

Environment Select Committee

February 2015

- The interest in neighbourhood planning remains high in Wiltshire, with around 50 neighbourhood planning groups (qualifying bodies) attached to a 'link officer' in the spatial planning team to support them through the process.
- Planning officers are emphasising the importance of the 'scoping' stage in establishing whether a neighbourhood plan is the most appropriate tool – qualifying bodies should consider to what extent the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy and emerging Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations DPD meets their local planning priorities.
- Designation of the Neighbourhood Area is the first formal step in the neighbourhood planning process and 29 Areas have been designated in Wiltshire, with more to follow.
- 4 qualifying bodies have submitted their draft neighbourhood development plan to the council:

Devizes Area Neighbourhood Plan – the council is in the process of appointing an independent examiner to assess the plan proposals.

Pewsey Neighbourhood Plan – the council is in the process of appointing an independent examiner to assess the plan proposals.

Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan – an examiner has been appointed to assess this joint cross-boundary plan between Limpley Stoke (in Wiltshire) and Freshford (in Bath and North East Somerset). The final examiner's report is expected shortly. Following this, the Plan will be taken to a community referendum.

Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan – following receipt of the examiner's report in September 2014, a referendum was held on 27 November 2014 and 90% of residents who voted were in favour of the Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan (turnout 32%). Residents were asked to vote on the following question "Do you want Wiltshire Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Malmesbury to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?".