

16/07/2026

A Neighbourhood Plan for Chearsley

A community-led plan to shape how the village develops over the coming years.

What we'll cover today

1

Introduction

What a Neighbourhood Plan is.

2

The Local Plan

Housing and the wider planning context.

3

Powers & limits of a Neighbourhood Plan

What the plan can and cannot decide.

4

Why it matters

The value for Chearsley and our plan area.

5

Our journey

Timeline, progress and the road ahead.

6

Q&A

Your questions, comments and feedback.

What are Neighbourhood Plans?

It is not the same as the Village Plan created in 2014.

Neighbourhood Plans sit within a statutory planning hierarchy. They are local, voluntary but legally binding documents, but must remain compatible with the Bucks Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



NPPF

National policy issued by Government; sets broad principles for the whole country and some overall requirements such as new housing numbers

Local Plans

Prepared by County or District Councils; provide detailed planning rules and guidance for their area.

Neighbourhood Plans

Produced by Town or Parish Councils; express community wishes for local development.

Statutory planning documents

All levels must align > **National Policy** shapes Local Plan > **Local Plans** set the framework for the **Neighbourhood Plan**.

Housing is the headline, but the plan is broader

Councils must develop Local Plans showing where their housing allocation will be built — a complex and often contentious process. But a Local Plan is far broader, setting policy across the strategies below.

THE HEADLINE

Housing — Affordable, specialist and traveller provision

Economy & Employment

Retail, employment sites, skills, tourism

Built environment

Design, amenities and conservation areas

Transport

Roads, parking, freight, rail etc.

Natural environment

Green spaces, green belt, water quality, biodiversity

Infrastructure

Water, telecoms, energy, waste and construction standards

Social

Health, shops, sports & leisure



Local Plans cover the policy environment into which a Neighbourhood Plan must fit.

Bucks Council ‘draft’ Local Plan

95,500

new homes across **Buckinghamshire** are specified by the NPPF - to be delivered by 2045

36

new homes **Chearsley** are specified by the ‘***draft***’ Bucks Local Plan - to be delivered by 2045

100 Years of Housing Growth in Chearsley (1920 – 2049)



What a Neighbourhood Plan can do

A Neighbourhood Plan carries real, evidence-based powers to shape how the village develops.

✓ Allocate sites for development

Identify preferred sites for housing, small business units, community facilities, recreation and parking — one of the strongest powers available.

✓ Decide the type of housing needed

Smaller family and affordable homes, accessible homes, homes for local and older residents, and self-build plots. Inspectors welcome evidence of local need.

✓ Influence design

Set policies on height, density, materials, roof pitches, landscaping, parking, lighting, biodiversity and energy efficiency — evidence-based policies carry real weight.

✓ Protect Local Green Space

Designate special spaces — village greens, recreation grounds, paddocks, orchards and key views — with protection broadly comparable to Green Belt.

✓ Protect village character

Cover settlement edges, important views, heritage assets, landscape setting, dark skies and tranquil areas, where evidence supports it.

✓ Support community infrastructure

Identify needs for footpaths, play areas, traffic calming, drainage improvements and community buildings.

✓ Influence developer contributions

Help set local infrastructure priorities, though Section 106 and CIL mechanisms remain with the local planning authority.

Evidence is everything — well-justified policies grounded in local evidence carry real weight at examination.

What a Neighbourhood Plan cannot do

It works within the planning system — shaping how growth happens, not whether it happens.

X Stop all development

If the Local Plan requires housing growth, a blanket “no more houses” policy would almost certainly fail examination. This is the biggest misconception.

X Reduce the housing target

Buckinghamshire’s housing numbers are set strategically. The parish cannot opt for far fewer homes than the Local Plan requires.

X Ignore national policy

The plan must meet the Basic Conditions — having regard to national policy and staying in general conformity with strategic policies.

X Override planning law

It cannot remove permitted development rights, change listed-building or conservation-area controls, or replace the Local Plan.

X Protect every field

Protection applies only where planning evidence exists. “Residents like this field” isn’t enough — evidence matters.

The golden rule: a Neighbourhood Plan works with the Local Plan and national policy — it shapes how growth happens, not whether it happens.

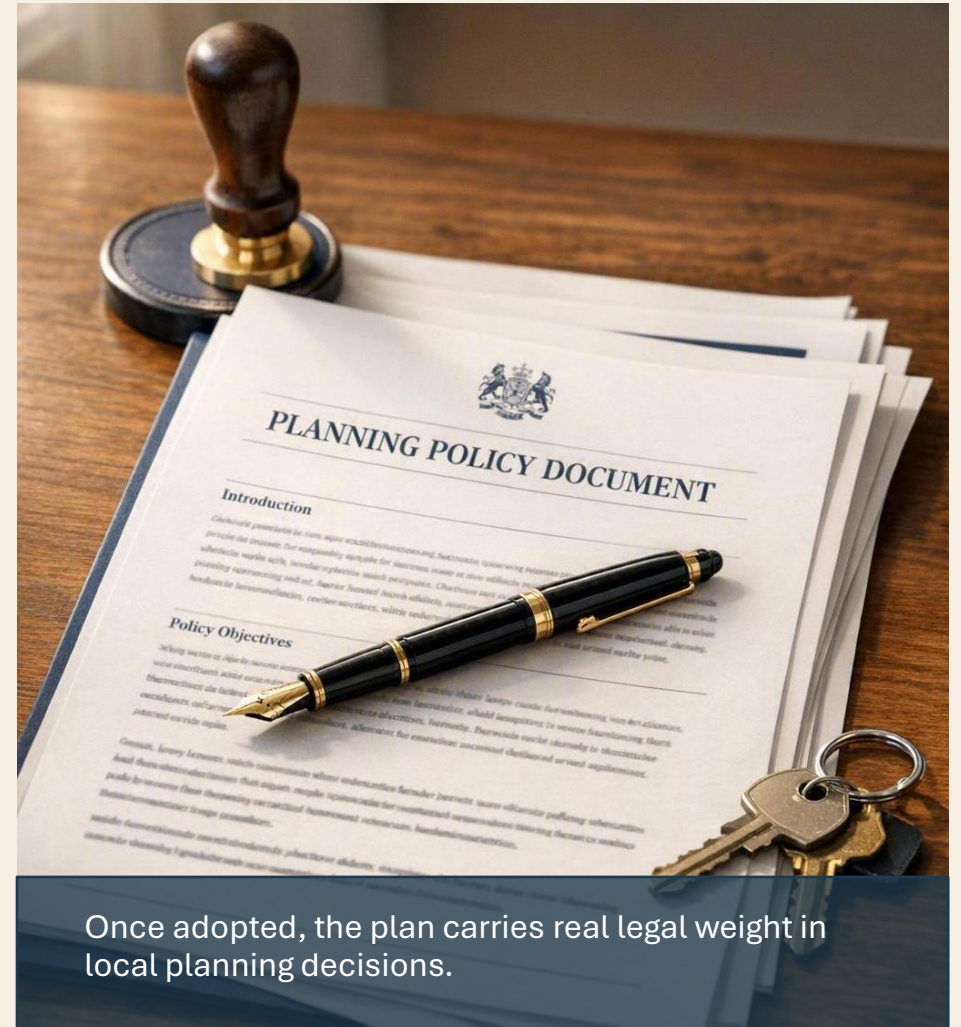
Four reasons it matters for the village

1 It Becomes Law (Real Teeth)

Full Legal Status: Possesses official regulatory power, unlike our previous "Village Plan."

Local Control: Requires Buckinghamshire Council to judge all housing applications in Chearsley against our Neighbourhood Plan

Stronger Protection: Prevents speculative development



Once adopted, the plan carries real legal weight in local planning decisions.

Four reasons it matters for the village

2 We Choose Locations, Not Developers

Dictate Growth: Directs *where* development happens, since the Neighbourhood Plan cannot block growth entirely.

Community-Led Allocation: Empowers residents to proactively choose the most sustainable, least intrusive spots for future homes.

Blocks Profit-Driven Choices: Prevents outside developers from simply picking the fields that maximize their own profits.



The community decides where new homes go — not developers.

Four reasons it matters for the village

3 Specify Strict Design Codes

We can write bespoke design guidelines tailored entirely to our village character.

This allows us to :

- Specify local materials such as traditional brick, stone, wychert or thatch.
- State maximum building heights to preserve historic skylines.
- Define off-street parking minimums to protect narrow village lanes from congestion.



Bespoke design rules protect our village's traditional character.

Four reasons it matters for the village

4 Protecting Vital Green Spaces

Green Space Equivalency: Grants designated land the highest possible level of permanent legal planning protection.

Secures Local Treasures: Blocks unwanted development on highly valued community spaces, village views, and wildlife areas.

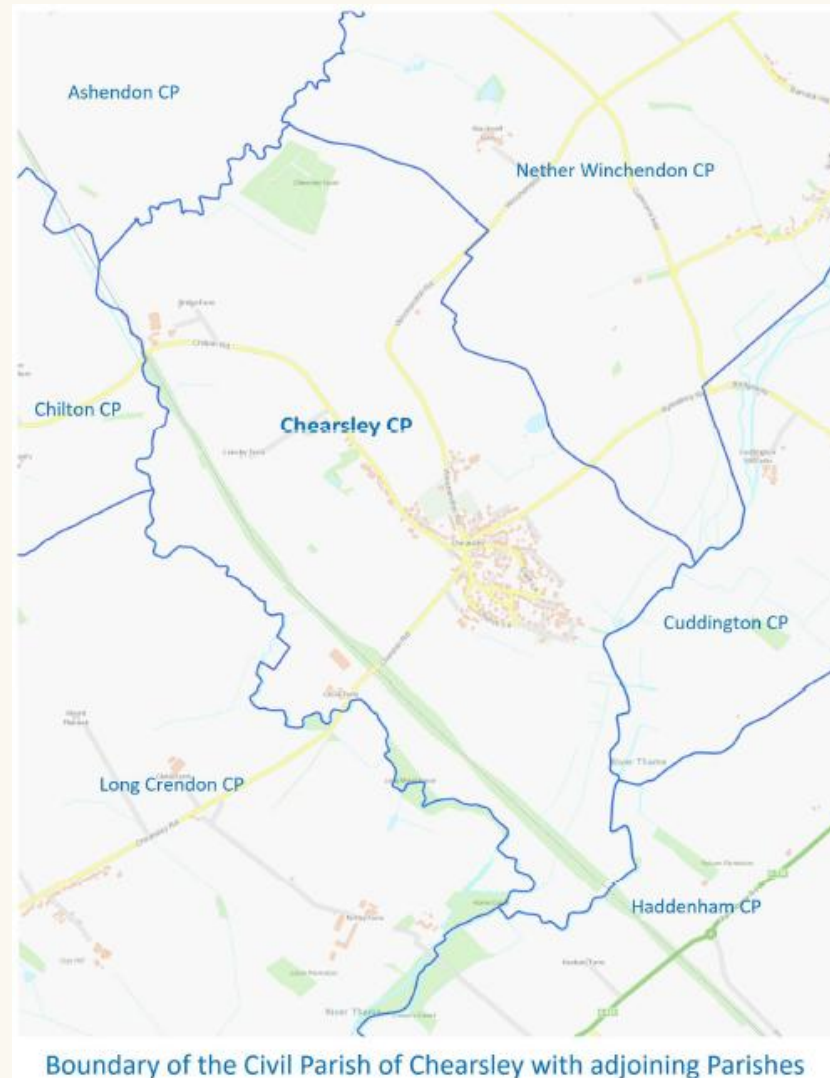
Formally Designates Land: Uses national planning rules to permanently protect specific local plots as Local Green Spaces



Cherished fields and views can be locked in as protected Local Green Spaces.

Chearsley Neighbourhood Plan Area

Planning area designation is the first formal step; the next stages focus on evidence, resident views and policy development.

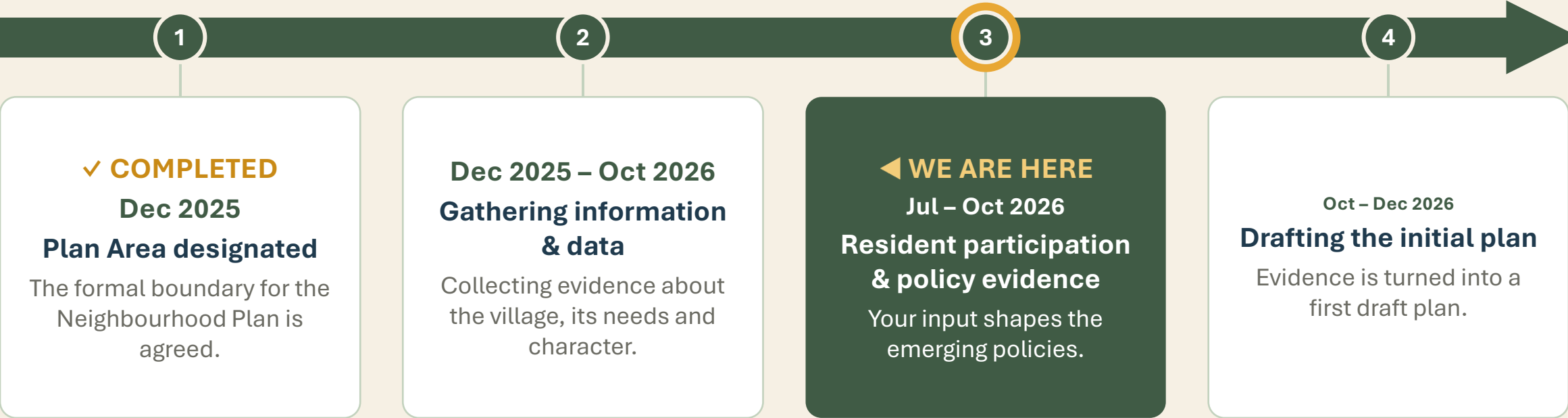


The designated plan area is the whole of the Chearsley Civil Parish and is already in place.

The map shows Chearsley Civil Parish in context with neighbouring parish areas.

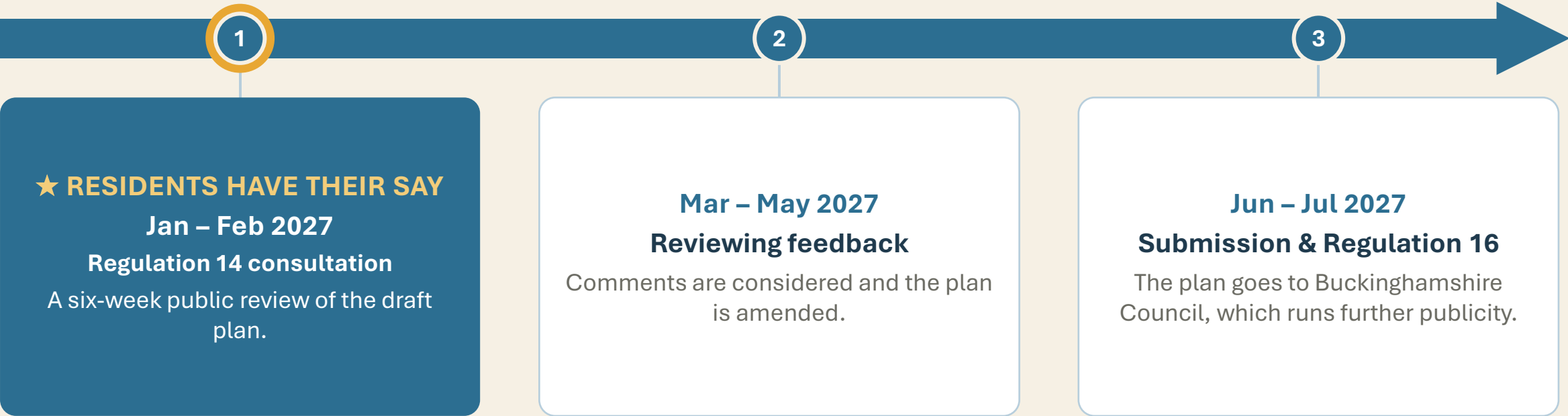
Foundation & Evidence

Designating the area, gathering evidence and drafting the plan — December 2025 to December 2026.



Community & Council Consultation

Formal consultation, feedback and submission to Buckinghamshire Council — 2027.



Note: these dates are estimates, subject to independent examination timeframes.

Final Checks & Village Vote

Independent examination, referendum and adoption — late 2027 into 2028.



Note: these dates are estimates, subject to independent examination timeframes.

The key things to remember

A Neighbourhood Plan is how Chearsley shapes the growth that is coming.

1

A Neighbourhood Plan is local, but legally binding

It sits beneath the Bucks Local Plan and the NPPF, and must stay compatible with both.

2

Growth is coming either way

Buckinghamshire's draft Local Plan sets the housing numbers; the plan shapes how that growth happens, not whether it does.

3

It carries real powers

We can allocate preferred sites, influence the type and mix of homes, and protect valued spaces and local character.

4

But it has clear limits

It cannot stop all development or reduce the housing target — a blanket 'no' would fail examination.

5

Residents decide

Your input shapes the policies now, and the whole village votes on the final plan at referendum.

NEXT STEPS

Shape the plan with us

Questionnaires, feedback sessions and consultation opportunities will help turn Chearsley's priorities into policies.

Q&A

Participate

Share your views and encourage neighbours to contribute.

Review

Look at the emerging evidence and policy ideas.

Respond

Take part in the Regulation 14 consultation on the draft plan.