

## **What is a neighbourhood plan?**

Neighbourhood planning aims to give people greater ownership of plans and policies that affect their local area. It enables local people to put together ideas for development, relating to land use or spatial matters in their area via a 'Neighbourhood Development Plan. Once adopted, this plan will form part of the statutory development plan.

It is intended that parish councils take the lead in neighbourhood planning, with the local planning authority still having a significant role to play in offering advice, support and to help regulate the process. Telford & Wrekin Council will still continue to produce development plans that will set the strategic context with which the neighbourhood development plans will sit.

Neighbourhood development plans will not take effect unless there is a majority of support in a referendum of the neighbourhood.

They will also have to meet a number of conditions before they can be put to a community referendum and legally come into force. These conditions will ensure plans are legally compliant and take account of wider policy considerations (e.g. national policy).

Conditions are:

they must have regard to national planning policy

they must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. such as in a core strategy)

they must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements

An independent qualified person will then check that a neighbourhood development plan or order appropriately meets the conditions before it can be voted on in a local referendum. This will make sure that referendums only take place when proposals are workable and of a decent quality.

Proposed neighbourhood development plans or orders will need to gain the approval of a majority of voters of the neighbourhood to come into force. If proposals pass the referendum, the local planning authority will be under a legal duty to bring them into force.