

Your Neighbourhood Plan

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is a new way of helping our community influence the planning process in our parish.

What it can do:

- Develop a shared vision for Wheathampstead
- Choose where new homes, shops, offices and other developments can be built
- Influence the type of housing and community facilities we need
- Identify and protect open spaces
- Influence what new buildings look like
- Influence transport policies



What will the plan contain?

The plan will be based around our vision of how Wheathampstead will be in the year 2031 and a set of strategic objectives to achieve the vision. It will contain a set of policies that have legal weight in the planning process and will sit alongside St Albans' planning policies.

Who is preparing the plan?

The Parish Council is preparing the plan with the help of the community through a steering group. Although a Neighbourhood Plan does not have to be for the entire parish, we have chosen to prepare one for Wheathampstead as a whole, recognising the importance and distinct character of neighbourhoods such as Gustard Wood, Hilldyke Estate, The Folly, Lea Valley Estate, etc.

What role can you play?

It is vital that as many of our residents as possible contribute. By coming to this session and providing ideas and feedback to the steering group you help us make the plan reflect the needs and aspirations of the parish. You may even want to participate in an area you feel passionate about or you may have special skills we can use—examples include organising events, experience in planning, working with the elderly or young people.

What will happen once the plan is finished?

- We will consult the whole parish on the plan
- It will be finely tuned based on feedback
- It will be sent for independent examination
- There will be a referendum of the whole parish to adopt the plan. Over 50% of those voting have to show their approval.

How will the adopted plan be used?

Once adopted, it becomes part of the legal planning process. This means that as developers submit applications to St Albans planners, our planning policies for Wheathampstead are added to those of St Albans and influence the outcome.



Our eight strategic objectives

- SO1:** To retain and enhance a sense of belonging and participation within the community as a whole and also local neighbourhoods that have their own identity. The village should not be perceived as a town.
- SO2:** While welcoming new residents, to have sufficient and affordable accommodation of the right kind so that second generation residents can settle in the community, first generation residents can downsize when appropriate, and there is reasonably priced housing for first time buyers.
- SO3:** New buildings will be in-keeping both in design and size with the current architecture and be of such design as not to detract from the rural setting. Signage will be controlled to prevent clutter and inappropriate use of lighting, materials and design. The rural landscape in the parish and in particular along the Lea Valley will be maintained and any development that scars the scenery or causes coalescence with adjacent urban areas will not be allowed.
- SO4:** To preserve and promote Wheathampstead's historic buildings and conservation areas for future generations and to help draw visitors into the area for the benefit of retailers.
- SO5:** To promote and support business in all forms, including a thriving, vibrant and prosperous High Street, so as to deliver employment opportunities, make contributions to parish activities and encourage visitors into the village and open spaces. Areas and services will be designated for business use only.
- SO6:** To minimise our carbon footprint and improve personal health through the provision of local services, improved public transport and cycleways to adjacent settlements both within and outside the parish. To reduce the use of vehicles across the parish and the flow of traffic through the village.
- SO7:** To provide a wide range of educational, leisure and support services for young and old alike with a modernised and enhanced Memorial Hall acting as the services hub.
- SO8:** Our public open spaces will balance biodiversity, appearance and public access, and land owners will be encouraged to adopt an ecological approach to land use.

