

## Neighbourhood Plans: Offer of Support

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the opportunity to plan their local area by deciding how it should grow, where development should go, and what it should look like.

For example, neighbourhood planning can be used to:

- Choose where new homes, shops or offices should be built
- Have a say on what those new buildings should look like
- Influence the design and functionality of open spaces
- Grant planning permission for new developments the community wants to see go ahead.

Neighbourhood planning cannot be used to prevent developments required to meet the Council's current and future needs (the strategic priorities). However communities can use neighbourhood planning to influence the design, location and mix of new development and to address any issues that are purely local.

There are three types of neighbourhood planning tools your community may wish to use:

- **Neighbourhood Plan** - through a neighbourhood plan you can establish and deliver a vision for your neighbourhood, set planning policies and make proposals for land use in your local area. An adopted neighbourhood plan will sit alongside the Council's Development Plan Documents and help decide the outcome of planning applications.
- **Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)** - this allows you to grant up-front planning permission for certain types of development that the community wants.
- **Community Right to Build Order** - a type of NDO that grants planning permission for the local community to build small-scale housing developments, community facilities or shops.

### Is neighbourhood planning the right option?

Neighbourhood planning is not the only option available. There are many other ways you can influence planning in your area. Whichever method you choose, it should always be appropriate for your goal and available resources. Neighbourhood planning is generally aimed at bringing forward or shaping new development. If your goals cannot be met through development, neighbourhood planning may not be the best tool. The Localism Network has produced [Planning and Localism: Choices and Choosing](#), which sets out the options in more detail and provides advice on the most appropriate choices.

**The following outlines the support available from Adur and Worthing Councils to Parishes and Forums undertaking Neighbourhood Plans:**

### **1. Working relationships with Qualifying Bodies:**

We will seek:

- An open and constructive working relationship
- To work closely together at all levels, both in policy, and in strategic issues of importance
- To respect each other's views, and where different, after discussion to ensure proper understanding of the reasons for such differences
- To have a 'no surprises' policy, based on notifying each other well in advance, where possible, of significant announcements and developments in policy
- To minimise duplication of activity wherever possible
- To inform other stakeholders about our relationship so as to reduce uncertainty

### **2. The statutory obligations of Adur and Worthing Councils:**

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (and as amended 2015) outlines the following key roles and responsibilities for the Council:

- Agreeing and Designating Neighbourhood Plan Areas
- Agreeing and Designating Neighbourhood Forums
- Certifying compliance with the 'basic conditions' and statutory requirements and obligations
- Publicising the Plan and receiving representations
- Organising and funding an independent examination
- Organising and funding a referendum
- General duty to support
- Duty to 'make' the plan

At each stage we will:

#### **Stage 1: Area Designations**

- Check that any area application received contains the information listed in the Regulations
- Publicise the application for area designation and invite representations for a period of not less than 6 weeks
- Determine the application within the statutory deadline
- Publicise any decisions on the Council's website in line with the Regulations

#### **Stage 2: Neighbourhood Forum Designations**

- Check that any application received submitted contains the information listed in the Regulations
- Publicise the application and invite representations in accordance with the Regulations
- Determine the application in accordance with the Regulations

- Publicise any decisions on the Council's website in line with the Regulations

#### Stage 3: Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan

- Provide a Screening Opinion on whether Strategic Environmental Assessment is required when applied for by the Qualifying Body

#### Stage 4: Submission to the LPA

- Check that the Plan and supporting documents meet the criteria in the Localism Act
- Publicise the Plan for not less than 6 weeks and invite representations

#### Stage 5: Examination

- Appoint a suitable examiner and agree the appointment with the Qualifying Body that submitted the plan
- Submit the Plan, supporting documents and any representations to the Independent Examiner as soon as possible in accordance with the Regulations.
- Coordinate the arrangements for the examination in consultation with the Examiner
- Publish the Examiner's Report once received
- Publicise the decision in a decision statement and send a copy to the Qualifying Body and anyone who asked to be notified

#### Stage 6: Referendum

- Coordinate the referendum arrangements
- Provide an information statement in accordance with the Regulations
- Publish the information statement and specified documents on the Councils' website and make it available for inspection in accordance with the Regulations

#### Stage 7: Making the Plan

- If a 'yes' vote, the decision on the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be publicised with reasons for the decision
- As soon as possible after deciding to make the Neighbourhood Development Plan the Councils will publicise details of where and when the plan may be inspected on their website

### **3. Further advice and support**

We will:

- Provide you with a named point of contact in the Councils
- Provide advice on relevant adopted and emerging Development Plan Documents of the Councils
- Highlight and provide links to evidence base documents which may be relevant
- Review and comment on an early draft version where consulted and draft Neighbourhood Plan (Reg. 14)

- Provide planning advice on the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (and as amended 2015), National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance

The Councils are not able to offer advice or assistance in the following areas:

- Writing documents (this is your plan)
- Undertaking survey work (but can comment on questionnaires and methodology if requested)
- Attending every meeting (due to time and resource constraints)
- Attending every consultation event (as above)
- Direct financial support (the Councils can apply and use CLG grants)

### **Forum/Parish Responsibilities:**

The Qualifying Body will be expected to:

- Establish a steering group to develop the Neighbourhood Development Plan with clear terms of reference
- Arrange an initial meeting to which the named Council support officer can attend and advise the steering group
- Undertake to work towards preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (and supporting documents as required by the Regulations) with a defined project management approach, work programme and timetable to delivery
- Convene as a group on a regular basis throughout the period of preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (and its supporting documents) and its examination
- Commit adequate resources to the task
- Provide regular updates on progress against the project plan to the Council via the named officer
- Provide to the Council the Draft Submission Plan (Reg. 15) and associated documents in an electronic format agreed with the Council
- Provide results of primary source data (evidence) which would be helpful to the Council