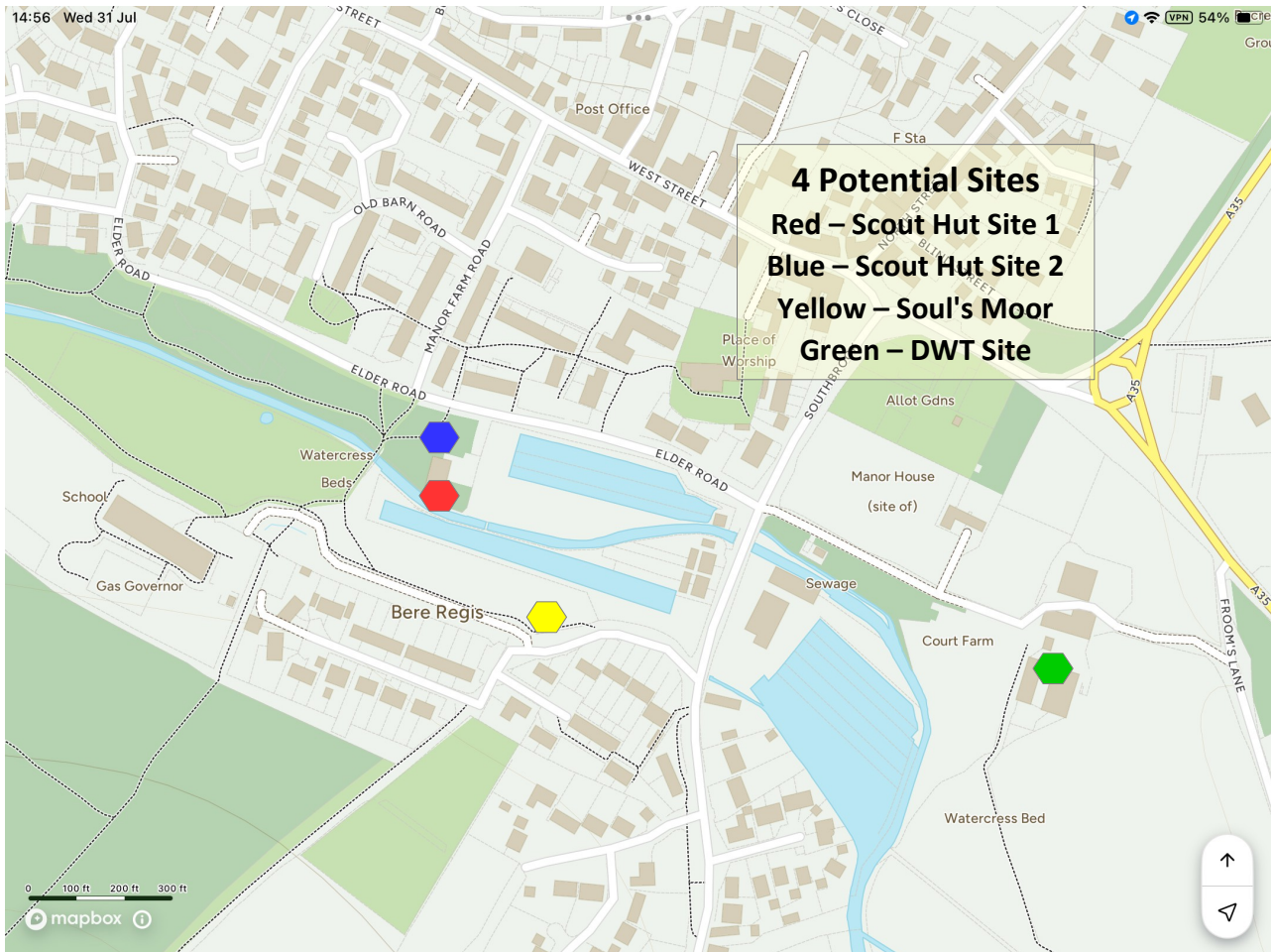




# A new Community Hall for Bere Regis – Introduction

## July 2024



For a number of years, we have been seeking a suitable location for a new Community Hall in Bere Regis, to replace the Drax Hall in North Street.

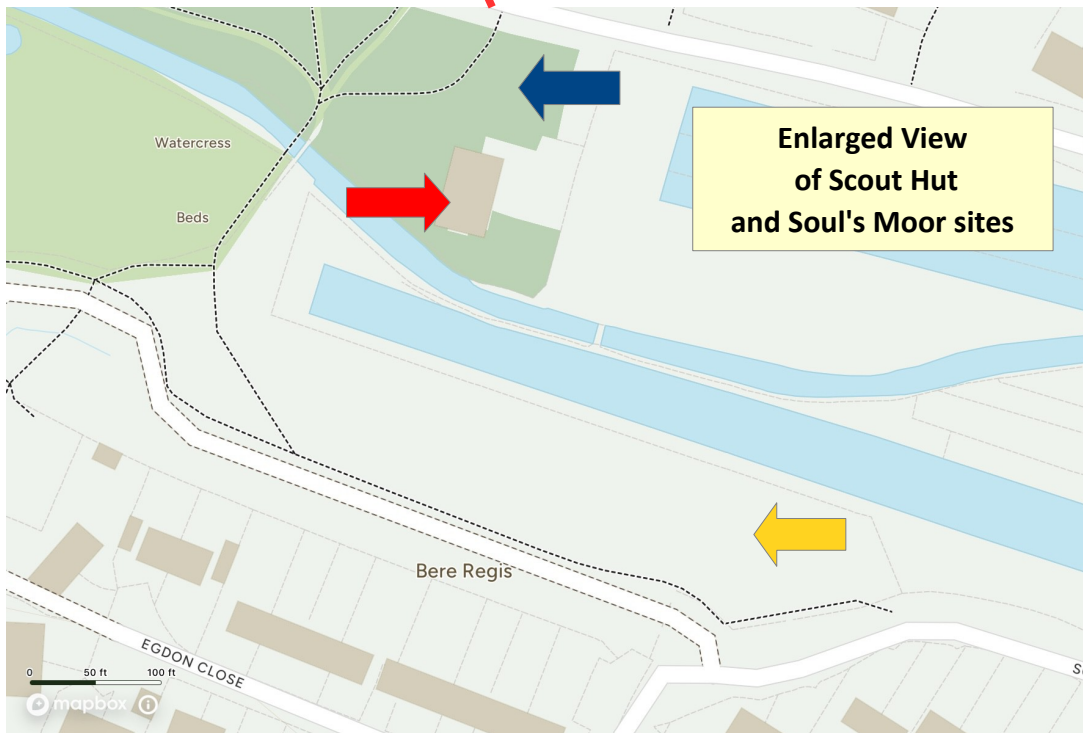
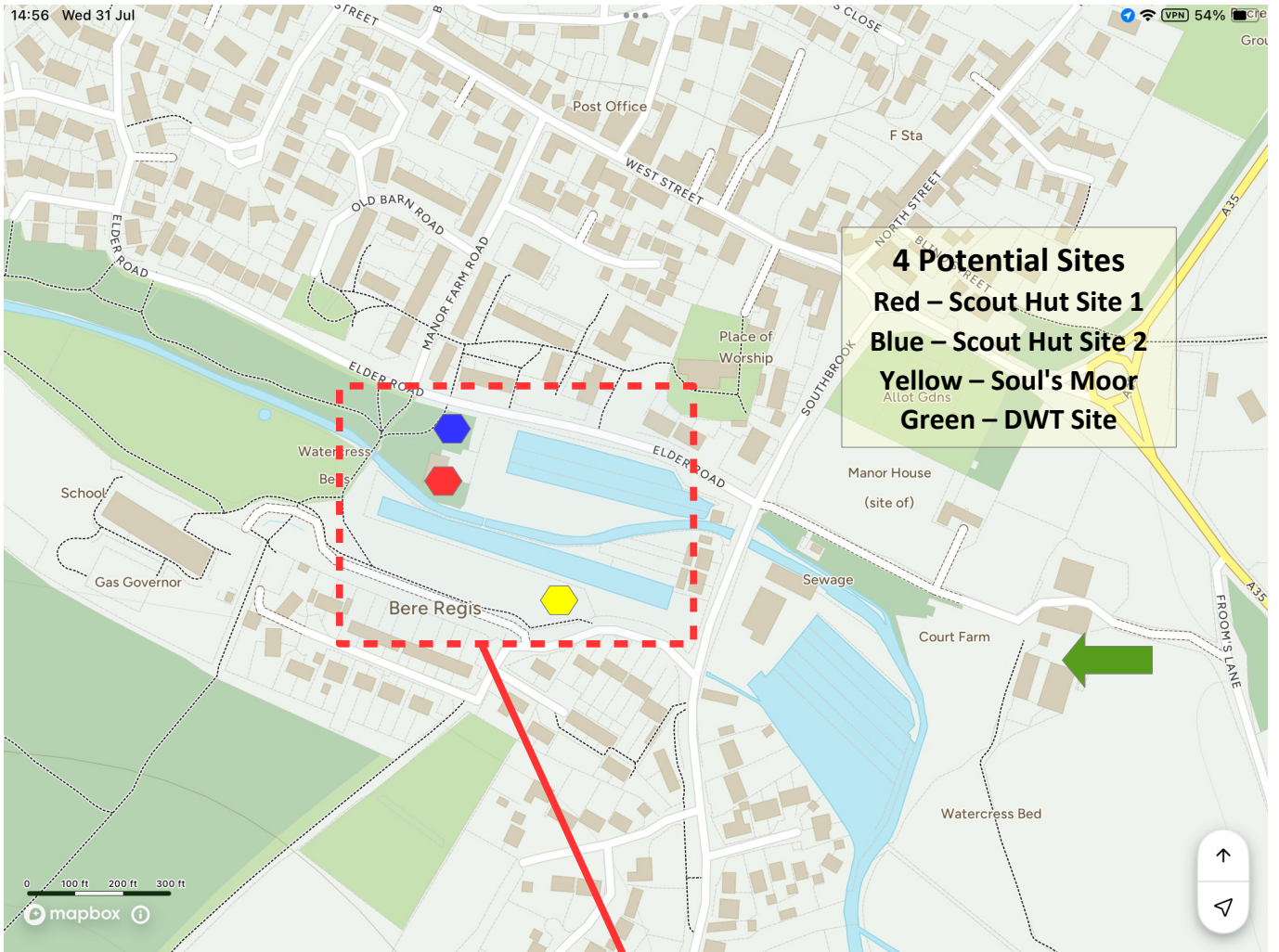
This short document identifies the sites we have considered, including some that have been discounted (with explanations), and gives a brief explanation of common land which is relevant to a number of the potential sites. We have settled on 4 potential sites, and the Pros and Cons of each are listed under each option.

We are asking you to show your preference for each of these sites by voting with an order of preference.

**You can use the form at the end of this document or you can vote online at:**

**[bereregisparishcouncil.co.uk](http://bereregisparishcouncil.co.uk) (link on home page)**

# Four Potential Sites for a New Community Hall



## What is Common Land?

You may often have heard the term used by the Parish Council or in conversation around the parish, but do you know what it is and what it means to own an area of common land.

Common Land is land subject to rights enjoyed by one or more persons to take or use part of a piece of land or of the produce of a piece of land owned by someone else. These rights are referred to as 'rights of common'. Those entitled to exercise such rights were called commoners.

It is a popular misconception that common land is owned by the general public and to which everyone has unrestricted right of access. All common land is privately owned. Today many are owned by local authorities, such as Parish Councils.

Souls Moor is designated Common Land, although there are no commoners and no-one with common rights. However, because of the designation, the land should be open and accessible to the public. If some of the land were to be used for something else, such as a new community hall, it must be replaced by land of equal or better ecological value.

Common Land is now overseen by Natural England.

In Bere Regis, the vast majority of the land around the village is owned by the Drax Estate. For the last 12 years, the Parish Council has been trying to negotiate a land swap in order to be able to deregister a sufficient amount of Souls Moor to allow the building of a community hall. This has proved difficult.

We have now looked again at other possible sites to see if the need to provide a land swap can be bypassed.

## Sites considered for a new community hall and discounted

**Sports Club** - Charitable status prohibits its use for non-sports facilities. There is insufficient space on the site to allow for any further facilities.

**Manor Farm Road Telephone Exchange** - This still serves as the main exchange for Wareham and this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

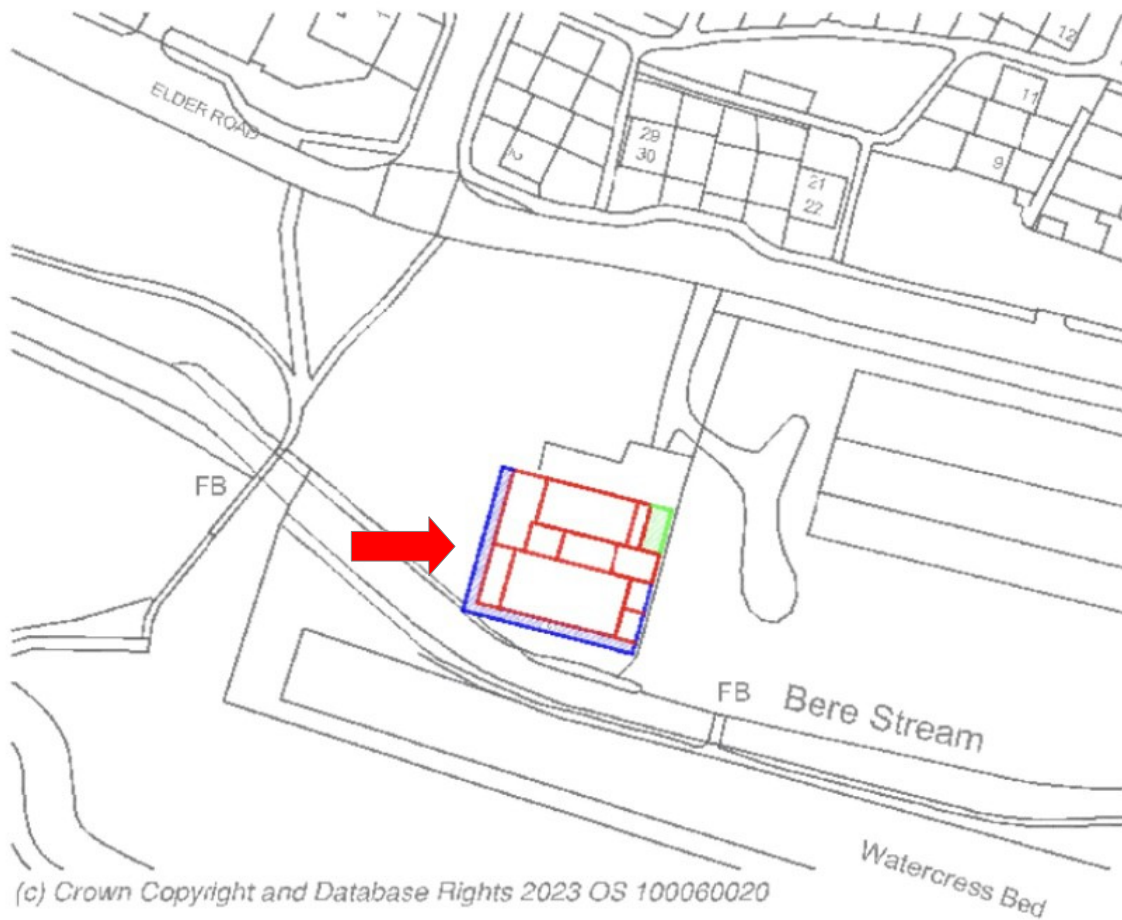
**Rye Hill Old School site** - The site has now been sold, subject to contract, to a Housing Association.

**Back Lane** - Wyatt Homes felt there would not be enough room on the site to accommodate the number of houses they wish to build and a community hall. In addition, parking would be a problem and the site is in a poor location

**Rye Hill Bonfire Field** - Owned by the Drax Estate and included in the long-term land bank, meaning that the Estate is hopeful that building will be permitted on the site at some point.

**Drax Hall, North Street** - Possible revamp of the existing hall. However, there is no parking, limited disabled access and kitchen facilities. The amount of work required to the structure would make such a project untenable.

## Scout Hut Site 1- Red Arrow



### Pros:

- Parish Council owns the site
- Dorset Council has indicated support for the scheme
- Fastest route to getting a new community hall
- Central, level with services nearby
- Good potential for the hall to be used by various user groups, including surgery for clinics and similar types of use
- Own and manage the building
- Opportunity to use latest building designs and energy saving technology
- Can use the money from the sale of the Drax Hall

### Cons:

- Floodplain
- Restricted parking available on site, although plenty of on-road parking
- Restricted potential for use in the evening when the Scouts are meeting
- Scouts will have to be rehoused during the build

## Scout Hut Site 2 – Blue Arrow



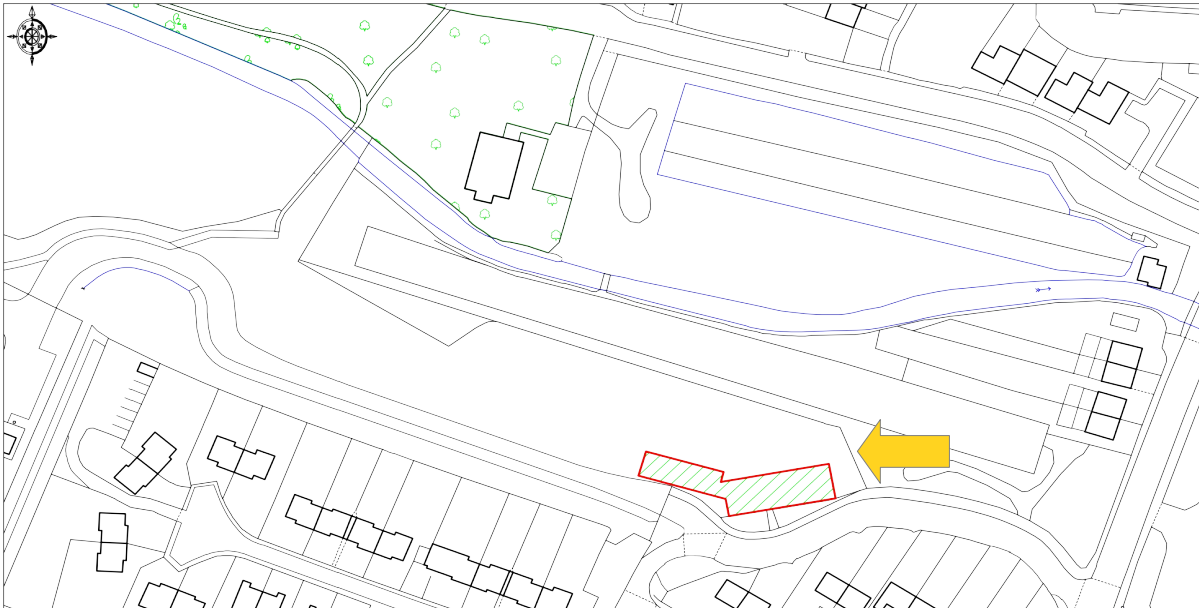
### Pros:

- Parish Council owns the site
- Central, level with services nearby
- Own and manage the building
- Scouts can remain in existing building
- Opportunity to use latest building designs and energy saving technology
- Good potential for the hall to be used by various user groups, including surgery for clinics and similar types of use
- Can use the money from the sale of the Drax Hall

### Cons:

- Common Land swap required
- Will involve removing some of the existing trees
- Restricted parking available on site, although plenty of on-road parking

## Souls Moor – Yellow Arrow



### Pros:

Parish Council owns the site

Central, level with services nearby

Own and manage the building

Hydrological assessment already undertaken, showing development would not affect the cress beds

Parking could be created on site

A hall on this site would bring electricity and water to site, allowing adjoining land to be used for fairs, markets, car boot sales, etc.

Could generate useful income as meeting/lecture hall with onsite catering

Good potential for hall to be used in the evening for live music, dancing, sports and recreation

Opportunity to use latest building designs and energy saving technology

Can use money from the sale of the Drax Hall

### Cons:

Common land swap required

Close to buildings on Southbrook and Egdon Close

Takes away open space from the middle of the village

## **DWT site (Court Farm) – Green Arrow (on the map on page 2)**

- Pros:**
- Won't have to maintain the building
  - Level site
  - Ample parking
  - May not have to raise the funds to build, although this will depend on any agreement reached
  - Good potential for the hall to be used by various user groups, including surgery for clinics and similar types of use
  - Opportunity to use latest building designs and energy saving technology
- Cons:**
- We don't own the site
  - Will not have control over rentals
  - Won't have ability to recover costs incurred by letting out the hall
  - May not be able to use money from the sale of the Drax Hall
  - Less likely to be available during the day as it is likely to be required by DWT

## **Voting for your Preferences**

You can use the paper form overleaf, or vote electronically:

**[bereregisparishcouncil.co.uk](http://bereregisparishcouncil.co.uk) (link on home page)**

**or via the Parish Council Facebook page**

If you use the paper form, you can

- send it to the Clerk at:  
Wardon Hill Farm  
Long Ash Lane  
Dorchester  
Dorset
- put it in the Parish Council postbox by the village shop
- give it to any Parish Councillor

**The closing date for voting is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

Please number the potential sites for the new community hall in order of preference – 1 being the best site, 4 being the worse. Please use the space below to make any comments you have regarding the sites. **Please return this form by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at the latest.**

DWT site

Souls Moor

Scout Hut Site 1

Scout Hut Site 2

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Comments:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

This is required to avoid duplication and will not be used for any other purpose. Your details will be destroyed once the results of the survey are recorded. If you wish to be kept informed of Parish information, please include your email below.

Email: \_\_\_\_\_