

WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

THURSDAY 8TH OF OCTOBER FROM 7-7.30 PM

A Special Welcome to Alan Gomm and Alex Fradley from Planning Policy at BCKLWN.

1a What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- A plan which sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a particular neighbourhood area specified in the plan
- A community led plan to help guide development, regeneration and conservation in the area
- Once 'made' the plan sits along the Borough's Local Plan and carries the same weight in the decision-making process
- Essentially it is about land use development. Other things can be put in the plan but must be marked differently from policies, for example, in an appendix
- The Borough Council has a duty to assist; this doesn't mean we write the plan for you. It means will provide access to information, offer advice, make timely decisions at the formal stages, arrange and pay for the examination and referendum
- Government are really behind Neighbourhood Plans, they are making more funding available as the direction of travel is that the Local Plan provides strategic policies and strategic allocations and Neighbourhood Plans provide the detail below this, which can take the form of allocations and other such policies

1b Why undertake a Neighbourhood Plan?

- A community produced plan – representing local views and aspirations, written by members of the community
- Can create policies to address local issues that are not covered in the Borough Council's Local Plan
- Becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area
- Can provide the community with greater control over development in their area although it is important to note it cannot stop development
- Parishes with a neighbourhood plan will receive 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy arising from developments in their area compared to parishes without a neighbourhood plan who will receive 15% (capped at £100/dwelling). CIL was introduced by the BCKLWN in February 2017.

1c What are 'Basic Conditions?

- These are conditions which a Neighbourhood Plan must comply with:
- Be in general conformity with strategic policies of the Local Plan
- Support Sustainable development
- Conform to EU regulations
- Have regard to the NPPF
- State the time period the plan will cover
- Gain over 50% of votes at the referendum

1d What could a Neighbourhood Plan look like?

- Overall Vision, Aims and Objectives
- Policies which seek to protect certain areas, buildings or views
- Policies which influence design
- Policies for development
- Policies for housing including residential allocations and development boundaries
- A Policies Map
- Some form of a Monitoring Framework

1e How are you going to get there / What is the process?

- First agree that you wish to proceed, consider establishing a steering group, create a project plan and explore any funding options available from Locality.
- Locality – up to £9K and up to 15K for those looking to allocate sites or prepare a complex plan. As part of this AECOM consultants will assist with technical studies such as Habit Regulation Assessment (HRA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) etc....
- **Area Designation** - formally set the area for which the Neighbourhood Plan will cover. Usually this will be the Parish Area. You will have to submit to the Borough Council a map which identifies the area, a statement why you consider the area to be appropriate and a statement explaining that you are a Qualifying Body i.e. a town or parish council. The Borough Council will then provide a decision
- **Vision, Aims & Objectives** – decide what you want to achieve as a community, narrow it down to the most important elements, and then group these under broad headings such as environment, economy, community, housing etc.
- **Plan Development** – consult the local community, a questionnaire is a common method for gathering views, collect data from other sources such as Office of National Statistics (ONS), develop policies (remember evidence will be needed to support the policies).
- If you are looking to allocate sites, consider developing a SEA.
- **Consultation** - Once you have a draft plan you need to consult the local community and statutory consultees for at least a 6-week period
- The draft plan will also need to be subjected to a SEA / HRA screening

opinion, the Borough Council will consult the statutory consultees (Natural England, Historic Environment and the Environmental Agency) on the plan to ascertain if a SEA and HRA are required. This can be done before your consultation. A screening report

must then be produced, depending upon the outcome you may have to undertake a SEA and HRA.

- **Health Check** - After your consultation, together we can arrange for the plan to be checked over by an independent examiner to ensure that the plan will pass through the formal examination later on in the process. All the plans which are at an advanced stage or have been made have gone through this stage and it has proved to be invaluable. Borough Council will pay 2/3rds of the cost (£375 + Vat per day)
- Consider making changes to the plan as a result of the consultation and health check
- **Submit the plan to the Borough Council** – we then publish the plan and supporting documents for a period of 6 weeks. The plan should be accompanied by, a map, consultation statement, a statement explaining how the plan meets the relevant regulations/legislation, and the relevant SA / SEA, HRA documents (if required).
- **Examination** – The plan is then submitted to an independent examiner, together we will agree on who the examiner is, we use NPIERS as a professional referral service
- Once the examiner's report is received the Borough Council will decide if the plan should proceed to referendum and if any changes are required to be made
- **Referendum** - a local referendum is held and if 50% of the vote is in favour of the plan, the plan can be 'made'. Hence the importance of community engagement throughout the process
- **Adoption** – The Borough Council publishes the plan as soon as possible and it is 'made'. It sits alongside the Local Plan and is used to determine planning applications

If that sounds like a lot of hard work, it potentially will be! However as mentioned earlier we are here to assist you in the process, and funding is available which may assist in bringing in some expertise from consultants

- Check out the PPG on Neighbourhood Plans, this also contains links to the regulations:

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

- Check out the locality webpage has an abundance of information including guides and access to funding

Appendix 1

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/>

- Check out RTPI/ Planning Aid for further resources

<http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org>

[.uk/](#)

Cllr Blunt – this give us a great opportunity and requires a separate discussion.

Cllr Green – questionnaires have not had a good response in the past but alternatives to be considered.

Cllr Blunt – requires serious consideration as a great benefit to the village but requires the involvement of parishioners.

Cllr Green thanked Alan and Alex for their time and excellent presentation.