



# Kington Town Council

Email: [clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

Web site: [www.kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

## Planning and Environment Committee

On Monday 6 July 2026 at 6.00pm

at

The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington  
for the purpose of transacting the following business

**Committee Members:** Cllrs. E. Banks, B. Bishop, N. Cornish,  
M. Fitton, R. Morgan, E. Rolls, P. Sell, M. Woolford &  
R. Widdowson

### Agenda

1. To receive apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation
2. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on [1<sup>st</sup> June 2026](#)
3. Planning and licensing matters:
  - a) To consider planning applications now due for consideration
    - i. [P261259/L](#) Roof renewal together with external repairs at The Coach House  
[Map – Location Market Hall Mill Street Kington Herefordshire](#)
    - ii. [P261512/F 37, High Street, Kington – Change of use](#)
    - iii. [P261392/L 37, High Street, Kington – Change of use](#)
  - b) To note any planning enforcement action
  - c) To note [planning decisions by Herefordshire Council Kington Weekly List](#) since the last meeting
    - i. Milk Hut – Hatton Gardens – Kington
4. Environmental matters:
  - a) High Street
    - i. To consider and decide responses to Herefordshire Council's Parking Strategy  
Note extension provide by Herefordshire Council to enable Kington Town Council  
to respond to the consultation  
[Item 4a Herefordshire Council - Parking Strategy Overview.pdf](#)
    - ii. To note Herefordshire Council's Strategic and Neighbourhood Planning updated  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) previously sent out in November 2025. These

updates reflect recent national legislative and policy changes, and the FAQs will continue to be reviewed and updated as further changes arise.

[Frequently asked questions about the National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) June 2026](#)

- b) Planters and floral displays
  - c) Allotments
  - d) Footpath and Highway matters
  - e) Churchyard maintenance
  - f) Litter and pavement sweeping
  - g) Update on proposal for 20mph zone in Kington
  - h) Emergency plans
5. Public Realm Funded works update
6. **Date and time of next meeting: Monday 7 September 2026, 6.00pm, The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington, and items for the agenda.**

*Michael Greenfield*

Town Clerk, Kington Town Council  
The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington, HR5 3DP  
Tel: 01544 239 098 or Mob: 07483 914 485  
Email: [clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

**01.07.2026**

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Planning & Environment Committee and may, at the discretion of the Chairman, speak on some agenda items. For more information on how you can participate in Committee meetings of Kington Town council, please speak to the Clerk at the address above.

## Minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026

6.00pm

at the Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington

### PRESENT

Cllr. P. Sell - Chair  
Cllr. E. Banks  
Cllr. B. Bishop  
Cllr. N. Cornish  
Cllr. E. Rolls  
Cllr. M. Woolford  
Cllr. R. Widdowson

### IN ATTENDANCE

Michael Greenfield – Town Clerk  
Ruth Robinson – Assistant Clerk

Public: 1 Member of the public

| Agenda item | Minute                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1           | <p><b>P&amp;E 031-26 To elect a Chair of the committee for the forthcoming year</b><br/>Cllr. P. Sell was nominated for election as Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year. Cllr. P. Sell signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.<br/><b>RESOLVED: That Cllr. P. Sell be elected Chair of the Committee until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.</b></p>                |
| 2           | <p><b>P&amp;E 032-26 To receive apologies, declarations of interest and requests for dispensation</b><br/>Apologies received from Cllr. R. Morgan.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Sell declared a personal interest in agenda item 7(c) (Allotments) and agenda item 7(f) (Churchyard Maintenance).</p> <p>Cllr. E. Banks declared a personal interest in agenda item 7(f) (Churchyard Maintenance).</p> |
| 3           | <p><b>P&amp;E 033-26 To elect a Vice Chair of the committee for the forthcoming year</b><br/>Cllr. M. Woolford was nominated for election as Vice Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.<br/><b>RESOLVED: That Cllr. M. Woolford be elected Vice Chair of the Committee until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.</b></p>                                                       |
| 4           | <p><b>P&amp;E 034-26 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2026</b><br/><b>RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on <a href="#">11 May 2026</a></b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

be approved, and that the Chairman of the meeting be authorised to sign them as a true record of the proceedings.

- 5      P&E 035-26    To review [Terms of Reference - Planning & Environment Committee June 2026](#) and consider any amendments required.  
**RESOLVED:** That the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Environment Committee be approved without amendment for the 2026/27 Municipal Year
- 6      P&E 036-26    **Planning & Licensing matters:**  
a)  
i) [P261228/FH](#)    Home gym within the grounds of the dwelling:  
[Map – Location Castle Hill House – 5 Church Road Kington HR5 3AG](#)  
**RESOLVED: No Comment**
- ii) [P261235/F](#)    Removal of an existing septic tank serving one dwelling and replacement with a Haba Bio Easy Flow Package Treatment Plant.  
[Map – Location Newburn Farm Kington Herefordshire HR5 3HD](#)  
**RESOLVED: No Objection**
- b) To note any planning enforcement action  
No planning enforcement action was reported.
- c) To note [planning decisions by Herefordshire Council Kington Weekly List](#) since the last meeting
- i) [P261206/XA2](#)    Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 attached to planning permission 242019  
Location: Land at Newburn Farm Kington Herefordshire HR5 3HD  
Decision: Approved  
Decision Date: Monday 18 May 2026  
**NOTED**
- ii) [P261205/XA2](#)    Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 attached to planning permission 251823  
Location: Newburn Farm Kington Herefordshire HR5 3H  
Decision: Approved  
Decision Date: 18 May 2026  
**NOTED**
- iii) [P261118/PA1](#)    Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed side and rear extension. The extension will extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling by 5.03 metres. The maximum height of the extension will be 3.35 metres and the height at the eaves of the extension will be 2.46 metres.  
Location: Cranleigh Hatton Gardens Industrial Estate Kington Herefordshire HR5 3DE  
Decision: Prior Approval Given  
Decision Date: 6 May 2026  
**NOTED**

iv) [P260952/PA1](#) Prior approval for a proposed single storey rear extension. The extension will extend beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling by 8 metres. The maximum height of the extension will be 4 metres and the height at the eaves of the extension will be 2.4 metres.

Location: 13 Montfort Field Kington Herefordshire HR5 3A

Decision: Prior Approval Given

Decision Date: 6 May 2026

**NOTED**

## **7 P&E 037-26 Environmental matters**

### **a) High Street**

To consider and decide responses to Herefordshire Council's Parking Strategy

[Item 7a Herefordshire Council - Parking Strategy Overview.pdf](#)

**RESOLVED: That due to the limited notice of the consultation period that the committee are unable to comment on the parking strategy.**

### **b) Planters and floral displays**

It was noted that the planters are looking good across the town.

It was noted that quotations will be sought from a variety of potential suppliers in late autumn to ensure value for money in the next annual contract for the work.

### **c) Allotments**

It was noted a Portaloo has been installed at the allotments.

### **d) Footpath and Highway matters**

To consider and decide responses to correspondence.

Footpaths:

The Footpaths Officer has returned from annual leave and is to be contacted regarding the various footpath issues.

There are leaves on the ground, which require removal. This is prominent around the Co-op and Burgage Wall and by the Market Hall, amongst other places.

Herefordshire Council are to be contacted regarding these matters.

[Item 7di Correspondence from Herefordshire Council.pdf](#)

**NOTED**

[Item 7dii Open Reach - Plan for Kington Town Council.pdf](#)

[Item 7dii Open Reach Email Island Terrace 21\\_05\\_2026.pdf](#)

[Item 7dii Open Reach - Specialist Technical Fibre Manager Email 22\\_05\\_2026.pdf](#)

**RESOLVED: That a representative from Open Reach be invited to a Full Council Meeting.**

**RESOLVED: No objection**

e) War Memorial

It was noted that a Working Party has been formed and that feedback is awaited.

f) Churchyard maintenance

It was noted that a report will be provided at the next meeting.

g) Litter and pavement sweeping

It was noted that a local business is to undertake regular cleaning and clearing of footpaths, supported by volunteers.

It was noted that dog bins are being sourced, for installation in the town.

h) Update on proposal for 20mph zone in Kington

It was noted that feedback from Herefordshire Council is awaited.

i) Emergency plans

It was noted that Cllrs. P. Sell and B. Bishop will be lead councillors in developing the Emergency Plan.

**RESOLVED: That an Officer from the Emergency Planning Team from Herefordshire Council be invited to a Planning & Environment Committee meeting to go through the process regarding developing an Emergency Plan.**

**8 P&E 038-26 Public Realm Funded works update**

The Clerk updated members on the Public Realm Service: Operational Briefing.

It was noted that Kington has a vacancy for a Locality Steward. The Clerk advised that Herefordshire Council were in the process of recruitment and that there is an interim officer who has responsibility for Kington.

It was commented that it would be beneficial for councillors to know when the advert is being placed, to enable Kington Town Council to promote the vacancy locally.

There is a central portal for reporting highways issues:

<https://my.herefordshire.gov.uk/en/service/Highways> [Report a highway issue](#)

**9 P&E 039-26 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 6 July 2026, 6.00pm**

**The Old Police Station, Market Hall Street, Kington,** and items for the agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed



Directorate/Division: Economy and Environment  
Team: Development Management  
Our Ref: 261259  
Please ask for: Awaiting Allocation  
Direct line: 01432 260386  
Email: [planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk)  
Date: 10/06/2026

Mrs Liz Kelso  
Clerk to the Parish  
Kington Town Council  
Office 1, The Old Police Station  
1 Market Hall Street  
Kington  
Herefordshire  
HR5 3DP  
[clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

*Agenda Item  
3a) i*

Dear Mrs Liz Kelso

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 261259 - Kington Market Hall, Mill Street, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3AL  
**APPLICATION TYPE:** Listed Building Consent  
**DESCRIPTION:** Roof renewal together with external repairs at The Coach House.  
**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 329605, 256614  
**WEBSITE:** [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications)

***Please note: Due the high caseloads currently being held by officers we are currently allocating new applications to officers on a capacity basis. This application is currently in a holding pile awaiting the allocation of an officer in the interim please respond using the online comments form.***

However, if you are requesting an extension of time in which to make comments, in due course a site visit will be carried out and an appropriate notice erected. Once the site notice has been erected a further 21 day consultation period will be given following the date of the notice is erected therefore before requesting an extension of time you might want to check the website for the current consultation end date. Any requests for extension of time should be emailed to [planning\\_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk) and someone will assess your request.

We have received an application which affects your Parish. The application is described above and we are seeking the comments or views of your Parish Council. If the land concerned is on or near the parish boundary, we consult both councils as a matter of courtesy and welcome local views.

The planning application and its supporting documentation can be viewed, normally within 24 hours, by using the website link above and entering the application number 261259.

If you wish to make comments which you would like the Council to take into account before making a decision on the application, please respond by **01/07/2026** If you do not respond by this date it will be assumed that you have no comments to make.

You will be able to monitor the progress of the application, including all of the correspondence received, any amended or additional documentation, the officer report and the decision by viewing the application on the Council's website.

Yours faithfully

## **TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

All personal data held is processed in accordance with data protection law. For further information please see our website [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/62/apply\\_for\\_planning\\_permission/3](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/62/apply_for_planning_permission/3)



Directorate/Division: Economy and Environment  
Team: Development Management  
Our Ref: 261512  
Please ask for: Awaiting Allocation  
Direct line: 01432 260386  
Email: [planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk)  
Date: 23/06/2026

*Agenda Item  
3a) ii*

Mr Greenfield  
Clerk to the Parish  
Kington Town Council  
Office 1, The Old Police Station  
1 Market Hall Street  
Kington  
Herefordshire  
HR5 3DP  
[clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Greenfield

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 261512 - 37 High Street, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3BJ  
**APPLICATION TYPE:** Planning Permission  
**DESCRIPTION:** Change of use from licensed premises to community meeting place (The Dove) and a craft workshop (The Yarn Barn). A first floor flat remains as existing (Part retrospective).  
**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 329675, 256610  
**WEBSITE:** [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications)

***Please note: Due the high caseloads currently being held by officers we are currently allocating new applications to officers on a capacity basis. This application is currently in a holding pile awaiting the allocation of an officer in the interim please respond using the online comments form.***

However, if you are requesting an extension of time in which to make comments, in due course a site visit will be carried out and an appropriate notice erected. Once the site notice has been erected a further 21 day consultation period will be given following the date of the notice is erected therefore before requesting an extension of time you might want to check the website for the current consultation end date. Any requests for extension of time should be emailed to [planning\\_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk) and someone will assess your request.

We have received an application which affects your Parish. The application is described above and we are seeking the comments or views of your Parish Council. If the land concerned is on or near the parish boundary, we consult both councils as a matter of courtesy and welcome local views.

The planning application and its supporting documentation can be viewed, normally within 24 hours, by using the website link above and entering the application number 261512.

If you wish to make comments which you would like the Council to take into account before making a decision on the application, please respond by **14/07/2026** If you do not respond by this date it will be assumed that you have no comments to make.

You will be able to monitor the progress of the application, including all of the correspondence received, any amended or additional documentation, the officer report and the decision by viewing the application on the Council's website.

Yours faithfully

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

All personal data held is processed in accordance with data protection law. For further information please see our website [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/62/apply\\_for\\_planning\\_permission/3](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/62/apply_for_planning_permission/3)



Directorate/Division: Economy and Environment  
Team: Development Management  
Our Ref: 261392  
Please ask for: Awaiting Allocation  
Direct line: 01432 260386  
Email: [planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningenquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk)  
Date: 23/06/2026

Mr Greenfield  
Clerk to the Parish  
Kington Town Council  
Office 1, The Old Police Station  
1 Market Hall Street  
Kington  
Herefordshire  
HR5 3DP  
[clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@kingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

*Agenda Item  
3ajiii*

Dear Mr Greenfield

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 261392 - 37 High Street, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3BJ  
**APPLICATION TYPE:** Listed Building Consent  
**DESCRIPTION:** Change of use from licensed premises to community meeting place (The Dove) and a craft workshop (The Yarn Barn). A first floor flat remains as existing (Part retrospective).  
**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 329675, 256618  
**WEBSITE:** [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/searchplanningapplications)

***Please note: Due the high caseloads currently being held by officers we are currently allocating new applications to officers on a capacity basis. This application is currently in a holding pile awaiting the allocation of an officer in the interim please respond using the online comments form.***

However, if you are requesting an extension of time in which to make comments, in due course a site visit will be carried out and an appropriate notice erected. Once the site notice has been erected a further 21 day consultation period will be given following the date of the notice is erected therefore before requesting an extension of time you might want to check the website for the current consultation end date. Any requests for extension of time should be emailed to [planning\\_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning_enquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk) and someone will assess your request.

We have received an application which affects your Parish. The application is described above and we are seeking the comments or views of your Parish Council. If the land concerned is on or near the parish boundary, we consult both councils as a matter of courtesy and welcome local views.

The planning application and its supporting documentation can be viewed, normally within 24 hours, by using the website link above and entering the application number 261392.

If you wish to make comments which you would like the Council to take into account before making a decision on the application, please respond by **14/07/2026** If you do not respond by this date it will be assumed that you have no comments to make.

You will be able to monitor the progress of the application, including all of the correspondence received, any amended or additional documentation, the officer report and the decision by viewing the application on the Council's website.

Yours faithfully

## **TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER**

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Planning

Milk Hut – 44 Hatton Gardens, Kington

*Agenda Item  
3c)i*

Response Received 17 June 2026



Dear Micheal,

I have completed my investigation into the above.

I have today closed the case with no further action. The shed is not considered to be a structure, it is not secured to the ground and it is sat next to a licenced hot food van which has planning approval and the large car parking area is also approved for car parking for patrons. There is no harm identified.

Best regards,

Dave  
Dave Wilkinson  
Planning Enforcement Officer  
Herefordshire Council  
Council Offices  
Plough Lane  
Hereford  
HR4 0LE

Agenda Item  
4a) i

## **Herefordshire Parking Strategy (2026–2041)**

### **Partner Communications Toolkit**

#### **1. Overview**

Herefordshire Council is inviting partners to support the promotion of consultation on the draft Parking Strategy (2026–2041), which is open until 03 June 2026.

We have attached a full communications toolkit including suggested news items, social media posts, a digital leaflet and social media assets for you to use.

The strategy sets out a long-term approach to managing parking across the county and supports wider priorities including town centre vitality, accessibility, transport, safety, economic growth and sustainable travel.

We are seeking feedback from residents, businesses and a wide range of partner organisations to help shape a fair, practical and future-focused approach.

#### **2. What we are asking partners to do**

- Share the consultation with your networks
- Promote the consultation on your website, newsletters and social media channels
- Encourage participation from relevant stakeholders and service users
- Use the suggested copy and graphics provided in this pack

#### **3. Key messages**

- Consultation is now open on Herefordshire's Parking Strategy (2026–2041)
- The strategy will shape how parking is managed across the county long term
- It supports town centres, accessibility, safety, economic growth and sustainable travel
- It covers residents, businesses, visitors and service users
- We want input from a wide range of partners and communities
- Feedback will help shape a fair, practical and future-focused strategy
- Consultation closes on 03 June 2026

#### **4. Who we want to hear from**

- Local businesses and town centre organisations
- Transport operators and freight/delivery sector
- Healthcare providers and NHS partners

- Schools and education settings
- Tourism and visitor economy organisations
- Accessibility and disability groups
- Community and voluntary organisations
- Residents and local communities

## **5. Consultation details**

Consultation is open until: 03 June 2026

Take part here: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/parkingstrategy>

If you have any queries please contact Phil Green, Communications Lead at Herefordshire Council  
– [phil.green@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:phil.green@herefordshire.gov.uk)



Agenda - Item  
19a) ii

# Frequently Asked Questions for Parish and Town Councils

**Planning Policy and Neighbourhood Planning Update**  
**Position as at June 2026**

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## Purpose of this document

This document explains how recent changes to national planning policy and legislation affect plan-making in Herefordshire, including neighbourhood development plans (NDPs). It is intended to support parish and town councils by providing clear, factual guidance, while recognising that some matters will continue to evolve as work progresses on the new Herefordshire Local Plan (2025 – 2045).

## How to use this document

This document is intended as guidance rather than a step-by-step manual. Parish and town councils may wish to read individual questions relevant to their circumstances rather than the document in full. Cross-references are included where topics overlap, particularly in relation to environmental requirements and neighbourhood plan timing.

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## Contents

1. What has changed in national planning policy?
  2. What does this mean for Herefordshire's Local Plan?
  3. What is a Five-Year Housing Land Supply?
  4. What is Herefordshire's current Five-Year Housing Land Supply position?
  5. Does this mean housing proposals will automatically be approved?
  6. What role do neighbourhood development plans still play?
  7. What is meant by "proportional growth" for parishes?
  8. Can parish-level housing figures be provided now?
  9. Should parishes pause neighbourhood plan work?
  10. Can neighbourhood plans still be reviewed or updated?
  11. How does climate change legislation affect neighbourhood plans?
  12. How does Natural England advice affect neighbourhood planning?
  13. What support will the Council provide?
  14. What parishes can safely do now
  15. Final note
-

## 1. What has changed in national planning policy?

National planning policy and legislation have changed significantly over the last 18 months. These changes affect how neighbourhood development plans are prepared, evidenced and examined, particularly in relation to the Basic Conditions.

In Herefordshire, these national changes are particularly significant given the county's environmental sensitivity, dispersed settlement pattern, and the need to prepare a new Local Plan to replace the adopted Core Strategy. A high proportion of the county lies within nationally and internationally important landscapes and habitats, including the Wye Valley National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), extensive river catchments with nutrient and water quality constraints, and numerous designated heritage assets. As a result, neighbourhood plans in Herefordshire are increasingly expected to demonstrate how they respond positively to climate change and nature recovery alongside meeting local housing and community needs.

### Updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024. Key changes include:

- A revised standard method for calculating housing need, which has substantially increased overall housing requirements nationally and locally.
- Stronger emphasis on:
  - delivering well-designed, sustainable development;
  - climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
  - protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

In Herefordshire, the implications of the updated NPPF are amplified by the scale of the revised housing requirement relative to the size of existing settlements, and by significant environmental constraints that limit where development can take place. Neighbourhood plans are therefore being prepared in a context where balancing growth, environmental protection and climate resilience is increasingly challenging and subject to close scrutiny at examination.

Neighbourhood plans must continue to have regard to the NPPF as a whole, and examiners will generally expect plans to reflect the current national policy position, subject to any applicable transitional arrangements for plans that have already been submitted or are well advanced in the process.

### Transitional arrangements for neighbourhood plans

Neighbourhood development plans submitted for Regulation 15 on or before 12 March 2025 benefit from transitional arrangements set out in national policy. In these cases, examination will generally take place having regard to the policy framework applicable at the time of submission, provided the plan has not been materially altered or formally resubmitted. A further Regulation 16 consultation, in itself, does not remove this transitional protection.

A further update to the NPPF is anticipated in summer 2026, and qualifying bodies should be aware that plans submitted after this point will be expected to reflect any updated national policy requirements. In this context, neighbourhood plans should focus on locally specific matters and should not duplicate national policy or strategic Local Plan policies, which are more appropriately addressed through the Local Plan.

### Document Status

This guidance reflects national policy, legislation and local circumstances as at June 2026. It does not replace statutory policy or legal advice and may be updated as the Herefordshire Local Plan progresses and further regulations come into force.

NPPF:

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

### **Changes introduced through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA)**

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 has introduced important changes to neighbourhood planning, most of which have come into effect through regulations in late 2025 and early 2026. Of particular importance for parish and town councils are changes to the Basic Conditions that neighbourhood plans must meet.

### **New and strengthened Basic Conditions**

Sections 98 and 99 of LURA amend Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As a result:

- Neighbourhood plans must now demonstrate how they contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, where this is relevant and proportionate.
- Neighbourhood plans must have regard to Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), once these are published.

These are legal requirements within the Basic Conditions, although their application will be assessed proportionately having regards to the scope and stage of the plan.

In Herefordshire, these changes are particularly important because neighbourhood plans often play a key role in shaping development in smaller settlements and rural areas, where strategic Local Plan policies are necessarily broader. Examiners will expect neighbourhood plans to demonstrate, through their Basic Conditions Statement, that these statutory requirements have been actively considered and reflected in policy choices, rather than simply acknowledged in supporting text.

LURA (sections 98 and 99):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/sections/98>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/sections/99>

### **What this means in practice for neighbourhood plans**

Compared with earlier neighbourhood plans, parishes are now expected to do more to demonstrate compliance, particularly through supporting evidence.

### **Climate change**

Neighbourhood plans are expected to show, in a proportionate way, how their policies:

- support climate change mitigation (for example, reducing emissions); and/or
- support adaptation to climate change (for example, flood risk, overheating, water resources, green infrastructure).

This does not require neighbourhood plans to duplicate strategic Local Plan policies, and expectations will be applied proportionately. In Herefordshire, however, neighbourhood plans are often well placed to address locally specific climate issues such as fluvial flooding, surface water management, heat stress in new development, rural accessibility, and opportunities for locally led renewable energy or nature-based solutions. Examiners are likely to expect neighbourhood plans to show that these local climate-related issues have informed policy choices, site selection (where relevant), or design requirements.

Neighbourhood plans are not required to duplicate national policy or strategic Local Plan policies and should, instead, focus on locally specific matters within their scope and influence. The extent

### **Document Status**

This guidance reflects national policy, legislation and local circumstances as at June 2026. It does not replace statutory policy or legal advice and may be updated as the Herefordshire Local Plan progresses and further regulations come into force.

to which these requirements are applied will depend on the scope, content and stage of the neighbourhood plan, and will be considered proportionately at examination.

### **Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)**

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new, statutory evidence base introduced through the Environment Act 2021 and implemented via LURA.

In Herefordshire, the LNRS is currently in preparation and is expected to be published in summer/autumn 2026, although this timetable is dependent on the completion of the underlying mapping work and may be subject to change.

Where a LNRS has not yet been finalised or published, neighbourhood plans are not expected to anticipate its detailed content. However, qualifying bodies should demonstrate awareness of emerging LNRS evidence and priorities, including the developing Herefordshire LNRS, and avoid policy approaches that would be likely to conflict with known or emerging nature recovery priorities.

In Herefordshire, the LNRS will form an increasingly important part of the evidence base as it is finalised and published, particularly given the county's extensive river corridors, priority habitats and existing biodiversity pressures. Neighbourhood plans will be expected to demonstrate awareness of relevant LNRS priorities as they emerge and to avoid policy conflicts with identified or likely nature recovery opportunities. Where appropriate, neighbourhood plans may also support delivery of LNRS objectives through locally specific policies, for example relating to green infrastructure, habitat connectivity or development design.

LNRS information will become increasingly important as the Herefordshire strategy is finalised and published, and neighbourhood plans that ignore relevant available evidence may be at risk of failing the Basic Conditions.

Environment Act 2021 (LNRS provisions):

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/part/6>

### **Increased expectations for evidence and justification**

Taken together, recent changes mean that neighbourhood planning is now operating in a more demanding legal environment.

Parish and town councils should be aware that:

- Examiners are likely to scrutinise Basic Conditions statements more closely than in the past.
- More detailed explanation and justification may be required, even where policies appear modest.
- Environmental evidence requirements (for example Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), including screening and, where necessary, full assessment) will continue to form an important part of the neighbourhood planning process in Herefordshire, particularly where plans allocate land or introduce material policy changes.

Taken together, recent changes mean that neighbourhood planning is now operating within a more demanding legal and policy environment than earlier plans, with greater emphasis on clearly evidenced justification and compliance with environmental and legislative requirements.

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In Herefordshire, where neighbourhood plans frequently operate at the limits of environmental capacity, these increased requirements mean that plans which allocate land or introduce new policy directions are more likely to require additional technical evidence and careful justification. Parish and town councils should therefore be realistic about the time, expertise and resources needed to prepare or review neighbourhood plans in the current context.

### **Key points for parish and town councils**

- *National policy and legislation have changed in ways that affect neighbourhood planning.*
- *Environmental and climate-related legal tests are now more prominent at examination.*
- *The Local Plan is being prepared under LURA, but neighbourhood plans are already subject to updated Basic Conditions.*
- *The timing, scope and content of neighbourhood plan work now require more careful consideration than in the past.*

## **2. What does this mean for Herefordshire's Local Plan?**

The Draft Herefordshire Local Plan consulted on in 2024 made provision for fewer homes than is now required under the updated National Planning Policy Framework. In light of the scale of change to national policy, the draft cannot be progressed, and a new Local Plan must be prepared to respond to the revised requirements.

Herefordshire Council is now progressing work towards a new Local Plan within the framework established by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA), having regard to transitional arrangements that apply to Local Plan preparation. While transitional arrangements apply to the preparation of the new Local Plan, the legislative changes affecting neighbourhood development plans (including amendments to the Basic Conditions) are now in effect and are being applied through neighbourhood plan examinations.

This new Local Plan will set the strategic context for future development, including the overall level of housing required and the approach to distributing growth between the city, market towns and rural areas, informed by evidence and public consultation.

The Herefordshire Core Strategy (2015) remains the adopted development plan for the county and continues to carry weight in planning decisions. However, following changes to national housing need methodology, it is now considered out of date only in relation to the calculation of housing need, as required by the current National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

## **3. What is a Five-Year Housing Land Supply?**

A Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) is a nationally defined measure used to assess whether there is a sufficient supply of deliverable housing sites to meet identified housing needs over the next five years. It is intended to support the continued delivery of housing in line with national policy.

Local planning authorities are required to assess their five-year housing land supply annually, using the best available and most up-to-date evidence. A supply of 5 years or more indicates that

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sufficient deliverable land is available, while a figure below this means that a full five-year supply cannot currently be demonstrated (as at June 2026).

#### **4. What is Herefordshire's current Five-Year Housing Land Supply position?**

Following application of the revised housing requirement, Herefordshire is currently (as at June 2026) unable to demonstrate a full five-year housing land supply, with the most recent assessment indicating a supply of approximately 3.11 years.

This position is reviewed annually as part of the Council's housing land supply assessment, with updated figures typically published in late summer or early autumn through the Authority Monitoring Report pages. The position will also be addressed through the preparation of the new Local Plan. Importantly, this does not mean that planning decisions are taken in the absence of policy or without regard to local circumstances; all applications continue to be assessed on their individual merits against the development plan and national policy.

#### **5. Does this mean housing proposals will automatically be approved?**

No. The absence of a five-year housing land supply does not mean that all housing applications will be granted planning permission.

Where a five-year supply cannot be demonstrated, planning applications are assessed under the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. However, this presumption does not override all policy considerations, and proposals may still be refused where, for example:

- they conflict with policies protecting important environmental, heritage or landscape assets;
- the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against national policy; or
- relevant neighbourhood plan policies continue to attract protection under national policy.

Where relevant neighbourhood plan policies are up to date and consistent with national policy, they may continue to carry significant weight even in the absence of a five-year housing land supply.

In all cases, planning applications continue to be assessed on their individual merits, taking account of the development plan, national policy and local circumstances.

The absence of a five-year housing land supply does not automatically reduce the weight to be given to neighbourhood development plan policies. Where a neighbourhood plan has been made and is up to date, its policies continue to form part of the statutory development plan. The weight to be given to those policies in decision-making will depend on the specific circumstances of the proposal, the age and content of the plan, and the relevant provisions of national planning policy.

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## 6. What role do neighbourhood development plans still play?

Neighbourhood development plans remain part of the statutory development plan and continue to play an important role in planning decision-making. However, they are now being prepared and reviewed in a changed policy and legislative context. Considering the role and weight of neighbourhood plans, account will also be taken of the policy context at the time the plan was prepared and submitted, alongside current national policy and local circumstances, including any applicable transitional arrangements.

The changed policy and legislative context includes:

- significantly increased housing requirements at a national level; and, pending the preparation of the new Herefordshire Local Plan and the apportionment of growth through a rural strategy, neighbourhood plans progressing at this stage should have regard to the national standard method when considering housing needs, as explained further in Section 8;
- the preparation of a new Herefordshire Local Plan; and
- new statutory duties introduced through recent legislation, including requirements relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

National planning policy sets out the circumstances in which neighbourhood plans can continue to attract significant weight in decision-making. It recognises that neighbourhood development plans which have been made relatively recently and which continue to address relevant planning matters, including housing where appropriate, are more likely to continue to attract significant weight in planning decision-making.

The age of a plan is considered alongside its content and the extent to which it reflects the current national policy context, rather than by reference to any single fixed time period.

## 7. What is meant by “proportional growth” for parishes?

Under the adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy (2015), housing provision for villages and rural settlements was guided by a proportional growth approach. This approach used indicative figures to help assess whether the scale of development proposed was reasonable in relation to the size, role and characteristics of the settlement, rather than setting fixed housing targets for individual parishes.

These proportional growth figures apply only for the lifetime of the Core Strategy plan period (2011–2031). Housing requirements beyond that period, including how growth is distributed between different settlements, will be determined through the preparation of the new Local Plan.

## 8. Can parish-level housing figures be provided now?

The revised standard method for calculating housing need operates at a local authority level and does not generate housing requirements for individual parishes or settlements. Decisions about how housing growth is distributed spatially are matters for the Local Plan, rather than the standard method itself.

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Until the new Local Plan has progressed further and strategic decisions on growth distribution have been made, the Council can only provide parishes with indicative information for context.

Any emerging parish-level figures provided at this stage:

- do not represent settled housing targets;
- do not constitute site allocations; and
- may change as Local Plan evidence and policy work develops.

Parish and town councils are therefore advised to treat indicative parish-level housing figures with appropriate caution at this stage and to avoid relying on them as firm requirements.

## 9. Should parishes pause neighbourhood plan work?

Given the scale of recent policy and legislative change, the absence of an adopted new Local Plan, and emerging environmental evidence requirements, many parish councils may find it helpful to consider whether to pause formal consultation stages in neighbourhood plan preparation at this time.

This does not prevent background work, informal community engagement, or active participation in the Local Plan process. Rather, it reflects the current level of uncertainty and recognises that, in some cases, proceeding cautiously may help to reduce the risk of unnecessary cost, duplication of effort, or subsequent re-work as the wider strategic planning framework becomes clearer. However, this will not be the appropriate approach in all circumstances. Where a neighbourhood plan is already well advanced, it may be reasonable to continue to submission, provided that any changes in national policy or legislation are clearly addressed through supporting documentation (for example within the Basic Conditions Statement or a separate position statement), rather than by repeating earlier consultation stages.

There are also legal risks associated with progressing neighbourhood plans prematurely in the current policy and evidential context. Neighbourhood development plans must meet the Basic Conditions, including compliance with habitats and other environmental legislation and having regard to national policy and statutory evidence. Where a plan is prepared or submitted for examination without adequate or up-to-date environmental evidence, there is a risk that it may fail examination or require substantial modification.

Even where a plan is successfully made, unresolved legal deficiencies, particularly in relation to habitats, environmental assessment, or impacts considered “in combination” with other plans and projects, can increase the risk of subsequent legal challenge. In these circumstances, policies within a neighbourhood plan may attract limited weight in decision-making, or the plan itself may be vulnerable to challenge.

These risks are heightened where neighbourhood plans propose new housing allocations or significant policy changes ahead of the adoption of the new Herefordshire Local Plan, as set out in the FAQ “How does Natural England advice affect neighbourhood planning?”

It may be helpful to distinguish between different types of neighbourhood planning activity when considering whether to pause or proceed:

- Evidence gathering, informal engagement, policy review (excluding new allocations) and participation in the Local Plan process can continue with relatively low legal risk.

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- Updates to existing neighbourhood plan policies that do not introduce new site allocations, amend settlement boundaries, or otherwise change the overall scale or distribution of development may be appropriate in some circumstances, subject to proportionate environmental assessment.
- Neighbourhood plans or reviews that introduce new housing allocations or other significant policy or strategic changes carry the greatest risk in the current interim period, particularly in relation to compliance with environmental legislation and the Basic Conditions.

Parish and town councils should be aware that even relatively limited policy changes can, in practice, trigger the need for more comprehensive review processes, depending on their effect on the plan as a whole. Careful consideration should therefore be given to the scope of any proposed changes when deciding how best to proceed. The appropriate approach will vary depending on the stage of the plan, its scope, and local circumstances.

In particular, parish and town councils should have regard to the Natural England advice on neighbourhood plans coming forward ahead of the adoption of the new Herefordshire Local Plan. This advice explains how the absence of up-to-date, plan-wide environmental evidence affects neighbourhood plans that propose new housing allocations, and why this raises issues of compliance with habitats and other environmental legislation.

Extend detail is set out in the FAQ “How does Natural England advice affect neighbourhood planning?”

## 10. Can neighbourhood plans still be reviewed or updated?

Neighbourhood development plans can continue to be reviewed, but the scale and nature of the review is important, as different types of change follow different procedures:

- Minor (non-material) modifications are limited to factual, typographical or explanatory changes and do not alter the meaning or intent of existing policies.
- Material (non-substantial) modifications involve policy changes that update or refine the plan but do not alter its overall strategy. These changes will require consultation and independent examination.
- Substantial modifications, such as the introduction of new site allocations, changes to the settlement boundary or significant strategic change, require the plan to follow the full neighbourhood plan process, including consultation, examination and referendum.

Where policy or legislative changes occur during plan preparation, it may be appropriate to address these through supplementary documentation, such as an updated Basic Conditions Statement or a separate position statement. This can provide a proportionate and lawful way to demonstrate how the plan responds to updated national policy or legal requirements without necessarily requiring a return to earlier plan-making stages, depending on the scale and nature of the changes involved.

Parish councils should be aware that even relatively limited policy changes can, in practice, trigger the need for more extensive review processes under the Regulations, depending on their effect on the plan as a whole. The scope of any proposed changes should therefore be carefully

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considered at an early stage, alongside the likely procedural requirements, consultation and examination implications.

## 11. How does climate change legislation affect neighbourhood plans?

Neighbourhood development plans are now required to demonstrate, where appropriate and proportionate, how they contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation as part of the Basic Conditions. For neighbourhood development plans that have already reached an advanced stage (for example Regulation 16), these requirements will not normally result in earlier stages of plan preparation needing to be revisited. Instead, examiners are likely to consider whether climate change mitigation and adaptation have been addressed sufficiently through proportionate evidence and, where necessary, recommend modifications to ensure the Basic Conditions are met.

This reflects amendments to neighbourhood planning legislation introduced through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and is reinforced by national planning policy. It is a legal requirement that applies to plans submitted for examination from 2026 onwards.

In practice, this means that neighbourhood plans should show that climate change considerations have informed policy choices, rather than simply being acknowledged in supporting text. The level of detail expected will depend on the scope and content of the plan.

In Herefordshire, neighbourhood plans are often well placed to address locally specific climate issues such as flood risk, surface water management, access to services, green infrastructure, and development design in rural settlements. Neighbourhood plans are not required to replicate strategic Local Plan policies, but examiners will expect a clear and reasoned explanation of how relevant local climate issues have been taken into account.

Where neighbourhood plans allocate land for development or introduce new policy requirements, additional justification or environmental evidence may be needed to demonstrate compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Further information on environmental evidence and legal compliance is set out in the FAQ “How does Natural England advice affect neighbourhood planning?”

## 12. How does Natural England advice affect neighbourhood planning?

Natural England is a statutory consultee on neighbourhood development plans where proposals may affect European sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), or other nationally important habitats and species. Its role is to advise on whether plans are likely to comply with habitats and wider environmental legislation, which forms part of the Basic Conditions.

In its advice to Herefordshire Council dated 16 June 2025, Natural England set out a clear position on neighbourhood plans coming forward in advance of the adoption of the new Herefordshire Local Plan. In particular, Natural England advised that, in the absence of an up-to-date, evidence-based Local Plan, neighbourhood plans that propose new housing allocations would be required to demonstrate legal compliance with the Habitats Regulations and SSSI regulations on a plan-by-plan basis, including consideration of impacts in combination with other neighbourhood plans and projects.

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Natural England cautioned that this would require individual neighbourhood plans to undertake significant environmental evidence-gathering, effectively replicating work normally carried out at Local Plan level. Natural England noted that this would be time-consuming, costly for qualifying bodies, and not consistent with the intended plan-making framework.

Natural England also advised that neighbourhood plans which do **not** introduce housing allocations beyond those already provided for in the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2011–2031) do not raise the same concerns, as the necessary strategic environmental assessment work was undertaken through that plan.

Natural England advised that this approach is likely to require individual neighbourhood plans to undertake more extensive environmental evidence gathering. However, its advice is a material consideration at examination. Neighbourhood plans that allocate new housing or introduce material policy changes are more likely to require robust and proportionate environmental evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Basic Conditions. Where such evidence is not available or is insufficient, there is an increased risk that a plan may require modification or, in some cases, be found not to meet the Basic Conditions at examination. Parish and town councils should therefore give careful consideration to the scope of any proposed allocations or policy changes, and the associated evidence requirements, when deciding how best to proceed.

Parish and town councils should take this advice into account carefully when deciding whether to progress neighbourhood plans during the period before the new Herefordshire Local Plan is adopted.

Natural England's advice letter to Herefordshire Council (16 June 2025) is available here: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/54mjzzhh/natural-england-letter.pdf>

### 13. What support will the Council provide?

Herefordshire Council will continue to provide advice and procedural support for neighbourhood planning, subject to available resources and the statutory framework. However, parish and town councils should be aware that:

- The responsibility for securing any required SEA or HRA evidence rests with the qualifying body. The Council is no longer able, as a matter of practice and resourcing, to undertake or commission this work on behalf of neighbourhood plans; and
- The Government-funded neighbourhood planning grant programme previously administered by Locality has ended, and no replacement funding scheme for parish-led neighbourhood plan preparation is currently in place. Notwithstanding this, the Council will continue to support the statutory stages of neighbourhood planning in line with national requirements.

Parishes and town councils are therefore encouraged to engage with officers at an early stage to discuss their intentions and the most appropriate way forward in light of current policy, legal and funding considerations.

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## 14. What parishes can safely do now

Notwithstanding the current uncertainty in the strategic planning framework, there are a number of activities that parish and town councils can continue to undertake with confidence:

### **Evidence gathering**

Parishes may continue to gather local evidence to improve understanding of community needs, environmental constraints and local character. This may include work on topics such as landscape sensitivity, heritage, local green space, infrastructure capacity, flood risk, or climate-related considerations. Evidence should be proportionate and focused on matters within the scope of neighbourhood planning, recognising that strategic matters will be addressed through the new Local Plan.

### **Community engagement**

Informal community engagement can continue, including discussions with residents, businesses and local stakeholders about priorities, opportunities and concerns for the area. This can help maintain momentum and ensure that any future neighbourhood plan work is informed by up-to-date local perspectives, without committing to fixed proposals or allocations at this stage.

### **Participation in the Local Plan process**

Parish and town councils are encouraged to engage actively in the preparation of the new Herefordshire Local Plan, including responding to consultations and providing local information and insight. This is the primary mechanism through which strategic decisions on the overall level and distribution of growth, infrastructure and environmental considerations will be made.

### **Review of existing neighbourhood plan policies (excluding allocations)**

Where neighbourhood development plans are already made, parishes may wish to review existing policies to consider whether updates could improve clarity, effectiveness or alignment with current national policy, including the anticipated update to the NPPF in summer 2026. As part of this process, it may be helpful to identify where policies duplicate national or strategic Local Plan policy and to consider whether such duplication can be reduced so that neighbourhood plans focus on locally specific matters where they add most value. Any such reviews should avoid introducing new site allocations or making changes that would affect the overall scale or distribution of development until the wider planning context is clearer.

Parish and town councils should also be aware that even relatively limited changes to policy wording may, depending on their effect on the plan as a whole, require a fuller review process.

## **Final note**

Neighbourhood planning remains valued and supported in Herefordshire, but it is now taking place within a changing legal and policy environment shaped by increased housing requirements, heightened environmental constraints, and the preparation of a new Local Plan.

This guidance is intended to help parish and town councils make informed and proportionate decisions, while recognising that policy and legislative frameworks will continue to evolve as the new Local Plan progresses.

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