



Braintree District Council (BDC) has just given the go ahead for Finchingfield and Wethersfield to develop a joint Neighbourhood Plan (NP).

What is a Neighbourhood plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is a legal document that records residents' aspirations for their community over the next 15 years. It is subject to a local referendum and forms a key part of planning decisions. This makes it less likely that developments can be imposed upon a community or the lack of a plan be exploited by developers.

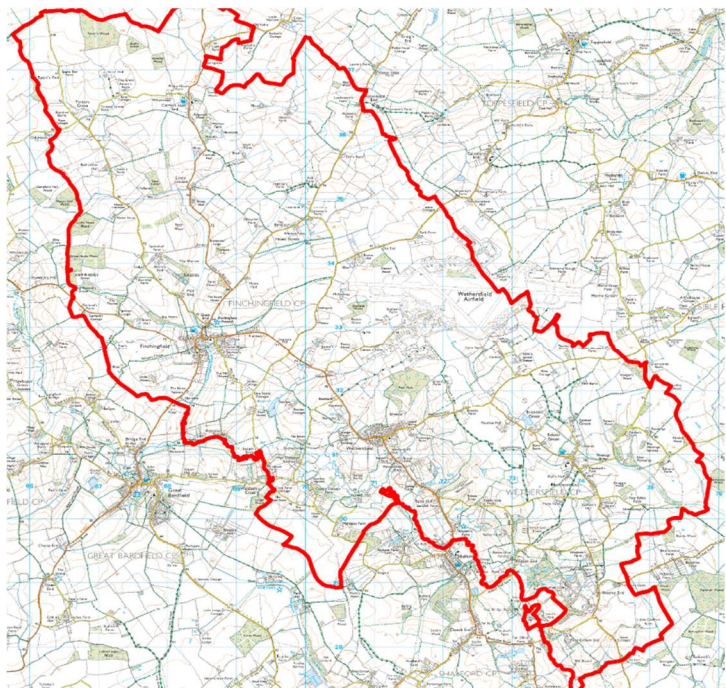
Numerous Braintree parishes have completed their own plans (including Coggeshall and the Salings) and those of Bardfield and Toppesfield are well under way.

What is a the Joint Finchingfield and Wethersfield Neighbourhood plan?

Our Joint NP will preserve the distinct and separate identities of each parish but recognises our common aspirations and concerns. We are all a little weary of attempts to change our villages in various ways but this is our opportunity to take back some control by creating a positive vision for where we all want to live.

To create our NP will require a great deal of effort. By combining our resources, we can shape a bright, positive

sustainable future to meet community needs for generations to come for the entirety of both parishes, including most of the airbase.



What has it got to do with me?

This is YOUR plan. It is not written by outside consultants or policy makers.

Our NP will be developed through an open inclusive process that will engage all local residents and businesses. Our approach and objectives will centre on the people at the heart of our community.

A NP team of volunteers has been set up to co-ordinate the process which anyone is welcome to join. Even if you know nothing about planning, you can get involved in helping to shape your community's future. If you are worried about the footpaths, the airbase, crime or traffic, or have ideas about renewable energy, jobs or affordable housing across either parish, then our NP is of interest to you. Everyone is welcome to join the team or help out in any way including helping to organise events or collect information; complete the residents' survey or join in community discussion groups.

How does the plan get written?

Our NP cannot simply be a wish list of ideas. We need to understand the direction in which strategic planning policy guides us, the issues and challenges facing this area, decide on a community vision and objectives and collect evidence (for example housing needs) to support our proposals to realise that vision.

Our Vision needs to be consistent with the Local Plan of Braintree District Council (BDC) and national policy guidance (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as any regional strategic policies (such as Essex County Council's (ECC) Levelling-Up and Net Zero strategies). Within these boundaries, our NP can design specific policies that form part of planning decisions.

How do I find out more?

Over the next few weeks, we will set up a NP website and Facebook page and organise events to provide information and listen to people's questions. Alternatively, please contact:

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