

# Neighbourhood and Community Planning

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# Contents

Introduction	1
Picking the right tool for the job	?
Community Planning Tools	3
■ Neighbourhood Plans	
Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans	7
1 Getting started	8
<b>Step 1: Getting organised</b>	<b>8</b>
Legal Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans	11
Support for Neighbourhood Planning	13
<b>Step 2: Applying for a Neighbourhood Area</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Step 3: Consultation on the Application</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Step 4: Designation of the Neighbourhood Area</b>	<b>17</b>
2 Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan	18
<b>Step 5: Community engagement and evidence</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Step 6: Developing Plan Content</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Step 7: Consulting on the Draft Plan</b>	<b>21</b>
3 Getting the Plan in place	23
<b>Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Step 9: Consultation on the Submitted Plan</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Step 10: The Examination</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Step 11: Progressing to Referendum</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Step 12: The Referendum</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Step 13: Adoption of the Plan</b>	<b>27</b>
4 Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan	28
■ Appendices	
1 Support from HDC	31
2 Useful Resources	34
<b>Template Area Application Letter</b>	<b>36</b>
3 Glossary	37

## Introduction

### What does this Neighbourhood and Community Planning in Huntingdonshire Guide do?

#### Helps you to identify the right community planning tool for your area

This guide first asks what you want to achieve in your community, and briefly sets out a range of community planning tools which can help you achieve your goals, it highlights the benefits and disadvantages of each tool.

#### Sets out Huntingdonshire District Council's support offer for a particular community planning tool: Neighbourhood Plans

A number of communities across Huntingdonshire and nationally are using neighbourhood plans to set out a shared vision for how they want to see their area develop. Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has a key role in providing support for this particular community planning tool. This guide sets out:

- An overview of the process for completing a neighbourhood plan in Huntingdonshire;
- How HDC can help you; and
- What town and parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans will be expected to do.

### What does this guide not do?

There is a wide range of excellent community planning and neighbourhood planning resources freely available online. This guide is not intended to replicate existing online guidance but to focus on setting out the particular neighbourhood planning support offer for Huntingdonshire. Links are provided throughout to more detailed guidance.

### Relationship with other Huntingdonshire community planning documents

This guide provides additional detail about neighbourhood planning to that provided in the 2013 Huntingdonshire Town & Parish Charter.

#### Document Information

For any queries about this document, please contact the planning policy team:

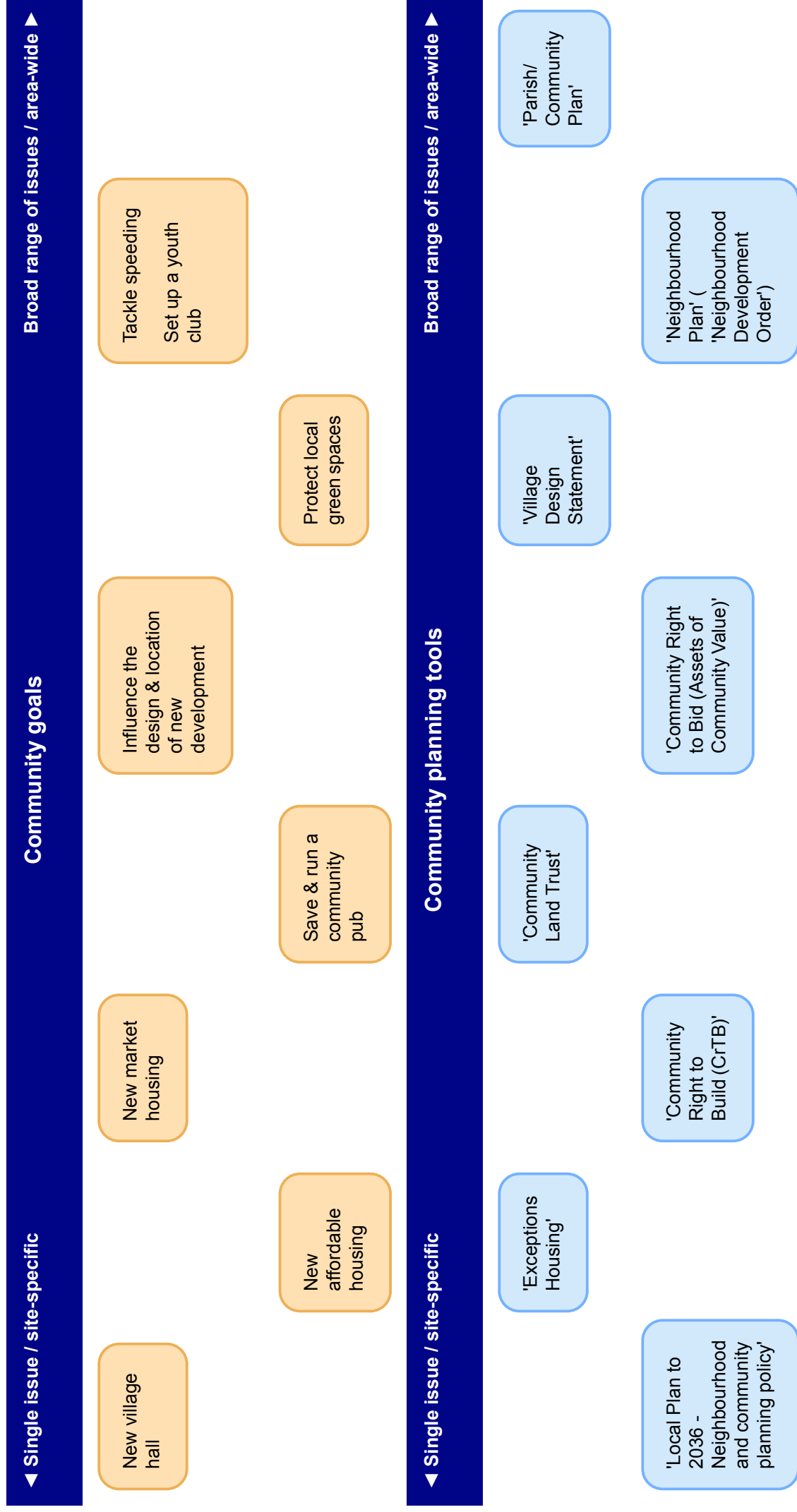
[local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk).

This guide includes a range of links to websites providing supporting information, data or guidance. Every effort has been made to ensure that these links are up to date. As websites change these links can become invalid. In circumstances where links have become invalid please use a suitable search term for an internet search. Alternatively please contact the Local Plans team at the email address above for guidance.

Cross references have been included in the text. Where these are underlined they provide a clickable internal link to the reference in electronic versions (pdf and web).

## Picking the right tool for the job: community planning goals and tools

The diagram below sets out a range of possible community goals, and the range of community planning tools available to achieve them.



## Community Planning Tools

### Neighbourhood Plan

<b>What is it?</b>	A plan for the neighbourhood area (often the parish/town) including policies that inform planning decisions regarding development proposals.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>Gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.</p> <p>The plan has statutory status: providing influence over planning decisions; giving the opportunity to specify sites for development; and enabling communities to add detail to Local Plan policies to shape development in their area.</p> <p>Community consultation can also identify non-planning goals which communities can tackle themselves.</p> <p>Areas with a neighbourhood plan in place receive more infrastructure funding arising from development in their area than areas without a neighbourhood plan.</p>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Time and resource intensive: before the neighbourhood plan comes into force, the community must follow a set process and meet a number of statutory tests, which lengthen the process, add costs, and require planning expertise.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team Locality
<b>First step</b>	Read this guide, then contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

### Local Plan to 2036 - Neighbourhood and community planning policy

<b>What is it?</b>	A policy in the draft Local Plan to 2036 which supports community-based development proposals, as an exception to the requirements of other relevant Local Plan policies, where there is identified community support or need.
<b>Benefits</b>	Community-led development proposals can be given planning permission without the need to go through the lengthy statutory process required for Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Site and proposal specific: doesn't enable communities to influence future planning decisions in their area.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

# Community Planning Tools

## Exceptions Housing

<b>What is it?</b>	Housing development targeted at meeting the needs of local people at less than market cost, on land where development would not normally be granted. The site should be well related to the existing settlement and the houses should be occupied by people having a local connection to the settlement.
<b>Benefits</b>	Provides additional low-cost housing in areas where it is needed, targeted to local people. Less resource intensive for communities than a Neighbourhood Plan or Community Right to Build; process can be completed in partnership between the Council and a Registered Provider (Housing Association).
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Only delivers housing; can't be used for other community development proposals.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Housing Strategy team <a href="#">Cambridgeshire ACRE</a>
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Housing Strategy team: <a href="mailto:housing.services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">housing.services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

## Neighbourhood Development Order

<b>What is it?</b>	Grants planning permission for specific types of development in a specific neighbourhood area. Created as a part of a neighbourhood plan.
<b>Benefits</b>	Enables communities to deliver small scale, site specific development within a neighbourhood plan without the need for a separate planning application (e.g. small scale rural exceptions affordable housing or a community building such as a village hall).
<b>Disadvantages</b>	See above for neighbourhood plans.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

## Community Right to Build (CrTB)

<b>What is it?</b>	A form of Neighbourhood Development Order that can be used to grant planning permission for small scale development for community benefit on a specific site or sites in a neighbourhood area.
<b>Benefits</b>	Enables communities to deliver small scale, site specific development without the need for a separate planning application (e.g. small scale rural exceptions affordable housing or a community building such as a village hall).
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Time and resource intensive: before the Right to Build Order comes into force, the community must follow a set process and meet a number of statutory tests, which lengthen the process, add costs, and require planning expertise. The process is similar to that required for Neighbourhood Plans, but is focused on a single site.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team Locality
<b>First step</b>	Read the My Community Guide: <a href="#">Understanding the Community Right to Build</a>

# Community Planning Tools

## Community Land Trust

<b>What is it?</b>	Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are local organisations set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets important to that community, like community enterprises, food growing or workspaces.
<b>Benefits</b>	A helpful organisational structure enables communities to deliver their own services, housing, pubs or community enterprises. CLTs can be used in combination with another of the community planning tools set out here (e.g. rural exception site or Community Right to Build). Potentially beneficial for land/organisations having charitable status. A way for communities to deliver their own services
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Can be complex to set up and resource intensive over a long period. Some parish councils may not be sufficiently resourced. Replicates what Registered Providers (housing associations) do.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team; Housing Strategy team <a href="#">Community Land Trust East</a>
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

## Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value)

<b>What is it?</b>	Enables communities to nominate public or private community assets of value to their community (e.g. a village pub). Once the community has nominated them they will be identified by the Local Planning Authority on a list of 'Assets of Community Value'. Once on the list, if an asset comes up for sale or lease, a community group has a period of time in which they can register their interest as a potential bidder, delaying a sale on the open market.
<b>Benefits</b>	Gives some protection to valued community facilities, by providing an extended window of opportunity for the community to organise if such an asset is put up for sale.
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Just because an Asset is added to the list does not mean that the community will definitely be able to buy it for community use; they will need to be able to meet the asking price. Not all nominated Assets will be added to the formal list: to be added to the list, the Asset must meet certain tests relating to community value.
<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Corporate team: <a href="mailto:acv@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">acv@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>First step</b>	Read the <a href="#">Community Right to Bid page on the HDC website</a> .

## Village Design Statement

<b>What is it?</b>	A document created by the community informing the design of new development in an area.
<b>Benefits</b>	When adopted, it can become supplementary planning guidance. This means that they are a consideration which the council must take into account when determining planning applications.
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Unlike neighbourhood plans, village design statements do not become part of the statutory development plan, and therefore do not have much weight in determining planning applications.

# Community Planning Tools

<b>Support organisations</b>	Huntingdonshire District Council - Planning Policy team
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>

## Parish/ Community Plan

<b>What is it?</b>	A comprehensive plan for the area identifying community priorities and actions to address these.
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>Enables communities to produce a comprehensive vision for their area, addressing all issues of interest to the community.</p> <p>Identifies non-planning goals which communities can tackle themselves.</p> <p>Non-development-focused community goals can be achieved more quickly than development-focused goals, which must follow a statutory process.</p> <p>No formal process to follow.</p>
<b>Disadvantages</b>	<p>No influence over planning decisions.</p> <p>Time intensive: although there is no formal process to follow, most parish plans still take well over a year to produce, including getting started, consulting the community, and identifying priorities and actions.</p> <p>Non-development-focused actions can also be identified and addressed alongside the neighbourhood planning process.</p>
<b>Support organisations</b>	<a href="#">Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils</a>
<b>First step</b>	Contact the Planning Policy team: <a href="mailto:local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk">local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk</a>



# Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans

## Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans

This guide seeks to explain Huntingdonshire District Council's approach to neighbourhood plans and how they can fit with the existing Development Plan and the emerging Local Plan. The advice is intended for town and parish councils that are contemplating drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan.

### Neighbourhood Plan Process Overview

Stage	Steps	Time required	Responsibility of:	
<b>Stage 1:</b> <b>'Getting started'</b>	'Step 1: Getting organised'	<b>4 weeks<sup>(1)</sup></b>	Town/ Parish Council	
	'Step 2: Applying for a Neighbourhood Area'			
	'Step 3: Consultation on the Application'		HDC	
	'Step 4: Designation of the Neighbourhood Area'			
<b>Stage 2:</b> <b>'Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan'</b>	'Step 5: Community engagement and evidence'	<b>6 weeks</b>	Town/ Parish Council	
	'Step 6: Developing Plan Content'			
	'Step 7: Consulting on the Draft Plan'			
<b>Stage 3:</b> <b>'Getting the Plan in place'</b>	'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan'	<b>6 weeks</b>	HDC	
	'Step 9: Consultation on the Submitted Plan'			
	'Step 10: The Examination'	Appoint Examiner	<b>28 working days notice</b>	HDC + Town/ Parish Council jointly
		Independent examination		Examiner
		Examiner reports		
	'Step 11: Progressing to Referendum'	<b>28 working days notice</b>	HDC	
	'Step 12: The Referendum'			
'Step 13: Adoption of the Plan' If a majority vote 'Yes', the plan is 'made' by Full Council and comes into force as part of the Development Plan				
<b>Stage 4:</b> <b>'Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan'</b>	Implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan		Town/ Parish Council	

1. Depends on the area being applied for. 4 weeks is for the whole of a town/ parish council area

# Stage 1: Getting started

## Stage 1: Getting started

The first stage of producing a Neighbourhood Plan is to get an area designated for it. There are four steps in this stage:

'Step 1: Getting organised'

'Step 2: Applying for a Neighbourhood Area'

'Step 3: Consultation on the Application'

'Step 4: Designation of the Neighbourhood Area'

### Step 1: Getting organised

#### Who leads neighbourhood planning in Huntingdonshire?

In nearly all areas of Huntingdonshire, town and parish councils are responsible for neighbourhood planning<sup>(1)</sup>. However, guidance recommends that such councils get involvement from the wider community so that interested community members can play an active role in shaping the plan. The relationship between any group and the formal functions of the town/ parish council should be clear to the wider public.

#### Creating the best neighbourhood plan possible

Before getting started it is worth considering why you want to do a neighbourhood plan, and what you could achieve through the plan, and through the plan-making process.

#### The best Neighbourhood Plans are:

- Based upon strong community engagement, and are owned by the wider community
- Uniquely local
- Complementary to Local Plan policies- providing additional policy detail
- Not just about creating a nice-looking document, but have a focus on the implementation of community projects and ideas

#### The Neighbourhood Planning process can:

- **Inform communities:** developing a neighbourhood plan can educate and inform the steering group and wider community about planning and the process of planning for the local community.

#### How can HDC help?

The Council will offer to meet you to help you consider how to get started on your neighbourhood plan. This meeting might cover matters such as:

- a run through of the process for preparing a neighbourhood plan
- the requirements to fit in with national planning policy
- what neighbourhood plans can cover, but also what they can't
- what may be involved in terms of technical work
- expectations of effective community engagement
- the requirements to fit in with the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan and how this might shape the content of the neighbourhood plan
- possible resource and capacity considerations

1 Areas with a parish meeting as opposed to a parish council will need to go through an extra step of applying to be designated as a [neighbourhood forum](#). This designation is subject to certain tests. If you live in an area with a parish meeting please contact HDC in the first instance.

# Stage 1: Getting started

## The best Neighbourhood Plans are:

- **Tackle non-planning issues:** community consultation often flags up issues of importance to the community that are not related to the planning system, such as speeding or the need for new community groups. These should not be lost, and can be addressed separately to the creation of the planning-focused document.
- **Bring people together:** working with others over a period of time can in the steering group can connect people, and if done well, community consultation events can be enjoyable social events.

Some of these matters are considered in more detail in other parts of this guide. The initial meeting may not need to cover all of these items, but it is suggested that you make some preparation for the meeting and inform us if you will want to discuss other matters so that we can do any research or other work in order to be prepared to deal with your questions.

To create the best neighbourhood plan possible, it is important to get organised.

## Project planning

Given the length of time the neighbourhood plan will take to produce, good project management is essential (expected timescales are set out throughout this guide). This will enable you to manage the workload, and the wider community's expectations if things get delayed. It may therefore be useful to draw up a simple project plan to help you get organised. The project plan could:

- Set out when you think you will be able to take the different steps in the process
- Who will work on different parts of the plan
- Who will be the main point of contact with HDC
- Who will be responsible for taking actions at specific points
- Who you could get to help you draw up the plan

The project plan doesn't have to be particularly detailed and you can leave parts that you will decide on later. The project plan can, and probably will, change as you go through the process.

You should also remember that you will mostly be relying on the time of volunteers so you will have to work within the limited time that they have. This means it may not be possible to make progress as quickly as you might like.

## Further tips for getting organised

- **Get help:** use available online resources referenced in this document, and take advantage of the support on offer.
- **Learn from the best:** read other neighbourhood plans to work out what you think works, and what doesn't. You can ask us for contacts from other neighbourhood planning groups that are further ahead in the process to learn from their experience.
- **Gather as broad a steering group as possible:** members of a diverse steering group will provide different perspectives, and their backgrounds will also help the group engage with different sections of the wider community.
- **Think about how to recruit and manage volunteers:** consider targeting people in your community with specific skills to help with particular tasks,

## Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Neighbourhood Planning](#)

## Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 1 and 2

## Time needed

No time constraints: take as long as you need.

## Stage 1: Getting started

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and parcel up tasks into manageable chunks that might attract volunteers more than an undefined role which could last years.

- **Be creative, and have fun:** if you're going to put significant time and effort into this process, make it fun for all involved. Celebrate getting to milestones, and if you get bogged down in the process, remember why you are doing this!

## Legal Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans

### The Basic Conditions

To be successful at examination, a neighbourhood plan must meet a number of tests, known as Basic Conditions. At submission, a statement about how the plan meets the Basic Conditions should accompany the plan. In summary, the neighbourhood plan must demonstrate that it is consistent with:

- **national planning policy:** as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG);
- **Statutory protections for listed buildings and conservation areas;**
- **Sustainable development:** contributing to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions, or showing how consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset;
- **Strategic policies set out in the adopted and emerging Local Plan;**
- **EU obligations:** see below for more detail; and
- A number of other basic conditions.

More information about some of the Basic Conditions is provided below.

#### How can HDC help?

We can advise you at the start of the process about how to meet the basic conditions.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

[NPPG: The basic conditions](#)

### Sustainable development

Your neighbourhood plan must demonstrate how it contributes to sustainable development, using sufficient and proportionate evidence. You may be able to use the Council's Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal to provide some of this evidence.

#### Sustainability Appraisal

A sustainability appraisal is a systematic process which can help you select the most sustainable options in your neighbourhood plan policies. It assesses the extent to which your emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives. While sustainability appraisal is not required for neighbourhood plans, and involves a significant amount of work, it can help you make evidence-based decisions when writing your plan, particularly if you are choosing between sites for allocating development.

#### How can HDC help?

We can discuss with you the options for evidencing how your plan delivers sustainable development.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Meeting the Basic Conditions - Sustainable development](#)

#### Other Resources

[Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3 - Sustainability Appraisal Consultation](#)

# Stage 1: Getting started

## Strategic policies in the local plan

Neighbourhood plans need to be in "general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area".

### Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2009

- The adopted Core Strategy is the current development plan for the area. It sets the context for development in the district and provides the basis for local and neighbourhood planning.
- The Core Strategy has a strategic focus. For the purposes of neighbourhood planning, all policies in the Core Strategy should be considered to be strategic.

### Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

- The Council is in the process of producing a Local Plan to cover the period up to 2036. Once adopted the Local Plan will replace all existing parts of the development plan, including the Core Strategy.
- The draft Local Plan includes both strategic and non-strategic policies. For the purposes of neighbourhood planning, policies in Section B: The Strategy for Sustainable Development should be considered to be strategic. The policies that allocate land for development in Section D: 'Allocations' should also be considered as strategic as they are required to achieve the strategy as set out in Section B.

## EU obligations

Your neighbourhood plan must be compatible with EU obligations in order to be legally compliant. The main relevant obligations relate to the environmental impacts of your plan.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) integrates environmental considerations into the process of preparing a plan. You will need to explicitly screen your draft plan to check whether or not it will have certain impacts that trigger the need for a full SEA.

**Other EU obligations** may also be triggered, depending on:

- the presence of protected species or habitats in or close to your area, and
- what your neighbourhood plan contains

EU obligations are complex, and if triggered, could require a substantial amount of work in order to address. It is important to discuss with us early in the process whether your plan is likely to trigger the need for a full SEA and assessments relating to other EU obligations.

### How can HDC help?

We can discuss with you at the start what the requirement for general conformity with the development plan's strategic policies means. We will check your draft and submitted plan to assess how it meets the requirement for general conformity.

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Conformity with strategic policies](#)

### Other Resources

[Adopted Development Plans on HDC website](#)  
[Emerging Local Plan to 2036 on HDC website](#)

### How can HDC help?

We will discuss with you the steps that you need to take, and what evidence needs to be produced in order to comply with the EU obligations.

We can also provide an SEA screening template.

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: EU obligations](#)

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheets 1 and 2

## Support for Neighbourhood Planning

### Overview of support from Huntingdonshire District Council

The Council has a statutory requirement to provide support for neighbourhood planning. This includes two specific roles:

- taking decisions at key stages in the neighbourhood planning process; and
- providing advice and assistance to the town and parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans. The advice and assistance we provide comprises a number of roles as set out below:

Advice	Assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Technical expertise</b> (e.g. explaining how you can meet the legal requirements for neighbourhood plans; providing advice in policy writing)</li><li>• <b>Critical friend</b> (e.g. commenting on draft questionnaires, reviewing the draft plan)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Process guidance</b> (e.g. explaining the timescales and processes for examination and referendum)</li><li>• <b>Provide and point to evidence</b> (e.g. population and housing evidence sources and data)</li><li>• <b>Point you towards further support and funding</b> (e.g. connecting you with groups that are further ahead in the process)</li></ul>

Our support for neighbourhood planning is set out at each stage of the process in this guide, and is summarised at Appendix 1: 'Support from HDC'.

#### Keep talking to us!

Setting aside the detail of our neighbourhood planning support offer, it's important to remember that the best neighbourhood plans which make a real impact to development in their area, are the result of a constructive and ongoing conversation with the council. Keeping in touch with the Council, and in particular at key points in the process will ensure that your neighbourhood plan:

- is based upon the most relevant evidence;
- is additional and complementary to local plan policies; and
- has teeth, in terms of influencing planning decisions.

#### A caveat

The Council is required to provide the neighbourhood planning assistance it considers appropriate. The planning policy team is responsible both for the preparation of the local plan, and for neighbourhood planning support.

Neighbourhood planning by definition is led by the community; we cannot and should not write your plan for you. The support offer set out below is therefore focused on providing specific support at key points in the neighbourhood planning process.

# Stage 1: Getting started

## Other support and funding

### Online guidance

There is a wealth of excellent neighbourhood planning guidance available online. The following list provides links to some of these (N.B. this is not intended to be exhaustive):

<a href="#">My Community: Neighbourhood Planning Key Resources Kit</a>	Includes in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap (very clear and comprehensive; see in particular the worksheets at the back)</li><li>• Writing Planning Policies guide</li><li>• RTPI resources on a range of topics</li></ul>
<a href="#">Planning Practice Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning</a>	Sets out the national rules governing the neighbourhood planning system including key stages and decisions (e.g. deciding neighbourhood areas, the legal tests for neighbourhood plans, and the process of independent examination and referendum).
<a href="#">Planning Aid: Forum for Neighbourhood Planning</a>	This site is especially helpful for learning from others' experiences, and for posting questions on a forum.
<a href="#">Department of Communities &amp; Local Government: Notes on neighbourhood planning</a>	Update bulletins on neighbourhood plan progress nationally, including links to new resources as they become available.
<a href="#">Twitter #neighbourhoodplanning</a>	Good for getting inspiration and following links to other's activities.

### Funding

There is a significant amount of funding available to support neighbourhood planning:

- All groups writing a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order will be eligible to apply for up to £8,000 in a neighbourhood planning grant (as at November 2015).
- Groups facing more complex issues can apply for specific packages of technical support where needed, and may also be eligible for further £6,000 in grant.

Visit the [My Community](#) web-pages to find out more, and to fill in an Expression of Interest form.

In addition, the Council also receives funding from government for each neighbourhood plan produced. The funding pays for the examiner and referendum, as well as for some of the support we provide. This means that these formal stages of the neighbourhood planning process are free to groups preparing their plans.

### Further practical support

As noted above, producing a successful neighbourhood plan requires some planning expertise. While the Council can provide a range of support as set out in this guide, you may feel that you would value more intensive planning support for specific parts of the process. The [My Community grants and support web-page](#) highlights that the grant funding available could be used to engage an independent planning expert.



## Step 2: Applying for a Neighbourhood Area

The first step towards preparing a neighbourhood plan is for the town or parish council to apply for an area to be designated as a neighbourhood area.

### Deciding on the 'Neighbourhood Area'

The neighbourhood area does not have to follow existing administrative boundaries. There are advantages to choosing the same area as the town or parish making the application:

- A shorter period for consultation on the application is required (See Consultation on the Application).
- It is more likely to be supported by people responding to the consultation.

There are other alternatives. An area can either be smaller or larger than the area of the town or parish:

- **Alternative Scenario 1 - smaller area:**  
A town council may decide that one particular area of their town is particularly cohesive and has its own identity so might consider drawing the area smaller than the area of the town council.
- **Alternative Scenario 2 - larger area:**  
Two adjacent parish councils for villages that are close together may decide that drawing up a neighbourhood plan for both parishes would have benefits because the plan could tackle issues shared by both villages.

If you decide that a larger area would make sense you will need to have the agreement of the town or parish council whose area you are extending into.

You should check whether there are other neighbourhood areas nearby. If you think that part of an area that is already designated as a neighbourhood area should be part of your area you will need to talk to us about how to proceed.

Whatever area you decide upon you will need to say why you have chosen it when you make your application to HDC.

### Making an application

To make an application for the designation of a neighbourhood area the town or parish council needs to write a letter to Huntingdonshire District Council. We have set up a 'Template Area Application Letter' to get you started.

The letter needs to include:

1. a statement explaining why the proposed neighbourhood area is considered to be an appropriate area; and
2. a statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act. Town and parish councils are relevant bodies<sup>(1)</sup>.

#### How can HDC help?

We can advise you on things to consider when deciding upon the area for the neighbourhood plan.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Designating a neighbourhood area](#)

#### Other Resources

[Neighbourhood Planning on HDC website](#),  
[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 2

#### Time needed

There are no constraints on how long this has to take so take as long as you need.

#### How can HDC help?

We can provide the map needed for the application

#### Guidance and Regulations

[Regulation 5](#)

# Stage 1: Getting started

A map showing the area that the application is for will need to be included with the letter.

If the area being applied for is the same as the town or parish then all you need to do is tell us and we will provide the map. If you decide on a different area you can talk to us about producing a map.

## Other Resources

'Template Area Application Letter'  
[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 2

## Time needed

There are no constraints on how long this has to take so take as long as you need.

## Step 3: Consultation on the Application

HDC is required to consult on applications for new neighbourhood areas. An application will be subject to public consultation for at least:

- 4 weeks, If the neighbourhood area is the same as the town or parish council area
- 6 weeks, in all other circumstances

Consultation events will be held online on the Council's [Consultation Portal](#).

We will tell you before hand when the consultation will start and finish. You should publicise and promote the consultation locally.

## How can HDC help?

This step is our responsibility.

## Guidance and Regulations

[Regulation 6](#) as amended by [2015 amendments](#)

## Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 2

## Time needed

We aim to set up and start the consultation within 2 weeks of receiving a complete application. The consultation takes at least 4 weeks and in some circumstances 6 weeks.

# Stage 1: Getting started

## Step 4: Designation of the Neighbourhood Area

After consultation the responses will be considered. A report detailing the main issues raised in responses will be prepared for the Strategic Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder. In most circumstances this report will have a recommendation for the area to be designated.

Where the application is for a neighbourhood area that will be the same as the area of the town or parish council making the application the Council has a total of 8 weeks to determine the application from the date that the consultation started. For other areas we have 13 weeks. If the area extends outside Huntingdonshire we have 21 weeks to determine the application.

### How can HDC help?

This step is our responsibility.

### Guidance and Regulations

[Regulation 6A](#)

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 2

### Time needed

We have 8 or 13 weeks to determine the application.

# Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

## Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

The second stage of producing a neighbourhood plan is to draw up a draft plan. There are three main steps in this stage:

'Step 5: Community engagement and evidence'

'Step 6: Developing Plan Content'

'Step 7: Consulting on the Draft Plan'

### Step 5: Community engagement and evidence

This is possibly the single most important step; the content of the neighbourhood plan depends on finding out what is needed for your area, from both community views and secondary evidence.

#### Community engagement

##### What is community engagement for neighbourhood planning?

Community engagement is the range of activities aimed at involving everyone in the community in the development of your neighbourhood plan. Your aim is that all members of your community have the opportunity to shape what your neighbourhood plan says, and that they feel ownership over the final document.

##### Who to involve?

Community engagement should aim to involve everyone who might be affected by the neighbourhood plan. This will mainly be residents but it will also include anyone who travels into the area to work and visitors to the area. It should also seek to include landowners or their agents if land is going to be designated for any reason or if development is proposed anywhere.

##### Community engagement process

There are no hard and fast rules about how, or how many times, to ask for community views when developing a neighbourhood plan. However, before going ahead to write your plan, it may be helpful:

- At the start, to focus on informing people about what a neighbourhood plan is, that a neighbourhood plan is being prepared for their area, and how they can get involved;
- Early on in the process, to ask open questions, enabling everyone to say what is important to them, rather than limiting views to specified issues;
- Building on that initial engagement, to delve deeper into the issues people have highlighted as being important.

##### Community engagement methods

#### How can HDC help?

We can help you decide how best to involve the community and get their views. We can help you design a questionnaire, or could comment on one you have prepared.

#### Guidance and Regulations

NPPG: Consulting on, and publicising, a neighbourhood plan

#### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 4 [Hunts Forum of Voluntary Services](#) (for engagement and consultation advice and training)

#### Time needed

No time constraints: take as long as you need.

# Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

What engagement methods to use is up to you. Be creative to engage people's interest and imagination. Research methods set out in other community planning guides. Methods could include:

- Polls or surveys (paper and/or online)
- Online discussion forums, social media comments
- Market/ street stalls/ stalls at community events
- Open workshops
- A walk round your area, with people taking pictures of what they like or don't like
- Making a 3D model of your area, using approaches like [Planning for Real](#)

## Evidence

There are a wide range of sources of evidence that might be useful, including:

### Strategies relating to your area

- the [Core Strategy](#) and emerging [emerging Local Plan](#) and the [background evidence](#) that supports them
- other Huntingdonshire District Council plans and strategies
- Cambridgeshire County Council strategies (e.g. Market Town Transport Strategies)
- information gathered by other town/ parish councils who are working on their own neighbourhood plans
- existing plans for an area, such as a parish plan or village design statement

### Sources of evidence and data

- socio-economic data for for Huntingdonshire or your ward (census and other data- see 'Socio-economic evidence sources')
- Cambridge sub-region [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#)
- Huntingdonshire Environmental Capacity Study and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
- [Conservation Area appraisals](#), [buildings-at-risk surveys](#) and [landscape character studies](#)
- statutory lists (listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments)
- details of other environmental protection designations, such as tree preservation orders and sites of special scientific interest
- plans or data from other public bodies or utilities companies
- local libraries, archives and web sites
- Information from Environmental Health such as land contamination and air quality

### How can HDC help?

We can point you to relevant evidence sources for your plan.

We can provide a set of initial maps to help you consider the planning issues in your area

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Evidence](#)

### Other Resources

Appendix 2: 'Useful Resources'

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheets 4, 5 and 6

### Time needed

No time constraints: take as long as you need.

## Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

### Striking a balance between community engagement and secondary evidence

The best neighbourhood plans are built upon a balance of community views and secondary evidence:

#### Don't go overboard on community engagement:

Secondary evidence can help inform community discussion, moving the debate beyond one based solely upon personal opinion. Particular issues to consider include:

- Don't ask people questions you could find the answer to elsewhere: are there other sources of information providing answers to the questions you're asking, perhaps in existing evidence?
- Be aware of consultation fatigue: has community engagement happened recently in your area which might mean people are less willing to spend the time providing their views again? Can you use responses from other recent community engagement to inform your plan?

#### On the other hand, don't get swamped by evidence and data:

There is a huge amount of fascinating data available and it's easy to get a bit overwhelmed by it and/or to explore it in great detail. When looking through what evidence to use to inform your plan, it may be helpful to:

- Consider what story the data is telling you and why you're using it. In particular, it's important not to overwhelm the wider community with loads of figures and statistics that are not 100% relevant to the plan you're developing;
- Remember that informing your plan with this type of evidence is only one part of the story: making sure that the community is fully involved in shaping the plan is just as important.

## Step 6: Developing Plan Content

### What to consider when writing your plan

Once you have gathered community views and evidence, there is a wide range of things to think about when drawing up the draft plan:

- **Identify key issues/ themes for the plan to address -**  
This should be based on the engagement and consultation you have done and the evidence that you have collected.
- **Identify the strategic local plan policies -**  
The strategic policies are currently those in the Core Strategy. You should also refer to the emerging Local Plan for information about which of its policies are considered to be strategic.
- **Develop clear aims for the Neighbourhood Plan -**  
These should seek to tackle the issues and themes bearing in mind that the policies with which to achieve these aims can only deal with planning matters.
- **Write planning policies and guidance -**  
Policies should clearly identify the circumstances in which they apply.
- **Identify any projects or proposals for the neighbourhood area -**  
Do the projects you have in mind need to be enabled by policies?
- **Consider allocating specific sites for different uses -**  
If there are different options for where the development you want can go you should think about which is best. If you identify one option as

### How can HDC help?

We will run a workshop, covering issues such as:

- Making best use of the evidence
- What makes a good policy
- The role of supporting text

We can advise about:

- the potential need to gather more evidence to support your plan.
- whether you need to take additional work to address E U obligations.
- the use of monitoring indicators.

## Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

better than the alternatives it is probably worth specifically identifying that in the plan.

The content of your neighbourhood plan will influence whether there is a need to think about SA, SEA and other EU obligations (see 'Legal Requirements for Neighbourhood Plans').

### Considering the implementation of your neighbourhood plan early on

When drafting your neighbourhood plan it is important to ensure that the priorities in it have a realistic chance of being delivered. To achieve this, you may wish to consider setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-set) indicators to monitor the priorities in your plan. On the other hand, it may be more manageable to measure the implementation of your plan's priorities using indicators already included within the Council's Annual Monitoring Report, which provides information on things such as housing delivery and a range of environmental measures.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Preparing a neighbourhood plan](#)

#### Other Resources

[Locality: Writing Planning Policies](#)  
[Planning Aid: How to structure your neighbourhood plan](#)  
[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheets 4, 5 and 6

[HDC Annual Monitoring Report](#)

#### Time needed

No time constraints: take as long as you need.

## Step 7: Consulting on the Draft Plan

### Pre-submission consultation

The town/ parish council is required to undertake consultation for a period of at least 6 weeks on the draft neighbourhood plan.

You should try to publicise the consultation as widely as possible. You should specifically contact:

- HDC - all departments including Community Services regarding environmental impact
- key consultees, based on the content of the plan (e.g. Natural England, the Environment Agency, English Heritage)
- neighbouring district, town or parish councils, as applicable
- significant land-owners, particularly if you are proposing to allocate their land for any reason
- local community organisations

For everyone that comments you should record contact details (an email address is usually enough) so that you can inform them of any changes you make in order to address their comments, but also to send to HDC as part of the Consultation Statement when you submit the neighbourhood plan (See Stage 3: 'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan').

Other things to think about:

#### How can HDC help?

We can help you publicise the consultation by providing contact details for key consultees. We can also use our social media and other online tools to help publicise the consultation.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[Regulation 14](#), [Regulation 21](#) and [Schedule 1](#).  
[NPPG: Consulting on, and publicising, a neighbourhood plan](#)

#### Other Resources

## Stage 2: Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

- Would a comment form help make sure you collect all the details you need?
- Where will you have copies of the plan available?
- Would it make sense to have a longer consultation period?

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

### **Responding to the consultation: are changes needed?**

You should identify the main issues raised in comments on the draft plan. You should then decide whether you want to change the plan to try to address these issues. You may find that people raise issues that are not related to anything that is in the plan, in which case it is OK to decide that you will not change the plan to address that issue.

You will need to set out all of this information in the Consultation Statement (see Stage 3: 'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan'). You may find it beneficial to look at how other town/ parish councils have done this or how we have done it for the [emerging Local Plan](#) or our Supplementary Planning Documents.

### Time needed

The consultation has to last at least 6 weeks. There are no time constraints on how long responding to issues raised in the consultation should take.



## Stage 3: Getting the Plan in place

This stage of producing a Neighbourhood Plan is the boring official bit where most of the actions are taken by HDC. There are six steps to this stage:

'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan'

'Step 9: Consultation on the Submitted Plan'

'Step 10: The Examination'

'Step 11: Progressing to Referendum'

'Step 12: The Referendum'

'Step 13: Adoption of the Plan'

### Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan

This step is when the town/ parish council passes over the neighbourhood plan to HDC.

#### What's required at submission?

You will need to send us a:

- **Basic Conditions Statement** - a statement setting out how the neighbourhood plan meets the [Basic Conditions](#). Please note that some of the Basic Conditions apply only to Neighbourhood Development Orders.
- **Consultation Statement** - a statement setting out who and how you consulted on the neighbourhood plan, the main issues raised and how you have addressed them in the final version of the plan. This should include a list of all the people/ organisations that made comments on the draft plan (See 'Pre-submission consultation') and their contact details, usually an email address - this is important as we need this information when we consult on the submitted plan.
- **Copy of the Neighbourhood Plan** - It is advisable to send us a printed copy and an electronic version. It may also be useful to send an 'editable' version to facilitate making modifications should they be necessary (See 'Step 10: The Examination').

The submission documents also need to include a map of the neighbourhood area but we can provide this.

#### How can HDC help?

We can advise on what needs to be included in each of the submission documents. We can provide the map of the neighbourhood area. Once submitted, we will check that the submission documents include everything that is required.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Submitting a neighbourhood plan](#)

#### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7  
[My Community: basic conditions statement](#)  
[My Community: consultation statement](#)

Time needed

## Stage 3: Getting the Plan in place

There are no constraints on how long this should take so take as long as you need.  
It will take us about 2 weeks to check the submission documents.

### Step 9: Consultation on the Submitted Plan

HDC will publicise the neighbourhood plan and consult on it for a period of at least 6 weeks. We will run an online consultation event on our [Consultation Portal](#).

You can help us by publicising the consultation locally.

#### How can HDC help?

This step is our responsibility.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Submitting a neighbourhood plan](#)

#### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

#### Time needed

The consultation must be open for at least 6 weeks

### Step 10: The Examination

#### Choosing an Examiner

We will discuss the appointment of the examiner with you. There are two main options:

1. NPIERS (Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service), who will send us the details of 3 examiners, based on any specialisms we specify. We will then discuss with you who we think is best.
2. We can contact anyone we think would be a good examiner, for example someone who has examined other plans in Huntingdonshire.

The decision is the responsibility of HDC but we will decide jointly with you.

#### How can HDC help?

We will discuss appointing the examiner with you  
We will jointly decide who to appoint

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: The Independent Examination](#)

# Stage 3: Getting the Plan in place

## Send items to the Examiner

HDC will send all the comments received during the submission consultation to the examiner along with all the submission documents.

### Other Resources

[NPIERS](#)

### Time needed

There are no constraints on how long this should take.

## The Examination

The examination will probably be conducted by what is known as 'written representations' but could include hearings. The examiner will decide if hearings are necessary based on the complexity of the issues raised and the impact on whether the plan will meet the 'The Basic Conditions'.

### How can HDC help?

We will check through the examiner's 'fact check' report and provide or correct any factual information

## The Examiner's Report

The examiner writes a report that sets out whether:

- the plan meets the Basic Conditions as it stands;
- modifications will be necessary for the plan to meet the Basic Conditions; or
- modifications can't be made to enable the plan to meet the basic conditions

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: The independent examination](#)

If the plan meets the Basic Conditions as it stands or if modifications are needed the recommendation is that the plan can proceed to a referendum.

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

However, if the examiner concludes that it is not possible to modify the plan to enable it to meet the Basic Conditions the recommendation will be that the plan cannot proceed to a referendum.

### Time needed

The report will be sent to the town/ parish council and to HDC in draft for 'fact checking', when basic information in the report can be corrected and clarification can be sought from the examiner.

The examiner will take as long as they need to properly examine the plan. The examiner will ask us to check their draft report within 1 or 2 weeks.

# Stage 3: Getting the Plan in place

## Step 11: Progressing to Referendum

The Council has a procedure in place for when an examiner's report is received.

At this stage we have limited options. We can:

- Act upon the examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum:**  
This option should be taken when the Examiner either recommends that the plan meets the Basic Conditions as it stands or can meet the basic conditions subject to modifications.
- Propose to take a substantially different decision from the examiner's recommendation:**  
This option can only be taken as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the Council about a particular fact. In this case the Council must notify all those identified in the consultation statement (see 'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan') and invite representations on the alternative decision and where necessary as a result of these representations the local planning authority must reopen the examination.
- Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report:**  
This is only permissible where the examiner has recommended that the plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

There are currently no requirements in place for how long we have in order to decide whether or not a neighbourhood plan will proceed to referendum. However we will aim to complete this process in 9 weeks.

### How can HDC help?

This step is our responsibility.

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: The referendum](#)

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

### Time needed

We will aim to complete this process in 9 weeks

## Step 12: The Referendum

### Setting up the Referendum

We will do all the necessary administration for setting up the referendum. We will work with you to decide on a date for the referendum. We have to give at least 28 working days notice that a referendum is going to take place. Once we have decided when the referendum will be we will publicise the details.

The examiner may advise that the area for the referendum should be enlarged from the neighbourhood area. If this is the case those residents living outside the neighbourhood area would be eligible to vote in the referendum in the same way as those living within the neighbourhood area.

If more than 50% of those voting vote in favour of the plan it can then be 'made'. You will be responsible for campaigning for a 'Yes' vote.

### Gaining Support in the Referendum

Factors that will make a 'Yes' vote more likely include:

- publicity at all stages, so that the voting population know about the plan
- involvement of a range of partner organisations

### How can HDC help?

We will discuss with you when the referendum should be held. We can advise on the limitations on campaign expenditure.

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: The referendum](#)

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

## Stage 3: Getting the Plan in place

- robust community involvement and engagement from the beginning and throughout the plan-making process
- involving and engaging with as many people as possible, including minority groups
- basing the content of the plan on firm evidence and on the outcomes of the community engagement programme and explaining how this has been done
- explaining key decisions made in producing the plan
- openness and transparency in the plan-making process
- clearly explaining the choices and compromises made in the plan
- addressing the diverse range of local needs and wants

There are limitations on things like campaign expenditure. We will be able to advise on this.

### Time needed

We have to give at least 28 working days notice that a referendum is going to take place. The result of the referendum should be available within 1 week.

### Step 13: Adoption of the Plan

If more than 50% of those voting vote in favour of the plan it can then be 'made' by Full Council.

Following a successful referendum, Full Council will formally adopt the plan at one of their regular meetings. This formal stage is known as 'making' the plan. To enable this stage to happen, we will programme a report for the next Council committee cycle after the referendum.

Once the neighbourhood plan is 'made' it becomes a part of the 'development plan' for Huntingdonshire. This means that it is a statutory material consideration in guiding future development and in the determination of planning applications within the neighbourhood plan area.

### How can HDC help?

This step is our responsibility.

### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Majority 'Yes' vote](#)

### Other Resources

[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 7

### Time needed

This will usually take up to 2 months as Council meets every 2 months

# Stage 4: Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan

## Stage 4: Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan

Your neighbourhood plan has been 'made'- well done! This is a great achievement, so remember to make a point of celebrating this milestone.

However, the neighbourhood plan being 'made' is not the end of the story; the final neighbourhood plan stage is about delivering the priorities identified in your plan. See below a number of things to consider to ensure that your neighbourhood plan creates positive change on the ground, as opposed to just being a nice-looking document.

### Implementation of policies

#### Development management decisions

The Council will determine planning applications in your area in accordance with the development plan for the area, which will include the Local Plan and your neighbourhood plan.

#### Allocations of land for development

Allocating land for development in a neighbourhood plan does not automatically mean that the housing, shop or community building you want to see developed will magically pop up next week. Even as you write your neighbourhood plan you could start thinking about how you will ensure that the development you want to see happens. This could involve talking to landowners, talking to the Council about how affordable housing could be delivered, or starting to consider how a project might be funded.

#### How can HDC help?

We can discuss with you how to ensure that neighbourhood plan priorities result in development (e.g. working with you to deliver exceptions housing).

### Community Infrastructure Levy

Under the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), 15% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected as a result of development in a given parish area will be passed to the relevant town/ parish council, this is commonly known as the 'meaningful proportion'.

Payments will be capped to £100 per council tax dwelling per year, for example, a town/ parish with 500 dwellings cannot receive more than £50,000 of CIL receipts per year.

For areas with an adopted neighbourhood plan the amount to be passed to the town/ parish council will be 25% with no cap.

The 'meaningful proportion' is required to be used to support the development of the local area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

#### How can HDC help?

We can advise on how and when you should spend the meaningful CIL proportion. We can also advise on what is required for the financial reporting.

#### Guidance and Regulations

[NPPG: Spending CIL receipts](#)

#### Other Resources

[CIL on HDC website](#)  
[Locality Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide](#), Worksheet 8

# Stage 4: Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan

If a town/ parish council has failed to spend CIL funds transferred to them within 5 years from receipt, or has not applied the funds in accordance with the Regulations then HDC can serve a notice on the town/ parish council requiring it to repay some or all of the receipts that had been transferred to them.

The current arrangements for payment of the meaningful proportion is that:

- CIL received from 1 April to 30 September will be transferred to the town/ parish council by 28 October of that financial year; and
- CIL received from 1 October to 31 March will be transferred to the town/ parish council by 28 April of the following financial year.

To ensure transparency town/ parish councils must publish for each financial year their:

- total CIL receipts;
- total expenditure;
- a summary of what the CIL was spent on; and
- the total amount of receipts retained at the end of the reported year from that year and previous years.

Reports can be combined with other reports already being produced and should be placed on your website and a copy sent to the HDC.

Where a town/ parish council does not have a website we can, if requested, publish the information on our website on your behalf.

The CIL report must be published and sent to us by 31 December following the end of the reported year.

## Time needed

Financial reporting needs to be done at the end of each financial year

## Addressing community priorities which don't relate to planning

As noted earlier, neighbourhood plans often identify community priorities that don't relate to the planning system. Such priorities might include things like tackling speeding, addressing anti-social behaviour, or setting up a community group. These can often be addressed more quickly than those linked to the planning system. You can start to work on these actions even before your plan is 'made'.

Consider setting up a new working group to take forward community-based actions. The neighbourhood plan working group may feel in need of a rest!

## How can HDC help?

We can point you to sources of help in addressing community priorities which don't relate to planning, both within the Council and in other organisations.

## Time needed

No time constraints: take as much time as you need.

# Stage 4: Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan

## Monitoring and reviewing your neighbourhood plan

### Monitoring

Keeping track of the progress of any 'What to consider when writing your plan' included in your plan, monitored either by you or in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report, will help you assess whether your plan's aims are being achieved, and if not, whether you need to do anything different to achieve them.

### How can HDC help?

We can discuss with you whether there is a need to refresh or review your plan.

### Reviewing/refreshing your neighbourhood plan

After a few years conditions in your area may change, and you may wish to review or refresh your neighbourhood plan to bring it up to date. Any neighbourhood plan review will have to involve at least the formal processes of consultation, examination and referendum.



## Appendix 1: Support from HDC

### HDC support at each stage of the process

Table 1

Stage/Step	HDC support	
	Taking key decisions/formal process	Advice and assistance
<b>Stage 1: 'Getting started'</b>		
'Step 1: Getting organised'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 meeting, providing advice and information about:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood Area options</li> <li>The legal requirements that neighbourhood plans must meet</li> <li>The neighbourhood planning process</li> <li>Initial evidence sources</li> <li>Sources of additional support and funding</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
'Step 2: Applying for a Neighbourhood Area'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a template Neighbourhood Area application letter (see 'Template Area Application Letter')</li> <li>Provide a map for Neighbourhood Area application</li> </ul>
'Step 3: Consultation on the Application'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run consultation on Neighbourhood Area application</li> </ul>	
'Step 4: Designation of the Neighbourhood Area'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess responses to the consultation on Neighbourhood Area application, and</li> <li>Formally designate the Neighbourhood Area</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 2: 'Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan'</b>		
'Step 5: Community engagement and evidence'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a set of initial maps to help you consider the planning issues in your area</li> <li>Comment on a draft survey before it is used with the community</li> </ul>
'Step 6: Developing Plan Content'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 workshop, covering issues such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making best use of the evidence                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What makes a good policy</li> <li>The role of supporting text</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Appendix 1: Support from HDC

Stage/Step	HDC support	
	Taking key decisions/formal process	Advice and assistance
		<p>Targeted advice about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the potential need to gather more evidence to support your plan.</li> <li>whether you need to take additional work to address EU obligations.</li> <li>the use of monitoring indicators.</li> <li>Provide all mapping required for the draft plan</li> </ul>
'Step 7: Consulting on the Draft Plan'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a 'health-check' of your plan before you consult on it, or pay for an independent planning expert to provide this.</li> <li>Provide contact details for key consultees.</li> <li>Help publicise the consultation using our social media and other online tools</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3: 'Getting the Plan in place'</b>		
'Step 8: Submitting the Neighbourhood Plan'		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise on what needs to be included in each of the submission documents before you submit.</li> <li>Provide the map of the neighbourhood area.</li> <li>Provide all mapping required for the submission draft plan</li> <li>Once submitted, check the submission documents include everything that is required.</li> </ul>
'Step 9: Consultation on the Submitted Plan'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run consultation on the submitted plan</li> <li>Collate comments from the examination consultation and submit them to the examiner</li> </ul>	
'Step 10: The Examination'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formally appoint the neighbourhood plan examiner</li> <li>Complete a 'fact check' of the examiner's report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss and decide jointly with you which examiner to appoint.</li> </ul>
'Step 11: Progressing to Referendum'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formally recommend that the plan progresses to referendum (depending on the outcome of the examination)</li> </ul>	
'Step 12: The Referendum'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise and publicise the referendum</li> </ul>	

# Appendix 1: Support from HDC

Stage/Step	HDC support	
	Taking key decisions/formal process	Advice and assistance
'Step 13: Adoption of the Plan'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formally 'make' (adopt) the plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 4: 'Delivering the Neighbourhood Plan'</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide planning applications in your area in accordance with the Local Plan and your neighbourhood plan, as the development plan for the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss with you how to ensure that neighbourhood plan priorities result in development (e.g. working with you to deliver exceptions housing).</li> <li>Advise on how and when you should spend the meaningful CIL proportion. We can also advise on what is required for the financial reporting.</li> <li>Point you to sources of help in addressing community priorities which don't relate to planning, both within the Council and in other organisations.</li> <li>Discuss with you whether there is a need to refresh or review your plan.</li> </ul>

# Appendix 2: Useful Resources

## Appendix 2: Useful Resources

### Socio-economic evidence sources

General evidence sources	
<a href="#">Census 2011</a>	The Census 2011 provides the most wide ranging, small area, and robust (ie they actually asked everyone rather than doing a sample survey) dataset available for socio-economic statistics. The parish profile linked here is a good place to start when thinking about your parish.
<a href="#">Cambridgeshire Insight</a>	Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group's evidence website provides lots of useful data in various formats including reports, spreadsheets and interactive data atlases. Many of the links below are from this website.
Topic specific evidence sources	
Population	
<a href="#">Census 2011 parish profiles</a>	Provides data by age, ethnicity, and employment status by town and parish. N.B. These characteristics aren't linked together in the profile so you can't really interrogate them.
<a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk">www.nomisweb.co.uk</a> <a href="#">Census 2011 ward profile</a>	If you want to dig further and are confident with statistics then most Census 2011 outputs are available from the NOMIS website. The 2011 ward profile is a good place to start, as you can click on 'query dataset' to get more detail such as data by age. N.B. Census wards may not match your neighbourhood plan area.
<a href="#">County Council population and dwelling estimates and forecasts</a>	Available by parish/ward for estimates and wards by age bands; single year of age is available on request.
Deprivation	
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015: <a href="#">England IMD Explorer</a> <a href="#">Cambridgeshire data atlas</a>	Seven indices of deprivation are combined to form the composite Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD2015). The indices include: income, employment, education, skills and training, health deprivation and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services and living environment.  N.B. IMD 2015 is provided at Lower Super Output Area level, which is smaller than a ward. These areas do not neatly match parish boundaries.
Housing	
<a href="#">Cambridge sub-region Housing Data Atlas</a>	A wide range of housing information at parish and ward level.
Traffic and travel	
<a href="#">Census Travel to Work data</a>	The Census parish profiles referred to above show how people travelled to work in 2011.
<a href="#">Bus services</a>	County Council bus timetable- search for your area.

## Appendix 2: Useful Resources

<a href="#">County Council traffic count data</a>	Search for 'traffic count'. Download the data and check by road name for traffic monitors in your area. Look at changes between the years for which data is provided. You can exactly see where the traffic monitors were by using the Eastings/Northings in the spreadsheet and putting these into a web map such as <a href="http://gridreferencefinder.com/gmap.php">http://gridreferencefinder.com/gmap.php</a>
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### Crime

<a href="#">Cambridgeshire interactive crime atlas</a>	A wide range of crime information at ward level.
<a href="#">Police.uk</a>	Local crime map. Use the 'Find your neighbourhood' button to see information on crime in your area.

### Economy

<a href="#">Economy data atlas</a>	Includes ward-level data on employees and employment (which includes self-employed workers).
Businesses	We are not aware of any organisation holding this information at a parish or small area level. This may be an area where you will need to use local knowledge.

# Appendix 2: Useful Resources

## Template Area Application Letter

The following text can be used as a template for letters applying for designation of a neighbourhood area. Text marked ~text~ should be replaced with appropriate information.

Andy Moffat  
Head of Development  
Huntingdonshire District Council  
Pathfinder House  
St Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
PE29 3TN

~Date~

Dear Mr Moffat,

**~town/ parish council name~ : application for designation of a neighbourhood area**

~town/ parish council name~ has resolved to produce a neighbourhood plan and formally applies for designation of a neighbourhood area as set out in Part 2, paragraph 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Attached is a map showing the area to which this application relates. This follows the parish boundary. This area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area because it is a properly constituted parish within the planning area of Huntingdonshire.

I confirm that ~town/ parish council name~ is the relevant body authorised to act in relation to this proposed neighbourhood area, as defined by Schedule 9, Part 1, paragraph 61(3), 2(a) of the Localism Act 2011.

Yours sincerely

~signed by town/ parish council chairman~

Chairman of ~town/ parish council name~

## Appendix 3: Glossary

### **Affordable housing**

A range of housing types provided at below market rates in order to meet the needs of those who can't afford housing on the open market.

### **Annual Monitoring Report**

A document produced each year to report on progress in producing the development plan and implementing its policies.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

Allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools and leisure centres.

### **Community Right to Bid**

Aims to give community groups the time to develop bids and raise money to buy public assets that come onto the open market.

### **Community Right to Build**

Allows local people to drive forward new developments in their area where the benefits (e.g. profits from letting homes) could stay within the community. These developments must meet minimum criteria and have local support demonstrated through a referendum.

### **Conformity**

One of the basic conditions for neighbourhood plans is that they be in general conformity with strategic local policy.

### **Conservation Area**

An area of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which are preserved and enhanced by local planning policies and guidance.

### **Consultation**

A communication process with the local community that informs planning decision-making.

### **Core Strategy**

A development plan document forming part of a local authority's Local Plan, which sets out a vision and core policies for the development of an area.

### **Development Management**

The process of administering and making decisions on different kinds of planning application.

### **Development Plan**

A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in the area.

### **Evidence Base**

The evidence upon which a development plan is based, principally the background facts and statistics about an area, and the views of stakeholders.

### **Green Infrastructure**

Landscape, biodiversity, trees, allotments, parks, open spaces and other natural assets.

### **Green Space**

Those parts of an area which are occupied by natural, designed or agricultural landscape as opposed to built development; open space, parkland, woodland, sports fields, gardens, allotments, and the like.

### **Housing Associations**

See Registered Providers

### **Independent Examination**

An examination of a proposed Neighbourhood Plan, carried out by an independent person, set up to consider whether a Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions required.

### **Infrastructure**

Basic services necessary for development to take place e.g. roads, electricity, water, education and health facilities.

# Appendix 3: Glossary

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## **Legislation**

The Acts of Parliament, regulations, and statutory instruments which provide the legal framework within which public law is administered.

## **Listed Buildings**

Any building or structure which is included in the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

## **Local Plan**

The name for the collection of documents prepared by your local planning authority for the use and development of land and for changes to the transport system. Can contain documents such as development plans and statements of community involvement.

## **Local Planning Authority**

Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development; a district council, metropolitan council, a county council, a unitary authority or national park authority.

## **Material Considerations**

Factors which are relevant in the making of planning decisions, such as sustainability, impact on residential amenity, design and traffic impacts.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The government policy document adopted in March 2012 intended to make national planning policy and guidance less complex and more accessible. The National Planning Policy Framework introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It gives five guiding principles of sustainable development: living within the planet's means; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

## **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

An online resource giving guidance on planning practice in support of the NPPF.

## **Policy**

A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.

## **Planning Permission**

Formal approval granted by a council allowing a proposed development to proceed.

## **Qualifying Body**

Either a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum, which can initiate the process of Neighbourhood Planning.

## **Referendum**

A vote by the eligible population of an electoral area may decide on a matter of public policy. Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are made by a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area.

## **Registered Providers**

These are independent housing organisations registered with the Housing Corporation under the Housing Act 1996. Most are housing associations, but there are also trusts, co-operatives and companies.

## **Site Of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

A protected area designated as being of special interest by virtue of its flora, fauna, geological or geomorphological features. SSSIs are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by the official nature conservation body for the particular part of the UK in question.

## **Stakeholders**

People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and government.

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. Has been in place since the European SEA directive (2001/42/EC).

## **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

An assessment of the environmental, social and economic impacts of a Local Plan from the outset of the preparation process to check that the plan accords with the principles of sustainable development.



## Appendix 3: Glossary

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**Strategic Policy**

A policy that is essential for the delivery of a strategy, for example, the overall scale and distribution of housing and employment in an area.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

Provides detailed thematic or site-specific guidance explaining or supporting the policies in the Local Plan.

**Sustainable Development**

Contributing to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions, or showing how consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset