December 2025:

LYTCHETT MATRAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

Dorset Council Local Plan Consultation

The Parish Council has issued a comprehensive response to Dorset Council's Local Plan Options Consultation, warning that the scale and distribution of proposed development would have severe and lasting consequences for the village, its landscape and its essential infrastructure.

The Parish Council's submission, informed by the recent village-wide Neighbourhood Plan Survey and a detailed assessment of proposed development sites, challenges both the methodology underpinning Dorset's housing targets and the concentration of growth proposed around the Lytchett area. The Council argues that Government calculations used to derive Dorset's required housing numbers are "flawed, inappropriate, and insensitive to rural conditions", noting that they fail to account for the county's constrained infrastructure, distinctive topography, and significant areas of protected countryside.

Under the draft Local Plan, the village would grow from around 1,700 houses to more than 2,300 over the plan period. Together with the 150 houses already approved, this represents an increase of approximately 40% in both housing and population in te next 17 years. The Parish Council emphasises that no comparable level of growth has occurred at any point in the village's history and warns that such rapid expansion would "fundamentally alter the settlement's character, identity, and sense of place".

The erosion of the Green Belt forms a central part of the Parish Council's concerns. The draft Local Plan proposes around 6,000 new homes across Lytchett Matravers, Lytchett Minster, Sturminster Marshall and is almost all on designated Green Belt land. The Parish Council argues that this level of incursion is "excessive, disproportionate, and inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework", which requires that Green Belt boundaries endure and that any amendments must be justified by truly exceptional circumstances.

The Council is particularly concerned that the proposed settlement extending from Lytchett Minster towards Bulbury and up to Lytchett Matravers will effectively remove the rural separation between existing settlements. It stresses that any new community must be self-contained, clearly distinct, and accompanied by an appropriate green buffer to safeguard the identity of Lytchett Matravers.

Alongside its objections to overall housing numbers, the Parish Council raises significant concerns regarding Dorset Council's proposal for a "Flexible Settlements Policy", which would remove defined settlement boundaries. The Parish Council states that such an approach would introduce uncertainty, reduce community influence over future development, and create opportunities for incremental sprawl. We are surrounded by Green Belt and the implications could be catastrophic.

The Parish Council also highlights the acute pressures on local infrastructure. The primary school, GP surgery, road network, drainage systems, utilities and community facilities are already operating at or near capacity. It calls for a firm commitment that infrastructure improvements must precede, rather than follow, major housing growth.

Employment provision is another area of focus. Local business parks are fully occupied, and several businesses report that lack of available premises is restricting growth. The Council argues that, in the interests of sustainability, the Local Plan must facilitate expanded employment opportunities within Lytchett Matravers to reduce reliance on commuting to Poole and Bournemouth.

Throughout its submission, the Parish Council reiterates that it recognises the need to plan for a level of future growth, without destroying the village feel. However, it asserts that such growth must be proportionate, infrastructure-led, environmentally responsible, and reflective of the clearly expressed wishes of the local community.

Guerrilla Gardeners

The GG team have been busy throughout the season, but are no taking their winter break. WE start again at the beginning of March. One of the last tasks was to scatter the chippings over the mud at Rocket Park, so we hope that lasts through the winter.

We are always looking for new volunteers. We meet on Tuesday mornings from 9.30 for 2 hours for what is both gardening and a catch up on all the social activity of the village. Come and join us. Let the Parish Clerk know if you are interested

Christmas Greetings

This will be the last Parish Magazine before Christmas, so we all wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Councillor Vacancies

We still have 2 vacancies for Parish Councillor, so please call the Parish Clerk to find out more. Being a parish councillor is a direct way to participate and help in your community. It does take a few hours per week, but it is very rewarding so give it some thought. If you have any questions, please call the Parish Clerk or any Councillor to have a chat.

Parish Council Meetings:

Our next Finance & General Purposes meeting is on December 10th at 7 p.m. and the next Full Council meeting will be on December 17th at 7 p.m., earlier than usual because of Christmas, both in the Village Hall as usual. Agendas for all meetings are published online and the associated reports can be requested from the Parish Clerk. Meetings always start with a public participation session, so please come along if you have suggestions or questions that you would like to discuss with the Parish Council or stay and listen to our discussions, because it's all about your village.

Alf Bush,

Chair, Lytchett Matravers Parish Council

For further information please visit our website at: https://lytchettmatraverspc.org/ or contact the Parish Clerk via lytchettmatravers@dorset-aptc.gov.uk You can find us and comment on the Lytchett Matravers PC Facebook page. The Parish Clerk can also be contacted directly on 07596-885667.