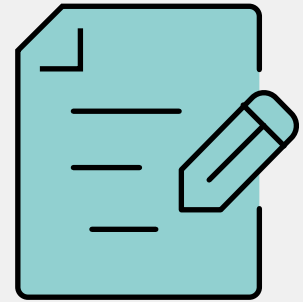




# 04

## Implementing and monitoring your plan

# Implementing and monitoring your plan



Policy documents age and can become out of date over time, therefore becoming less effective in decision making.

There is no formal requirement to review your neighbourhood plan, but it will help your plan stay relevant and effective. Monitoring will help you evaluate the performance of the policies in your plan and identify whether they need to be adjusted or revised. You should regard monitoring as an iterative process, with no specific beginning or end.

You will not be the only ones to benefit from monitoring your neighbourhood plan. Your plan contains proposals and policies which contribute towards the overall targets and objectives within our Local Plan (currently the Wiltshire Core Strategy). Therefore, the monitoring of your plan will in turn help us review our own strategic policies.

## How is your plan working?

To assess how effective your Neighbourhood Plan is in practice, it is useful to look at how it is being used and how it influences decisions or actions. In particular:

- Are the aims (vision and objectives) of your plan being achieved?
- Are the assumptions and objectives behind the policies still relevant?
- How are the policies being applied and how are they shaping decisions on planning applications?
- Have any of the policies had any unintended consequences?
- Are any of the projects and/or actions identified in your plan being achieved?
- Has any money been raised through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and if so, how is this being used?
- Have there been any changes to national and local policy?
- Have there been any changes in your local area which would affect the scope of your plan?

To maintain momentum after your neighbourhood plan is 'made' we recommend identifying a specific person or group of people to be responsible for monitoring. They should be familiar with your neighbourhood plan and preferably have been involved in its preparation. A good understanding of the policies will also be necessary to assess how well they are being applied.

# What to monitor?

## Planning applications and decisions

Once your neighbourhood plan is 'made' it forms part of the statutory development plan which relevant planning applications will be determined against unless planning material considerations indicate otherwise. Monitoring planning application decisions is therefore one of the best ways to measure how effective your plan is.

As the local planning authority, we have a key responsibility in implementing your plan by applying its policies through the development management process. As soon as your neighbourhood plan is 'made', you may want to arrange a training / briefing session with us, so that you can explain the policies.

Your role does not need to end once your plan is 'made' and we encourage you to do the following for your neighbourhood plan area:

- **Make representations (comments) on planning applications**

What are the relevant neighbourhood plan policies and why do you think the application conforms or conflicts with these?

Do you have any constructive suggestions for modifications and improvements to the scheme?

- **Keep a record of planning decisions**

What was the planning officer's recommendation?

Which policies were relevant and were they applied as you intended?

Was the decision delegated to an officer or made at planning committee?

What was the decision (did it differ to the officer's recommendation)?

Were there any conditions on an approval or reasons for refusal that relate to your neighbourhood plan?

If there was a departure from policy were the reasons for doing so clear and valid?

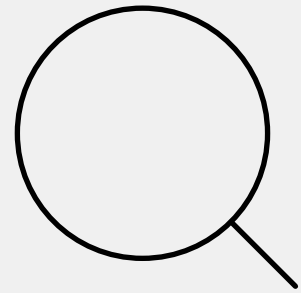
- **Keep a record of appeal decisions**

How were your neighbourhood plan policies applied and interpreted by the planning inspector?

- **Keep a record of enforcement activities**

Have any unauthorised works taken place which breach your neighbourhood plan?

Has the local planning authority taken any enforcement action and what reasons do we have / not have for doing so?



Most of the above can be recorded in a spreadsheet which you can populate as and when information becomes available. You can search for planning applications/decisions on our website (the 'advanced search' option allows you to specify type of application, parishes, and decision dates): <https://development.wiltshire.gov.uk/pr/s/>

Further advice on making effective representations on planning applications and assessing planning decisions is also set out in Locality's toolkit guidance *After the Neighbourhood Plan is Made: Implementation, Monitoring and Review*.

The hope is that your neighbourhood plan policies are being applied consistently and are proving to be effective. However, you may find that development has been allowed which does not meet your plan expectations. Perhaps the policies in your plan are being interpreted differently than intended. Maybe your monitoring indicates that some of the policies are vague or provide general aspirations, rather than a clear test to consider development proposals against. You might also notice that issues are arising locally which are not addressed in your neighbourhood plan.

Any of these issues could indicate a need to amend or redraft the policies of your neighbourhood plan. See our guidance note **Reviewing your plan**.

### **Other projects and actions**

Neighbourhood plans often include projects and actions that fall outside the scope of planning policy. Maybe your plan seeks to promote business and enterprise in your area, influence the local highways authority on issues like parking, traffic management and street furniture or deliver new community facilities or improve public open spaces. These are not part of the statutory neighbourhood plan but are just as important in delivering your plan aims. Therefore, keeping track of project and action delivery is another way you can monitor how well your plan is doing.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

Where there is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), 25% of monies raised from development within a neighbourhood plan area is paid to the town or parish council. So, for town and parish councils, there is a direct role in providing infrastructure and addressing community priorities, using CIL monies and possibly other funds. Keeping track of CIL funding and what it is being used for is also a worthwhile exercise.

### **Changes to legislation and other policy**

It is important to stay on top of any changes to national and local policy and guidance. You want to avoid the policies in your neighbourhood plan becoming eroded because they are at odds with other planning policy. You should also be mindful of changes to legislation, for example changes to permitted development rights, which may conflict with your neighbourhood plan (e.g. changes of use, size of householder extensions).

### **Changes to the local area**

Continuing community and stakeholder engagement may highlight local issues or concerns that were not apparent when you first prepared your neighbourhood plan. Examples of such change could be:

- Significant new employers moving into the area
- Loss of employment
- New or improved infrastructure
- Closure of shops or the collective impact of smaller shop closures
- Significant new projects
- House price increases or stagnation and viability challenges
- Population changes
- Environmental issues addressed or new environmental challenges

Assessing the impact of local changes will help you determine whether your neighbourhood plan is still fit for purpose and would benefit from review.



All material within this document is copyright Wiltshire Council except where indicated otherwise and may not be used, copied, or reproduced without permission. All rights reserved.