



**Stantonbury Parish Council**

# **Guide to the Neighbourhood Plan**

**Welcome to the future of  
Stantonbury Parish**

## The Neighbourhood Plan

I would like to introduce the Parish Council Guide for the Production of the Stantonbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Our recent Parish magazine introduced an initial thought regarding the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. This magazine has been devoted to advising you of why we, the Parish Council, think it is important that residents develop this Plan and what's involved in its production.

At a strategic level Milton Keynes Council is proposing Site Allocation of amenity land for development, to meet its housing commitments dictated by Central Government and the Regeneration of the ageing housing stock. Both issues that will greatly impact our community.

At a local level, there are some aspects of ongoing development that frequently annoy or cause distress amongst our Parishioners. For example, the ubiquitous growth in the number of Houses of Multiple Occupancy, parking issues associated with them or parking issues generally. Speeding on our roads etc, are some of things brought to the Parish Council for intervention or action.

These local issues will impact the entire Parish now and in the future. Currently we have to apply the normal planning mechanisms to get our view across to the Planning Directorate of Milton Keynes Council. We, in spite of our best efforts, are frequently overruled by the Planning Officers recommendations through technicalities, lack of time or opportunity for consultation.

The Government has been gradually changing the way planning is approached and at the same time devolving powers to residents through the Localism Act 2011 to have control of how their environment is impacted by new planning applications. A recent example is the latest change removing planning application requirements for developers, building on brown field sites, including compulsory purchase of existing buildings. (Budget Speech July 2015)

So how does the Neighbourhood Plan fit into all this?

This is the mechanism that fits below Milton Keynes Council's Local Plan and sets out what we, the residents, see as important matters that should be considered in considering planning applications. It will be our collective voice that sets out what we want to be complied with at local level, on planning issues, rather than individual specific application objections, in other words, all the issues we want to control can be embedded in the Neighbourhood Plan and are legally binding on the Planning Department to apply where this Parish is concerned.

Many other Parishes in Milton Keynes and nationally have now adopted their own Neighbourhood Plan to great effect on their environment.

Please take the time to read this document. If you want to be part of the group developing the Plan please complete the expression of interest at the end of this document.

Graham Davison  
Chairman Stantonbury Parish Council





## What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

Fig1 (page 8) shows a simplified view of planning process. Development proposals from any source are reviewed against Milton Keynes Council's Strategic Plan (back of this document) then the Local Plan. The application is then put out for public comment. Individuals or collectives, such as the Parish Council have, at this time the opportunity to support or object to the development application.

For major developments, the short period of time in which to comment, prevents organising effective consultation and our intervention in the process is rather "Shut the stable door after the horse has bolted" and frequently approval is invariably given against the wishes of the residents.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a legal tool compiled by residents and the Parish Council setting out what you want in your area and it can cover any aspect of living in this community. It remains in force for 12 years.

When completed it is voted on by the community in a referendum and if accepted, becomes a further level of Planning Control to be considered by Milton Keynes Council Planning Department in considering any proposed development.

It would be naive to think that because an area in the Parish is fully developed no changes are ever likely to happen. Milton Keynes is an expanding city within a country with an expanding population. We should be ever mindful that green spaces we currently enjoy may be considered for development



Bancroft Park is currently enjoyed by all the Parish and we would like to keep it.

### Do you want/need a Neighbourhood Plan?

Without a Neighbourhood Plan any planning application will only be considered against the requirements of the Strategic and Local Plans. Objections will be considered in the way they are now.

A Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to set Policies and objectives binding on Milton Keynes Council and Planning Applicants. It enhances and tailors the Local Plan to our specific needs.

It is not just about housing. Nor is it about preventing development. There may be occasions when additional housing may be beneficial to the area. There may be opportunities in allowing business or shops to expand but the Plan is far more than either of these examples. It is all about how we shape the future environment and social structure of our Parish for the benefit of us all.

Initially the Parish Council has sought approval from Milton Keynes Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. This approval has been given.

We have done this to facilitate the grant monies available to develop the Plan and to alert the Council of the need to assign a Planning Officer to support the Plan.



Currently the application for the Neighbourhood Plan covers the entire Parish but it can be changed to suit a local area or if needed, to extend beyond our Parish boundary into areas that may affect us. We can have many discrete Local Plans but each must follow the same fundamental development process as a larger collective Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is to represent the Planning interests of all those within the Parish.

However, if after wider consultation the view is that a Plan is not required then our application can be cancelled. The key here is to make sure your voice is heard by responding to the initial questionnaire you will receive.



Cricket being played during the summer in Bradville for all to enjoy.

### **Who produces The Neighbourhood Plan?**

You do, the residents together with other interested parties, including the Parish Council. All those that have an interest in being part of the group to form the Plan can participate. You will have to organise yourselves to be representative of all interests.

For example:-

- Schools;
- Places of worship;
- Health facilities;
- Businesses;
- Residents;
- Clubs;
- Associations;
- The Police;
- The Environment Agency;
- English Heritage;
- Natural England;
- The Parks Trust.



Nobody should feel excluded. If our wider community is on board from the start, then it will be easier to achieve the support that is needed to adopt a Neighbourhood Plan at the referendum stage.

From the initial collective of people you will need to form a management structure exploiting the skills of individuals, assign responsibilities, set objectives and a target time frame.

Most other groups formulating a Neighbourhood Plan produce a Project Plan setting objectives, milestones, costs etc. You will need to involve other people who may not agree with your views. It will require our community to reach a broad consensus on the objectives, key issues and desired outcomes.

The Parish Council and a Planning Officer from Milton Keynes Council will be there, along side you, to guide you through the process and facilitate meetings, venues etc.

The advantage we have, is that at least 60 other Parishes, nationally, have been through this process and we can draw from their documents and experiences to speed up the production of our document and avoid the mistakes they made. We can also invite representatives of those who have completed the task to advise us of their best practice.

If you want to participate please email the Parish Office with your details:

Name

Address

Email address.

There will no doubt be frustrations along the route, but the ultimate result will be very rewarding.

### **Who pays for it?**

Milton Keynes Council will receive from Central Government a grant of £33,000 to assign a Planning Officer to support the generation of the Document. We can apply for a £6,000 possibly £8,000 grant to help with the cost of its development. Volunteers - you will undertake much of the work but the more people participating and being well managed, means that we can cope easily with this. From time to time, the Parish Council will provide further injections of funds to help the process.

### **What can it contain?**

It can contain anything supported by the majority of the wider community!!

Please look at some of the Neighbourhood Plans already implemented for an idea of the far ranging issues you can consider and Policies you can make, please look at these websites

<http://mycommunity.org.uk/programme/neighbourhood-planning/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/neighbourhood-planning-regulations--2>

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/inyourarea/neighbourhood/>

Local Neighbourhood plans

<http://cmktowncouncil.org/referendum-on-cmk-business-neighbourhood-plan/>

<http://www.stonyfutures.org/Home>

If you want hard copies of examples please contact the Parish Office.

An early stage of the development process will be to circulate a questionnaire to gauge what people see as important and essential to the area. It is in our hands what goes in or what is left out. It is entirely your decisions that count. We have included the first questionnaire for people to let us know exactly what areas they are interested in, a full survey will be produced by the group, after consideration of the initial comments.

For example some of the things you may want to include:-

- Parking restrictions
- Transport and access (including issues around roads, cycling, walking and access for disabled people)
- The development of housing, including affordable housing
- Bringing vacant or derelict development back into use



- Protection and creation of open space, nature reserves, allotments, sports pitches, play areas, parks and gardens
- The planting of trees or amenity landscaping
- Protection of important buildings and historic assets (yes we have these in our Parish)

Consultation is the key to a successful Neighbourhood Plan and apart from Questionnaires other mechanisms to communicate may be:

- leaflets and posters
- meetings and events
- workshops and questionnaires
- website, email groups and social media (e.g. Facebook)
- notices in the parish magazine or local newsletters
- the local press and radio stations

At the end of the consultation you will have the basis of what the community wants. This will then form the core of the initial document.



One of play parks in the Parish, we currently have over 60 play parks, wonderful heritage sites including the Roman ruins and the Windmill.

Areas reserved for cricket and other games need to be protected.

We have wonderful areas of outstanding beauty that are free to everyone, each estate has areas that are used by us all, let us protect them for future generations.

### **What can it not contain?**

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot...

- Conflict with the strategic policies in the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority
- Be used to prevent development that is included in the Local Plan
- Be prepared by a body other than a parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum

The Neighbourhood Plan is not a tool for implementing stagnation or preventing change. It cannot overturn currently approved planning decisions.

### **What time scale is involved?**

Current wisdom suggests a time period of two years. At the back of this magazine is a diagram of the key steps and the consequential time frame. There are some parts of the process we have no control over such as the independent review, consideration by Milton Keynes Council and so on. However, the bulk of the work is down to us.

Again we can draw from the experiences of others, since, when you read other Neighbourhood Plans they have to face many of the same issues we do. So, a great deal of work has been done for us, we can modify or personalise what they have already done.

If two years is considered the maximum time for us to produce the Neighbourhood Plan then providing we start now, we should be able to complete it before regeneration etc commences in our area.

## Public Meetings

Our local Parish Councillors have been holding informal meetings in the following places at the dates and times given below:-

Bancroft, Bancroft Park & Blue Bridge	July 25 <sup>th</sup> 2015
Bradville	October 17 <sup>th</sup> 2015
Oakridge Park	October 10 <sup>th</sup> 2015
Stantonbury	September 5 <sup>th</sup> 2015

We hope that at these informal meetings we are able to discuss with you any matters of concern or interest you may have. We would especially like you to sign up for more information by giving us your email address. Like all public bodies your details are protected and we will not bombard you with frequent emails.

Information will regularly be up-dated on the Parish website and by email to those who have provided their details. We will publicise the first large-scale public meeting for the autumn by email, social media, Facebook and the Parish Website.

After the initial questionnaire, there will be further public meetings to discuss findings and progress.

Estate	Houses	Population 2015	Comments
Bancroft	426	900	
Bancroft Park	150	300	
Blue Bridge	250	550	
Bradville	1810	4150	Currently nominated for Regeneration for Bradville North
Linford Wood			No houses, large industrial area.
Oakridge Park	580	1300	
Stantonbury	1512	3500	



**Example potential sources of interest in developing our Parish area.  
Without A Neighbourhood Plan**





## Example time scale and expression of interest in participating form

### Neighbourhood Plan - Timescale from Milton Keynes Council

Task		Rag no.	Weeks allocated	SPC Dates
Deciding to do a Neighbourhood Plan				
1	Town or Parish Council decides to consider preparing a NP		2	04/03/2015
2	Discuss proposal with MKC Development Plans team		1	April 2015
3	Set up Steering Committee and Project Team		3	04/03/2015
Deciding on the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan				
4	Prepare for issues consultation with community		4	June 2015
5	Issues consultation with community		4	July – Oct 2015
6	Review outcomes of issues consultation		2	
Designating Plan Area				
7	Decide area to be covered by plan		2	May 2015
8	Town or Parish Council submit plan area to MKC	5	1	May 2015
9	MKC publicises plan area	6	1	June 2015
10	Consultation - 6 weeks		6	June 2015
11	MKC designates plan area	7	1	July 2015
Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report				
12	Meet with MKC Development Plans to discuss SA		1	
13	SA Scoping Report preparation		5	
14	Send to Statutory Bodies		1	
15	Consultation - 5 weeks		5	
16	Comments back, amendments made to SA Framework		1	
Developing Options				
17	Develop consultation options		13	
18	Use SA Framework to appraise options		8	
<i>Consultation on Options (optional - not necessary under Regulations)</i>				
19	<i>Consider consultation responses</i>		3	
Draft Neighbourhood Plan				
20	Prepare draft Neighbourhood Plan document		4	
21	Prepare SA Report		6	
22	Prepare consultation materials		3	
Consultation on Draft Plan				
23	Consultation - minimum 6 weeks	14	6	
24	Consider consultation responses		3	
Submission Neighbourhood Plan				
25	Prepare submission Neighbourhood Plan document		5	
26	Prepare final SA Report		5	

27	Prepare Consultation Statement		4	
Submission and consultation				
28	Submit relevant documents to MKC	15	1	
29	MKC publicises submitted plan	16	1	
30	Consultation - minimum 6 weeks	16	<b>6</b>	
Examination				
31	Examiner appointed		3	
32	Documents and representations sent	17	1	
33	Decide on hearing sessions or written representations only		1	
34	If hearing sessions, advertise and hold sessions		2	
35	Examiner's report published	18	1	
36	Deal with any recommendations from Examiner's Report		1	
Referendum				
37	Organise Referendum, print ballot papers, advertise etc.		8	
38	Referendum		1	
MKC adopts Plan				
39	MKC adopts Neighbourhood Plan	19	1	
40	MKC publicises adoption of Neighbourhood Plan	20	1	

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# Stantonbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan Enquiry Sheet

I would be interested in being involved in the neighbourhood plan.  
I would like to participate as follows:-

Email comments / Participation in the development group / Regular meetings / Liaising with residents (circle all that apply).

My details are:

Name

Address

Email

Tel No

Signature

**This enquiry will be entered into a draw for £50 of CMK shopping vouchers. Draw to take place November 2015.**





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