



Neighbourhood Planning Guidance

Neighbourhood Planning: Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council

September 2017

This document includes hyperlinks to a range of websites, and the hyperlinks can be accessed using the published version of this document, which is available to view via: www.scambs.gov.uk/npguidance. Every effort has been made to ensure that these hyperlinks are up-to-date, however as websites change these hyperlinks can become invalid.

Herefordshire Council has kindly given permission for us to provide links to their guidance on neighbourhood planning.

Huntingdonshire District Council has kindly allowed us to take inspiration and wording from their Neighbourhood Planning Guidance.

If you have any queries relating to this document, please contact us via neighbourhood.planning@scambs.gov.uk or 01954 713183.

Purpose of the guidance documents

The neighbourhood plan guidance documents have been created to help local communities decide whether they want to get involved in creating a neighbourhood plan and if they do; it advises them on how to prepare a neighbourhood plan. Appendix 1 provides a list of the guidance documents provided by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC).

To help guide you through the various stages of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, Appendix 2 provides a guide which summarises procedures, regulations, and useful Neighbourhood Planning Guidance documents for each stage.

What is a neighbourhood development plan?

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the initiative of neighbourhood development plans to encourage local communities to become involved in shaping the future of their community. The Act reformed the planning system allowing local communities the potential to create a vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their own local area.

It is important to note that neighbourhood plans should aim to be **'pro development'** as opposed to obstructing it.

A neighbourhood plan will also need to **conform to planning policies and guidance at a local, national and European level**, as well as meet the neighbourhood plan regulations.

For this reason it **cannot stop development** which is allocated or permitted, or propose less development than that in the Local Development Plan. It can, however **propose more development** than the Local Development Plan.

Guidance and Regulations

Neighbourhood Planning Regulations

- Original (April 2012): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)
- Amended (February 2015): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2015](#)
- Amended (October 2016): [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) and Development Management Procedure \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

These regulations may occasionally change or new regulations introduced

National Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning

- [National Planning Practice Guidance](#)

Who can create a neighbourhood development plan?

The legislation allows two types of organisations to lead on a neighbourhood development plan:

- A parish or town council
- A neighbourhood forum

We are aware several parishes in South Cambridgeshire do not have a parish council. These communities can still get involved within neighbourhood planning in an adjoining parish or formally apply to the Council to be designated as a 'Neighbourhood Forum.' Where a Parish Council chooses to produce a neighbourhood plan it should work with other members of the

community who are interested in, or affected by, the neighbourhood planning proposals to allow them to play an active role in preparing a neighbourhood plan or Neighbourhood Development Order.

To find out more about who can create a neighbourhood plan see the SCDC guidance '**Getting Started**'.

Other Resources

SCDC Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Documents

Getting Started

What are the benefits of creating a neighbourhood plan?

Preparing a neighbourhood plan enables communities to have a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work. This is because unlike parish, village or town plans communities may have prepared, a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority.

By producing a neighbourhood plan it will give local communities the opportunity to set out policies for the development and use of land in their neighbourhood, for example:

- Propose more development than the Local Plan;
- where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built;
- have their say on what buildings look like;
- comment on what infrastructure should be provided;

However, a **Neighbourhood Plan cannot:**

- propose less growth in an area than is proposed in the Local Plan;
- include strategic policies that impact/influence an area beyond the neighbourhood area designated;
- propose new roads to be built – this is the responsibility of Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority;
- encourage more buses to serve the area;
- review the Green Belt boundary;
- amend the Conservation Area or formally identify new buildings to be listed or identify new assets of community value – it is the role of SCDC to do this;
- prevent any development from ever taking place in an area;
- be prepared without community input and support; or
- undermine local, national or EU regulations and policies.

Timescales

The timescale of getting a neighbourhood plan to a referendum generally depends on the complexity and issues of your plan. It could therefore take between approximately 18 months – 2 years to reach a referendum.

What happens when a plan is completed?

Once a plan is completed and adopted, it will become a statutory plan carrying equal weight to the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and be part of the Local Development Framework. This means that it will be used in making decisions on planning applications by SCDC in your area.

Other Resources

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Website: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/planning-policy>

Locality:

Locality support groups and organisations running community-led projects and plans to build and strengthen communities across England.

Website: <https://mycommunity.org.uk/>

Planning Aid England:

Planning Aid England provides advice and support to individuals and communities.

Website: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

Department for Communities and Local Government

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

Planning Advisory Service (PAS)

PAS Provide high quality help, advice, support and training on planning and service delivery to councils.

Website <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas>

Neighbourhood Guidance Documents (Appendix 1)

Deciding to Produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan:

1. Is a Neighbourhood Plan the Right Tool for your Parish
2. Getting Started
3. Support Offer to Parish Councils
4. Memorandum of Understanding

Preparing the Plan:

5. Getting a Neighbourhood Area Designated
6. Developing a Vision and Objectives
7. Generating Options
8. Writing Planning Policies ¹
9. Strategic Environment Assessments (SEA) ¹
10. Sources of Evidence and Information

Additional Guidance

11. Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Plans
12. What are the Basic Conditions and How to Meet Them
13. Strategic Policies
14. Site Assessments
15. Maps for Neighbourhood Plans
16. Affordable Housing

¹ These guidance notes will be released later during the consultation and extra time will be allowed to comment upon them.

Appendix 2: Procedure Guidance Tool

