

Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan – Vote on 21st February



What's it all about?

The Town Council sponsored a team of local volunteers to produce a comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan that sets out planning policies which apply to all relevant developments in the town and its surrounding parish up to 2031.

A referendum will be held on the 21st February between 7.00am and 10.00pm in The Exchange and you will be asked “Do you want North Dorset District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Sturminster Newton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

Why have a Plan?

It gives our community important benefits:

- We have been able to say where any larger development should be located in the town
- It helps us protect our important landscape and character of the town from inappropriate development
- It sets out design criteria for new buildings that enhance our neighbourhoods and improvements to the footpath links
- It indicates areas for improvement in the town centre and encourages economic regeneration
- It sets out opportunities for investing income raised when development occurs to improve the town's facilities

Where are we now?

The Plan has just completed the final stage - an examination by an independent Examiner appointed by the Secretary of State.

The Town Council, has reviewed the changes made by the Examiner and feels that the amended plan still achieves the objectives of the community, while protecting our landscape and local character.

What happens next? – It's your decision

If the voters vote "Yes" the Plan will be adopted by the Local Planning Authority and must be taken account of in all relevant future planning matters in the parish.

If they vote "No": Sturminster Newton will not have a Neighbourhood Plan. This means:

- Local planning decisions will be made solely using District and National policies.
- Policies in the Plan that you have influenced relating to design, landscape, housing priorities, footpath linkages and open spaces will not be used in planning decisions.

Need more information?

You can read the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan at the Town Council Office and the Library. You can also review it on-line at <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/neighbourhood-planning/submitted-plans/sturminster-newton-neighbourhood-plan-2016-2031.aspx>

Please vote and have your say on this important plan!