

## What is Neighbourhood planning?

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give members of the community a more hands on role in the planning of their neighbourhoods. It is a process that is led by the community and supported by the Council.

Neighbourhood planning needs to be a positive process, so it cannot be used to block development that is needed in the borough. However, it could be used to influence the type of development that takes place in a neighbourhood, whereabouts it takes place, what it looks like and the mix of uses that are included.

Regulations have been produced that provide a framework for neighbourhood planning. The Regulations set out what is required from local groups who wish to undertake neighbourhood planning and what the role of the local authority will be in supporting this.

Neighbourhood planning can be pursued in three different ways:

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – a plan that sets out policies for new development in the neighbourhood. Plans must be positive and encourage sustainable development.
- **Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)** – An NDO means that certain types of development can take place in an area without the need to apply for planning permission
- **Community Right to Build Order** – Similar to an NDO, but this gives the residents within the neighbourhood the power to actually undertake certain development without the need to apply for planning permission

### Neighbourhood planning process

Neighbourhood planning can only be carried out by a neighbourhood forum or a parish council. A neighbourhood forum needs to meet certain requirements and be approved by the local authority. If you are interested in finding out about the process required to become a neighbourhood forum, please contact the planning policy team.

Only one group can undertake neighbourhood planning in a particular neighbourhood. When an application to create a forum is made to the Council, we advertise the application through our website. At this stage, other groups of individuals have a 28 day window to register their own group.

When more than one group is interested in preparing a neighbourhood plan for the same area, we will encourage the groups to work together.

When it has been agreed that a neighbourhood forum will prepare a neighbourhood plan for an area, they will take the lead and the council will provide support. It is up to the neighbourhood forum to consult and involve local people in the preparation of the plan but the council will, of course, provide advice on how to go about this.

Before a neighbourhood plan can be adopted there will be an examination in public where an independent examiner will consider whether the plan should go forward to be voted on at a local referendum, in which everyone living in the area covered by the neighbourhood plan will be able to vote for or against its adoption. If the neighbourhood area is a business area, then local businesses may also be eligible to vote. If more than 50% of votes are in favour of the plan then it will be adopted.

### **Neighbourhood Planning in Southwark**

When the Localism Bill was first published in November 2010, the Government announced a programme of pilot projects where local authorities could work with community groups to explore some of the principles of neighbourhood planning in advance of the proposals becoming law.

Southwark was selected by the government's Department for Communities and Local Government as one of these neighbourhood planning front runner authorities and since then, Southwark Council has been working with groups in **Bankside** and **Bermondsey** to prepare two separate neighbourhood plans for their areas.

We will update this page regularly to publicise any applications to create new Neighbourhood Forums in Southwark, making clear the areas that these forums will cover. Once neighbourhood forums are in existence, we will also use this page to publicise their Plans and/or Orders.

### **Neighbourhood Planning in Bankside**

The Bankside neighbourhood plan process is being led by the Bankside residents' forum. Further information about their ideas for the area is available on their website: [www.wearebankside.com](http://www.wearebankside.com). An application for the residents' forum to be formally designated as a Neighbourhood Forum for the purposes of neighbourhood planning was made in October 2012.

### **Current Consultations**

- Bankside Neighbourhood Area and Bankside Neighbourhood Forum applications

### **BBLB SPD**

When the neighbourhood planning front runner programme was announced, Southwark Council, in consultation with the Greater London Authority, decided to suspend work on the preparation of the Bankside, Borough and London Bridge Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The council will continue, in consultation with the GLA, to keep under review the need to resume work on the preparation of the Bankside, Borough and London Bridge SPD (which is also intended to form the Mayor's Opportunity Area Planning Framework - or OAPF - for the area).

It is not expected that the neighbourhood plans being prepared in the area will not remove the need to have a clear planning framework for the whole opportunity area in the form of an SPD/OAPF and it is expected that work will resume on the preparation of this during 2013.