



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION TO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS





Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans

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Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans

1. Introduction

A neighbourhood plan gives communities power to shape the future development and growth of their local area. It allows communities to choose where new homes, shops, offices and community facilities should be built and what they should look like. Once 'made' it forms part of the statutory development plan and is used by the local planning authority in making decisions on planning applications.

Neighbourhood plans were introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011 which set out new rights and powers for communities, including the right to plan, summed up by the term 'neighbourhood planning'. Hundreds of communities around the country have been taking advantage of this new right and are preparing their own neighbourhood plan.

This guide explains what a neighbourhood plan is and answers some of the most frequently asked questions. It gives an overview of the process, the timescales and the purpose. It should help you decide if a neighbourhood plan is appropriate for your community and help you to get organised if you decide to embark on the process. This introductory guide is part of a Neighbourhood Plan toolkit produced by Cheshire Community Action (CCA). More detailed guides (including templates and case studies) for each stage of the plan are available from CCA.



The CLP Toolkit includes:

- **Introduction to Neighbourhood Plans** (this document)
- **Guide 1 – Getting Started and Applying for A Neighbourhood Area** which guides you on:
 - Deciding if a neighbourhood plan is the right process for you
 - Getting the community on board
 - Setting up a steering group
 - Applying for a neighbourhood area designation
- **Guide 2 – Gathering Evidence** which guides you on:
 - Getting organised with a project plan, budget and applying for funding
 - Preparing an evidence base including a Basic Conditions Statement and Consultation Statement
- **Guide 3 – Community Engagement Methods** which guides you on:
 - Examples of community engagement methods at each stage
 - Designing questionnaires
- **Guide 4 – Drafting the Plan and Getting it Made** which guides you on:
 - How to draft policies
 - Submission of the plan to the local planning authority
 - The final stages of independent examination, referendum and the plan being made
- **Community Profile or OCSI Report** which gives you extensive data specifically for your community from Census 2011 and many other government sources, collated into graphs and diagrams

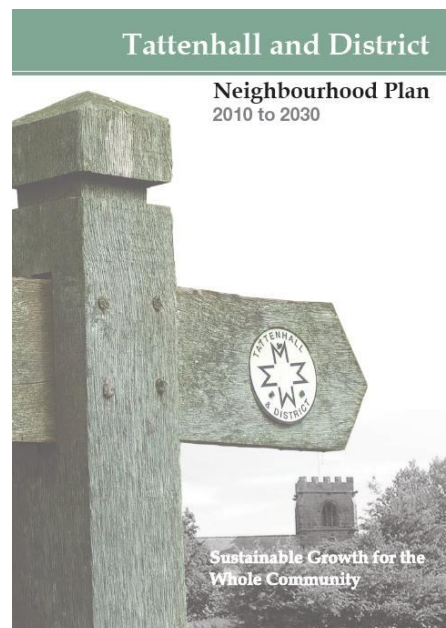
2. What is a neighbourhood plan?

A neighbourhood plan is a plan drawn up by a community that sets out a shared vision, policies and proposals to shape future growth and development of the local area. It is part of the statutory development plan and is used by the local planning authority in deciding planning applications.

It allows people to have a say on where new homes, shops, businesses and community facilities should go and what they should look like. It gives people the opportunity to identify and help protect areas of green space that are of particular importance to them. It **cannot** stop development but it can guide or encourage further development.

What distinguishes a neighbourhood plan from other forms of community led plan, such as a parish plan or a village design statement, is that it is a statutory plan. This means that by law it has to be taken into account by local planning authorities and other decision makers when planning applications are being determined. It sits alongside the local plan prepared by the local planning authority and both of the plans are used in planning decisions along with other 'material considerations'. Parish plans and village design statements may be material considerations but are given less weight i.e. they have less influence in the planning decision.

The legislation does not prescribe the content of a neighbourhood plan. The plan can be comprehensive or cover just one or two issues. The scope of the plan will depend on the wishes of the local community and scope of the Local Plan prepared by the local authority.



3. Why produce a neighbourhood plan? What are the benefits?

A neighbourhood plan can give people real power to shape the development and growth of their local area. There are many potential benefits of a neighbourhood plan in terms of outcomes and also the process of preparing one. For example, a neighbourhood plan can:-

- Give local people greater ownership of the planning policies in their area;
- Allow a community to set out where development should go and what it should look like;
- Bring the community together to share ideas and build consensus about the needs and priorities for the area;
- Help create lasting partnerships to take forward actions that may arise from the process;
- Raise awareness and understanding of planning;
- Improve relationships between the community and the parish council;
- Provide a detailed evidence base about the community;
- Help raise funds/grants
- Inform local authority strategies



4. How do we decide whether to do a neighbourhood plan?

There are lots of factors to consider if you are interested in doing a neighbourhood plan, including:

- Scope of the plan in terms of issues and geographical area;
- Scope of national and local planning policy;
- Skills and experience of the parish or town council or neighbourhood forum;
- Alternatives to a neighbourhood plan e.g. a parish plan or village design statement;
- Costs in time and resources;
- Availability of funding.

A key question to ask at the start is ‘what are our motivations for doing a neighbourhood plan?’ It is important to understand the issues that are the trigger for your interest because it might be that a neighbourhood plan is not the most appropriate planning tool to address those issues. For example, if the lack of affordable housing is a particular problem in the local area you may decide that it is best to start with a housing needs study before working with Housing Associations to deliver affordable housing, in which case you would not need to prepare a neighbourhood plan. On the other hand, for example, you may find that the Local Plan proposes a figure for the number of new homes in the area but does not propose where those homes should go, in which case you may want to do a neighbourhood plan to set out policies to control the location of new homes.

Cheshire Community Action can help you to decide whether or not you should start a neighbourhood plan.

5. What are the key stages involved?

It is important to understand that there are legal processes to follow when preparing a neighbourhood plan. The legislation for neighbourhood plans is set out in the Localism Act 2011¹ and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012². Further practical advice is set out in the Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap prepared by Locality³.

There are five key stages to the neighbourhood plan process as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Stages of a Neighbourhood Plan



¹ Localism Act 2011, Chapter 20, Part 6. HMSO, 2011.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents> or for a simple guide to the Act see: *A plain English guide to the Localism Act*. Department of Communities & Local Government, 2011. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview>

² Statutory Instrument 2012 No. 637, *Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012*. HMSO, 2012 (website).

³ *Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide*. Locality, 2013. <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Neighbourhood-Planning-Roadmap1.pdf>

1. Agreeing the neighbourhood

To prepare a neighbourhood plan you must be a qualifying body. This means either a parish council or town council, or, in those areas without a parish, a 'neighbourhood forum' approved by the local planning authority.

It is advisable to have a steering group with terms of reference to lead the process. The steering group may be a mix of local councillors, local volunteers and other representatives (e.g. from businesses) to share the workload.

At this early stage, representatives from Cheshire Community Action can help you to find out more about the process, provide a toolkit of resources and help you set up a steering group.

To formally commence work on the neighbourhood plan the relevant body has to apply to the local planning authority to get the neighbourhood area designated. The local planning authority must then publicise the application for a six-week consultation period. As soon as possible thereafter the local planning authority should decide whether or not to designate the neighbourhood area and publicise details of its decision.

2. Preparing your plan

This stage of the plan is about gathering evidence and will require considerable time and resources so it is advisable to draw up a project plan and budget. The project plan should set out key stages, actions and timescales, and cover:-

Funding

There are likely to be significant costs associated with preparing a neighbourhood plan in terms of time and resources. Some costs, such as the examination and referendum will be borne by the local authority but other costs, especially in relation to consultation, will need to be borne by the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum. **Cheshire Community Action can give you up-to-date advice on possible funding sources and help you apply for funding.**

Publicity

It is recommended that you start a programme of publicity and awareness-raising about the neighbourhood plan. A range of methods is recommended e.g. local newspaper articles, posting flyers, posters in public buildings and public events where people can find out more about the neighbourhood plan process.

Gathering evidence

There will already be a lot of evidence available on the neighbourhood e.g. information on population trends, employment, local schools, shops and services. **At Cheshire Community Action we can provide you with an 'OCSI report': a detailed socio-economic profile of your community**, taken from Census 2011 data and many other government sources (see further information in Appendix 1). In addition to local evidence it is also necessary to understand the strategic context of the plan so it is essential to look at strategic planning policies in the Local Plan and other strategies and policies that may have an impact on the neighbourhood. You may wish to collate all of this existing evidence into an Evidence Report.

Community engagement

For various reasons, not least the referendum at the end of the process, the project plan must allow for significant engagement with the community. It is sensible to structure the consultation so that you are gauging opinion in the following progression:-

1. Issues and themes
2. Vision and objectives
3. The draft plan (a statutory consultation stage)

It is important to use a variety of consultation methods during these stages so that you are giving plenty of opportunity for people to give their views. You should think about hard-to-reach groups such as the elderly who may find it difficult to go to meetings, ethnic minorities and young people and how you will consult with them. **Guide 3 of our Neighbourhood Plan toolkit gives advice and examples on how to engage with your community at the various stages of the plan.**

There may be other evidence that is required, such as a Sustainability Appraisal which reports on the likely environmental, economic and social impacts.

Once you have drafted the plan you must formally consult with the community and statutory consultees (eg English Heritage, Environment Agency) on it for 6 weeks. Following any necessary minor amendments the plan should then be submitted, along with a Basic Conditions Statement⁴ and Consultation Statement⁵, to the local planning authority for a further six weeks 'publicity' period. The local planning authority will check that the plan complies with local, national and European legislation, including Human Rights requirements.

⁴ A Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the neighbourhood plan conforms with strategic policies of the Local Plan, national policy and EU obligations

⁵ A Consultation Statement explains: who was consulted, how they were consulted, what main issues and concerns were raised and how those issues and concerns have been addressed where relevant

3. Examination

An independent examiner will consider whether the plan meets basic conditions. This means the plan must comply with European Union obligations, national and local planning policies. The examiner will make recommendations to the local planning authority on whether or not the plan should proceed to referendum. The examiner may recommend that the plan proceeds to referendum subject to modifications. The examiner's report is not binding on the local planning authority.

4. Referendum

If the local planning authority regards the neighbourhood plan to be satisfactory, with modifications if necessary, it will arrange for a referendum to be held. The authority must publish information on the plan and give notice of the referendum. More than 50% of those voting in the referendum must vote 'yes' for the plan to be made.

5. Plan comes into force

The neighbourhood plan is made and will be used by the local planning authority when deciding planning applications.

6. How long will it take?

A neighbourhood plan will typically take around two years to prepare before it comes into force. The timescale will depend on a number of factors such as the scope of the issues, the scale of the population, the ability to obtain funding, progress with an emerging Local Plan, and energy and commitment of steering group members. Some of these factors are external and beyond the control of the steering group.

7. How can we help?

At Cheshire Community Action we can help you at the early stages of a neighbourhood plan, in terms of getting started and preparing the plan. We can help you:

- Decide if a neighbourhood plan is the right choice for your community or if there are more appropriate alternatives e.g. a parish plan or village design statement;
- Set up a neighbourhood plan steering group with a constitution;

- Prepare a project plan;
- Apply for funding;
- Gather evidence by providing a socio-economic profile report of your community;
- Engage with your community using a variety of methods by offering you advice and direct support e.g. on drafting questionnaires, with presentations, workshops and public events;
- Draft reports including the consultation statement, evidence report and draft plan by providing 'critical friend' support.

We can offer step-by-step support by attending steering group meetings and providing advice and support by telephone and email. Our **neighbourhood plan toolkit** of guidance documents and case studies can be purchased in parallel or independently from our support.

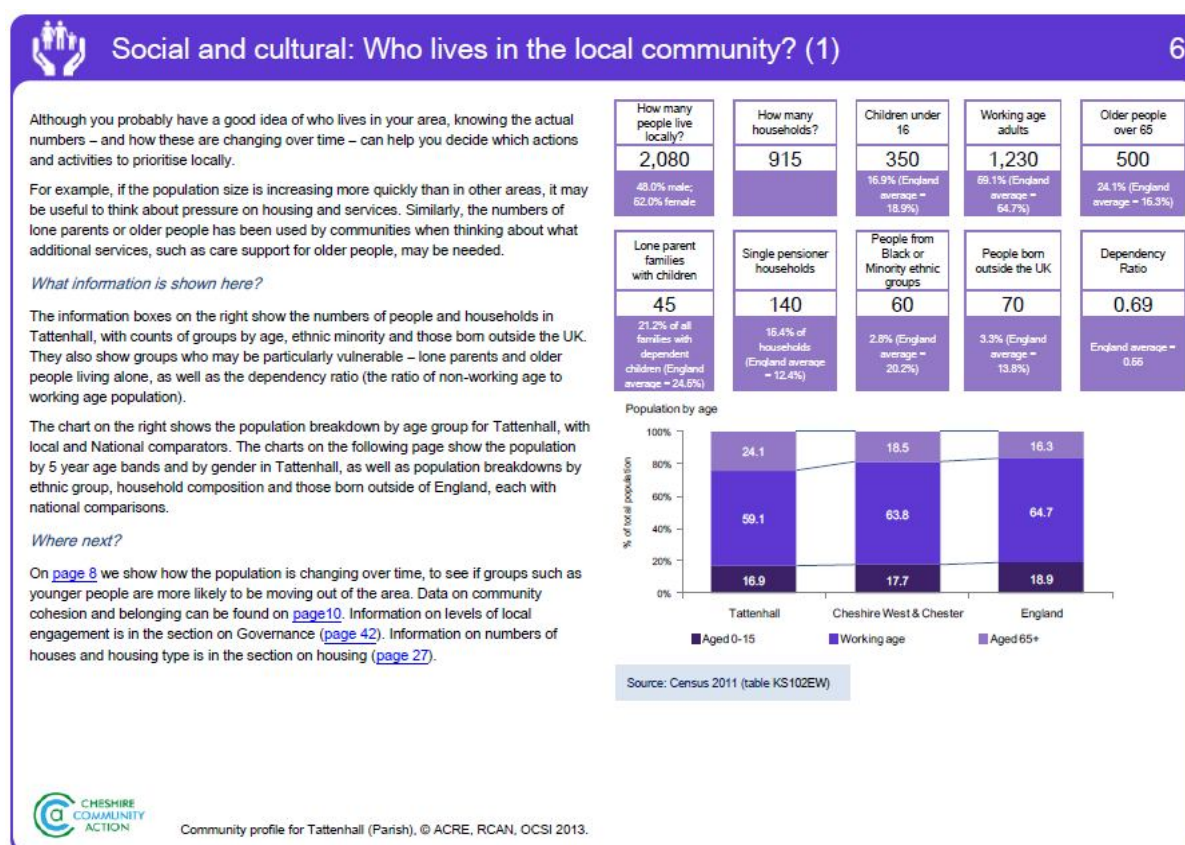
All our neighbourhood plan support is offered as a consultancy service. Representatives from our community led planning team would be pleased to come along to your parish or town council/community group meeting free of charge to discuss your options and give you a quote for support.



Community Profile (OCSI Report) Example

OCSI Reports are socio-economic profiles of communities, using extensive data from the 2011 Census and many other government sources. Data is presented in graphs and diagrams as well as tabular form. In addition to population and housing data the reports include fully collated statistics on culture, equality, economy, social issues, services, transport and connectivity, environment and governance. They also compare your community to borough-wide and nationwide statistics.

We can provide these reports for your community at just **£50 each** which will save you weeks or even months of time in data collation.





Housing & the built environment: What type of housing is in the local area?

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Housing is an important issue in rural communities. Increases in house-prices, which recently have far outstripped average increases in earnings, mean that local people may be priced out of the housing market in the area in which they grew up. For a community to sustain a fair and balanced housing market, it must provide affordable housing accessible to the local community. However, local housing development can also strain local services, as well as affect the character of the area (although a larger population may be able to sustain more shops, businesses and local amenities).

With levels of overcrowding increasing, record population growth and the limited supply of affordable homes, evidencing the type and availability of housing in the local area will be essential to community planning.

What information is shown here?

The data shows the housing types in the local area. Data is taken from Census 2011 and offers the most up to date account of the types of housing in the local area.

The bar chart on the right shows how your area compares against the local authority and national averages on the type of housing.

Where next?

The following pages show data on housing tenure (owner occupied, social housing, private rented), affordable housing, overcrowded housing and housing in poor condition.

Detached houses 375 39.7% of dwellings (England average = 22.3%)	Semi-detached houses 348 36.8% of dwellings (England average = 30.7%)	Terraced houses 144 15.2% of dwellings (England average = 24.6%)
Flats (purpose built) 67 7.1% of dwellings (England average = 16.7%)	Flats (other) 11 1.2% of dwellings (England average = 6.4%)	Caravan or other temporary accommodation 00 0.0% of dwellings (England average = 0.4%)

Dwelling type breakdowns



Source: Census 2011 (table KS401EW)



Community profile for Tattenhall (Parish), © ACRE, RCAN, OCSI 2013.

Neighbourhood Plans – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a neighbourhood plan?

A community-led plan setting out the vision, policies and proposals for the future development of a local area. Once 'made' by the local planning authority, it forms part of the statutory development plan and is used in making decisions on planning applications.

2. Why produce one?

- Gives local people greater ownership of the planning policies in their area;
 - Allows a community to set out where development should take place and the type and quality of that development;
 - Brings the community together to share ideas and build consensus about the needs and priorities for the area;
 - Helps create lasting partnerships to take forward actions that may arise from the process;
 - Raises awareness and understanding of planning;
 - Improve relationships between the community and the parish council;
 - Provide a detailed evidence base about the community;
 - Help raise funds/grants;
 - Inform local authority strategies;
- And many other benefits.

3. Who produces it?

A 'qualifying body' which means a parish council or town council, or a 'neighbourhood forum' in those areas without parishes. A neighbourhood forum must be approved by the local planning authority. In practice a steering group made up of local councillors (in parished areas), local volunteers and other representatives from the community will manage the process.

4. How is it done?

There are five broad stages:-

1. **Designation of a Neighbourhood Area**
Apply to the local planning authority to designate a neighbourhood area.
2. **Preparing the Plan**
 - Build a robust evidence base to support the plan:
 - Collate existing statistical information on the area
 - Consult thoroughly with the community using a variety of methods
 - Produce other evidence as required e.g. a Sustainability Appraisal reporting on the likely environmental, economic and social impacts
 - Prepare evidence reports including a Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement
 - Formally consult the community and statutory bodies for 6 weeks on the draft Neighbourhood Plan
 - Submit the plan and supporting documents to the local planning authority for a further 6 week period of publicity
3. **Independent examination**
An independent examiner considers whether the plan meets 'basic conditions' (including compliance with EU, national and local planning policies and law) and makes recommendations on whether or not to proceed to referendum.
4. **Referendum**
The local planning authority organises a local referendum in which the majority must vote in favour for the plan to come into force.
5. **Plan comes into force**
The plan will be used by the local planning authority in the determination of planning applications.

5. Can we produce a joint neighbourhood plan with another parish?

Yes, neighbourhood plans can cover more than one parish and can even cross local authorities' administrative boundaries. The parishes acting as a cluster would need to make arrangements for how they would work together and who would lead the process of submitting the formal documents. If the plan crosses local authority boundaries the application for a neighbourhood area needs to be made to all the respective local planning authorities.

6. Is it compulsory to produce a neighbourhood plan?

No, every parish and town has a right to produce a neighbourhood plan but not all areas will want to do so. It is up to each community to decide if it is appropriate to produce a neighbourhood plan depending on local circumstances.

7. What are the alternatives to producing a neighbourhood plan?

There are various alternative tools that communities can use to help address planning issues at the local level. They each have different purposes, advantages and disadvantages. The main alternatives are:

- The Local Plan (including core strategy, area allocations, area action plans, supplementary planning documents)
- Planning applications (including planning conditions, S106 agreements, community infrastructure levy [CIL])
- Parish/town plans
- Village design statements
- Local Development Orders
- Article 4 Directions
- Planning enforcement
- Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO)
- Community Right to Build Orders

Further information on the differences between these various tools is provided in guidance by the Gloucestershire CPRE:-

http://www.localismnetwork.org.uk/Localismnetwork.org.uk/Localism_Network_files/CPRE%20hyperlinked.pdf

8. What are the differences between a neighbourhood plan and a parish/town plan?

Neighbourhood plans and parish/towns are both types of **community led plan** i.e. plans initiated and led by local volunteers involving extensive consultation with the local community. A parish or town plan sets out a vision and action plan for the community, in which many of the actions will be a range of projects that can be carried out by members of the community e.g. establishing new social events, creating a community website, setting up a litter picking group, organising improvements to a play area. A neighbourhood plan, however, is focused on land use and development issues and alongside the Local Plan is used by the local planning authority to determine planning applications.

Key differences between a Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Plan

Neighbourhood Plan	Parish Plan
Statutory document – must be taken account of in planning decisions	Material consideration of limited weight in planning decisions
Legal requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012	Process based on good practice experience and advice
Led by the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum	Led by a steering group of volunteers from the community
Focuses on land use and development policies and proposals	Covers broad range of economic, social and environmental projects e.g. from new play areas to better community websites
Cost – the government estimates £17k to £63k	Cost – the average cost is £3k to £10k

9. Can we put non land use issues and projects in the neighbourhood plan?

You can put non land use issues and projects in the neighbourhood plan document but those proposals which are non land use related should be separated and clearly identified. Policies in the plan must only relate to the use and development of land. The land use related policies and proposals comprise the Neighbourhood Development Plan which is the strict legal term as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

10. Can a neighbourhood plan stop development?

No. The plan can guide the location, mix and design of development but it cannot have negative policies preventing development or proposing less development than the level set out in the Local Plan (the borough-wide plan adopted by the local planning authority).

11. Can a neighbourhood plan promote more development than in the Local Plan?

Yes, a neighbourhood plan can propose more development than set out in the Local Plan. However, this is as long as it does not conflict with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

12. If a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum makes a neighbourhood plan do they then have decision making responsibilities for applications, appeals, enforcement etc?

No, the decision making remains with the local planning authority.

13. How much detail should a neighbourhood plan go into?

It is up to each community to decide the level of detail for the plan. The plan can cover a single issue or range of issues. It can relate to the whole or part of a neighbourhood. It may or may not allocate specific sites. Most plans being produced are comprehensive in their coverage because there is often cross over between issues e.g. housing proposals may have implications for transport infrastructure. There are also minimum statutory requirements such as Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal that may apply, particularly if sites are being allocated. When making decisions on the level of detail it is a good idea to ask 'will the resulting plan pass the examination and referendum?'

14. What level of consultation is required?

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012) set out the minimum requirements for consultation and publicity at key stages with those living or working in the neighbourhood area or with an interest in or likely to be affected by the proposals. In essence, there is a 6 week consultation period with the community and statutory consultees on the draft plan before it is submitted to the local authority and then a further 6 week publicity period by the local planning authority once it is submitted. These are the minimum requirements but in practice a process of on-going dialogue and collaboration with all members of the community from the earliest stages will help to ensure the plan has high levels of involvement and support. It is for the parish council or neighbourhood forum to decide exactly who to consult given the scope and nature of the proposals.

CCA are experts in community consultation and can advise neighbourhood plan groups on all aspects of consultation, including

who to consult, what methods to use, how to report on the results of consultation and use them to inform the neighbourhood plan.

15. How long will it take to produce?

It is down to individual areas to decide the pace at which they wish to progress the plan and also down to external factors such as ability to obtain funding. However, on average the process is likely to take about two years.

16. Who will pay for the neighbourhood planning process?

It is the responsibility of the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum to pay for the preparation of the neighbourhood plans. The local planning authority will pay for the examination and referendum.

17. Where can we get funding?

There are various possible sources of funding:-

- **Parish council** - through its precept
- **Borough Council** – the type of funding support varies from borough to borough but examples are:
 - i. Ward councillor budgets
 - ii. Community Empowerment Fund (available only in the Cheshire West & Chester area, contact Peter Davidson, Grants Officer, Cheshire West & Chester Council, tel. 01244 973753)
- **Locality** – an organisation managing the government's Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning programme. Direct support and/or grant funding of up to £7000 is available.
<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>
- **Awards for All** – offers small Lottery grants of £300 to £10,000 for wide range of community projects:-
<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/awards-for-all-england>
- **Local community** - in addition to other funding sources you will probably need to raise funds in some form from the local community e.g. through fundraising events, sponsorship from local businesses or donations from benefactors. You may be able to secure contributions in kind such as printing, catering for events, equipment on loan or discounted room hire. You will certainly need to rely on **volunteer time**.

18. Does the neighbourhood plan have to conform to the local authority's Local Plan?

Yes, the neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan that is in force at the time of the Examination. However, in reality many local authorities are still preparing their Local Plans so do not have up-to-date adopted strategic policies. In this situation it is all the more important to receive early and on-going support and advice from the local planning authority during preparation of the plan to ensure its smooth progression through the Examination process.

19. What evidence needs to be submitted to the local authority with the plan?

As well as the plan the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum must submit:

- a map or statement which identifies the neighbourhood area
- a Consultation Statement which sets out:
 - who was consulted
 - how they were consulted
 - summarises the main issues and concerns
 - how those issues and concerns have been addressed in the plan
- A Basic Conditions statement which explains how the plan:
 - has regard to national planning policy
 - is in general conformity with strategic elements of the Local Plan
 - contributes towards sustainable development
 - is compatible with EU obligations (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitat Regulations and the Human Rights Act)

20. What responsibilities does the local planning authority have?

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the local planning authority has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and orders and to take plans through a process of examination and referendum. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6 chapter 3) sets out the LPA responsibilities as:

- Designating a forum
- Designating the area of the neighbourhood development plan
- Advising or assisting communities in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan
- Checking a submitted plan meets the legal requirements
- Arranging for the independent examination of the plan

- Determining whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements
 - Subject to the results of the referendum/s bringing the plan into force
- It also sets out which councils have responsibility for arranging the referendums.

21. Who organises and pays for the examination and referendum?

The local planning authority pays for both the examination and referendum.

22. What checks does the local planning authority make once the plan is submitted?

The local planning authority will check that the proper procedures have been followed and publicise the plan for a statutory 6 week period. The local planning authority does not have to check that the basic conditions have been met at this stage. It is down to the independent examiner to check that the plan meets the 'basic conditions'. It is only once a plan passes the referendum that the local planning authority should also check that document is compliant with EU law before the neighbourhood plan is made.

23. What will the examination be like?

In most cases it is expected that the examination will take the form of written representations. Anyone who is affected by the plan will be able to submit representations to the independent examiner. However, examiners will have the ability to hear oral representations where necessary to ensure adequate examination of issues or to ensure a person has had a fair chance to put forward a case.

24. Is the independent examiner's report binding?

No, the examiner's report is not binding, however, the local planning authority must have clear reasons for departing from any of the examiner's recommendations. These recommendations could be either that the plan goes straight to referendum, or that the plan is modified or that the plan does not go to referendum. If the examiner recommends big changes the parish council or forum may need to go back to the local community and consult again on these changes.

25. What question will be asked at the referendum?

“Do you want [xxx local planning authority] to use the neighbourhood plan for [xxx neighbourhood area] to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

26. What happens if there is a ‘no’ vote at the referendum?

If fewer than 51% of those voting support the plan then the neighbourhood plan has not passed the referendum and cannot be brought into legal force to be used by the local planning authority in planning decisions. The plan will need to be revised before being subject to further consultation, examination and referendum. The planning authority is entitled to decline a repeat proposal.

27. What happens once a plan passes a referendum?

The plan must be ‘made’ by the local planning authority and it will come into legal force. There are limited exceptions to this, including if the local planning authority considers the plan will break EU law, in which case the local planning authority can decline to make the plan.

28. What is the lifetime of a neighbourhood plan?

There are no specified time limits but the timescale is unlikely to exceed that of the Local Plan. It should be decided by the community and set out in the plan.

Useful Contacts Table

Organisation	Address	Tel	E-mail/contact name	Website
Cheshire Community Action	Suite G7, Northwich Business Centre, Meadow Street, Northwich, CW9 5BF	01606 359731	claire.jones@cheshireaction.org.uk sarah.baron@cheshireaction.org.uk	www.cheshireaction.org.uk
Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)	Somerford Court Somerford Road Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 1TW	01285 653477	acre@acre.org.uk	www.acre.org.uk
Awards for All	1 Plough Place London EC4A 1DE	0845 4 10 20 30	general.enquiries@biglotteryfund.org.uk	www.biglotteryfund.org.uk
Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC)	Blue Bache Barn Burleydam, Whitchurch Shropshire SY13 4AW	01948 871314	Jackie Weaver	www.chalc.org.uk
Cheshire East Council	Westfields Middlewich Road Sandbach CW11 1HZ	0300 123 5500	info@cheshireeast.gov.uk communitygrants@cheshireeast.gov.uk	www.cheshireeast.gov.uk
Cheshire East Council Local Area Partnership teams	Congleton Crewe Knutsford Macclesfield Nantwich Poynton Wilmslow or Partnerships Manager	01625 383843 01270 686663 01270 685881 01625 374950 01270 685793 01625 374950 01270 685881 01270 686632	alan.lawson@cheshireeast.gov.uk dawn.clark@cheshireeast.gov.uk richard.christopherson@cheshireeast.gov.uk val.burlison@cheshireeast.gov.uk sharon.angus-crawshaw@cheshireeast.gov.uk val.burlison@cheshireeast.gov.uk richard.christopherson@cheshireeast.gov.uk kirstie.hercules@cheshireeast.gov.uk	
Cheshire Landscape Trust	Room A022 The Heath Business & Technical Park Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 4QX	01928 518018	Katie Lowe/Rachel Fitzpatrick cltoffice@tiscali.co.uk	www.cheshirelandscapetrust.org.uk

Organisation	Address	Tel	E-mail/contact name	Website
Cheshire Record Office	Duke Street, Chester Cheshire CH1 1RL	01244 977195		http://archives.cheshire.gov.uk/
Cheshire West & Chester Council (CW&C)	HQ, 58 Nicholas Street Chester CH1 2NP	0300 123 8123	enquiries@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk	www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
CW&C Area Partnership Boards		01606 288766	partnershipsandareaworking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Ewan McHenry (Senior Locality Manager, Rural Communities) ewan.mchenry@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk	
CW&C Spatial Planning		01244 973887	Jeremy Owens (Strategic Manager – Spatial Planning) planning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk	
CW&C Housing		0151 356 6715	Lesley Bassett (Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer) lesleybassett@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk	
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	Bickley Hall Farm, Bickley Malpas, Cheshire SY14 8EF	01948 820728	info@cheshirewt.org.uk	www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Cheshire Branch	Victoria Buildings Lewin Street Middlewich Cheshire CW10 9AT	01606 835046	info@cprecheshire.org.uk	www.cprecheshire.org.uk
Department for Food Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Nobel House 17 Smith Square London SW1P 3JR			www.defra.gov.uk
English Heritage	English Heritage 3rd floor Canada House 3 Chepstow Street Manchester M1 5FW	0161 242 1400	northwest@english-heritage.org.uk	http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/

Organisation	Address	Tel	E-mail/contact name	Website
Fields In Trust (National Playing Fields Association)	15 Crinan Street London N1 9SQ	0207 427 2110	info@fieldsintrust.org	www.fieldsintrust.org
Halton Borough Council	Municipal Building Kingsway, Widnes Cheshire WA8 7QF	0303 333 4300		www.halton.gov.uk
The Mersey Forest	Risley Moss Ordnance Avenue Birchwood, Warrington WA3 6QX	01925 816217	mail@merseyforest.org.uk	www.merseyforest.org.uk
National Association of Local Councils (NALC)	109 Great Russell St London WC1B 3LD	020 7637 1865	nalc@nalc.gov.uk	www.nalc.gov.uk
National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners	O'Dell House Hunters Road Corby Northants NN17 5JE	01536 266576 0151 512 3882	natsoc@nsalg.org.uk Dave Morris davejmorris49@hotmail.com	www.nsalg.org.uk
Natural England	Foundry House 3 Millsands Riverside Exchange Sheffield S3 8NH	0845 600 3078	enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk	www.naturalengland.org.uk
Peak District National Park Authority	Aldern House Baslow Road Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1AE	01629 816200	customer.service@peakdistrict.gov.uk	www.peakdistrict.gov.uk
Plunkett Foundation	The Quadrangle Woodstock Oxfordshire OX20 1LH	01993 810730	info@plunkett.co.uk	www.plunkett.co.uk
Warrington Borough Council	New Town House Buttermarket Street Warrington Cheshire WA1 2NH	01925 443322		www.warrington.gov.uk



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