

Proposal: Introduction of a Broadstone Safe Zone Scheme

1. Purpose of the Proposal

This proposal recommends that Broadstone Town Council explore and adopt a **Broadstone Safe Zone Scheme**, creating a network of clearly identified local businesses, community facilities and other suitable venues where anyone who feels threatened, vulnerable or unsafe can seek help and support.

The scheme would provide a simple, visible and community-based way of helping residents feel safer when out and about in Broadstone. It would complement, rather than replace, existing emergency services and safeguarding arrangements.

2. What is a Safe Zone?

A Safe Zone would be a participating location displaying a recognisable **Broadstone Safe Zone** sign or sticker.

A person who feels unsafe could enter the premises and ask for help. Staff or volunteers would be provided with simple guidance on how to respond appropriately, including:

- Providing a safe place for the person to remain temporarily.
- Listening and offering reassurance.
- Helping the person contact a family member, friend or other trusted person.
- Contacting emergency services where appropriate.
- Supporting a child or vulnerable person in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Helping someone who is lost, distressed or being followed.
- Providing access to a telephone where appropriate.

The scheme would **not require participating businesses to act as security personnel, counsellors or emergency responders**. Its purpose would simply be to provide a safe point of contact until appropriate assistance can be obtained.

3. Why Broadstone Needs a Safe Zone Scheme

Broadstone is a strong community with many residents, businesses, community groups and volunteers already looking out for one another. A Safe Zone scheme would build on this existing community spirit.

There may be occasions when someone feels uncomfortable or vulnerable while walking through the Broadway, travelling home, waiting for transport or attending a community event. This can particularly affect:

- Children and young people.
- Older residents.
- People with disabilities.
- People who are lost or unfamiliar with the area.
- Anyone experiencing harassment or intimidation.
- Residents who feel threatened or followed.
- People who may become vulnerable due to an unexpected situation.

Knowing that there are recognised places nearby where help can be sought could provide reassurance and encourage people to seek assistance before a situation escalates.

4. Proposed Safe Zone Locations

Broadstone Town Council should seek expressions of interest from suitable organisations and businesses throughout Broadstone.

Potential locations could include:

- Local shops and businesses.
- Cafés and restaurants.
- The Library.
- Community facilities.
- Pharmacies.
- Sports and leisure facilities.
- Places regularly used by young people.

The objective should be to create a **network of Safe Zones**, rather than relying on one single location.

Where possible, locations should be positioned so that residents can readily identify a Safe Zone within the main areas of the village.

5. Safe Zone Identification

A consistent and easily recognisable logo or window sticker should be developed.

For example:

BROADSTONE SAFE ZONE

If you feel unsafe, come in and ask for help.

The signs should be clearly visible from outside the premises.

A map of participating Safe Zones could also be published on Broadstone Town Council website and included in appropriate community communications.

6. Training and Guidance

Participation should be voluntary.

Before becoming a Safe Zone, participating organisations should receive a short guidance document explaining:

1. What a Safe Zone is.
2. How to respond when someone asks for help.
3. When emergency services should be contacted.
4. Appropriate safeguarding procedures.
5. How to respond if the person is a child.
6. What staff should do if someone is being followed or threatened.
7. The limits of the organisation's responsibility.

The scheme should be designed to be **simple, practical and proportionate**, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy for participating businesses and organisations.

7. Emergency Situations

Safe Zones would not replace the emergency services.

If someone is in immediate danger, injured or experiencing a serious emergency, the appropriate emergency service should be contacted.

The Safe Zone provides a temporary place of safety and a trusted point of contact while appropriate assistance is arranged.

8. Communications and Promotion

Once established, the scheme should be promoted through:

- Broadstone Town Council's website.
- Social media.
- Community newsletters.
- Local magazines.
- Community noticeboards.
- Local schools and youth organisations.
- Participating businesses.
- Community events.

Schools and organisations working with young people could be particularly important partners in making children and young people aware of the scheme.

9. Pilot Scheme

It is recommended that Broadstone Town Council initially establish the scheme as a **12-month pilot project**.

During the pilot, the Council could:

- Recruit participating Safe Zones.
- Produce signage and guidance.
- Establish the online map.
- Promote the scheme.
- Gather feedback from participating organisations.
- Review how frequently the scheme is being used.
- Identify any problems or safeguarding issues.
- Assess whether the scheme should be expanded.

A report could then be presented to Broadstone Town Council at the end of the pilot period.

10. Financial Implications

The scheme should be capable of being delivered at relatively low cost.

Potential expenditure could include:

- Design and production of Safe Zone signs.
- Printed guidance.
- Promotional materials.
- Website information.
- Training or safeguarding resources where required.

The Council should investigate whether local businesses, community organisations or external funding could contribute towards the initial costs.

11. Recommendation

It is recommended that Broadstone Town Council:

- 1.** Approves the principle of establishing a Broadstone Safe Zone Scheme.
- 2.** Asks officers/councillors to develop a simple Safe Zone framework, including safeguarding guidance and participation criteria.
- 3.** Invites local businesses, community organisations and public-facing facilities to participate.

4. Develops a recognisable Broadstone Safe Zone sign and supporting promotional material.
5. Establishes an online list/map of participating Safe Zones.
6. Launches the scheme initially as a 12-month pilot.
7. Reviews the effectiveness of the scheme after 12 months and reports the findings back to the Council.

12. Conclusion

The Broadstone Safe Zone Scheme would be a practical example of **community-led safety**. It would not attempt to replace the police or other emergency services, but would provide an additional layer of reassurance by connecting residents with trusted local places where they can seek help.

Most importantly, the scheme would build on something Broadstone already has in abundance: **a community that looks out for one another.**

A Safe Zone network would make that support more visible, more accessible and easier to find when someone needs it.