

Agenda
Wells Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
7pm Wednesday 16th February 2022 by Zoom - details below

Steering Group Members:

Wells City Council: Cllrs Adrian I'Anson, Denise Denis & Tanys Pullin

Graham Barrow, Helen Ellison, Mendip Cllr Laura Waters, Simon Nash & Rosemary Naish

St Cuthbert Out Parish Council: Tony Hathway & Ian Humphreys

Resilience Officer: Emma Jakins

County Councillor: Tessa Munt

Planning consultant: Stuart Todd

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2022 – attached
3. Final draft of Composite Plan for reference to Council – Stuart Todd
– to follow
4. Draft consultation leaflet – Stuart Todd - attached
5. Any Other Business
6. Next meeting – 8th March 2022 at 7 pm by Zoom

City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2029

Regulation 14 Consultation Version

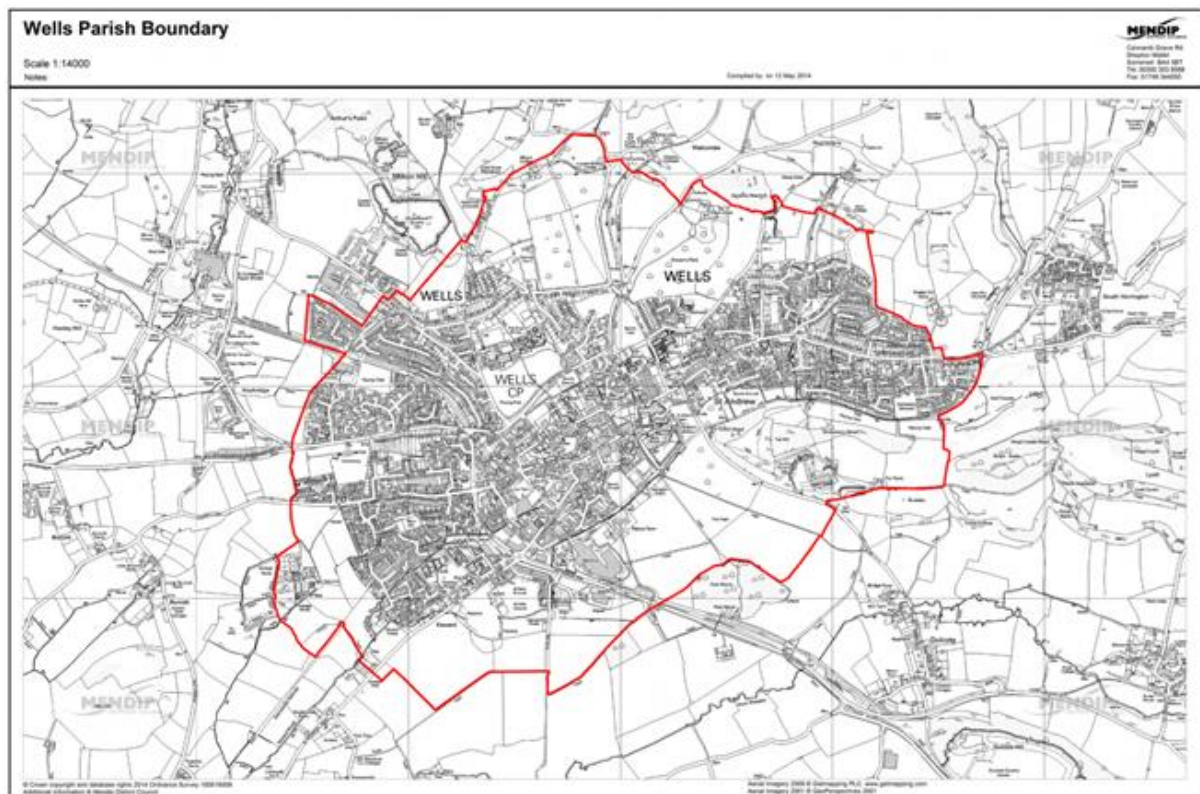
SUMMARY LEAFLET



YOUR CITY, YOUR SAY. WE NEED YOUR VIEWS!

Introduction

This summary explains what the City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan is and summarises the Plan's areas of focus and the planning policies it contains. The full draft version of the Plan and all associated documents can be viewed online on the City Council website (<https://www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>). The Plan covers the Parish of the City of Wells (outlined in red below).



The Plan was originally consulted upon in 2014 and was broadly supported by the community. However, after that point the City Council disbanded the group of volunteers producing the Plan. Following election of a new City Council in May 2018, a decision was taken to revive the Neighbourhood Plan. A new Steering Group was established and this draft is the fruit of their labours, being updated and further supplemented by additional research.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning strategy produced for local areas. It is a Plan written by the community and for the community and is produced, typically, for Parish areas.

Once the Plan has gone through the required procedures and tests, it carries statutory “weight” in the planning system and has to be taken into account by Mendip District Council as Local Planning Authority (and the successor Unitary Council), alongside national planning policies, the “strategic planning policies” contained in the Local Plan and “material considerations”, when considering planning applications. When finalised the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the “development plan” alongside the adopted Local Plan.



The Neighbourhood Plan must only have policies which relate to land-use planning and development matters within the defined Plan area (the Parish). It should not repeat other planning policies (at the district or national level), and policies should add local detail not already provided by Local Plan policies. Those actions, programmes and projects which do not typically require planning permission or are not about the use of land or buildings will not have policy coverage, although they can be referenced in the Plan if they help to convey wider issues of importance.

The Plan must pass tests set by the Government, including “general conformity” (alignment) with national and district planning policies and undergoing thorough public consultation. The Plan and its policies have to follow specific legal requirements and meet various national tests and rules.

You can find out more about the process and these rules at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>.

What is the Plan's Vision?

We have developed a Vision for the Plan which sets out the “direction of travel” for the Plan and its content (shown in the box below).

Wells Vision

- 1.→Wells will continue to be an attractive place to live, work and visit; sufficiently compact to retain its distinctive identity whilst accommodating the growth necessary to ensure its economic viability.¶¶
- 2.→Wells will have accommodated its additional residents in housing that not only matches their material and economic needs, but which also contributes to the distinctive nature of its surroundings and incorporates high standards of design, energy efficiency and sustainability.¶¶
- 3.→The increase in population will sustain and develop the service and employment base in Wells, providing the necessary economic growth and reducing the need for in-commuting.¶¶
- 4.→The additional population will have good access to health and education facilities.¶¶
- 5.→The city centre will be thriving and vibrant, providing a range of retail and other services and facilities.¶¶
- 6.→The character of the City's heritage and its landscape setting will be protected and enhanced.¶¶
- 7.→The people of Wells will have good access to open spaces, play equipment and recreation facilities.¶¶
- 8.→The visitor economy will have developed sustainably to be a strong sector, with employment opportunities and attracting sufficient investment to sustain the visitor attractions.¶¶
- 9.→Wells will have achieved, or be close to achieving, carbon neutrality. Businesses and residents of Wells will have knowledge and understanding of the steps necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change and biodiversity loss.¶¶

What are the Plan's Main Themes?

The Plan sets out several themes, or topics, drawn from the key issues identified in previous consultations. These are:

- Heritage and the Built Environment
- Housing
- Moving Around
- Retail and Commercial Buildings
- Tourism
- Environment

For each topic, we developed Aims and Objectives to help identify and guide the issues on which we require planning policies. These are presented in detail in the full draft Plan.

What are the Plan's policies?

The Plan's policies are particularly important as they are the part of the Plan which carry statutory or legal "weight" in the planning system. We have not reproduced policy wording in full in this leaflet due to limitations on space and so we encourage you to take a look at the draft Plan itself to view them in full. However, we have summarised, in very broad terms, the "direction of travel" of each policy, so that you have a good idea of the focus of the topics and policies. As all policies carry the same "weight" in the planning system, they are not set out in any priority order.

A key theme running through the Plan is that our policies should seek to protect what we value and what is special, enhance existing provision of facilities and assets and provide support for additional facilities and development being a response to demand and local needs, while ensuring that there is no adverse impact on the things that we value the most in our natural and built environments.

It should be noted that where our policies seek to protect areas of land, such as Space, these remain proposals at the time and we have attempted to contact about these areas prior to this consultation. We will continue to seek with landowners during the development of the Plan.



subject to
needs,
impact on
natural and

policies
Local Green
current
landowners

to engage

Heritage and the Built Environment

- Policy HBE1: Heritage and the Built Environment This policy seeks to ensure that development respects and protects the heritage value of Wells. It introduces the Wells Design Guide as a core part of the Plan.
- Policy HBE2: Local Heritage Assets This policy requires planning proposals to take into account local heritage assets.

Housing

- Policy H1: Responding to Local Housing Demand and Needs This policy seeks to ensure that housing development which comes forward in the city does so in a way which responds positively to housing need in Wells.
- Policy H2: High Quality Housing Design This policy reiterates and signposts the importance of the Wells Design Guide when housing proposals come forward. It also draws out particularly criteria which housing proposals should meet in order to achieve “high quality design” in the Wells context.
- Policy H3: Housing Fit for the Future This policy encourages housing proposals to exceed carbon emission reduction and energy efficiency standards set out by the Government in Building Regulations.
- Policy H4: Playspace This policy requires playspaces to be protected from loss and supports new and improved playspaces to come forward as part of new developments.

Moving Around

- Policy MA1: Constraints and Opportunities on the Local Highway, Cycleway and Footpath Network This policy introduces and supports the Wells Transport Plan set out in the “Moving Around” section of the Plan.



Retail and Commercial Buildings

- RCB1: New Development within the Primary Frontages This policy supports proposals which change the primary retail frontages in the city centre where they demonstrate that they will enhance the city centre’s vibrancy, overall offer and historic value.

- Policy RCB2: Commercial Development and Responding to Climate Change This policy encourages development proposals for commercial and business uses to exceed carbon emission reduction and energy efficiency standards set out by the Government in Building Regulations.



Tourism

- Policy TOU1: Tourism This policy supports proposals which enable a wider range of visitor attractions and accommodation to be delivered to support the local economy as long as they do not compromise what makes Wells special.



Environment

- Policy ENV1: Protecting the Character of the Landscape, Views and Setting This policy seeks the protection of important views and vistas in Wells in the context of the landscape setting of the city.
- Policy ENV2: Nature Recovery Network (including protected areas of biodiversity, geodiversity and habitat) This policy sets out Wells' Nature Recovery Network, designed to support green and blue infrastructure areas and corridors used by wildlife, protect their habitats from further loss and sustain them into the future by growing the size and extent of biodiversity and habitats which are both local and strategic in nature.

- Policy ENV3: Local Green Space This policy designates local green spaces as areas which should be protected from loss and substantial change. These are mostly recreational and amenity areas important to local people, most of which are publicly accessible.



How can I respond?

There is a comments form at the back of this leaflet. It is also available on the website (<https://www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>). It will help us to structure comments to respond to particular policies or sections of the Plan if you can.

Comments can be emailed to XXXXXXXX or posted to the City Council at: Secretary of Steering Group, City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan, c/o Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RB.

The consultation is open from XXXXXX until XXXXXX.

Where can I find out more?

You can see a full version of the draft Plan, and supporting documents on the City Council website at <https://www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>.

If you wish to see a paper copy of the Plan, you can access a copy of the Plan by contacting us via the email address, phone number or postal address below.

Post: Secretary of Steering Group, City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan,
c/o Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RB.

E-mail: XXXXXXXXXXXX Telephone: XXXXXX XXXXXXXX

What's Next?

Following consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and City Council will review all comments.

The Plan will be **revised in the Spring / Summer of 2022**. We intend to then **submit the Plan in Summer to the Local Planning Authority (LPA)** (currently Mendip District Council, but soon to be the new Somerset Unitary Authority). The LPA then runs a final consultation, after which comments and the Plan itself are considered by an independent Examiner at a **Public Examination**. The Examiner will assess the Plan using planning tests set by the Government. If the Plan passes those tests, it will be finalised and be subject to a **local Referendum** when all eligible residents in the Plan area (Parish) will vote on whether to accept the Plan for use in the planning system, or not. If a majority support the Plan it becomes a legal planning document in the planning system, being **“made” (formally adopted)** by the LPA.



THANK YOU. PLEASE HAVE YOUR SAY!

City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan

Regulation 14 Public Consultation

Comments Form

Please use this form to provide comments on the draft Plan and its associated documents. Please state to which page number, section or policy your comment refers, unless it is a general comment about the Plan as a whole.

You can post or drop-off your comments to: Neighbourhood Plan Consultation, Secretary of Steering Group, City of Wells Neighbourhood Plan, c/o Wells Town Hall, Market Place, Wells, BA5 2RB. You can also email your response to **insert email address** (please insert “Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Response” in the subject line).

The deadline for comments to be received is **[date to be confirmed].** Thank you.

Name:

**Title / organisation /
Business (if not an individual):**

Address:

Email address:

*Resp. no.
(office use only)*

You do not have to give your contact details, although it is helpful for us to understand where in the City of Wells you live in relation to some comments made and you may wish to provide your details to be contacted in the future about progress with the Plan. Individuals' comments will be anonymised in the report of comments received, which will be made public following consultation. Organisations, agencies, private businesses and consultants etc. will normally be named, but if you are representing one of these, please indicate if you would prefer that your response is anonymised.

Page no. / section / policy reference	Comments
	<p data-bbox="527 1913 1339 1955"><i>Please continue comments over the page if necessary.</i></p>

Page no. / section / policy reference	Comments
	<p data-bbox="402 1913 1339 1955"><i>Please continue comments on an additional sheet if necessary.</i></p>