

How we got ready to prepare a new local plan

We started preparing a new local plan for Newark & Sherwood District on **1st September 2026**.

Government policy says we should adopt the new plan within 30 months of this date. This is to help ensure we have an up-to-date local plan that responds to the needs of the area and our communities.

This page explains what we did to get ready to meet the 30-month timeframe. It also has links to further information and where you can get updates.

We published a timetable for preparing the plan

The timetable shows when we expect to carry out the different stages and activities for preparing a plan. It helps us check if and how we can adopt the plan within the 30-month timeframe. We'll keep this updated as we make more progress.

Our timetable sets out a clear programme of work from the publication of the Notice of Plan Making in March 2026 through to adoption in April 2029, including the public consultation stages, gateway checks, examination and ultimately onto adoption in April 2029.

To support timely plan preparation, we have undertaken a Scoping Consultation between the 1st and 31st July 2026. This sought early input from key stakeholders, infrastructure providers, community organisations and interested members of the public, helping us refine our understanding of the issues the new Local Plan will need to address. It has also raised awareness of the plan-making process, our proposed programme, and the type of input we will require from stakeholders as the plan progresses.

This early engagement has helped establish an informed foundation for the preparation of the plan and should support more efficient consultation and evidence-gathering as the process moves forwards. We will continue to work closely with stakeholders throughout plan preparation and promote the use of digital engagement tools to help manage and analyse consultation responses effectively, reducing the risk of delays and supporting delivery of the plan within the published timetable.

Local government reorganisation will occur during the plan preparation period, with the successor authority expected to assume responsibility for the Local Plan from April 2028. We have identified this as a potential delivery risk and will work with the shadow authority, once established, to develop appropriate mitigation measures and seek to ensure continuity of plan preparation in accordance with the published timetable.

The timetable is available at: <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning/planning-policy-guidance/new-local-plan>

We established project management and governance arrangements

Preparing a local plan is a complex process. It involves many people across the council and from other organisations. Thinking early about how the work is planned, managed and signed off helps us monitor our progress and keep the work on track. It also helps us anticipate and manage any risks to us adopting the plan within 30 months.

We have already established a number of key foundations, including an agreed Local Plan timetable, approved budget provision for 2026/27, additional Government funding to support plan preparation, and a programme of work to develop the evidence base required to support the plan. A detailed project plan is also being developed to coordinate the activities needed to progress through the plan-making process and the Gateway assessments.

Project management and governance arrangements were considered by the Planning Policy Board in June 2026 as part of preparations for the Scoping Consultation. This reviewed how existing governance structures, including the Planning Policy Board, Cabinet and the Council's scheme of delegation, would likely interact with a 30-month plan preparation programme. This discussion identified the need to establish clear decision-making responsibilities and appropriate delegated powers to maintain progress against the published timetable.

Alongside this, we are developing a detailed risk register and monitoring framework to identify, manage and mitigate risks to plan delivery. Project management and governance arrangements will be finalised by Members in September 2026, alongside the decision to proceed through Gateway 1.

We planned how we'll consult on the plan

Public consultation is essential for the local plan to represent the needs of our communities. It must be easy for people to have their say in a way that works for them, so they can influence the way the area develops. By planning this early, we can ensure people are aware in advance and can get involved from the start.

We have undertaken a scoping consultation to get people's views on what the plan could contain and how we propose to consult on the plan at key stages. The consultation included a detailed draft Engagement Strategy setting out how we intend to consult and communicate throughout plan preparation. The strategy includes a range of engagement methods designed to maximise participation and ensure that consultation is accessible to different audiences. These include online consultation platforms, digital mapping tools and story maps, targeted stakeholder engagement, public events, workshops, meetings with infrastructure providers and community groups, and the continued use of the Council's website and communication channels to keep people informed.

We are currently reviewing responses received through the Scoping Consultation and will use this feedback to refine the Engagement Strategy before it is finalised. This will help ensure that our approach reflects local preferences for engagement and provides opportunities for people to participate in different ways.

The final Engagement Strategy will also integrate the project management and governance arrangements to be agreed by Members in September.

Further information on the proposed approach to engagement is available through the Scoping Consultation document:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b36370be0d7b4fa388badbda7888dac6>

We began scoping the content of the plan

Scoping includes considering how well the existing plan is working and gathering baseline information about the area. This helps to identify our future needs and

ambitions. Starting this early means we can begin preparing the new plan with a clear vision, making it quicker and easier to consult on the plan and make decisions about it.

We have begun scoping the content of the new Local Plan through an early scoping consultation carried out across July this year, supported by baseline information about the district and an initial review of the key planning issues the plan will need to address. The consultation set out why a new plan is being prepared, including changes to national policy and the need to maintain an up-to-date development plan, and explained that the plan will establish a vision for the district, local planning policies, development requirements and, where necessary, the locations for future growth.

As part of this scoping work, we have prepared a District Profile to identify key information about Newark and Sherwood and the potential issues that may need to be addressed through the plan. We have also started to consider the scope of the plan itself, the evidence base required to support it, how the plan will be appraised, and the approach to consultation and engagement. This provides a structured basis for understanding future needs and ambitions before the plan-making process enters its more detailed phases after Gateway 1.

The responses to the Scoping Consultation are being reviewed and a summary will be published following the Council passing through Gateway 1.

Further information is available to view below.

Scoping Consultation Document:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b36370be0d7b4fa388badbda7888dac6>

District Profile:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a69990f5805244ee92c6c39b576c6a51>

We began a Strategic Environmental Assessment

We're legally required to identify, describe and evaluate likely significant effects on the environment of:

- implementing the local plan
- reasonable alternatives, taking into account the plan's objectives and scope

This process will consider how community, national and international environmental protection objectives and any other environmental challenges are taken into account in the plan. It will help us to predict significant environmental effects and develop ways of preventing, reducing and offsetting these.

It is important we start this work early and are transparent about how we're doing the assessment when engaging stakeholders and communities.

We have therefore begun the early stages of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process by identifying relevant plans and programmes in the Scoping Consultation document, and baseline information and environmental constraints through the District Profile which will support the new Local Plan. This includes

recognition of the district's major biodiversity assets and designations, including sites of international, national and local importance, including the district's key biodiversity assets and designations, such as the Birklands and Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and the Sherwood Forest Possible Potential Special Protection Area. This provides an initial basis for understanding the environmental issues and sensitivities that will need to be considered when assessing the likely significant effects of the plan and reasonable alternatives.

We are currently commissioning specialist consultants to undertake the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment for the new Local Plan. The commission has been structured to ensure that the assessment work can support the proposed plan-making timetable, including the ability to consult on the scope of the SEA at an early stage. This will help ensure that the assessment is transparent, proportionate and available to inform engagement with stakeholders and communities as the plan progresses.

The scope of the SEA will build on the baseline information already identified through the Scoping Consultation and District Profile and will consider relevant environmental objectives, existing designations, potential environmental issues and the reasonable alternatives available for the plan. This will allow significant environmental effects to be predicted early and provide a framework for identifying measures to prevent, reduce or offset adverse effects as the Local Plan is prepared.

Further information is available below.

District Profile:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a69990f5805244ee92c6c39b576c6a51>

How to stay up to date

For updates about the New Local Plan, including consultation activities, please email planningpolicy@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk and ask to be added to the consultation database.

Further information can also be found on the New Local Plan webpage:

<https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/new-local-plan>