

Houghton Parish Council has agreed to put together a Neighbourhood Plan, and have agreed with Test Valley Borough Council the neighbourhood area, which is the Parish Boundary. Neighbourhood Planning, introduced through the Localism Act 2011, gives the community the opportunity to decide what it wants in the future for the betterment of the Parish covering Housing, Environment, Community and Recreational Facilities, Economic expansion and infrastructure requirements.

Neighbourhood planning legislation came into effect in April 2012. Further legislation covering the referendum stage of neighbourhood planning came into force on 2 August 2012.

A Steering Group has been formed to research, develop and make recommendations with a view to establishing a Neighbourhood Plan addressing the future needs of Houghton Parish.

The membership of the Steering/Working Group will be formed from current Parish Councillors (maximum of 2) and local members of the community who can bring value to the project as approved by the Parish Council. In addition, the Working Group will be supplemented by representation from Test Valley Borough Council and guidance will be given to the group through a representative appointed by Planning Aid on a Consultancy Basis. The Working Group may also co-opt further representation from any other person or organisation that is likely to bring additional benefit to the project. Details of any assistance offered by such parties must be declared publicly and should not be seen to compromise the integrity of the direction of the plan.

All members of the Steering/Working Group must declare any personal interest that may be perceived as being relevant to the decisions or recommendations made by the group. This may include membership of an organisation, ownership of interest in land or business or indeed any other matter likely to be relevant to the work undertaken by the Working Group.

In undertaking this role the main objective of the Steering Group will be to:

- Be responsible for drawing up a Draft Neighbourhood Plan and any revisions as a result of the on-going consultation process.
- The Neighbourhood Steering Group will report to the Parish Council
- The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group shall not have the power to exercise, on behalf of the Parish Council, any authority, nor to incur expenditure without prior authority from the Parish Council
- The Neighbourhood Steering Group task meetings are informal and can be held anywhere without public notice. Dates will be publicised.
- The date and venue of the Neighbourhood Steering Group meetings will be displayed on the web site ahead of schedule
- Notes should be taken to facilitate reporting back to the Parish Council on a monthly basis

- Recommendations made as a result of Community Engagement shall be referred back to the Parish Council for decision making, such that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan when presented should have the full backing of the Parish Council and not the Steering Group alone.
- Work together with the Parish Council such that the Final Plan meets the needs of the community as seen from on-going consultation process.

In undertaking this, further objectives will be to;

- Suggest a timetable for the project and identify costs associated with delivering the project
- Establish the future housing and business needs of the area, having regard for the wider social, economic and welfare considerations of the area, e.g. health, education
- Develop policies to inform the future development and use of land in the area, including Infrastructure policies that go hand in hand with development
- Identify sites for development in line with the requirements laid down in the Local Plan, including sites that may be suitable for further development
- Take note and include in the Plan non-land orientated projects that are of importance to the community and identified through Community Engagement
- Ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is supported by an effective on-going programme of communication and consultation with the community, Test Valley Borough Council, developers, adjoining parishes and other key third parties.
- Have regard to relevant national policies, be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the district council, EU and Human Rights legislation when developing the plan.
- Conduct a sustainability assessment to support the Neighbourhood Plan if required, including Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) or Habitat Regulation Assessments (HEA)
- Support the Parish Council in taking the plan through the examination.
- Support the Parish Council in finding consensus through the referendum process and ultimately securing community endorsement of the Neighbourhood Plan
- Have a comprehensive Evidence [\[2\]](#) base to support the Neighbourhood Plan Policies through Community Engagement and research, including communication with Parish Councillors, Test Valley Borough Council Officers and Hampshire County Council Officers.
- Policies for the Objectives formatted to include an Intention, a Justification followed by fine details

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Category: Supporting Documents

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Footnotes

The Terms of reference will be continually reviewed during the life of the project and relevant amendments will be made following either recommendation by the Working Group to the Parish Council or directly by the Parish Council.

The Steering Group will regularly report its findings and Progress to the Parish Council including the on-going budgetary implications associated with the project. Any formidable allocation of funds to the project will have to be approved by Houghton Parish Council in Consultation with Test Valley Borough Council.