



Neighbourhood Planning

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Aims of this meeting

- **To help you understand the neighbourhood planning process**
- **Help you decide whether a Neighbourhood plan is right for your area**
- **Help you understand what resources and support are available**

What are Neighbourhood Plans?

- **Used to determine planning applications**
- **Statutory status– they are a powerful planning document**
- **They are drawn up by the community themselves, but the Parish Council is the ‘responsible body’**
- **They must focus on land use and development policies**

Relationship with Local Plan

- **Must be in general conformity with the adopted local plan and national planning policies**
- **Take account of any emerging Local Plan**
- **Can propose more, not less development**
- **Can provide more local detail – distinct to the community – for example:**
 - 1. Set out design requirements**
 - 2. Designate Local Green Space**
 - 3. Protect community buildings**
 - 4. Allocate further development**



Is a Neighbourhood Plan right for your area? What could be in it?

- **Vision, Objectives, Policies, justification**
- **No fixed template, could have one policy, or 100**
- **Can control the type and mix of new development**
- **Can address local housing need**
- **Can protect green spaces**
- **Can have employment policies.....**
- **Should be distinct to your area**

What does the community want to achieve?

What cannot be in it?

- **Community Events**
- **Highways Issues**
- **Bus Timetables**
- **Speeding**
- **Litter**
- **Must be realistic and deliverable**

QUIZ QUESTIONS

Can your Neighbourhood Plan:

- 1. Protect an ancient tree?**
- 2. Influence the location, design and layout of a new housing estate?**
- 3. Extend opening hours of the local GP surgery?**
- 4. Set up a local business network?**
- 5. Protect community facilities?**
- 6. Improve road signage?**
- 7. Prevent a local independent café becoming a Starbucks?**

QUIZ ANSWERS

Protect an ancient tree?	YES – through policies which place appropriate conditions on planning permission.
Influence the location, design and layout of a new housing estate?	YES – neighbourhood plans can allocate sites for housing and influence the mix, type, design, and layout.
Extend opening hours of the local GP Surgery	NO – you will have to lobby your local health service providers.
Set up a local retail business network?	NO – but this could be one of your projects that sit alongside your plan.
Protect community facilities	YES – neighbourhood plans can ensure that community facilities (e.g. community centres) are protected.
Improve road signage	NO – signage is a matter for your Highways Authority but traffic management in relation to new development is where planning policy can have influence.
Prevent a local independent café becoming a Starbucks	NO – as in planning terms this would not require a “change of use”.

National Picture

- **Over 2500 communities have begun Neighbourhood Plans**
- **Over 500 have passed referendum**
- **Average turn out approx. 32%, average yes vote 89%**
- **A small number have failed examination, one has failed referendum**
- **Takes about 2-4 years depending on the scale and complexity of issues**

Essential Steps

- 1. Agree the area and submit area application to CWaC**
- 2. Ask people about the issues they would like to see addressed and research those issues to build evidence**
- 3. Produce a draft plan for public consultation with evidence to back your policies**
- 4. Submit your final plan to CWaC**
- 5. Meet the “basic conditions” to gain a successful result from an independent examination**
- 6. Win a referendum**

How long will it take and how much will it cost?

- Depends on complexity
- Number and skills of volunteers
- Depends on size of the community
- Probably run into £1000's
- 15 = average number of volunteers involved
- 3.8 years = average time taken to produce a NP
- 2,800 = average number of volunteer hours spent on producing a neighbourhood plan or 1.6 full time equivalent for 12 months
- 49 = average number of hours given per volunteer

Funding and support

- **Groups are eligible for grants of up to £9,000 from central government, run by ‘Locality’**
- **Technical support and extra help and funding for more complex plans**
- **The funding is easy to apply for online via:**
www.neighbourhoodplanning.org

Why Bother?

- **Development is likely to happen – this is your chance to shape it**
- **Can indicate what community benefits you would like from development**
- **Great way of getting the community together**
- **Must be considered by Halton Planning Authority when determining planning applications**
- **Neighbourhood Plans are being used to fight, and win appeals**
- **Greater knowledge is greater power – useful for all aspects of planning**
- **If you allocate, you have more control of development**

Top Tips

- **Get advice early – let the Authority know what you are doing and understand what policies already apply to your area in the Local Plan**
- **Prepare a realistic and robust project plan, try to keep the momentum going**
- **Good leadership is vital – a good/bad chairman can make or break a project**
- **Think about what you want to achieve from the outset and ensure it is realistic and achievable**
- **Get the community on board and communicate progress regularly**
- **Don't do a mini Local Plan! – this is the Planning Authority's responsibility**
- **Lots of good examples out there, and toolkits**
- **Make sure that it is in general conformity with local and national policies**
- **Keep it distinct to your area**
- **Keep the policies LAND USE BASED!**
- **Make sure that you can back up your policies with EVIDENCE**

Guidance

For those who want to understand the process in more detail and/or want to get involved, we recommend reading the neighbourhood plan roadmap guide:

https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/NP_Roadmap_online_full.pdf



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