



CHARLBURY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2031

The future for our thriving community



Photo by Peter Kenrick

Public Consultation on the Draft Plan

18th September to 31st October 2019

Please take part – it's YOUR plan!

A draft version of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan will be available for public consultation and comment from **Wednesday 18th September**. This is your opportunity to influence this important document so that Charlbury continues to be the place where you want to live in the future. We need to know what **YOU** think! We must receive your responses by the deadline of **Thursday 31st October 2019 – Don't miss out!**

On the back page of this pamphlet you can find all the details of how to view the draft plan documents and how to take part in the consultation.

We have also included a short summary in the middle pages of this pamphlet to give you an idea of what the plan is about, but please do take time to look at the full draft plan and let us know what you think. We particularly need your views on the proposed **Policies** (in blue boxes) and **Community Aspirations** (in green boxes) in sections 5 to 8 of the plan.

Peter Kenrick, Vice-Chairman of Charlbury Town Council

Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan – in summary

People who live in Charlbury believe that it is a great place to live¹.

Charlbury rated 5th Best Place in the Southeast to live in 2019 by The Sunday Times².

We all know that Charlbury is an attractive historic town in a beautiful location with good transport links. It has a vibrant and varied community offering a wide range of services, activities, clubs and facilities that are very well supported.

But Charlbury also has challenges to meet if it is to maintain this vibrant community. These include the shortage of modest housing required to meet local needs and a trend towards a higher aged population.

We also acknowledge the climate emergency declared by the UK Parliament and more recently by West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). Charlbury welcomes WODC's determination to be carbon neutral by 2030 and recognises the challenges this imposes on communities such as ours within the district.

The Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan represents our opportunity within the present planning regime to retain all that is good about Charlbury whilst enabling appropriate development that addresses current challenges at the same time as sustaining and enhancing the features that people value.

The Plan describes in detail how this is to be achieved within the constraints set by national planning policies and those of West Oxfordshire. It sets out a positive vision for the future of Charlbury enabling the views, needs and aspirations of the local community to shape and direct development in the town.

The Plan has used a wide-ranging evidence base including the views of local residents in response to the Town Survey of 2016, a Housing Needs Assessment commissioned by the Town Council and assessments of the Parish Character and Local Green Spaces compiled with substantial assistance from many local volunteers.

¹ In the Town Survey 2016, more than 90% Agree or Strongly Agree to the Question: "Charlbury is a great place to live with a strong community and lots of activities?"

² The Sunday Times survey of "Best Places to Live 2019" in association with HABITO

Charlbury 2031 – Our Vision

Charlbury will continue to be a thriving, active community, welcoming and supportive to people of all ages and circumstances to live, work and visit. Future development will focus on supporting this primary vision whilst sustaining and enhancing the built and natural environment.

The needs of the local community will be paramount in determining the scale and nature of future development whilst ensuring that Charlbury becomes a more sustainable and low carbon community recognising the global challenges of climate change and biodiversity. All future development must preserve Charlbury's strong landscape setting and respect its historic environment whilst ensuring that Charlbury continues to play an important role within the wider community as befits its good transport links and the range of services and facilities available.



Photo by Hugh Goyder

The Plan in outline



Photo by Peter Kenrick

Housing

The affordability of housing is recognised as a key issue for Charlbury in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. A thriving and diverse community with a balanced age and social structure requires a mix of housing stock including properties affordable by those on lower incomes. Recent market housing in Charlbury has not generally provided for this need. The Plan seeks to redress this balance with policies that support the provision of a limited supply of new housing affordable by those on or below the median income for the town.

Economy, Community, Transport and Movement

Charlbury has good transport links and a wide range of community facilities when compared to neighbouring parishes. These features add to the vibrancy of the community and are highly valued by local residents. They also enable Charlbury to play an important service role to the wider area which in turn helps to ensure the ongoing viability of the community facilities. However, this service role also brings challenges in areas that the town survey identified as key concerns for residents, including support for local business and management of traffic and transport issues including parking. There are also challenges posed by the need to work towards becoming a carbon neutral economy to mitigate the impact of climate change. The Plan seeks to address these matters through policies which reinforce Charlbury's service role, protect and enhance employment and services, support sustainable tourism, to address traffic-related and environmental concerns.



Photo by Peter Kenrick



Photo by Peter Kenrick



Artist: Maureen Sparling



Photo by David R Murphy

Natural Environment and Green Space

The beauty and importance of Charlbury's natural environment is acknowledged in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and through the town's inclusion within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Protection of this environment is very important to the local community. The Neighbourhood Plan supplements the protections provided by the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework by identifying specific locations and issues of particular importance within the parish. These include the protection of important views (e.g. the view across the Evenlode Valley), green corridors for the protection of wildlife, biodiversity and trees.



Photo by Peter Kenrick



Photo by Peter Kenrick

A number of open spaces within the parish have been identified as being of particular importance to the community. These will be given additional protection by being designated as Local Green Spaces in the Plan.

Historic Environment and Locally Appropriate Design

Much of Charlbury's character and attractiveness derives from its many historic buildings and monuments and from its landscape setting which includes neighbouring Cornbury Park and Wychwood Forest. This is emphasised in the designation of the town and its surroundings as a conservation area. The Plan sets out policies to conserve and enhance this character and Charlbury's heritage assets, which include over 100 listed buildings. These policies supplement national policies and those of WODC.

A local Design Guide is included which identifies the distinctive features of different parts of the town and contains guiding principles for the design of new developments and for alterations to existing buildings. The aim is to ensure that Charlbury's unique character and identity is maintained for future generations.



Photos by Dr Kathryn Davies and Peter Kenrick

What Happens Next?

Pre-submission Consultation

When the consultation draft version of the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031 is available, a 6-week public consultation has to take place to allow local residents and other consultees to comment on the document. This is the consultation that will be launched on 18th September 2019 with responses accepted until 31st October 2019. See the back page for details of how to take part.

Review of the Draft

At the end of the consultation period, all responses will be considered and documented, and the draft plan will be revised as necessary.

Submission to West Oxfordshire District Council

Once the revisions to the draft have been completed and approved by the Town Council, the revised draft together with a consultation statement will be submitted to West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) which is the local planning authority. From this point onwards, WODC will be responsible for the further progression of the Plan.

Further Stages

Before the Neighbourhood Plan can be adopted, it will be subject to additional stages under the control of WODC, including:

- Examination by an independent inspector (to ensure that the plan is legally sound and not vulnerable to legal challenge)
- Referendum of all Charlbury electors.

Plan Adoption

If a majority of those voting in the referendum vote to approve the Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan 2031, WODC will adopt it and it will become a “Made Plan”. As a Made Plan, it becomes a legal part of the planning system and its policies must be taken into account by WODC when considering all planning applications within the parish of Charlbury.

Public Consultation – How to take part

The consultation draft neighbourhood plan is now complete and a 6-week period of public consultation is about to begin as required by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 – Regulation 14.

The consultation will be launched on Wednesday 18th September 2019 and all responses must be received by Thursday 31st October 2019.

During the consultation period, the draft plan plus supporting documentation will be available to download from the website www.charlburynp.org.uk. Paper copies will also be available to view in the “Reference & Local Studies” section of the Charlbury Library, located in the Charlbury Community Centre, Spendlove Centre, Enstone Road, Charlbury OX7 3PQ.

You can respond to the consultation in any of the following ways:

- Online via the website www.charlburynp.org.uk
- By completing a response form which you can download from the above website or collect a copy from the Charlbury Library. Completed forms, duly signed, can be scanned and emailed via the above website or to the Town Clerk at charlburytc@btinternet.com. Alternatively you can deposit them in the white metal response box located in the “Reference & Local Studies” section of the Charlbury Library.
- Other responses submitted by email as above or deposited in the response box will be considered provided they are clearly marked “Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan Pre-submission Consultation Response”, dated with the name and contact details of the responding person and/or organisation clearly indicated.

During the consultation period, two public “drop-in” sessions will be held in Charlbury at which you will be able to see information about the draft plan, talk to members of the Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, ask questions and let us know what you think. These sessions will be held as follows:

- Saturday 21st September – 2pm to 5pm – at Charlbury Street Fair
- Saturday 5th October 10am to 12 noon – in the Corner House