

Vision and objectives

Our reviewed Neighbourhood Plan will be valid until 2038. We need to establish a shared vision and objectives for our Parish

Our current Vision Statement:

The Plan seeks to shape future development so that it:



Our plan – Our future

- meets local needs in ways that are in keeping with the scale and size of the town and other settlements in the Parish;
- complements and enhances our natural and historic environment;
- creates job opportunities for local young people;
- protects the high quality nationally-recognised rural landscapes and the town's landscape setting; and
- addresses our long standing issues of flooding, traffic and affordable housing.

Our current nine objectives cover the following themes:

1. Housing
2. The economy and jobs
3. Reducing flood risk
4. Traffic management and accessibility
5. Community well-being
6. Good quality design
7. Green and open spaces
8. The local landscape and wildlife
9. Sustainability and climate change

Neighbourhood Plan Review: Questions:

- 1. Do you agree with the existing vision and objectives?**
- 2. Is there anything missing that we should add?**
- 3. Have any new challenges arisen that we need to consider?**

Objective 1: Housing

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will provide for a limited amount of housing to meet local needs. It will do this through:

- developing collaborative partnerships with one or more Housing Associations to bring forward affordable housing on exception and other sites.
- permitting small-scale infill sites and conversions within the parish.
- supporting the redevelopment of some brownfield (previously used) sites to mixed uses.
- making sure that developments include a suitable mix of housing suited to local needs, including dwellings suited to older residents.

Large-scale development is not acceptable to the community and where new housing is needed the consensus was that it should be delivered through smaller sites. There is an overwhelming desire to maintain the scale, style and setting of Much Wenlock and to protect the rural settlements and surrounding countryside from development.

What does the Much Wenlock Place Plan say?

- Provide affordable houses, for rent/shared ownership to meet identified need.
- Current infrastructure in Much Wenlock is overloaded. A sensitive approach to infrastructure development due to the nature of the town's environmental capacity.
- Landscape setting is an important consideration.
- Consider school capacity when planning for additional house building.
- Avoid large, bland housing estates.
- Sheltered housing close to town.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. What sort of properties - in terms of tenure, size and type - do you think are most needed in Much Wenlock?
2. What are the likely housing needs for you and your family over the next 10-15 years?
3. What do you think are the main barriers to people moving into their own home (either rental or privately owned) in Much Wenlock?
4. What could we do to help tackle affordability issues in Much Wenlock?
5. Should Bourton (and/or Homer) become a "Community Cluster", which would mean that limited infill to address local housing need could be delivered there?
6. Should we, where possible, give priority to affordable homes to those with a local connection to the parish / key workers?
7. Where should any new development in the parish be focused?

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will help business create jobs by:

- ✓ allocating land for business use.
- ✓ making sure that existing employment sites are kept for employment use wherever possible and appropriate.
- ✓ supporting new business premises in suitable locations.
- ✓ protecting the vitality of Much Wenlock town centre.
- ✓ supporting new mixed use developments, so that where appropriate, people can combine work and home life.
- ✓ encouraging appropriate and sustainable green tourism activities.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Do you agree with the existing objectives? Is there anything missing?
2. Currently, 0.72 hectares of land at Stretton Road is allocated as employment use. Should we be looking to allocate additional land for employment use? What is needed (offices, business start-up units, flexible working space etc.) and where?
3. How could we protect and grow our High Street? What sort of activities could we support? How could we improve the town centre, for instance the look and feel?
4. Lilleshall Quarry now has planning permission for cabins for tourism and Westwood Quarry is now owned by Shropshire Council and is a nature reserve. Farley Quarry is now being considered. What would you prefer to see happen at the Farley Quarry?
5. What sort of tourism facilities, accommodation and activities would you support locally?
6. Would you support the reuse of former agricultural buildings for use as employment sites?



Objective 3: Reducing flood risk

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will encourage new ways of reducing flood risk and water pollution in the parish by:

- ✓ supporting the implementation of the Integrated Urban Drainage Management Plan.
- ✓ keeping sites which can be used to slow down the flow of surface water (Flood Attenuation Areas – See Town Map) free from inappropriate development.
- ✓ making sure that developments minimise the impact on water quality and subsequent health risks during flooding conditions.
- ✓ protecting and improving local water quality.

Points to consider

Parts of the parish have suffered from severe flooding for many decades due to:

- Water running off the steep slopes surrounding Much Wenlock
- The duration and intensity of rain, hail and now snow — worsening with climate change.
- The increased use of hard (impermeable) surfaces.

As a result, the Much Wenlock area is designated as a High Category **Rapid Response Catchment** by the Environment Agency - the only one in Shropshire. This means that after heavy rain or rapid snow-melt, the flow of water is so rapid that it's not possible to prepare proper flood defences or to give adequate warnings to residents. Risk to life, livelihood and property is high.

Potential solutions to explore

Whilst flood issues predominantly fall within the remit of the Environment Agency and Shropshire Council (as the Flood Authority), we need to review how we consider this in our Neighbourhood Plan. Potential alleviation measures we can explore include:

- Seeking ways to minimise the quantity of new build in Much Wenlock.
- Focusing development to previously developed (brownfield) sites.
- Supporting development only on land that is not liable to flooding.
- Reducing the use of hard (impermeable) surfaces in new and existing properties.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Would you support the inclusion of an updated flood policy in our Plan?
2. Have you been concerned by the recent increase in flooding incidents?
3. If so, was this because the floods affected you in your own home or was it concern for the effects within the community?
4. Would you support any/all of the potential alleviation measures?

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will support new ways of managing the traffic in and around the town of Much Wenlock by:

- ✓ making sure that new developments have enough car parking to meet current and future needs.
- ✓ supporting local and strategic traffic management which reduces HGV/LGV vehicles through the parish in order to minimise their adverse impact, whilst managing new developments so that they do not have an unacceptable traffic impact on local residents.

Points to consider

The development of 1,000 plus homes at the former site of the Ironbridge Power Station and other large new developments nearby will have an impact on Much Wenlock, including an increased need for parking in the town and pressure on our roads.

Much Wenlock is a historical heritage town that wishes to offer both ease of parking for its many visitors and tourists, and an attractive and safe environment for them to walk around in.

Whilst we have little influence over strategic traffic, including enforcement issues, we can include policies in our Neighbourhood Plan that encourage more people to walk and cycle locally, both for practical and recreational journeys. We can also support those wishing to horse ride.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Thinking of walking and cycling in the area, are there any routes that you think could be improved, and how?
2. Are there paths that could be better linked up and if so, where?
3. Is car parking a problem and where? What could we do about it?
4. Which areas of the town and villages do you think could be made safer for school children and other pedestrians/ cyclists?
5. Should we install additional electric vehicle charging points in public locations?
6. How could public transport, particularly buses, be improved locally?
7. Could the stretch of road through the Conservation Area (Barrow St, High Street, Wilmore St, Sheinton St) become a 'shared space' with altered road surfaces that show pedestrians where they can cross, and warn drivers that they can get through but have to slow down and give way to pedestrians? This already works well in Ludlow and Shrewsbury town centres.

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will protect existing community facilities and services considered important for a vibrant community and support the development of new ones which benefit local people and visitors by encouraging:

- ✓ new facilities for families, the elderly and young people.
- ✓ developments or uses associated with a positive visitor experience.
- ✓ the protection of existing community buildings and services.
- ✓ new public toilet provision to cater for local and visitor needs.

Opportunity to nominate 'Assets of Community Value'

An Asset of Community Value is defined as: A building or other land is an asset of community value if its main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future. The Localism Act states that 'social interests' include cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Are there any facilities that you think are lacking in the parish? Which ones?
2. Could any existing facilities be expanded or improved— which ones and how?
3. Is there enough provision for our children and if not, what could be improved and where?
4. Are teenagers well catered for? — if not what could be provided and where?
5. Are there any facilities that you think we should nominate as Assets of Community Value?

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

All future development will be well designed and will aim to:

- ✓ respect the scale, style and setting of the historic townscapes of Much Wenlock (in particular the unique characteristics of the 'bowl' setting) and Bourton.
- ✓ make sure that in Much Wenlock and Bourton, the use of building materials is in keeping with those used in their respective Conservation Areas. Elsewhere, new developments should use materials which respect their setting and rural environment.
- ✓ be of the highest quality design.
- ✓ new developments will include gardens of an appropriate scale to the property.

A Bespoke Design Guide for Much Wenlock

At a national level, planning policy recognises the valuable role that communities play in defining what makes their towns and villages particularly special to them. There are lots of factors that can contribute to the character of an area including building styles, materials, architectural features, the height of buildings, the layout of an area, the use of green spaces, types of vegetation and so forth.

The Town Council has commissioned consultants to help us put together a Design Guide for the Parish, which will provide guidance to support planning applications locally. The intention is to ensure that development contributes positively to the overall character of the area and is designed to a high quality, mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Have a look at the other posters to find out more about the emerging Design Guide and to provide your feedback.

Opportunity to identify 'non-designated heritage assets'

Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance that means they should be carefully considered in planning decisions because of their heritage interest. They are not significant enough to receive a national listing (Grade I, II etc.) but are special to the local community. We can identify such assets in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Are there any buildings or structures locally that are not listed (Grade I, II etc.), but which you think should be identified as non-designated heritage assets? What are they and why are they special?

Objective 7: Green and open spaces

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will make sure that:

- ✓ existing areas of green space within the parish are protected and their quality is improved.
- ✓ extra areas of green space are created within new developments and opportunities taken to create linkages between sites and address gaps in existing networks by the creation of new rights of way.
- ✓ new accessible green space should at least meet or exceed Shropshire Council's standards for green and play spaces and allotments.

Designating Local Green Space: The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to protect small areas of green space against inappropriate development, where they meet certain criteria. They must be located close to the community, be fairly small in size and be demonstrably special to the community (e.g. for historic, recreational, beauty, tranquil and/or wildlife reasons). At the moment, the following spaces are protected in this way: **Gaskell Field, Windmill Hill, Havelock Crescent Open Space and Southfield Road Railway Line/Community Orchard**. In addition, we recognise the **Holy Trinity Churchyard** as an important informal open space.

Protecting local viewpoints: We have an opportunity to protect special views and viewpoints from the impacts of development. These might be views that take in a particular landscape or historic building or street-scene, for example. The views must be visible from a location that is publicly accessible.

Supporting new open space: We can also support the provision of new open spaces as part of new development.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions

1. Are there any additional areas of green space that you think should be protected as a Local Green Space? Please tell us why.
2. Are there any views that you think are particularly special? Why?
3. Do you support the provision of new green space? Are there any areas of the parish where this is particularly needed? Do you think we need an additional park in Much Wenlock?

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

The Plan will encourage sympathetic management of the countryside and natural outdoor environment in and around the parish to enhance the quality of the landscape, improve local biodiversity and provide other benefits to the community's quality of life.

Supporting wildlife, habitats and biodiversity: Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is an approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. The word 'biodiversity' comes from the term 'biological diversity'. Since 12 February 2024, all major developments have to provide a “minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity”. Requirements for smaller developments will come into being from 2 April 2024. Often the ‘net gain’ can be delivered on the development site but sometimes this is not possible and the net gain is delivered elsewhere.

Our Neighbourhood Plan can support this provision by:

- ✓ Mapping out our network of local green (land) and blue (water) habitats to protect and, where possible, enhance and better connect the spaces and corridors within it.
- ✓ Setting out how and where biodiversity can be improved locally.
- ✓ Rewilding areas of the parish.
- ✓ Protecting trees, woodland and hedgerows.

Supporting the use of ‘wildlife friendly’ features: We have an opportunity to support the use of features such as bird and bat boxes, hedgehog fencing and ponds.

Protecting our ‘dark skies’: Parts of our parish benefit from dark skies, where light pollution is minimal. Reducing light pollution is important: it can improve our quality of life and provide creative inspiration, it can promote better sleep patterns and reduce stress, it can support a more natural environment for both nocturnal and diurnal animals and reduce wastage from unnecessary or excessive lighting, thus reducing the parish's carbon footprint.

Neighbourhood Plan Review Questions:

1. Which natural features do you think are particularly notable in our parish and should be protected / encouraged?
2. Are there areas of the parish where you think biodiversity could be improved?
3. Do you support the use of wildlife friendly features in new development?
4. How could we reduce the impacts of light pollution in the parish?

What does our current Neighbourhood Plan Say?

- ✓ the application of higher energy standards in new houses.
- ✓ supporting small scale proposals for hydro-electricity, solar energy, anaerobic digestion, biomass and wood fuel products where appropriate and encouraging their use in the local community.
- ✓ encouraging the use of land within the parish to support food production that meets the needs of local people and markets.

These are our current policies:

Policy SCC1: With the exception of the conversion of listed buildings, development proposals will be expected to have a minimum energy efficiency standard equivalent to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Policy SCC2: Proposals for individual and community scale energy from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
- the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

These policies aim to contribute to sustainable development by:

- Reducing Shropshire's contribution to climate change.
- Adapting to the impacts of climate change.
- Protecting and improving Shropshire's water and air quality.

Neighbourhood Plan Review: Questions

1. What sustainable design features should we encourage in development?
2. Should we, where possible, try to ensure that our historic buildings are adapted to be more energy efficient with lower emissions?
3. Would you support a 'community scale energy scheme' locally? What sort of scheme and where? Examples include solar and wind systems.
4. What other ways could we help to mitigate the impacts of climate change?

Local infrastructure priorities

In their Draft Local Plan, Shropshire Council has set a target of 200 new houses to be built in Much Wenlock between 2016 and 2038.

77 houses have already been built or have planning permission.

Shropshire Council has ear-marked a preferred site on the Bridgnorth Road for up to 120 houses.

This leaves only 3 houses as windfall development, meaning 'unexpected' developments.

All development sites of over 10 houses attract a developer contribution called a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). As we have a Neighbourhood Plan, 25% of that Levy comes to the Town Council, who can spend it on anything that 'supports the development of the area'

This could be infrastructure, or other items, provided it is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the parish's area. For example, the pot could be used to fund affordable housing.

1. What sort of local priorities do you think we should be spending the CIL on?

Community projects and aspirations

Although the Neighbourhood Plan is primarily about planning policy, we can include details of other projects and aspirations that are important to our community. These might be delivered by the Town Council or other organisations relating to the Parish. Funding for such projects might come from a variety of sources.

2. Are there any issues or ideas that you wish to raise that have not been covered by the themes or which sit outside land-use and planning policy?

