

# Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit



## Foreword



From April 2012 onwards, local communities have been given new legal powers under the Localism Act 2011 to start neighbourhood planning in their areas. These changes have the potential to give local people a greater say in helping shape the development and future growth of the communities of which they are a part.

The county council welcomes these new opportunities and is committed to supporting neighbourhood planning as a way for people in Oxfordshire to help shape the future of the places where they live and work. Many parish councils and neighbourhood forums across the county are already working on their own neighbourhood planning documents and in Thame and Woodcote we have seen two of the earliest adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans in the country.

In Oxfordshire we operate under a two-tier system of local government and the five local councils in the county have a legal duty to provide support to groups engaged in neighbourhood planning in their area. So if you decide that neighbourhood planning is a good idea for your community, you should in the first instance approach your local district council for their help and guidance about how to get started.

However, the county council is a key infrastructure provider and delivers a wide range of important public services, including ensuring that roads, schools, waste facilities and public transport are provided to support new and existing development. As such we can provide very useful policy guidance and advice in these areas to those carrying out neighbourhood planning projects. In preparing your Neighbourhood Development Plan you will probably also need to consult with the county council, as well as your local district council, on how the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which you could receive if your plan makes provision for new development, is allocated and spent.

To help you in this, we have prepared this toolkit setting out what information, guidance and support the county council has to offer. It explains the main county council services that may have to be considered when carrying out neighbourhood planning and provides links to the policy guidance and includes the details of teams that can help you.

Finally, I wish you every success in your neighbourhood planning projects and hope you find this toolkit to be a helpful resource to use in your project work.

**Councillor David Nimmo Smith**  
*Cabinet Member for Environment*

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## What is Neighbourhood Planning?

From April 2012, local communities have been given new legal powers under the Localism Act 2011 to take part in neighbourhood planning for their areas. Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work and have their say on development in their local area.

Neighbourhood planning allows communities to prepare:

- **Neighbourhood Development Plans** (see the [section](#) below)
- **Neighbourhood Development Orders:** A Neighbourhood Development Order grants planning permission for certain types of development, which are defined by the order, within the neighbourhood plan area. The permission could be full or outline, could have conditions attached and could be site specific or grant more general development rights across the whole area.
- **Community Right to Build Orders:** The community right-to-build process is instigated by a 'community organisation' where the community decides to bring forward specific development proposals for the benefit of the community. This might include community facilities and affordable housing.

This toolkit focuses on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans.

## What are Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs)?

A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a land use plan which sets out the policies against which planning applications are assessed. Neighbourhood planning should happen alongside and not replace your local district's planning policy role and NDPs must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan (including the Core Strategy).

<b>Neighbourhood Development Plans CAN...</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Development Plans CANNOT...</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Development Plans MUST...</b>
Shape and influence where development will go in your local area	Conflict with the policies within the Local Plan or Core Strategy	Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of adopted Local Plans
Decide what this development should look like	Say 'no' to or block development	Be in general conformity with national planning policy (for example the National Planning Policy Framework,
Include detailed planning policies for the local area	Provide for less development than the adopted Local Plan	Be in line with other laws and EU Directives/legislation and Human Rights obligations

Once adopted, Neighbourhood Development Plans become part of the development plan for the area, which means that the policies and proposals contained within them will be used in the determination of planning applications, including appeals. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (*Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990*).

Neighbourhood Development Plans *may* require a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) depending upon the scope of the Plan. The National Planning Practice Guidance website refers to the need (or otherwise) for SEA, stating “*whether a neighbourhood plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of will depend on what is proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan. A strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where:*

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development*
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan*
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.*”

Your local district council will be able to undertake a screening process to decide whether SEA is required based on information provided by you and in consultation with statutory consultees, of which we are one. If it is found that SEA is required for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, we will also assist in providing the required information and data to assist in the scoping and assessment of the environmental effects of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan.

## **Who can prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

If an area is covered by a parish or town council, it is the only body that can lead on neighbourhood planning. If there isn't a parish or town council, then a community group known as a neighbourhood forum (NF) needs to be established to lead the process. The aim of the parish council or neighbourhood forum must be to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. It must have a written constitution, have open membership and comprise a minimum of 21 individuals.

The Localism Act recognises that not all communities are residential in nature and in non-parished areas that are predominately commercial; a business-led neighbourhood forum can be established.

The parish or town council, or neighbourhood forum, needs to apply to its local district council to have an area designated as a neighbourhood area. Subject to the approval of the designation by the district council, this will then be the area to which the Neighbourhood Development Plan applies.



## What funding is available?

Funding is available from different sources to help communities prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans. The Government has contracted Locality (<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/>) to support neighbourhood planning through the Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning programme, a two year, £9.5 million support programme for communities developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or Neighbourhood Development Order.

The programme is being delivered by Locality, in partnership with the Royal Town Planning Institute (including Planning Aid England), Community Development Foundation (CDF), Urban Vision Enterprise, Eden Project and planning consultants URS.

Funding can be used to cover startup costs, developing and analysing the evidence base, public consultations and training, as well as venue hire, printing and publicity. The programme will support groups developing Neighbourhood Development plans in two ways:

- **direct support:** professional advice and support, with an average value of equivalent to £9,500, tailored to meet the needs of supported neighbourhoods. This support is provided through Locality and the Royal Town Planning Institute / Planning Aid England. Planning advice will be given by qualified planners, although their work may be supplemented by community engagement specialists. This element of the programme enables you to receive expert advice tailored to the individual needs of your area to help you to complete the various stages of your Neighbourhood Development Plan. More information is available [here on the My Community Rights website](#).
- **grant payments:** up to £7,000 per neighbourhood area, to contribute to costs incurred by the group preparing a neighbourhood plan or order (more information is available [here on the My Community Rights website](#))

Communities can apply for this funding through the [www.mycommunityrights.org.uk](http://www.mycommunityrights.org.uk) website, where you will need to supply details including the nature of the area you are planning for, the capacity of your group, how far your plan has progressed and your timetable for completion. If you are only preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan you can apply for either direct support or a grant, but not both. If you are preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan and a Neighbourhood Development Order you can apply for both direct support and grant payments, one for each activity.

Please refer to this document, [Neighbourhood planning funding guidance](#), for more information on who can apply, when, how, and what the grant money can (and cannot) be spent upon. It is also recommended that you also speak with your district council before applying about support they might offer and what your needs are.

As your neighbourhood planning activities progress, your district council will also receive funding from the government to help support you and to pay for the independent examination of the plan or order and the referendum of local people.

**Please note:** Oxfordshire County Council receives no funding for supporting neighbourhood planning.

## What is my local District Council's role in Neighbourhood Development Planning?

Oxfordshire operates under a two-tier system of local government; with five local councils (Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council) and the county council, which is responsible for some services across the whole county.

District councils in Oxfordshire have a legal duty to provide support to groups engaged in neighbourhood planning in their area and should be the first port of call for initial enquiries from groups in Oxfordshire that are interested in neighbourhood planning.

Groups interested in neighbourhood planning should review any guidance published by district councils. The table below outlines district council guidance and contact details for neighbourhood planning in Oxfordshire:

District council	Information on Neighbourhood Planning	Contact for Neighbourhood Planning
<b>Cherwell</b>	<a href="http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/">http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning/</a>	<a href="mailto:planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">planning.policy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Oxford City Council</b>	<a href="http://www.oxford.gov.uk/NeighbourhoodPlanning.htm">http://www.oxford.gov.uk/NeighbourhoodPlanning.htm</a>	<a href="mailto:planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk">planningpolicy@oxford.gov.uk</a>
<b>South Oxfordshire</b>	<a href="http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans">http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans</a>	<a href="mailto:planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk">planning.policy@southoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Vale of White Horse</b>	<a href="http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans">http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans</a>	<a href="mailto:planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk">planning.policy@whitehorsedc.gov.uk</a>
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<a href="http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/communities/community-planning/neighbourhood-planning/">http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/communities/community-planning/neighbourhood-planning/</a>	<a href="mailto:astrid.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk">astrid.harvey@westoxon.gov.uk</a>



## **What is Oxfordshire County Council's role in Neighbourhood Development Planning?**

Oxfordshire County Council is fully supportive of neighbourhood planning as a way for local communities to have a greater say in where they live and work and will support parish councils and neighbourhood forums working on Neighbourhood Development Plans in their local area.

The County Council has various statutory responsibilities for service delivery and infrastructure provision for which new development can have significant implications; these should be taken into account in the preparation of a neighbourhood plan.

New housing, employment and other development can place pressure on existing infrastructure and services. If you are intending to allocate development sites in your neighbourhood plan you should assess the impacts of your growth proposals and your plan should include any necessary mitigation measures and how they will be funded and delivered.

The diagram on the next page shows areas for which we have statutory responsibility and others where we can provide information or guidance to groups engaging in neighbourhood planning:



Unlike district councils, county councils do not receive funding from the Government to provide services to groups working on Neighbourhood Development Plans. However we are willing to assist Neighbourhood Development Plan preparation in the following ways:

- If the Neighbourhood Development Plan is intending to allocate sites for development, we can provide strategic comments on prospective sites to aid site selection at an early stage of the plan making process.
- If the Neighbourhood Development Plan does allocate sites for development, we can then provide basic technical advice on those sites, including opinions on any mitigation measures proposed and planned access arrangements that

have been identified. This is usually at the stage when engagement with landowners or developers has taken place and is similar to the advice we provide when a formal pre-application request is received from the local planning authority.

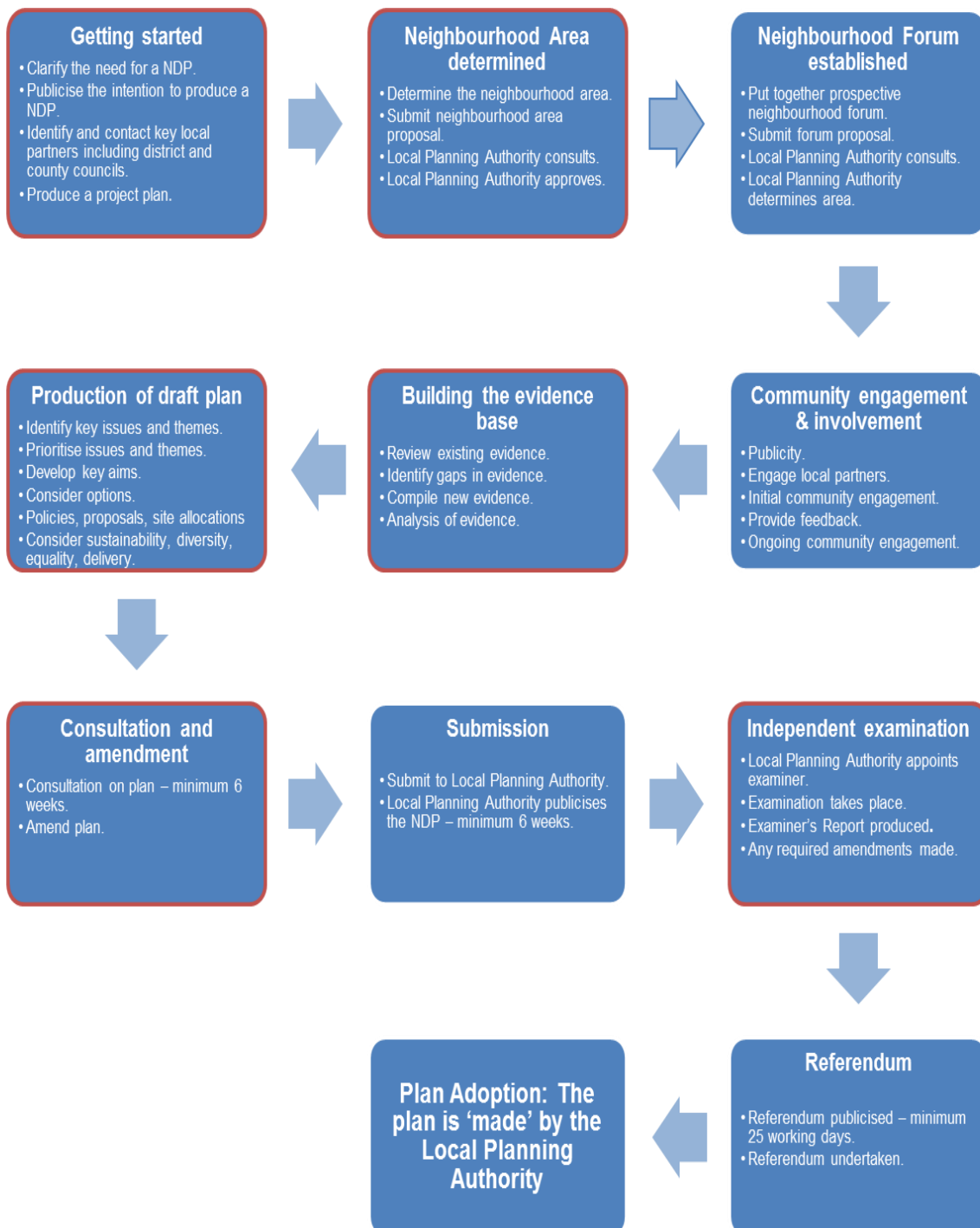
- We will provide information on the County Council's property ownership within the Plan area where it may be of relevance to the process.
- We will help identify where the county council's requirements as an infrastructure provider need to be taken into account in the preparation and delivery of Neighbourhood Development Plans. This includes the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and the securing of contributions or direct mitigation by developers for infrastructure projects. Please see this toolkit's [CIL section](#) on page 18 for more information.
- Our officers can attend neighbourhood plan meetings or workshops (either in or out of office hours). Please see the '[Our services and charges](#)' section on page 15 for details. Officers will also allocate time proportionate to the size of the plan area and scale of development proposed.
- We recommend that we are asked to comment on emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans once the first draft has been completed. Any further specialist technical advice in addition to that outlined above may incur a charge. Details of our services and those that may incur charges can be found in the '[Our services and charges](#)' section on page 15.
- We will be consulted by the district councils at the formal stages of the Neighbourhood Development Plan preparation process, and will respond to those consultations as well as any formal consultation stages managed by the parish or town council or neighbourhood forum.

We will publish and maintain this toolkit to provide as much useful and relevant information and guidance as possible on county council services.

In the first instance, parish councils and neighbourhood forums should make full use of the policies, plans, strategies, documents and standing guidance provided as part of this toolkit.

However, in preparing your plan, you may also need to talk to some of our officers to make sure that your neighbourhood plan will comply with our plans and strategies; annex 1 of this toolkit provides contact details to enable you to do this.

The diagram below illustrates the stages of the Neighbourhood Development Plan preparation process. The county council has a role in all the stages highlighted in red:



These stages are:

## How we can help/our role

### Getting Started

- Clarify the need for a NDP
- Publicise the intention to produce a NDP
- Identify and contact key local
- Produce a project plan

- Contact your local district council and us to let us know that you are intending to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Use this toolkit to familiarise yourself with the information, guidance and services we provide.

### Neighbourhood Area determined

- Determine the neighbourhood area proposal.
- Submit neighbourhood area proposal.
- Local Planning Authority consults
- Local Planning Authority

- Your local district council will consult us on the designation of your neighbourhood area.

### Building the evidence base

- Review existing evidence
- Identify gaps in evidence
- Compile new evidence
- Analysis of evidence

- Use this toolkit and the links to documents contained within it as the starting point for gathering evidence in areas where the county council has a responsibility.

### Production of draft plan

- Identify key issues and themes
- Prioritise issues and themes
- Develop key aims
- Consider options
- Policies, proposal, site allocations
- Consider sustainability, diversity, equality

- If the Neighbourhood Development Plan is intending to allocate sites for development, we can provide strategic comments on prospective sites to aid site selection at an early stage of the plan making process.
- Then if the Neighbourhood Development Plan does allocate sites for development, we can then provide basic technical advice on those sites. As an indication this is usually through a planning officer attending one neighbourhood plan meeting out of office hours and some allocated time proportionate to the size of the plan area and scale of housing development proposed.
- More detailed technical advice may incur a charge, please see each section in this toolkit for more details.
- Once the first draft has been completed, we will respond to a pre-submission consultation request.

### Consultation and amendment

- Consultation on plan – minimum 6 weeks.
  - Amend plan
- Your local district council will formally consult us when your plan is submitted.
  - We will respond to this consultation within the timescale requested by the local district council.

### Independent examination

- Local Planning Authority appoints examiner
  - Examination takes place .
  - Examiner's Report produced .
  - Any required amendments made .
- We may ask to attend an Examination in Public if we wish to comment on an aspect of the plan.

The documents linked in this toolkit may play an important role in helping to decide the approval of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and should therefore be given careful consideration in the preparation of NDPs.



## Our services and charges

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to supporting neighbourhood planning as a way for communities to shape their own future and will provide guidance and advice free of charge according to our usual service standards. However there are a number of technical or specialist services which incur a charge.

OCC Department	Service	Charging information
Planning	Officer attendance at neighbourhood plan meetings, workshops or exhibitions	Attendance by a county council planning officer at the first meeting, workshop or exhibition is <b>free of charge</b> . Attendance at subsequent meetings, workshops or exhibitions is chargeable at <b>£40+VAT per hour</b> , per officer, including preparatory work. Attendance at evening or weekend events will incur a 50% supplement.
Planning	Response to draft pre-submission Neighbourhood Development Plans	A <b>free of charge</b> response setting out the comments of a range of county council departments on draft policies, proposals and site allocations will be given on receipt of a complete draft copy of the Plan (including selected sites for development if appropriate).
Planning	Site visits	Site visits by a planning officer are chargeable at <b>£40+VAT per hour</b> , including preparatory and follow-up work.
Archaeology & Heritage	Access to the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER)	We advise neighbourhood planning groups in the first instance to use the <a href="#">Heritage Gateway</a> to identify local heritage assets, which is a <b>free service</b> . If groups would like more specific data from the HER or information on past archaeological work carried out in their area, they should contact the HER officer to discuss whether charges would apply to provision of this information.
Public Rights of Way	Diversion or stopping up of a public right of way	Please see information in this document <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/countryside/access/rightsofway/HAGuidancenotes.pdf">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/countryside/access/rightsofway/HAGuidancenotes.pdf</a>

The table below outlines services and charges:

OCC Department	Service	Charging information
Transport Development Control	Site visits and neighbourhood plan meetings, workshops or exhibitions	Site visits by a Transport Development Control Officer are chargeable at <b>£40 + VAT per hour</b> , including preparatory and follow-up work. Attendance by Transport Development Control Officers at meetings, workshops, exhibitions etc. are also chargeable at the same rate, with a 50% supplement if these take place in the evening or at weekends.
Transport Development Control	Technical reports Traffic counts and surveys Traffic and road safety data Traffic modelling Site appraisals	<p>Costs for these services will vary dependent on the project's scope, specifications and the nature of the development in question. Please contact <a href="mailto:transport.development.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk">transport.development.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk</a> for further details and a quote. Alternatively, plan-making bodies may wish to make arrangements with an independent transport consultant for some of these services.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, a substantive written response will be provided free of charge on site proposals included in draft Neighbourhood Plans, provided that the following information is included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scaled location plan(s)</li> <li>• Scaled site plan(s)</li> <li>• Scaled plan(s) showing proposed access arrangements (vision splays to design standards to be shown)</li> <li>• Brief description of development proposal(s)</li> </ul> <p>See also advice on <a href="#">pages 30 &amp; 31</a> of this document regarding the above.</p>

VAT will be charged at the current rate.

## Liaison with your county councillor

We would ask that you:

- Notify your county councillor that you are intending to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Discuss whether your county councillor is aware of any plans the county council has for infrastructure development in your area, which you may like your plan to acknowledge or develop.
- Keep your county councillor advised of the preparation of your plan; he or she may be able to help and provide advice.

We will help to keep county councillors informed of the progress on communities' emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans via our regular meetings with them.

A full list of current county councillors can be found [here](#).

## Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 and supplemented by a detailed regime contained in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 which came into force on 6 April 2010 and which have been amended on several occasions since then, most recently in February 2014. The Levy comes into operation in a district when adopted by the local authority and once adopted, allows local authorities to raise pre-determined funds from developers undertaking new building projects or changes of use in their area.

The Government believes that CIL, where adopted by local authorities, can in large degree replace the payments made under the previous system of planning obligations agreed between local authorities and developers (known as section 106 agreements). It will allow local authorities to determine how this money should be spent and will provide a more predictable funding stream to plan and deliver the required infrastructure. Scaling back of some section 106 tariff payments is due to operate nationally from April 2015.

CIL provides a transparent means for ensuring that development contributes to the cost of the infrastructure it will rely upon, such as schools and roads. The charge for the levy is set out in a 'Charging Schedule' which is drafted by the charging authority. For Oxfordshire, the charging authority is the local district council. CIL charges will be based on the size, type and location of a proposed development. The levy is to be expressed as £ per square metre. Section 106 agreements will continue to be used to deal with site-specific infrastructure requirements and affordable housing post-2015. It is possible in such cases that individual developments will attract both a Levy payment and obligations secured through a section 106 agreement.

Some (but not all) of the Levy will be passed directly to parish and town councils as a “neighbourhood fund”. In January 2013, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced arrangements for the proportion of CIL receipts to be handed over as neighbourhood funds:

- In parishes with adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans (plans that have passed a local referendum and brought into force), the parish council will receive a 25% share of CIL revenue from development in their area.
- Areas with adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans will not be subject to a cap on the potential value of the 25% CIL share they would receive.
- Where a parish does not have a Neighbourhood Development Plan, they will receive a 15% share of the revenue from development in their area, but this will be capped at £100 per council tax dwelling.
- The remainder of the Levy will be the responsibility of the local district council.
- In areas without a parish council (regardless of whether the area has an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan), the local district council must agree with the local community how the money will be spent.

**It is important for communities to realise that in order to deliver the infrastructure to support development brought forward under a Neighbourhood Development Plan, it may be necessary for the county council to recover a proportion of the neighbourhood fund’s CIL receipts to fund the supporting infrastructure for that development.**

We advise neighbourhood planning groups when they are preparing their Neighbourhood Development Plan to consider this need to allocate a proportion of CIL receipts within their control to secure the infrastructure services provided by the County Council which will be required to achieve these developments.

**Oxfordshire’s District Councils’ current CIL status:**

- Oxford City Council has an adopted CIL Charging Schedule which came into effect for planning permissions granted from 21 October 2013 and can be found here: [Oxford City Council CIL page](#)

Further information on CIL can be found on the following websites:

[Government policy website on Community Infrastructure Levy](#)

[Government Community Infrastructure Levy Guidance Documents](#)

[Community Infrastructure Levy information on the Planning Portal](#)

## Oxfordshire County Council Service Areas

### *Areas for which we have statutory responsibility*

#### **Education: Pupil Place Plan**

##### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council has a statutory duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available for every child of school age whose parents wish them to have one.

A Pupil Place Plan, which is published on our website, shows local communities, and those interested in their development, how we expect school provision to change over the next few years and sets out present and predicted pupil numbers on roll. The plan also sets out our policies on school organisation and the statutory framework for making changes such as opening, closing or enlarging schools.

##### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

The scale of development proposed in your plan may lead to a need to provide more places in your existing schools to accommodate new pupils, or even for a new school to be built to accommodate the planned growth.

##### **Pupil Place Plan produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- The current Pupil Place Plan can be found here: [OCC Pupil Place Plan](#)

##### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you require further information on provision of school places as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email the relevant contact for your area listed in the Pupil Place Plan.

## **Transport and Highways Management: Policy and Strategy**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/transport-policies-and-plans>

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/roads-and-transport>

The county council is the Highways Authority for Oxfordshire. The following policies and plans produced by Oxfordshire County Council should be considered as part of the development of Neighbourhood Development Plans:

**Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2030):** All transport authorities are required to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) in which they set out their objectives and plans for developing transport in their area over a stipulated period.

Our third Local Transport Plan is now in force, setting out our transport policy and strategy for the next 20 years. You can access the current and previous LTPs and information on our Transport Investment Programme here:

[OCC Local Transport Plan 3](#)

Local Transport Plan 4 is due to be adopted by summer 2015.

**Area Transport Strategies:** The 14 current area transport strategies form part of the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) which runs from 2011 to 2030 and include information on our transport strategy for local areas across Oxfordshire. They can be found here:

[OCC Area Transport Strategies](#)

**Transport Asset Management Plan:** A strategy for managing and maintaining the county's highway infrastructure to deliver enhanced levels of service, operational efficiencies and value for money.

Our Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) describes the process of asset management, and sets out a strategy for managing and maintaining the county's highway infrastructure to deliver enhanced levels of service, operational efficiencies and value for money. It also contains programmes of maintenance and transport improvements for the current year and provisional programmes for future years.

The TAMP is a working document and subject to regular updating. It is formally reviewed on an annual basis:

[OCC Transport Asset Management Plan](#)



**Highways Management Policy:** This is a manual of policies for the maintenance and management of the highway network in Oxfordshire.

This manual provides guidance on good practice and the levels of service provision we normally aim to provide. It should be noted that given the wide range of activities and locations this manual applies to, there may be some occasions when we have to depart from these policies in particular circumstances. Reviews will take account of whether any departures require amendments to policy.

The most current version of the manual can be found here:

[OCC Highways Management Policy](#)

**Lorry Route Maps:** The maps on the following page show our preferred routes for lorry and van traffic across Oxfordshire and include details on weight restrictions:

[OCC Lorry Route Maps](#)

The general principle will be that goods traffic should get on to strategic routes as early as possible in the journey, while minimising the part of the journey using the non-coloured roads and avoiding, wherever possible, any identified environmentally sensitive areas.

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

[joy.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:joy.white@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Transport and Highways Management: Transport planning application advice**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transport-planning-application-advice>

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transport-new-developments>

## **Transport policy, guidance and processes for new developments**

[OCC transport policy guidance for new developments](#)

Oxfordshire County Council can provide groups engaged in neighbourhood planning with guidance on policy and processes for transport and highway aspects of new developments, including parking standards.

The current guidance (Residential Road Design Guide) is being updated, and is gradually being replaced. The webpage link above includes the documents that will form this new guidance, with links where the documents are complete, and a date indicating when we are planning to make the remaining documents available. Where a document is not yet available, please continue to refer to the appropriate section of the Residential Road Design Guide (also included on the webpage above) in the meantime.

### **Residential Road Design Guide**

The Residential Road Design Guide outlines our current guidelines on a range of transport related issues, including cycling and walking. It also provides advice on landscaping, outlines road standards and covers procedures for the transfer of the responsibility of the roads from the developer to the highway authority.

The guide contains information on the following which neighbourhood planning groups should consider when drawing up policies or considering sites allocations for development:

- Philosophy and principles
- Specifications for road construction
- Road types, characteristics and use in residential developments
- Highway drainage
- Technical support data such as visibility criteria, junction types and junction spacing
- Street lighting design requirements
- Parking standards for new development
- Structural procedures
- Routeing of services
- Planting on adoptable highways
- Landscaping
- Acceptable materials
- Conservation areas
- Home Zone characteristics and new housing development
- Adoption of highways, public open spaces and parking spaces

## **Planning applications**

All planning applications are determined by the relevant local planning authority. In most cases for developments proposed in adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans this will be the local district council.

Oxfordshire County Council's Transport Development Control team is a statutory consultee of the planning process and therefore gives advice to the district councils on the transport and highway implications of each proposal.

This advice is used by the district council, who is the decision-making authority, in determining the planning application.

## **Advice on new development site proposals**

The County Council's Transport Development Control team will provide a substantive written response free of charge on site proposals included in draft Neighbourhood Plans, provided that the following information is included:

- Scaled location plan(s)
- Scaled site plan(s)
- Scaled plan(s) showing proposed access arrangements (vision splays to design standards to be shown)
- Brief description of development proposal(s)

Transport Development Control engineers may also be available to advise at meetings and workshops while such Plans are being developed. However, please note that this will be a chargeable service (refer to the 'Our services and charges' section on pages 15 and 16 for applicable fees).

Neighbourhood planning groups may also wish to be aware of the following other documents and matters to which regard will be paid by the Highways Authority when planning applications for developments proposed by Neighbourhood Development Plans are submitted:

- Development layout to accord with the Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 (and to be constructed to OCC specifications)
- Car parking provision to be to OCC adopted standards
- Cycle parking provision to be to OCC adopted standards
- Tracking plans
- Pedestrian, Cycle and Vulnerable Road User Audits
- Safety Audits on proposed access arrangements
- Drainage/SUDS issues
- Contributions for transport infrastructure and services
- Impacts on any local Rights of Way
- Construction traffic impacts

## **Oxfordshire County Council services and contact details:**

Please contact us at the following email address:

[transport.development.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:transport.development.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Flood Management**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/flooding>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The Water Management Act 2010 requires the county council to be the lead local flood authority for Oxfordshire. As such we are required to lead the coordination of flood risk management for surface water, ground water and smaller watercourses in our area.

We are also the consenting authority for filling in ditches or watercourses, although in Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire, the district council work on our behalf.

Main river flooding remains the responsibility of the Environment Agency. Please check the Environment Agency site below to find out which are the main rivers in your area. District councils are the land drainage authority and we work closely with district councils on all land drainage and surface water issues.

Oxfordshire County Council has published a [Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment \(PFRA\)](#), which provides a strategic flood risk assessment of local sources of flooding and is also preparing a Flood Management Core Strategy.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

As development and land use plans, Neighbourhood Development Plans may have to take flood risk and flood management into account and identify flood risks in the local area.

It is likely that any planning applications for development proposed by the plan will have to demonstrate flood mitigation measures and we strongly suggest that all development proposed by Neighbourhood Development Plans should follow the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

We suggest that parishes and neighbourhood forums are proactive in the maintenance of local ditches and consider making provision for this if necessary. We also would encourage all parishes to consider creating a flood group and flood plan to monitor local watercourses and report problems to the Environment Agency, local district council or ourselves.

### **Flood management information produced by Oxfordshire County Council and the Environment Agency:**

- [Oxfordshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment](#) (June 2011)
- To find out which rivers are main rivers and to check whether particular locations in your neighbourhood area are vulnerable to flooding, go to the Environment Agency website: [Flood risk maps](#)

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

For advice on developing Neighbourhood Development Plans in areas that suffer from flooding from surface water, ground water and from rivers, contact the drainage team:

[drainage@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:drainage@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

The Environment Agency should be contacted in relation to main river flooding.

## **Minerals and Waste Planning**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/minerals-and-waste-policy>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council is Oxfordshire's Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, responsible for planning matters related to the extraction of minerals and the management of waste and is also the Waste Disposal Authority, responsible for the management and disposal of household waste collected by the district councils and at the county's waste recycling centres.

We make decisions on all planning applications for minerals and waste developments and are responsible for preparing a Minerals and Waste Local Plan, a part of the development plan which sets the planning policy against which planning applications must be considered.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Whilst Neighbourhood Development Plans should not include policies or proposals for minerals and waste development, we can provide information on the location of existing and permitted minerals and waste sites, and details of the permitted operations. We can also provide information on proposed and other potential future minerals and waste sites and provide advice to groups working on Neighbourhood Development Plans in proximity to such sites.

We can also provide information and advice on 'Mineral Safeguarding Areas'. It is Government policy that important mineral resources should be safeguarded for the long term. Mineral planning authorities are required to define Mineral Safeguarding Areas in minerals local plans so that resources are not sterilised by non-mineral development, although there is no presumption that the resources will be permitted for working.

### **Minerals and Waste Planning information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- Minerals and Waste Local Plan 1996: The Minerals and Waste Local Plan was adopted in July 1996 and covered the period to 2006: [OCC minerals and waste local plan](#)
- This page also contains 'saved' policies from the plan, which continue to have effect, to avoid a gap in planning policy while the new Minerals and Waste Local Plan is developed.
- A new Minerals and Waste Local Plan is in development. Information about the preparation of this emerging plan can be found here: [Emerging Minerals and Waste Local Plan](#)



- The key element of this new plan will be the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, which will set out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and core policies for meeting minerals and waste development requirements in Oxfordshire over the period to 2030: [Minerals and Waste Core Strategy](#)

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you require further information on minerals or waste planning or safeguarding matters as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[minerals.wasteplan@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:minerals.wasteplan@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Waste Management and Disposal**

<http://www.oxfordshirewaste.gov.uk/cms/>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

In Oxfordshire, responsibility for waste management is shared between the county council, which is the Waste Disposal Authority responsible for Household Waste Recycling Centres and waste treatment and disposal sites, and the district councils which have responsibility for household recycling and waste collections.

Oxfordshire County Council works in partnership with the district councils to continuously improve waste management services within the county. Oxfordshire currently recycles around 60% of its waste, one of the highest recycling rates in England and residents produce less waste per person than any other county council in England. We also fund the Community Action Group (CAG) Project to provide support and funding for community groups holding events and initiatives that help to reduce the amount of resources wasted and increase the amount reused and recycled in Oxfordshire.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

District councils can advise parish councils and neighbourhood forums on the waste management implications of any development proposed in emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans. We will also pass comment on the waste management implications of such developments.

### **Waste Management and Disposal information:**

- Oxfordshire councils have a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS), which sets out our plans for managing waste more sustainably in the years ahead. For the most recent version of the JMWMS, please contact [wastemanagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wastemanagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk).
- A new Household Waste Recycling Centre strategy is currently being prepared which will outline our strategy towards the development of current and new household waste recycling centres in Oxfordshire. We are due to consult on this strategy during summer 2014. For up to date information, please see [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste).
- Community Action Group: <http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/index.php> . To contact Peter Lefort, the CAG Project Officer about Community Action Group activities in your area, email [peter.lefort@resourcefutures.co.uk](mailto:peter.lefort@resourcefutures.co.uk).

### **Waste Management and Disposal contact:**

If you require further information on waste management services or strategy in Oxfordshire as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[wastemanagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wastemanagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Economic Development**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/business>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

We encourage economic growth and diversification throughout the county and work in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in driving activities aligned with its four key programmes: skills, infrastructure, inward investment and broadband.

We are coordinating the investment in the Oxford City Deal programme and in support of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.

We also manage Invest in Oxfordshire which provides a free, confidential inward investment service.

Your local district council will have identified areas for planned economic growth in their local plan and they should be your first point of contact for queries regarding local economic issues.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Parish councils or neighbourhood forums preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan may wish to learn more about local economic development strategy and priorities to inform any emerging plans.

### **Economy and Skills information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- The Oxfordshire Economic Assessment provides an overview of economic conditions countywide. It has been prepared to support the work of the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership: [Oxfordshire Economic Assessment](#)
- Neighbourhood planning groups can also find more information on economic development strategy and initiatives in the county on the Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership's site: [Oxfordshire LEP website](#)

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you have a specific query regarding strategic economic development within your local area and how it may relate to neighbourhood planning, please email:

[economic.development@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:economic.development@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Public Rights of Way and Countryside Access**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess)

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council has a statutory duty to record, maintain and protect the public right of way network (public rights of way are footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways). We manage these rights of way in partnership with farmers, land managers, user groups and local councils. There are many other ways of accessing green spaces and the countryside including using access land, permissive paths, nature reserves, country parks and other routes and areas. The county council often does not manage these but does recognise their importance in providing a joined up network and does work with site owners and managers where possible.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

We can provide limited advice to Neighbourhood Development Planning groups wishing to improve the accessibility of public rights of way in their areas, increase the connectivity of their local network, or to increase awareness and engagement in the use or management of the network.

### **Public rights of way information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- The county council manages the Definitive Map and Statement (DM&S) of Public Rights of Way, which is the legal record of public rights of way. To view the map and statements online, please go to the webpage: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/defininitivemaponline](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/defininitivemaponline).
- The county council's main landing web page for access is [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess) and this contains full information about most aspects of public rights of way, including the opportunity to report issues and find out how access can be changed and improved.
- As the highway authority, the county council has a statutory duty to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which sets out our ambitions for the management and improvement of public rights of way for walkers, cyclists, equestrian users and people with mobility problems. Oxfordshire County Council calls its new plan the Rights of Way Management Plan and the current draft version is at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/rowip) along with the original plan from 2006.

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you require advice or ideas on how to improve and develop public rights of way as part of an emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[countryside@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:countryside@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Gypsy and Traveller Services**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/gypsies-and-travellers>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

Oxfordshire County Council has a duty of care to all Gypsies and Travellers within the county and will address their welfare, health and educational needs whether they live on one of the six county council owned Traveller sites or are residing on the side of the road on an unauthorised encampment.

District councils do not own or manage any sites but their planning departments work with Gypsies and Travellers regarding planning for private sites.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Oxfordshire County Council can provide advice on the management of existing county council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites and the development of proposals to create new sites, or make amendments to existing Gypsy and Traveller sites within Neighbourhood Development Plans.

### **Gypsy and Traveller information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- List of authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in Oxfordshire: [OCC gypsy and traveller sites](#)
- Gypsy and Traveller Services policies and procedures: [OCC gypsy and traveller policy](#)

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you require further information on Gypsy and Traveller sites as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[travellers@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:travellers@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Oxfordshire County Council Service Areas

### *Areas for which we can provide information and/or guidance*

#### **Information for Developers (Developer Funding)**

##### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

New development leads to greater impacts upon infrastructure and services. Where this occurs we try to ensure the various infrastructures for which the County Council has a responsibility is able to be delivered to meet those impacts. We achieve this by assessing the needs arising from planning applications and securing either the provision of those needs or, more often, financial contributions towards their provision. These are commonly known as developer contributions.

Contributions may typically be secured to a wide variety of infrastructure such as:

- education and youth facilities
- fire and rescue services
- libraries
- museum services
- social and health care needs
- transportation
- waste management

The precise requirements in each case will reflect the various impacts of the proposed developments.

We secure the contributions and/or provision by means of legal deeds called S106 agreements or planning obligations. Through planning obligations developers contribute towards sustainable communities by enabling development to take place without creating unacceptable impacts on existing infrastructure and services.

As stated in paragraph 204 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'Planning Obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.'

Where a development requires works to be carried out on the existing adopted highway, an Agreement will need to be completed between the developer and the County Council under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980. Examples of such works could be the construction of new access/junction improvement of the highway/junctions, or safety related works such as traffic calming or improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.



The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is changing how developer contributions are secured (see page 18). Until a CIL is adopted we will continue to secure contributions by means of S106 agreements. Once a CIL is adopted contributions will be secured by a combination of CIL and scaled back S106 agreements.

**How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

We will help identify where the county council's requirements as an infrastructure provider need to be taken into account in the preparation and delivery of Neighbourhood Development Plans. This includes the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts and the securing of contributions or direct mitigation by developers for infrastructure projects.

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

For further information please email: [developer.funding@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:developer.funding@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Archaeology and Heritage

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/archaeology>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

We protect and conserve Oxfordshire's archaeological resources by advising on planning applications and policies as well as providing detailed archaeological advice and information to other departments within Oxfordshire County Council, as well as to district councils, property owners and other national and regional bodies and utility companies.

The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) - formerly the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) - is an index of all known archaeological and historical sites in the county, which includes the four districts for which the County Archaeological Service has the planning responsibility: Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire. The HER now also includes data from the Oxford City Urban Archaeological Database (UAD), creating a unified county database in the HER. We use the HER when we're asked for advice on planning applications and policies. Members of the public also use it to answer educational, research-based and general interest queries.

Oxford City Council is responsible for heritage planning issues within Oxford City.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

We suggest that in the first instance, neighbourhood planning groups should use the Heritage Gateway (linked [below](#)) to identify heritage assets in their local area.

Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services can then help inform the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans by providing specialist advice on a range of heritage-related subjects. Depending on the nature of the query, a charge may be incurred; please contact the Archaeological Service for more information.

If you need information on a listed building or on conservation areas as part of your plan preparation, please contact your local district council, which will be able to identify the location and grading of local heritage assets in your area.

Neighbourhood planning groups within Oxford City should contact Oxford City Council's Archaeologist for information and advice on their local areas.

### **Archaeology and Heritage resources:**

- Heritage Gateway, managed by English Heritage, is an online database providing access to details of archaeological and heritage sites, including those listed in Oxfordshire's HER: [Heritage Gateway](#). Neighbourhood planning groups should use the Heritage Gateway as their first point of call in identifying any heritage assets in their plan area.

- The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER): [Information on the Oxfordshire HER](#).
- Further Oxfordshire County Council planning guidance: [OCC archaeological planning guidance](#)
- Oxford City Council's Archaeology and Planning policy and guidance: [Information from Oxford City Council](#)

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

To contact the Archaeological Service, please email:

[archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

To contact the Oxford City Council Archaeologist, please email:

[heritage@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:heritage@oxford.gov.uk)

## **Biodiversity and the Natural Environment**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/natural-environment>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

Your district council is the first point of contact. This is important because Neighbourhood Development Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the relevant district's Local Plan.

However, the ecology planning team provide specialist advice to the county council on minerals and waste planning and help coordinate county work on biodiversity. In addition we contribute to the delivery of the aims of Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) via two hosted projects (the Wychwood Project and Lower Windrush Valley Project). Information is provided by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), which is also hosted in the team.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Neighbourhood Development Plans are likely to contain a vision for your area as well as specific planning policies. All plans can affect biodiversity and it is important to consider biodiversity when drawing up your plan:

- Neighbourhood Plans provide an opportunity to enhance wildlife and greenspaces within your neighbourhood.
- Some areas and species are protected by law (see the list linked below). Vital development for your community could be held up or even stopped if biodiversity is not fully considered at an early stage of your plan.
- Your Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to comply with policies set out in your District's Local Plan, which include biodiversity.
- Public authorities, including Parish Councils, have a legal duty to 'have regard' for biodiversity under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006.

You will also need to examine other environmental considerations such as your local landscape, built heritage, archaeology and public access to the countryside and greenspaces.

Your plans should take biodiversity into account by:

- Containing policies that protect important wildlife habitats and species, and enhance the biodiversity in your local area.
- Bringing local people together to discuss what is important – consider helping to start or support community projects and activities.
- Presenting a positive vision for the wildlife in your neighbourhood.

The five steps below can help you to get started. At each stage, try and add local knowledge where possible to ensure your Neighbourhood Development Plan preserves and enhances the biodiversity local to your area:

- **Find out what biodiversity is on your doorstep.** Your local authority may be able to provide this information. The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC, see contact details below) provides mapping services for a small fee. Some basic information is available in the public domain, such as the Community & Parish Guide to Biodiversity, linked below.
- **Protect designated sites and protected species from new development.** Some species of animals and plants are protected by international and national legislation due to their significance or vulnerability. Harming or disturbing protected species is a criminal offence, so they are also important to consider when allocating sites for development. Sources including the Biodiversity and Planning Guide, the list of protected species and protected species records from TVERC (all linked below) can help you discover if there are designated sites or are records of protected species within your neighbourhood area. If there aren't any protected species recorded, it does not mean that there aren't any within your plan area –they may just never have been recorded there.
- **Protect wildlife already present on sites chosen for development.** The absence of designated sites or protected species records doesn't mean that a potential development area is not sensitive for biodiversity – you'll still need to do further work if allocating sites. As soon as you start thinking about potential development sites to allocate you should arrange for a basic ecological assessment to be undertaken. Find a qualified ecologist to carry out the assessment – you can get quotes from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre and from specialist private consultants (you can access a list here: <http://www.cieem.net/members-directory>). You should collect this information for all sites to be considered, before making the decision of which to allocate. You need to show that you have weighed up the impact on biodiversity in your choice of sites. This applies to all developments - allocations for housing, commercial, industry, or any other use.
- **Improve habitats for wildlife on development sites.** There are many types of wildlife habitats that can be created or retained on development sites; even small scale development can create habitats. Think about creating policies that require developments to include features such as bird and bat boxes, native local plants in landscaping schemes, green roofs or new habitats such as woodlands, ponds, wildflower meadows or other wildlife habitats.
- **Enhance opportunities for wildlife in your neighbourhood.** A Neighbourhood Development Plan is a great opportunity to enhance biodiversity in your local area, by improving the management of local spaces, creating new habitats or helping people gain better access to wildlife. Your plan should also look at how to link wildlife sites, habitats and areas of greenspace together. Wildlife corridors are areas of habitat that connect wildlife populations, so that animals can move between them. Corridors can include: hedgerows, areas of scrub, drainage ditches or swales, wildflower margins along public rights of way and areas of grass which are not heavily mown. Put specific policies in your plan so developers have to take them into account.

### **Biodiversity services and resources:**

- Biodiversity and Planning Guide:  
<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/planning-and-biodiversity>
- Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Action Plan:  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-biodiversity-action-plan>
- Guide to improving countryside access: [Oxfordshire Parish Guide to Countryside Access](#)
- Information on protected species and planning:  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/protected-species-and-planning>
- Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study (OWLS):  
<http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk>
- BBOWTs Community & Parish Guide to Biodiversity:  
[http://www.bbowt.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Community\\_Doc\\_FINAL\\_MED\\_RES.pdf](http://www.bbowt.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Community_Doc_FINAL_MED_RES.pdf)
- Thames Valley Environment Records Centre (TVERC):  
<http://www.tverc.org/cms/> TVERC may charge for some of their services; please contact them for more details.
- Wild Oxfordshire (formerly the Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum):  
<http://oncf.org.uk/>

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact**

For further information, in the first instance please contact your district council's Ecologist. The county council's Ecologist Planner is Tamsin Atley:

[tamsin.atley@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tamsin.atley@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Oxfordshire County Council Property and Assets**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/council-owned-land-and-premises>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council, through its provider Carillion Capita Symonds, manages the property register, a comprehensive database of the land currently or previously owned by the county council together with current and historic leases.

The county council holds property and assets to meet service needs in the following areas across the county:

- Schools (including early years, primary, secondary and special/SEN schools)
- Children's homes
- Adult learning centres
- Homes for older people
- Outdoor learning centres
- Supported housing
- Children's centres
- Agricultural and non-operational land
- Learning disabilities day centres
- Gypsy and Traveller sites
- Older persons' day centres
- Highways depots
- Museums and archives
- Park & Ride facilities
- Fire stations
- Waste recycling centres
- Libraries
- Public health
- Registration (births, marriages and deaths)
- Integrated transport, trading standards and countryside services
- Council offices and staff houses

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Information on land and property currently owned or leased by the county council may help inform the development of proposals for a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

As part of their emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans, parish councils and neighbourhood forums may also be interested in allocating sites for development or including land-use policies which may affect county council-owned facilities or land.

The county council may wish to participate in the neighbourhood planning process in relation to specific sites and/or policies (both as landowner and corporately) both

in making representations and participating at the examination hearing.

Therefore we would ask that you contact us as early as possible in your plan-making process (see contact details below) to discuss any such development opportunities and proposals.

**Information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- Oxfordshire County Council Asset Management Plan: this document sets out the county council's strategy for managing its assets:



adopted Asset  
Management Plan 20:

- Property terrier.

**Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you would like further information on our future strategic plans for our property and assets, please contact:

[corporate.landlord@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.landlord@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

If you would like to know if the county council owns a piece of land or premises or would like to consult the property terrier, please email:

[propertyhelpdesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:propertyhelpdesk@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



## **Specialist Housing for Older People**

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

As provider of adult social and health care services, we support and promote strong communities so that people can live their lives as successfully, independently and safely as possible.

People are living longer and we are expecting a huge increase in the older population in Oxfordshire, particularly those aged 85 years and over. The availability of appropriate housing is crucial if older people are to continue to live independently in their own homes.

We would support the provision of a range of new housing, particularly specialist housing, to meet the needs of older people and to provide choice. We also look to promote the development of small, independent living homes for 3 or 4 residents who might have learning and/or physical disabilities, or mental health needs; such residents would be supported by care staff on either a visiting or live-in basis.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

In planning for new housing, you may want to consider how the type and size of new homes would help meet the housing needs of local older people.

Provision could include smaller market and affordable homes for retirement households who wish to downsize from larger family accommodation or housing built to Lifetime Homes Standards homes which is designed to meet the changing needs of families over different stages of life, allowing people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible.

It could also include specialist housing such as extra care housing and purpose - built care villages where people live independently but access on-site care and support as required or the more traditional sheltered housing developments with a more limited range of services on-site.

If you are looking to allocate a site for an extra care housing scheme, locate it as close as possible to local shops, GP surgeries, community facilities and bus stops to allow ease of access for older residents. As a specialist service, extra care housing needs to offer a minimum of 40 flats.

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

For further information on the provision of older people's housing within your local area and how it may relate to neighbourhood planning, please email:

[nigel.holmes@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.holmes@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **Common Land and Village Greens**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/common-land-and-village-greens>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council is a Commons Registration Authority under the Commons Registration Act, 1965 and hold registers for both common land and town and village greens in Oxfordshire, which can be inspected free of charge. The county council maintains the registers and processes applications to register 'new' town or village greens.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

A search can be conducted by the district council to establish whether land in a Neighbourhood Development Plan area is registered common land or town or village green. Oxfordshire County Council can provide specific information on a common or village green including how an existing designation may affect an emerging plan's policies. We can also offer guidance on how an emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan may seek to designate areas town or village greens.

### **Common Land and Village Green documents produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- The county council's webpage provides information on common land and village greens, on their protection and on registering them: [OCC common land and village greens](#)
- This page gives more information on what Oxfordshire County Council does to maintain the register of common land and village greens: [OCC common land and village green register](#)

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you require further information on common land and village greens as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[commonland@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:commonland@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or call 01865 810808

## **Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/what-we-are-doing-about-climate-change>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

Oxfordshire County Council actively encourages communities in becoming more energy efficient and promoting resilience to climate change.

We fund the Community Action Group (CAG) project to provide support to Oxfordshire community groups promoting the efficient use of resources. The project currently supports a network of around 50 local groups involved in a diverse range of activities around energy management, renewable energy, flood resilience planning, local food and waste management. The CAG project provides support and funding for community groups holding events and initiatives that help to reduce carbon emissions and the waste of resources in Oxfordshire.

We also partner with the Low Carbon Hub, an Oxfordshire not-for-profit organisation at the forefront of developing renewable energy projects for community benefit, in OxFutures, an initiative co-funded by the EU Intelligent Energy Europe Programme mobilising large-scale investment to develop renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across the county.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Groups undertaking Neighbourhood Development Plans may wish to liaise with local Community Action Groups regarding their activities.

The Low Carbon Hub can help neighbourhood planning groups to consider developing renewable energy projects based on the natural resources of their local area. These might be schemes aiming at reducing carbon, becoming more energy efficient or generating renewable energy for the community. They can also advise on creating policies for promoting energy efficient building features and construction standards in development proposals.

Low Carbon Hub's community energy service helps communities from feasibility, planning and tendering through to raising the finance and project completion.

### **Related websites:**

- Community Action Group: <http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/index.php>
- The Low Carbon Hub's website: <http://www.lowcarbonhub.org/>
- OxFutures: <http://oxfutures.org/>

Neighbourhood planning groups may also wish to refer to these sites to learn more about energy saving and climate change adaptation schemes:

- <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/>
- <http://www.ukcip.org.uk/>

**CAG and Low Carbon Hub contacts:**

To contact Peter Lefort, the CAG Project Officer about Community Action Group activities in your area, email: [peter.lefort@resourcefutures.co.uk](mailto:peter.lefort@resourcefutures.co.uk).

The Low Carbon Hub can be contacted by emailing: [info@lowcarbonhub.org](mailto:info@lowcarbonhub.org).

## **Trees and Woodland**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/trees-and-woodland>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

The county council is responsible for the maintenance of trees on council owned properties, adopted road verges, and public rights of way.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

We can provide advice to neighbourhood planning groups on any proposed alterations to trees on road verges, county roads and public rights of way within their Neighbourhood Development Plan area. Queries regarding trees in other parts of a Neighbourhood Development Plan area should be addressed to the local district council.

### **Trees and woodland information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- Our Trees and Woodland webpage provides contact details at the district councils for managing tree preservation orders and information on dealing with trees adjacent to the highways or to public rights of way: [OCC Trees and Woodland webpage](#)
- The above web page also provides contact details for the Highway Enquiries team and the Countryside Service officers.

### **Oxfordshire County Council contact:**

If you have a specific query regarding proposed alterations to trees on road verges, county road and surfaced public rights of way as part of an emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email:

[highwayenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highwayenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **High Speed Broadband Provision**

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/broadband-oxfordshire>

### **Oxfordshire County Council's role:**

We are a partner along with the Government (through Broadband Delivery UK) and BT in Better Broadband for Oxfordshire, a £25 million project to bring fibre broadband to over 90 per cent of homes and businesses in the county by the end of 2015.

Better Broadband for Oxfordshire will boost the local economy by creating and protecting jobs. The project is bringing significant social and economic benefits to rural areas where broadband access has previously been slow.

### **How does this role relate to Neighbourhood Development Plans?**

Groups working on emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans can contact Better Broadband for Oxfordshire to learn more about current and forthcoming fibre broadband provision for their local area.

### **High Speed Broadband information produced by Oxfordshire County Council:**

- Oxfordshire County Council website: [OCC Broadband website](#)
- Better Broadband for Oxfordshire website: [Better Broadband website](#)

### **Better Broadband for Oxfordshire contact**

If you require further information on common land and village greens as part of the preparation process for your Neighbourhood Development Plan, please email: [broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## Other Oxfordshire County Council services that could benefit Neighbourhood Planning groups

**Oxfordshire Insight** (<http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/>): A collection of current data and statistical information on many aspects of living in Oxfordshire that may prove useful in preparing evidence bases for Neighbourhood Development Plans and scoping reports for Strategic Environmental Assessments of neighbourhood development plans. Information available includes:

- 2011 Census data
- Economy: employment, business, earnings
- Education and skills: GCSE results, school performance tables, training and skills
- Environment: climate change, water quality, air quality
- Equalities: minorities, ethnicity, disability, sexuality
- Health
- Housing: house prices, house availability, affordability, household composition
- Population: demographics, demographic change, age profiles
- Travel: commuting, leisure, congestion, road networks

**Oxfordshire County Council Local view** ([OCC Localview](#)): An interactive mapping tool which allows you to see a variety of different services and places of interest in your local area.

## General information

### Parish/town councils in Oxfordshire

General information on parish and town councils can be found here:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/parish-and-town-councils>

A full list of parish and town councils can be found here:

[http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mqParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&SLS=4&bc\\_r=1](http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mqParishCouncilDetails.aspx?LS=17&SLS=4&bc_r=1)

### Oxfordshire Partnership

The Oxfordshire Partnership Board sits at the heart of our partnership work. It brings together organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to focus on things that are important to people who live in, work in and visit Oxfordshire and, more importantly, to do something about them.

All five district councils are members of the Oxfordshire Partnership Board. Towns and parishes are represented on the board by representatives nominated by the [Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils](#).

The Oxfordshire Partnership has published [Oxfordshire 2030](#), a Sustainable Community Strategy setting out the long-term vision for the county's future.



## Annex 1: Oxfordshire County Council Contacts

Oxfordshire County Council is located at the following address:

Oxfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
New Road  
Oxford  
OX1 1ND

Contacts:

Taufiq Islam  
Senior Planning Officer (responsible for  
neighbourhood planning)  
Telephone: (01865) 815884  
Email:  
[mohammad.islam@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mohammad.islam@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Tom Flanagan  
Service Manager, Planning,  
Environment and Transport Policy  
Telephone: (01865) 815691  
Email:  
[tom.flanagan@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tom.flanagan@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Services Contacts:**

<b>Environment and Planning</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/environment-and-planning">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/environment-and-planning</a>
<b>Roads and Transport</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/roads-and-transport">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/roads-and-transport</a>
<b>Business</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/business">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/business</a>
<b>Children, Education &amp; Families</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/children-education-and-families">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/children-education-and-families</a>
<b>Community and Living</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/community-and-living">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/community-and-living</a>
<b>Fire and Public Safety</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/fire-and-public-safety">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/fire-and-public-safety</a>
<b>Social and Health Care</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/social-and-health-care">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/social-and-health-care</a>
<b>Leisure and Culture</b>	<a href="http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/leisure-and-culture">http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/leisure-and-culture</a>

## Useful Neighbourhood Planning Resources and Websites

In addition to the resources provided by the county council and your local district council, the following websites provide valuable information and resources to groups involved in neighbourhood planning and preparing Neighbourhood Development Plans:

### **Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG):**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/neighbourhood-planning>

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

### **National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG):**

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/what-is-neighbourhood-planning/>

### **Localism Act 2011:**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

### **The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012:**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

### **ACRE Community-Led Planning Site:**

<http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning>

ACRE's (Action with Communities in Rural England) website provides neighbourhood planning news and resources.

### **Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust's Community & Parish Guide to Biodiversity:**

[http://www.bbowl.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Community\\_Doc\\_FINAL\\_MEDRES.pdf](http://www.bbowl.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Community_Doc_FINAL_MEDRES.pdf)

BBOWT's guidance on how biodiversity can be discovered, protected, managed and created within local communities.

### **Biodiversity Planning Toolkit:**

<http://www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com>

Created by the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) in partnership with a wide range of conservation and planning organisations across the United Kingdom, this toolkit is aimed at helping users to incorporate biodiversity into the planning system and new development. The '[forward planning](#)' section may be of particular help in neighbourhood planning groups.

**CPRE Planning Help:**

<http://www.planninghelp.org.uk/planning-explained/neighbourhood-planning>

Further information is available at the Council for the Protection of Rural England's website.

**Design Council/Cabe:**

<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/CABE/Localism-and-planning/Neighbourhood-planning-toolkits-and-guidance/>

Cabe's toolkit provides guidance on how they can help communities achieve their aspirations of well-designed places.

**English Heritage:**

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/get-involved/improve-your-neighbourhood/>

English Heritage's advice and guidance on including the historic environment in neighbourhood planning.

**Environment Agency: Planning for the Environment at the Neighbourhood Level:**

[Guidance Note](#)

This is an advice note prepared jointly by the Environment Agency, English Heritage, Forestry Commission and Natural England which covers ideas for thinking about the local environment where to go for information and evidence.

**Locality:**

<http://locality.org.uk/>

Locality is the leading national network for community organisations and works with the Government in providing support to communities involved in neighbourhood planning. Resources available include this 54 page, comprehensive guide to producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan:

[Locality's Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap Guide](#)

**Locality Neighbourhood Planning Knowledge Hub:**

<http://planning.communityknowledgehub.org.uk/>

Neighbourhood planning forum, events, resources and news.

**My Community Rights:**

<http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>

The My Community Rights website has been set up by Locality to help communities use the Community Rights introduced by Government, of which neighbourhood planning is one. This site includes information on support available to neighbourhood planning groups.

**Oxfordshire Rural Community Council:**

<http://www.oxonrcc.org.uk/what-we-do/neighbourhood-planning>

ORCC can support communities engaged in neighbourhood and community-led planning from general support, advice and facilitation for communities who want to carry out most of the work themselves, to providing professional help at key stages in the process for those who wish to commission others to do work on their behalf

**Planning Advisory Service (PAS):**

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>

PAS is part of the Local Government Association (LGA) and funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government. They publish a range of useful guidance documents on neighbourhood planning, which although many are aimed at local planning authorities, will be of interest to neighbourhood planning groups.

**Planning Portal:**

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/inyourarea/neighbourhood>

Planning Portal's introduction to neighbourhood planning, including neighbourhood development orders and community right to build.

**Royal Town Planning Institute Planning Aid:**

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

The RTPI's Planning Aid scheme can offer specialist volunteer planning help and advice to groups involved in neighbourhood planning.

**The Woodland Trust:**

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/campaigning/neighbourhood-planning/>

Information on the benefits of woods and trees and how communities can include them in their neighbourhood plans.

## Glossary

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

### **Community Right to Build Orders**

An Order made by the local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

### **Core Strategy**

A development plan document which is also a part of the Local Plan.

### **Examination in Public**

A hearing to listen to oral representations where the independent neighbourhood plan examiner considers it necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to give a person a fair chance to put a case.

### **Local Plan**

The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

A document published in March 2012 which sets out the Government's planning policies for England.

### **Neighbourhood Area**

An area within the area of a local planning authority in England which has been designated by the authority as a neighbourhood area.

### **Neighbourhood Development Orders**

An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

### **Neighbourhood Development Plan**

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004)

### **Neighbourhood Forum**

An organisation or group empowered to lead the neighbourhood planning process in a neighbourhood area where there is no town or parish council.

### **Relevant Body**

(a) a parish / town council, or

(b) an organisation or body which is, or is capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum (on the assumption that, for this purpose, the specified area is designated as a neighbourhood area).