

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 came into force on the 6th April 2012. These regulations provide for local communities to be able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for their local area, putting in place planning policies for the future development and growth of the neighbourhood. These policies have material weight when planning decisions are being made; they can help to resist unwanted development and to promote the type of development the community wishes to see.

NPs inform and guide planning decisions, standing alongside the planning development documents of the local authorities to form the Local Plan. South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) is preparing an up-to-date Local Plan <https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/new-local-plan/> which provides the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Additionally, and over-arching that, is a Spatial Development Strategy for the West of England, setting out the best way forward on strategic planning policies for the sub-region.

At the end of 2020, Pilning and Severn Beach Parish Council decided to initiate a process to produce a NP. An application for the Parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area was made and accepted by South Gloucestershire Council.

A Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprising of several volunteers from across the Parish and representatives of the Parish Council, has been set up to take the process forward. A list of current members can be found on this website. A Service Level Agreement with SGC and the Steering Group's Terms of Reference have been established and agreed. Preliminary work to identify key issues is underway, which will allow a decision on whether proceeding with a NP is merited.

If it is decided to proceed, much work will be needed to build an evidence base around the key issues, including publicity and engagement with parishioners and other stakeholders. The NP document itself, would then be drafted and subject to independent examination to ensure it conforms to National Policy and does not contradict or repeat policies in the Local Plan. A community referendum would then be organised. If more than 50% of the votes are in favour of adopting the NP, it will become part of the Local Plan for planning related matters and will have the same legal status.

The NP is important in reflecting what the community wishes to see in the way of visions, aims, planning policies and proposals for developing and improving our area, with the appropriate infrastructure, whilst ensuring the Parish remains sustainable.

This website will be used to hold information on the developments and progress of the NP as it comes together and will host the NP itself as it moves through inspection and referendum.

Although having already commenced its work, the NP Steering Group would welcome additional volunteers with appropriate skills, experiences or enthusiasm to join the group. Furthermore, volunteers will be needed to help in the data gathering and publicity activities.

If you would like to join the group or offer your services as a volunteer at any stage, please use the 'contact us' tab on this website.

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