

Neighbourhood Plan

**An opportunity to influence planning and
development in Harrogate**

What does a Neighbourhood Plan look like?

It is a document with similarities to a Local Plan (for example the Harrogate District Local Plan).

“A neighbourhood plan puts in place planning policy for a neighbourhood area to guide future development. A neighbourhood plan is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, design, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only. These may be issues that are relevant to the whole neighbourhood or just to part of the neighbourhood. It is for those producing the plan to decide on its scope and content as a planning document”



What is your personal vision?

A neighbourhood plan **vision** is a mid to long-term goal describing what you want your neighbourhood to look like at the end of the plan period (eg 15 years).

It can be aspirational as well as grounded in evidence and data – quantitative (facts and figures) as well as qualitative (community views about what's important).

It might focus on our 'unique selling point' – why the area is distinctive and a desirable place to live – or the untapped potential for buildings and land that could be revitalised.



Current planning

Harrogate Borough Council abolished

New county-wide local authority – North Yorkshire Council

A Town Council for Harrogate is at least two years away

Harrogate's planning determined through decisions led by North Yorkshire Council

Ink not dry on Harrogate's local plan but being replaced by a new, county-wide local plan

But will the new, county-wide local plan include a vision supported by the 'whole' Harrogate town community?



HARROGATE
Civic Society



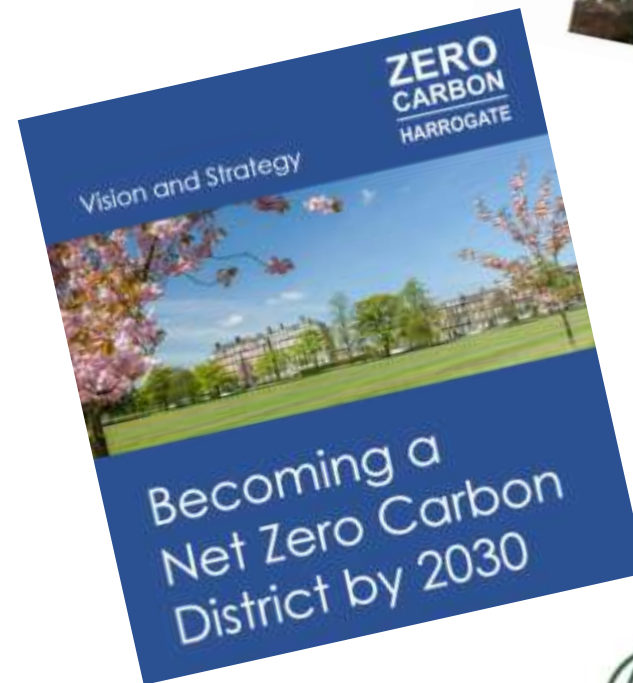
Future planning

Harrogate's community has many 'visions' and 'objectives'

Will they be compatible with North Yorkshire Council's vision/objectives?

Will there be robust policy guidance specific to Harrogate?

Is there something we can do to make a positive contribution to the future planning and development of Harrogate town?



HARROGATE
Civic Society



An opportunity

Together we can influence future Harrogate planning in the absence of a local town council

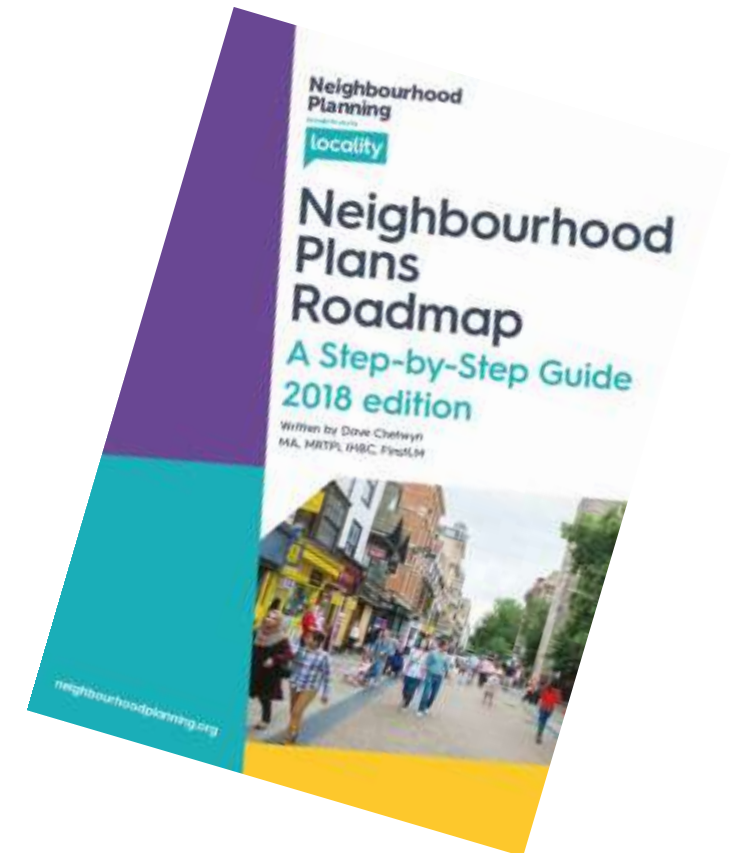
We can try to establish a vision which the community of Harrogate town supports

We can do this by working with others to follow the neighbourhood plan process

A neighbourhood plan has the same legal status as a local plan so it can make a real difference

There is lots of guidance and help out there

We would not be alone:



Other Neighbourhood Plans

Since the Localism Act there have been **over 2000** plans started and many are now adopted and steer local planning decisions

About **10 plans** have been 'designated' within the old HBC boundary (data needs updating) – for example Ripon, Masham, Knaresborough – and a few have been adopted

The town of Harrogate is **probably one of the largest unparished areas** by population to start the process for a neighbourhood plan



Alternatives

'Do nothing' – leave it to others/apathy/what's the point

Respond to consultations on the new North Yorkshire Local Plan – but with differing visions and objectives

Respond to reviews of documents such as the Town Centre Masterplan

Wait for a new Harrogate Town Council to influence planning – but for how long?

Work together now to produce our own Neighbourhood Plan – but how?



Is it time for a Harrogate Town Council and what are the chances of it happening?



What is a Neighbourhood Plan

The Localism Act 2011 – decision-making passed downwards to local communities

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area

A neighbourhood plan must still support delivery of North Yorkshire Council's strategic policies **but also provides a local context of the things that matter to the Harrogate town community**

A document containing a vision statement, objectives and policies to shape future development in the town



The rules

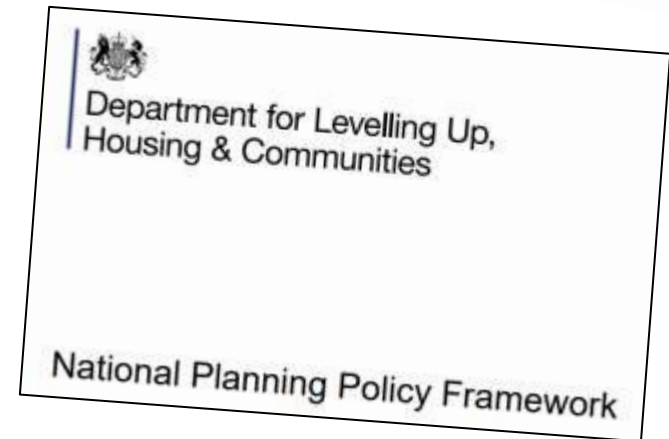
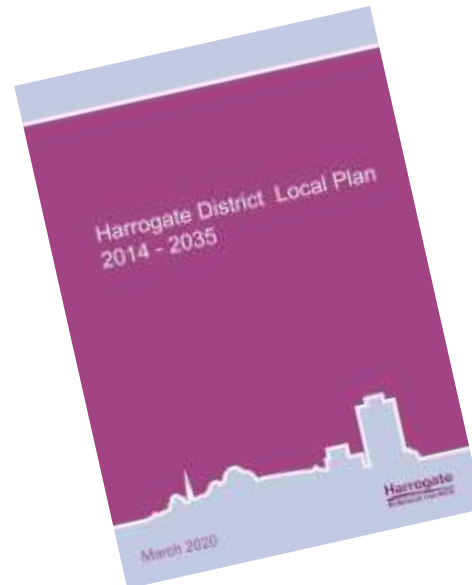
Follow the statutory procedure

Must meet basic conditions of delivering sustainable development

Have regard to national policy and guidance

Be in general conformity with adopted strategic local planning policies and not promote less development

Be evidence based



HARROGATE
Civic Society



The process

Three stages:

- Getting established
- Preparing the plan
- Bringing the plan into force

The first stage:

- Designation of the neighbourhood area and forum
- Building the evidence base
- Publicity and engagement

REALITY CHECK:

Long and complex
time consuming
cost implications
technically demanding

REQUIRES:

Skills
Compromise
Communication
Collaboration



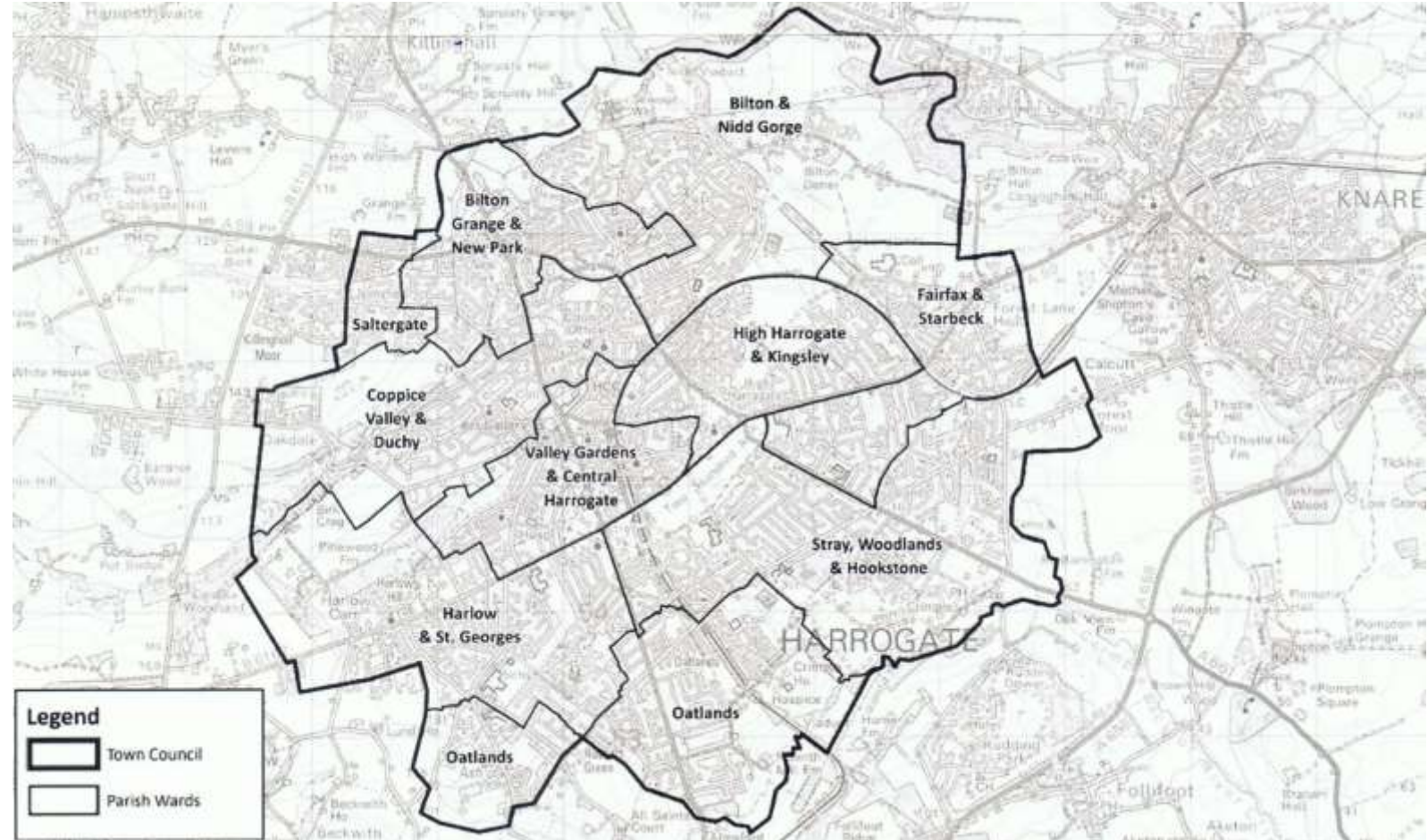
Neighbourhood Area

Decide if the area should include the whole or part of the unparished area of Harrogate town.

Cannot include parished areas

Justify the choice of area

Apply to NYC for designation



Neighbourhood Forum

A legal requirement for **at least 21 members** to steer the process.

An express purpose to promote social, economic and environmental well-being

A purpose that **reflects the character of the area**

Membership open to people living and working in the area

Membership drawn from different places in the area and different sections of the community

Harrogate's character

a tourist destination,
famous for its spa heritage, floral
displays,

shopping experience,
entertainment, food and drink
hub,

a conference and exhibition
venue,

a place of many business,
a place where people live and
work,

a place of many organisations and
support groups,

Other...



Evidence and publicity

Start gathering evidence early by using existing sources – HBC local plan/town centre masterplan/NYC local plan/other

Concentrate on evidence relevant to the scope of the plan and which supports the vision and objectives

Evidence should help paint a picture of the neighbourhood area – particularly its social, economic and environmental characteristics

Find out what people think is good/bad about the town and its qualities as a place to live and work

What are the issues facing the town now and in the future and what changes would people like to see?

Now starting to understand the potential scope of the plan...



What next?

We must first decide if this is something we want to do and reach a consensus at this meeting to **take things further**

Initial thoughts on **scope of the plan** – what do we want to achieve: **individually, as different organisations and businesses, as a community**

Invite more people, organisations and businesses to further meetings – spread the word

Contact NYC planners to be involved in the formal part of the process – they are required by law to help

Contact key players such as current, democratically elected representatives

Ensure **publicity and transparency** as we proceed



Future Scenarios

Harrogate gets a Town Council – but when?

**Town Council decides to have a neighbourhood plan:
the Forum could then become a Support Group to the
Town Council**

**Town Council decides not to have a neighbourhood plan:
all collaborative work and information from the Forum
can be used to influence NYC Local Plan**



Questions and Discussion

Do we want to take things further to create a neighbourhood plan?

What is the best way to proceed?

Who should be involved in the early stages and what skill base can be utilised?

Should we start to gather various 'visions' asap and look for common themes to understand the potential scope of the plan?

Is it possible/appropriate to identify objectives now to guide public consultation and evidence gathering?

Volunteers needed

