



Statement of general planning information & information for voters

Parish of Winterton-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

A Referendum relating to the adoption of the parish of Winterton-on-Sea Neighbourhood Plan will be held on Thursday 24 February 2022. This statement explains what a neighbourhood plan is, the role of the referendum and how you can take part.

What is a neighbourhood plan?

A neighbourhood plan is a formal plan about development (building and changes in the use of land) and can be prepared by a local community (usually a parish council). It provides the opportunity to shape (but not stop) development in the area. Once adopted, a neighbourhood plan's policies are used to help decide planning applications in the area as the plan forms part of the local authority's Development Plan. A neighbourhood plan does not have to cover all planning matters, it could just be one policy. This provides the opportunity to focus on the local community's own agreed priorities for the area.

How is a neighbourhood plan prepared?

A neighbourhood plan is prepared for a community by an organisation (also known as the 'neighbourhood body'), which in most cases within the Borough will be the parish council. However, in un-parished parts of the Borough, other organisations such as a 'neighbourhood forum' or another community organisation may be formed, and would need to apply to the Council to take the lead.

It is good practice for the parish council to set up a working group to lead on the preparation of the plan and this can comprise members of the community that are not on the parish council. Neighbourhood bodies may consider working with consultants to help them prepare their plans. The relationship between the parish council and the working group should be clear and transparent and this can be formalised with terms of reference. It is ultimately for the parish council, as the neighbourhood body, to make key decisions such as when to formally consult or submit the neighbourhood plan.

A neighbourhood plan must meet the 'Basic Conditions':

- support sustainable development
- generally conform to the strategic policies in the local plan
- have regard to national planning policies, and
- comply with relevant legislation; e.g. ensure environmental matters are taken into account, protect certain species and habitats, human rights, etc.
- specify the period it will cover

Neighbourhood plans have to pass through a series of formal stages, and conform to some nationally set 'basic conditions' (as shown above) before they come into force. One of the final stages is a local referendum, where the plan must receive at least 50% of the votes cast. Prior to referendum, the plan will have been examined by an independent appointed person and a decision made by the local authority for the plan to proceed to referendum.

Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A Referendum asks you to vote yes or no to a question. For this Referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

“Do you want Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Broads Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Winterton-on-Sea to help them decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper. Put a cross in only one box or your vote will not be counted.

If more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in this Referendum, then the Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the Broads Authority will use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Parish of Winterton-on-Sea. The Neighbourhood Plan will then become part of the Development Plans for the two local planning authority areas. This is a set of documents which sets out planning policies to guide development in the respective areas.

If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', then planning applications will be decided without using the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the local area.

For further information on the Referendum process please refer to the '**Information Statement**'.

Can I Vote?

You can vote in the Referendum if you live in the Parish of Winterton-on-Sea and:-

- You are registered to vote in Local Government Elections, and
- You are 18 years of age or over on **Thursday, 24 February 2022**

- You have to be registered to vote by Tuesday, 8 February 2022 to vote in the Referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling (01493) 846327.
- The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with the procedures which are similar to those used at Local Government Elections.

Ways of Voting

There are three ways of voting:-

1. In person
 - on Thursday 24 February 2022 at your local polling station. It is easy and the staff on duty will always help if you are not sure what to do.
 - In Winterton, the Polling Station is: Village Hall, Winterton NR29 4AT
 - You will receive a poll card telling you that this is your polling station.
 - If you do not receive your poll card you can contact Electoral Services on (01493) 846327 to ensure you are registered.
 - The polling station will be open from 7am to 10pm
 - If you are not in the queue for a ballot paper by 10pm you will not be able to vote; so make sure you arrive in plenty of time.
2. By post
 - To vote by post you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Town Hall, Great Yarmouth NR30 2QF to arrive by **5pm on Wednesday 9 February 2022**. Please note if you already have a postal vote in place, there is no need to complete another application form.
 - Ballot papers can be sent overseas, but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your ballot papers by 10pm on **Thursday 24 February 2022**.
 - You should receive your postal vote about a week before polling day. If it does not arrive in time, you can get a replacement up to 5pm on **Thursday 24 February 2022**.
3. By proxy
 - If you cannot go to the polling station, and do not wish to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf.
 - To vote by proxy, you need to complete an application form and send it to Electoral Services, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Town Hall, Great Yarmouth NR30 2QF to arrive by **5pm on Wednesday, 16 February 2022**.
 - When you apply for a proxy vote you must say why you cannot vote in person
 - Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available from Electoral Services on (01493) 846327 or by downloading from the Council's website at: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Am I Registered to Vote?

- If you are not registered you will not be able to vote.
- If you are not on the Electoral Register, you will need to complete an application form. This can be done online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or alternatively forms are available from Electoral Services on (01493) 846327.
- Completed applications must be received by no later than **Tuesday 8 February 2022**.

Further information on Neighbourhood Planning:

- [Great Yarmouth Borough Council](#)
- [Locality](#)
- [National Planning Practice Guidance](#)

Town & Country Planning - Background

The town and country planning system exists to protect and promote the public interest in the way land is used and developed. The current British planning system was established in 1947, and grew out of concern that uncoordinated development in the 19th and early 20th century had resulted in severe adverse impacts on health, economic efficiency, quality of life and the environment. Owners of property in Britain do not have a right to build or change the use of land as they please, but must obtain planning permission to do so. (Some development, typically minor changes, is 'permitted development'; thus benefits from an automatic permission).

More broadly the system aims to balance the needs and aspirations of the immediate site or locality with those for the wider area and country within which it sits, and to balance current concerns against longer term interests.

Inevitably these different aims and considerations are often in tension, and so there are difficult and controversial decisions to be made in balancing them when considering whether to grant planning permission or include something in a plan. (Planning decisions often seem easy if only one consideration is taken into account).

Local Planning Decisions

The responsibility for making most of these difficult decisions is given by Parliament to the local planning authority which, in this area, is Great Yarmouth Borough Council, except those areas within the designated Broads are which is controlled by the Broads Authority.

In most cases, prior public consultation is required before making a decision on planning applications. Decisions on applications must be made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless there are material planning considerations suggesting otherwise.

One of the important considerations which must be taken into account is national (government) planning policy, including the [National Planning Policy Framework](#). This tells local planning authorities which issues they should consider most important, how decisions should be reached, how plans should be prepared and what they should contain, etc.

Decisions are made by elected councillors, advised by specialist planning officers, though routine decisions (e.g. planning applications clearly in accordance with, or contrary to, adopted plans) will usually be delegated by councillors to senior officers; because of the volume of work and pressures of time.

There is provision for the planning decisions of the local planning authority to be challenged and reviewed by an independent planning inspector (or, if the issue is the legality of the decision or the way it was reached, the courts).

Local Plans

Local plans are prepared by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), usually the Council or the national park authority for the area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area and a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities. Local plans usually look forward at least over the next 15 years.

The Local Plan sets out the level of growth that needs to be planned for the local authority area. It sets out where that growth should be located and how it should be delivered. It also sets out the planning policies which the relevant council will use in determining planning applications. Policies in local plans can be 'strategic' and 'non-strategic'.

The local plan will be prepared with public consultation and to be formally adopted must be tested and pass through Examination conducted by an independent planning inspector; who will consider the views of those who oppose or support the plan, and decide whether it can be adopted and brought into force.