**Neighbourhood plan process explained**

**What is a Neighbourhood plan?**

*‘Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead.’ [[1]](#footnote-1)*

A neighbourhood plan is not a legal requirement, but it is **a right** that communities can choose to use to set planning policies that form part of the development plan used in determining planning applications. Once a neighbourhood plan is agreed, it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be obtained in accordance with the development plan.

The topics in a neighbourhood plan are up to the community to decide. Wider community aspirations than those related to land use and development may be included. They do not form part of the statutory development plan, however.

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## **Steps in the Neighbourhood Plan process**

## **Timeframes**

The whole process will take at least two years. We are aiming to have completed the referendum by December 2025. The following are estimates of how long each step of the process will take and when ideally it will be completed, if we are to finalise a plan within the next two years. Please note, some elements of this are outside the control of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group but we will do our best to complete tasks in this timeframe.

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| Step 1 |  | Agree the area to be covered by the neighbourhood plan (NP) | Done  |
| Step 2 | October 2022 to April 2024 | Gather evidence for what the community and others affected by the plan want in the NP. This will include: * Agreeing the objectives for the NP with the community
* Gathering background information from earlier work and different groups in the community.
* A housing survey on the needs of the community
* Other surveys such as environmental impact and sustainable development surveys.
* Formulating options for the plan in line with the agreed objectives for the NP in consultation with the community
 | By Sept 24DoneDoneTBCBy December 24 |
| Step 3 | January 2025 – February 2025 | Consultation with the community and others affected by the NP, to agree the final draft content of the plan | By April 25 |
| Step 4 | Mar 2025 – May 2025 | Submission of the draft NP to the Local Authority, consultation opens for six weeks during this period and the process with the LA is completed | By May 25 |
| Step 5 | April 2024 – July 2024 | The Local Authority submit the plan to an Independent Examiner, who reviews comments on the plan and its content against certain criteria. | By July 25 |
| Step 6 | August 2024 – December 2024 | The Local Authority publish their decision within 5 weeks of receiving the Independent Examiner report. If agreed, a referendum takes place in the community | By December 25 |

## **Community consultations**

There are several points in the process where consultation will take place with the community and others who will be affected by the Neighbourhood Plan.

To summarise these, they are

1. Discussions with community groups and others in the community to identify issues of particular concern or interest and the different ways these can be included in the plan. (Done)

2. A formal survey on the housing needs of the village (Done)

3. A consultation to agree the objectives of the plan (step 2)

4.A further consultation on the content: options and ideas for the NP (step 2)

5. A final formal survey on the content of the draft NP (step 3)

6.The Local Authority, once it receives a draft NP, will then invite comments from the community on the plan and the Independent Examiner may pick up on some of these comments and invite further discussion about them. (Step 4 and 5)

7. A referendum is held where those eligible to vote (people eligible to vote in an election) will be invited to vote on whether they want the NP.

1. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2> accessed 12/12/2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)