



# Updating Melksham's Joint Neighbourhood Plan



**O**ur first Melksham Town and Melksham Without Joint Neighbourhood Plan is being used by Wiltshire Council to determine local planning applications to help manage development and deliver our community's wishes and needs.

But our plan needs to be kept up to date and its life extended to ensure it continues to provide strong local powers after 2026, when the current plan period ends. To help ensure this happens the Steering Group has already started work on our updated Neighbourhood Plan 2.

The next version of the plan can tackle big and new local issues like climate change, protecting our valued green spaces and heritage, ensuring new homes meet local people's changing needs and support community facilities and planning for our town centre's vitality. It will also need to respond to and coordinate with Wiltshire's new Local Plan, which will probably be adopted in 2024. It will set high level strategic policies for our community area until at least 2036 including allocation of land to meet Wiltshire's share of Government housing targets.

## Representing the Community

It's imperative that the updated Neighbourhood Plan continues to represent the community's wishes, so throughout the process there will be plenty of opportunities to **Have Your Say** and help us shape our next Neighbourhood Plan. We have a new website where you can find out more and get involved: [www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org](http://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org)

## Help us Shape the Plan Get Involved and Have Your Say!

Throughout the spring and summer, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will be launching a series of community consultations on key local community issues. We need to gather your suggestions and priorities to shape the new Neighbourhood Plan's policies and priorities. Please help us protect and shape our area to meet your needs! Visit the website and sign up to get involved! [www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org](http://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org)

## UPCOMING CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITIES

### Protecting Local Green Spaces

**SURVEY IS LIVE**

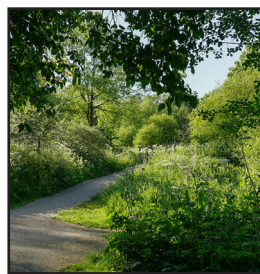
**T**he Neighbourhood Plan can protect qualifying green spaces through a designation called Local Green Spaces. But we need to know which ones to protect!

We need to know which green spaces you value the most and why they are special to you and your community. This could be because of:

- Its beauty;
- Its historic significance;
- Its recreational value (including as a playing field);
- Its tranquillity; or
- Richness of its wildlife.

The Steering Group can then assess all the nominations received to see if they meet the qualifying criteria for Local Green Space designation.

**This survey is already live. It will stay open until 5th June. So don't miss your chance to protect your local green space!**



### Building a Local Heritage List

**SURVEY IN MAY**

**M**elksham's heritage is a key part of our distinct character. It is partly protected by the Melksham conservation area and numerous listed buildings of national heritage importance. But that excludes other historic buildings and features in our area that are locally important.

There is now a way to help address that in our Neighbourhood Plan by adding a list of locally valued historic buildings and features to our existing Neighbourhood Plan heritage policy. This would mean locally listed buildings and features would have to be considered if a planning application came forward that affected one or more of them.

The criteria for what might qualify as a Locally Valued Heritage Asset are long and varied. But as a first vital step the Steering Group need your suggestions to be able to identify the local features that meet these criteria.

**The Steering Group will be launching this consultation online in May, so don't miss out!**



## PLANNING FOR HOMES AND FACILITIES TO MEET OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

**P**eople love to live in Melksham and Melksham Without and we have seen it grow significantly as a result. But it is essential that housing growth is managed by an up-to-date Plan and not through speculative development.

With the Wiltshire Core Strategy out of date and developers continuing to submit proposals for housing, our made Neighbourhood Plan is working hard to maintain plan led development for our area now, and aims to continue to help maintain this into the future.

The new Wiltshire Local Plan is likely to plan for Melksham to continue to grow in the years up to 2036. Working alongside the Local Plan, our updated Neighbourhood Plan can continue to ensure we get the right homes to meet our needs. It is vital that any new housing firstly provides affordable opportunities for our community and secondly homes that meet changing needs through life's journey. This can include starter homes to rent or buy, homes for a growing



family, smaller and accessible homes for downsizers, and older local people, to enable us all to continue to live active lives within our community.

To successfully influence the delivery of the right types of local housing and community benefits, our Plan for local homes must be built on solid local evidence. It can take the lead in allocating smaller sustainable housing and mixed use sites to provide diverse local housing and community benefit opportunities more responsively than the Local Plan can.

### A New Community Housing Survey

**SURVEY IN MAY**

**T**o set the agenda, most importantly, the Steering Group needs to understand what our precise local housing needs are. In May it will be launching a special Local Housing Needs survey to ask you about your existing housing and what existing or changing future housing needs you may have. We'll be supplementing this survey with our own highly detailed technical assessment of local housing needs based upon analysis of our community profile.

### Talking to Local Landowners

**CONTACT US NOW**

**A**longside the survey to ascertain local needs, the Steering Group is contacting all the local landowners on Wiltshire Council's possible housing sites list (called the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment "SHELAA") and is also once again calling upon local landowners to confirm if they wish their land to be considered for potential allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan and explain what their sites can provide to support our community housing and facility needs. If landowners or interested parties would like a site to be considered then please contact: [Teresa.Strange@melkshamwithout.co.uk](mailto:Teresa.Strange@melkshamwithout.co.uk) **Deadline for call for sites is Sunday 5th June.**

### Fill out the Housing Survey!

**SURVEY IN MAY**

**T**his is an extremely important survey. It will help us plan for the right type and location of new homes to provide opportunities for our community through both the Neighbourhood Plan policies and potential allocations.

**So please, please take part! The Steering Group will be launching this survey in May.**

**STAY IN TOUCH, HAVE YOUR SAY AND FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2**

**Visit our new Neighbourhood Plan website at [www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org](http://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org) and sign up for updates to take part at every stage of the journey!**

**IF YOU ARE NOT ONLINE AND UNABLE TO ACCESS THE WEBSITE THEN PLEASE GET IN TOUCH SO THAT WE CAN ARRANGE ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF ENGAGEMENT.**

Melksham Town Council  
[townhall@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townhall@melksham-tc.gov.uk) • Tel: 01225 704187

Melksham Without Parish Council  
[clerk@melkshamwithout.co.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout.co.uk) • Tel: 01225 705700