

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Communities now have new powers to shape development through Neighbourhood Planning, a new right introduced through the Localism Act 2011. ([Plain English Guide to the Localism Act](#), pdf).

It allows communities to prepare:

- Neighbourhood Development Plans;
- Neighbourhood Development Orders; and
- Community Right to Build Orders.

Who can undertake Neighbourhood Planning?

If there's a parish or town council, that is the only body that can lead on neighbourhood planning. If there isn't a parish or town council, then a community group known as a neighbourhood forum needs to be established to lead the process.

The Localism Act recognises that not all communities are residential in nature and in non-parished areas that are predominately commercial a business-led neighbourhood forum can be established.

The parish or town council, or neighbourhood forum, needs to apply to their local council to have an area designated as a neighbourhood area. This will then become the area where neighbourhood development orders apply.

The preparation of a Community Right to Build order is a slightly different process in that it requires the formation of a constituted community group rather than a neighbourhood forum. Parish and town councils can also lead on Community Right to Build Orders.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

A Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out the policies against which planning applications are assessed. Neighbourhood Development Plans will become part of the local development plan for the area, which means that the policies and

proposals contained within them will be used in the determination of planning applications, including appeals. It must be stressed that the policies produced cannot block development that is part of the local development plan. What they can do is shape and influence where that development will go and what it will look like.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Order?

A Neighbourhood Development Order can grant planning permission for specified developments in a neighbourhood area. Once established there would be no need for anyone to apply to the council for planning permission if it is for the type of development covered by the order.

What is a Community Right to Build Order?

A Community Right to Build order is a type of Neighbourhood Development Order in that it grants planning permission for types of development that communities want to see in their area. As well as housing, this includes other amenities for the benefit of local people such as a community building or playground.

Planning Aid England provides free and independent advice on neighbourhood planning. Call: 0203 206 1880 or Email: info@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

