



Telford & Wrekin
C O U N C I L

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

CABINET

Date **Thursday, 2 December 2021** Time **10.00 am**
Venue **Telford Room, Third Floor, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT**

Enquiries Regarding this Agenda

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Cabinet Members:

Councillor R A Overton	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety and Customer Services
Councillor A J Burford	Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care
Councillor E M Callear	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Visitor Economy
Councillor L D Carter	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood, Commercial Services and Regeneration
Councillor R C Evans	Cabinet Member for Council Finance and Governance
Councillor C Healy	Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Green Spaces, Natural and Historic Environment
Councillor S A W Reynolds	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People, Education and Lifelong Learning
Councillor P Watling	Cabinet Member for Cooperative Communities, Engagement and Partnerships
Councillor D Wright	Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport and Infrastructure
Councillor S Davies	Leader

Invitees:

Councillor W L Tomlinson	Liberal Democrats
Councillor N A Dugmore	Conservative

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

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Key	6.	Tibberton & Cherrington Neighbourhood Development Plan – Proceed to Making the NDP	Cllr R A Overton	31 - 102
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	8.	Progress update on recommendations from the Customer & Digital Peer Review and Key Actions from the Customer Strategy	Cllr R A Overton	145 - 154

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CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 4 November 2021
at 10.00 am in Telford Room, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way,
Telford TF3 4NT

PUBLISHED ON WEDNESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2021

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2021)

Present: Councillors R A Overton (Vice-Chair), A J Burford, E M Callear, L D Carter, R C Evans, C Healy, S A W Reynolds, P Watling, D Wright and S Davies (Chair).

Also Present: Councillors N A Dugmore (Conservative Group Leader) and W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrats / Independent Group Leader)

CAB- Declarations of Interest
108

In respect of Item 6, Councillor R A Overton declared that he was a councillor on Donnington and Muxton Parish Council and that he would not take part in the discussion on that item and leave the room whilst that item was discussed.

CAB- Minutes of the Previous Meeting
109

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB- Leader's Announcements
110

The Leader refuted ongoing criticism from the MP for Shrewsbury and Atcham surrounding the Council's opposition to Future Fit. Telford & Wrekin Council stood firmly on the side of residents in Telford and surrounding areas of Shropshire that would be negatively impacted by the Future Fit proposals. The proposals would leave Telford as the largest town in the country without an A&E.

The Leader called upon the Leader of Shropshire Council and the county's five MPs to accept his offer of a roundtable to discuss a joint proposal that worked for all of Shropshire – a new super-hospital located between Telford & Wrekin and Shrewsbury.

CAB- Empty Property Strategy and Action Plan
111

Councillor D Wright, Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport & Infrastructure, presented the report of the Director: Housing, Employment & Infrastructure.

The report built on the Council's Housing Strategy and focussed specifically on empty properties. It introduced the Council's strategy to address long-term empty properties by providing a new framework for bringing such properties back into use across the Borough. It set the challenge to bring 375 long-term empty properties back into use over the lifetime of the strategy.

There would be a range of support and assistance measures to enable owners to refurbish, let, or dispose of properties, but there were also enforcement measures included within the strategy. Through Telford & Wrekin Homes, part of NuPlace, the Council could acquire or take on management of appropriate properties for rent to meet local housing needs. These interventions were designed to influence the market and meet affordable housing needs.

The Authority was keen to intervene at the correct time to prevent properties falling into the hands of rogue landlords.

£1 million would be allocated to the strategy to bring the numbers of long term empty numbers down, tackling the blight that they wrought upon communities.

Members welcomed the report and acknowledged the necessity of tackling long-term empty housing to combat anti-social behaviour in communities and to provide for the Borough's housing needs.

The Leader of the Conservative Group welcomed the report and noted that the 375 home target was ambitious given the timescale. The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group also welcomed the proposals.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport & Infrastructure acknowledge the target was challenging stating that it was important to set such a challenge.

RESOLVED – that Cabinet

- a) **Approve and adopt the Council's Empty Property Strategy 2021-2026.**
- b) **Recommend to Full Council a new allocation of £1m prudential borrowing in 2021/22 to support the Empty Property Strategy, with delegation to allocate this funding to the Director, Housing, Employment & Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport & Infrastructure and the Director, Finance & H.R, and associated changes are made to the Capital Programme.**

CAB- Donnington & Muxton Neighbourhood Development Plan –

112 Approval to go to Referendum

Councillor R A Overton left the meeting before the item discussion began.

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport & Infrastructure presented the report of the Director: Housing, Employment, & Infrastructure.

The Council had worked closely with Donnington & Muxton Parish Council to develop the Neighbourhood Development Plan and to take the necessary steps to get the plan and its proposals ready, to be put to a referendum. Support for the neighbourhood plan process was expressed.

RESOLVED – that

a) Cabinet agreed with the Independent Examiner that, subject to the modifications recommended by him being made, the Donnington & Muxton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan met the “basic conditions” and all other legal requirements as summarised in this report and in the Independent Examiner’s report;

b) Cabinet agreed that the required modifications should be made to Donnington & Muxton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan and that the Donnington & Muxton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum Version (September 2021) should proceed to Referendum;

c) Cabinet agreed that the Referendum Area should not be extended beyond the designated area to which the Donnington & Muxton Neighbourhood Development Plan relates; and

d) The Chief Executive proceed to exercise all the relevant powers and duties and undertake all necessary arrangements for the Donnington & Muxton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (Referendum Version) to proceed to Referendum and for the Referendum to take place asking the question whether the voter wanted Telford & Wrekin Council to use this neighbourhood development plan for the Donnington & Muxton Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan area to help it decide planning applications in this neighbourhood area.

Following the conclusion of the item, Councillor R A Overton returned to the meeting.

**CAB- Telford and Wrekin Borough Climate Change Action Plan
113 and Consultation**

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Green Spaces, Natural & Historic Environment presented the report of the Director: Communities, Customer & Commercial Services.

It was COP26 at the time of the meeting and the Council was present at COP26 via the LGA Pass the Planet campaign. Locally, the Council was undertaking a number of COP26 related events, such as the Ocean Fish Trail.

The Council continued to make progress towards its net zero 2030 target, carbon emissions for the year 2020/21 had been reduced by 33% on the previous financial year. This was in part a result of new ways of working, with less travel involved in council activities and more work carried out via Microsoft Teams.

However, the Council's own carbon footprint was only part of the wider picture for the Borough. The Council had continued to play an active role in the Borough's Climate Change Partnership, helping to develop a draft action plan and completing a consultation on the plan. The consultation period had finished and included input from 525 people including children and young people. Additionally, a £1 million community bond scheme was to be established to support environmental projects in the Borough.

Members welcome the report praising the positive steps that had been made.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group stated support for the policy but noted that he would wish to see greater funding for tree planting initiatives to combat the impact of ash dieback.

The Leader of the Conservative Group welcomed the report but noted that the impact of lockdowns would have to be taken into account with regard to the reduction in the Council's carbon emissions in the year 2020/21.

RESOLVED – that

a) The progress the Council had made over the past 12 months in its journey to become carbon neutral by 2030 and how the Council would continue to work to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's operations and activities and influence carbon reduction Borough-wide be noted;

b) The launch of a £1 million Community Bond as detailed in this report be approved and authority delegated to the Director: Finance and Human Resources to agree terms and any documentation to give effect to the implementation of the bond and any projects as detailed in the report.

c) That it be noted that the report was in relation to the Council's response to the Climate Emergency Declaration and would be referred to Full Council for information as part of the 'Matters Determined by the Cabinet' report.

CAB- 2021/22 Financial Monitoring
114

The Cabinet Member for Council Finance & Governance presented the report of the Director: Finance and Human Resources.

This was the second financial monitoring report since the beginning of the financial year. There had been additional demands and costs for services and the Council expected to be £0.5 million over budget, this was higher than the position reported in July 2021.

There were total pressures of £5.68 million, with a residual projection of £0.5 million overspend. This did not include any Covid-19 grant funding or the use of any contingency funds.

Variations from the approved budget were primarily in children's safeguarding & family support and adult social care.

While there were plans from government for an additional £12 billion in funding for health and social care over the coming three years, there was no indication that councils would receive any of the funding.

The government spending review that would inform the Council's 2022/23 budget and the medium term Service & Financial Planning Strategy was announced after the report being presented was finalised. The outcome of the review would not be known until later on in 2021. This made planning difficult.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report noting that social care continued to be a significant funding issue and called upon the government to do more to solve the issue.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group noted the significant need for a resolution to social care funding.

The Leader of the Conservative Group sought clarification on the sustainability of borrowing in the long term.

In response to the query of the Leader of the Conservative Group, the Leader of the Council noted that borrowing spread the cost of major projects over the life span of projects and that this was standard practice that allowed other day-to-day operations to continue.

RESOLVED – that

a) The 2021/22 revenue budget position which continued to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic be noted and recommended that Full Council approve the use of balances detailed in section 5.1

b) The position in relation to capital spend be noted and recommended that Full Council approve the changes to the capital programme detailed in Appendix 3

c) The collection rates for NNDR, council tax and sales ledger be noted.

The meeting ended at 10.45 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Anthea Lowe
Associate Director: Policy & Governance
Date: **Wednesday, 10 NOVEMBER 2021**

Signed

Date: Thursday, 2 December 2021

Agenda Item 5: First Homes



“The council already have an excellent record of delivering new homes in the borough with around a third of these being homes available for affordable rent, social rent or shared ownership. This clearly demonstrates our commitment and performance in delivering quality homes for all residents.

“As a part of the First Homes scheme the Government have set national discount criteria of 30%. In this report we are proposing in Telford and Wrekin we go one step further and increase the discount on open market value to 40% to make first time buying even more accessible to our residents.

“The impact of this additional discount from the council will mean we are providing housing that is as affordable as possible for residents most in need as well as single income households and key workers including police, teachers, and nurses to ensure they have a fair chance at buying their own home.”

Councillor Richard Overton, Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety and Customer Services

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TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 02/12/21

FIRST HOMES – SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN TELFORD & WREKIN

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT &
INFRASTRUCTURE**

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR DAVID WRIGHT

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

The Council have an excellent record of delivering new homes in the borough with around a third of these being homes available for affordable rent, social rent or shared ownership. This clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment and performance in delivering quality homes for all residents. In the last 10 years the supply of affordable housing has increased significantly to over 300 homes per annum.

First Homes is a Government initiative to introduce a new form of discounted market housing available for first time buyers. From 28th December the Government will require Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to set aside a quarter of the affordable homes that they would secure through Planning Obligations (Section 106 Agreements) as First Homes. This means that of the 25% of homes in Telford and 35% in Newport and the rural area that would be secured for social or affordable rent and shared ownership properties, the Council will now be required to set aside a quarter of these for First Homes.

The Government have set national criteria for the scheme which includes a minimum discount of 30% on the market value of eligible properties. However LPAs have the flexibility to; apply their own local eligibility criteria and determine a local discount level for First Homes, as well as setting a price cap on the first sale. The purpose of this report is to set out the impact of Government policy on affordable housing in the borough and to propose local criteria that seek to mitigate this impact and maximise opportunities for local people.

First Homes will impact on the Council's ability to secure affordable housing tenures for those most in need. In setting local criteria the Council will seek to ensure that First Homes are as affordable as possible and targeted to local need, whilst ensuring that the Council continues to prioritise and secure homes for social and affordable rent.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Cabinet note the impact of First Homes on the supply of local affordable housing.

2.2 Cabinet approve the introduction of local First Homes criteria contained in the accompanying Policy Position Statement.

3. IMPACT OF ACTION

The Council is required by Government to introduce First Homes within the borough. The scheme is directed towards the provision of discounted market housing. The Council are clear that First Homes will reduce the number of homes coming forward for other more affordable tenures such as rented or shared ownership accommodation. The effect of Government policy will raise the bar for people needing to access affordable housing and wishing to live in their own property.

The proposals set out in this report seek to balance the need for 'affordable' first homes with the need to protect the number of homes coming forward for other tenures such as social and affordable rent.

4. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	1. every child, young person and adult lives well in their community 2. all neighbourhoods are a great place to live
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	A reduction in other more affordable housing tenures will disadvantage those most in need. First Homes will benefit first time buyers.
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	First Homes comes into force in the borough for planning applications determined after the 28 December 2021 (28 March 2022 in cases of significant upfront pre-application advice).	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The Council will place obligations on developers through Section 106 agreements to ensure Developers comply with the First Homes arrangements.

		<p>The planning application will include a First Homes monitoring fee, anticipated to be around £350 based on benchmarking with pilot Local Planning Authorities. This will be charged against each development and would be available to support additional resources to monitor the scheme if required. It is not possible at this time to identify the annual additional income.</p> <p>The Government are monitoring pilot schemes to determine any additional burdens, they are not allocating any new burdens funding at this stage.</p> <p>The developers will bear the burden of the reduced sales proceeds for any First Homes properties.</p> <p>There are some circumstances (identified within appendix A) where homes may cease to be classed as a First Home. Whilst it is expected that these occasions will be very few, in the event of that happening the Council will receive either a full or a part compensation payment for the loss of these homes. This will be re-invested in future First Homes provision.</p> <p>AEM 21/10/21</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<p>As it determines planning applications, the Council is required to implement the First Homes arrangements as set out in National Planning Practice Guidance and the 24th May Written Ministerial Statement. This report summarises the requirements and explains that there is scope for local planning authorities to apply local adjustments. Adjustments for the borough have been proposed and are being consulted upon. Cabinet is considering whether the adjustments are justified in the circumstances pertaining in the borough. Legal</p>

		advice will be provided generally and, in particular, regarding the terms of the Section 106 planning obligations and the restrictions on title which will be necessary to secure First Homes going forward (IR20.10.21)
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	First Homes will reduce other affordable housing tenures which could leave more people in need of lower cost affordable housing products. There may be additional administrative burdens on the Council to monitor First Homes implementation.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough-wide impact.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5. INFORMATION

Introduction

The requirement for First Homes has been introduced by Government as a new form of discounted market housing available for first time buyers and which meets its definition of affordable housing. The details of its introduction were confirmed in a Written Ministerial Statement on 24 May 2021, this followed consultation undertaken in late 2020. The Council responded to the consultation and set out its concerns that the proposals would adversely impact on the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) ability to deliver genuinely affordable homes for those most in need.

First Homes requirements come into force locally from the 28 December, or 28 March 2022 where there has been significant¹ pre-application engagement.

The Government have set national criteria for the scheme which includes a minimum discount of 30% on the market value of eligible properties. Other elements of the national criteria include:

- Combined income of purchaser(s) not exceeding £80,000
- Initial sale price cannot exceed £250,000 following 30% discount
- Must be a first time buyer/s – but no age limit
- The discount on market value applies to all subsequent sales and these must be to first time buyer/s
- First Homes are intended to be used as a person's sole or primary residence and should not be used for investment or commercial gain.

Impact of First Homes on affordable housing in Telford & Wrekin

The Council has a strong track record in delivering affordable housing with on average a third of all new homes being homes for social rent, affordable rent or shared ownership. Since 2011 the Council have delivered over 3,000 affordable homes in the borough, averaging 300 new affordable homes per year.

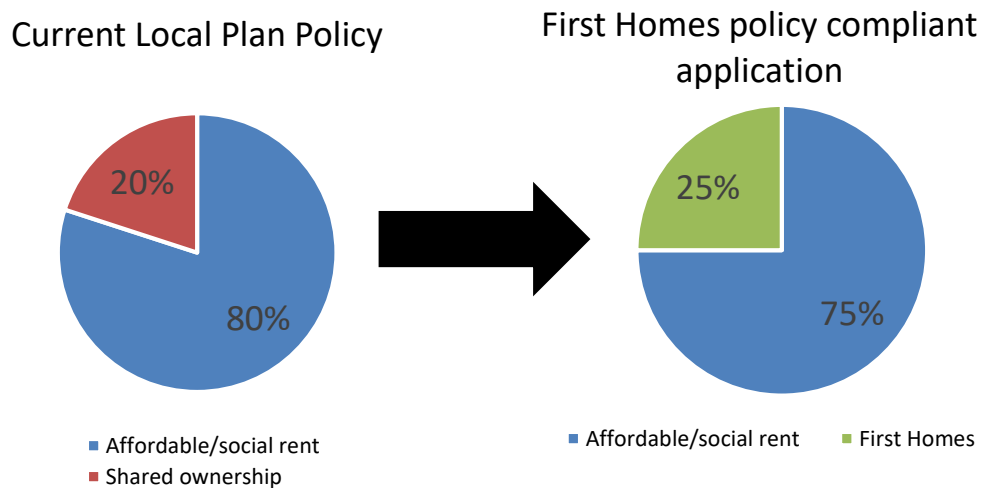
The Council secure around 40% of the Borough's affordable housing supply through Section 106 Agreements which would be subject to First Homes requirements. The remaining 60% are secured through other routes such as 100% affordable housing schemes delivered by Registered Providers or sites benefiting from Homes England grant.

¹ Any substantive discussions between the Council and the applicant relating to the proposed quantity or tenure mix of the affordable housing contribution associated with that application.

Based on current rates of affordable housing completions it is projected that around 30 affordable homes per annum (10% of total delivery) will be First Homes.

The adopted Telford & Wrekin Local Plan secures affordable housing through policy HO5 with the following proportions for affordable homes; 25% in Telford and 35% in Newport and the rural area.

The charts below sets out the example of a policy compliant scheme coming forward in Telford under the current system where the tenure split is 80% of homes for social and affordable rent and 20% for shared ownership. The second chart demonstrates the impact that First Homes would have in displacing shared ownership and reducing the proportion of homes for social and affordable rent.



The Council's priority in considering local First Homes criteria (set out below) is to protect affordable homes for rent. This is where the greatest need for affordable accommodation is in the borough.

The need to maximise the number of homes for affordable rent recognises that there are other costs associated with home ownership that would need to be met regardless of the level of discount such as; mortgage fees, legal costs, stamp duty, repair and maintenance costs.

Discount levels and price caps for Telford & Wrekin

LPAs have some flexibility to apply their own discounts on the market value and initial price caps. The Council have assessed the affordability of First Homes based on 30% and 40% discounts vs the affordability, this has also been supported by consultation with Housing Developers and registered housing providers to inform the level of discount.

Proposed local discounts in Telford & Wrekin include:

- **40% discount on market value of homes** where sites have no significant constraints to development. For sites that can demonstrate significant constraints to development, that impact on viability, the Council will consider reverting to the national discount.

The discount level will help ensure that First Homes are affordable for single income households including police, teachers, nurses and many private sector workers. As an example a home with an open market value of £150,000 sold with a 40% discount and a 10% deposit would require an income of around £22,500. At 30% discount the income required would rise to around £26,500 which would be out of reach for example for many single income key workers on starting salaries.

- **Initial sale cannot be at a price greater than £180,000** after the discount has been applied – the price cap reflects the fact that the scheme can also benefit families wishing to own their own home. The initial price cap will also include an uplift for Consumer Prices Index Housing (CPIH) to reflect inflation.

A local price cap of £180,000 based on a 40% discount would ensure that 1 – 3 bed properties with a maximum open market value of £300,000 could be First Homes.

The discount on market value and price cap on the initial sale would be in force for the full 6 month² marketing period for First Homes.

Local Eligibility Criteria for Telford & Wrekin

LPA's can also introduce local eligibility criteria that would remain in place for 3 months after the start of the marketing period. At the end of the initial 3 month period the local eligibility criteria falls away and the national criteria would apply. This process would also apply to all future re-sales of First Homes.

Proposed local criteria that would apply in Telford & Wrekin include:

- **Combined household income not exceeding £60,000** – this reduces minimum national income threshold to target the scheme at lower income households and joint income households. The income cap will be indexed to CPIH to take account of inflation.

The table below sets the starting salaries for a range of key worker professions. It demonstrates that at £60,000 the price cap for First Homes is would not exclude single or joint income households in similar professions.

Key worker profession	Starting salary
Newly qualified nurse	£25,000

² This includes 3 month period where local eligibility criteria is in place.

Newly qualified teacher	£25,000
Police constable	£21,000 – £24,000
Trainee fire fighter	£24,000
Care worker	£16,000 – £18,000
Army Private	£20,000

- **A local connection test** – it is a Council priority to ensure that First Homes are first and foremost available for local residents who live and work in the borough or have relatives that need care. The affordability of housing can also act as a barrier to recruitment into key sectors such as health and social care, homes that are more affordable will help make the Borough an attractive place to live for workers in those sectors.

The local connections criteria is in line with criteria applied through the local plan to demonstrate local residency or are employed in the borough.

- **Priority for key workers** – this includes NHS staff, teachers, police, firefighters and military personnel, social care and childcare workers as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. This would support key workers who work within Telford & Wrekin and wish to purchase their own property.

In line with national requirements local eligibility criteria will be waived for all active members of the Armed Forces, spouses, partners and veterans within 5 years of leaving the armed forces. This is inline with the Council commitments under the armed forces as set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.

Marketing of local eligibility criteria

It is critical that house builders effectively promote the scheme during the first 3 month period when local eligibility criteria would apply. It is proposed that house builders are obliged (through the Section 106 Agreement) to ensure that homes are marketed via the following channels:

- Local press
- Company website
- Rightmove / zoopla or other such website
- Guidance documents will be available on the Councils website for

The Council reserves the right to challenge house builders who cannot demonstrate that they have effectively marketed First Homes subject to the local criteria, leading to a re-introduction of the 3 month local criteria period.

Other key operating features of the scheme will include:

- Guidance on the scheme and local eligibility criteria will be available for prospective first time buyers and developers / housebuilders via the Councils website.

- The Council will consider enforcement action if First Homes restrictions are not followed as this could result in a reduction in the number of 'affordable homes' in the borough.
- First Homes should be delivered on-site unless an off-site financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified. Any cash contributions for affordable housing should ensure a minimum 25% of these contributions are used to secure First Homes.
- As with Local Plan Policy HO 6 (delivery of affordable housing) a landowner should enter into a section 106 legal agreement to secure First Homes and ensure that a legal restriction is registered onto a First Home's title on its first sale. The legal agreement will also ensure the discount on market value is secured in perpetuity on future re-sales.
- To protect lenders a Mortgagee Exclusion Clause should be included in the planning obligations if a home owner defaults on mortgage payments. This would allow a property to be sold to anyone on the open market at open market value and the property will cease to be a First Home. Once the mortgagee has recovered the funds due to them, any remaining proceeds from the sale would be used to reimburse the Council for the loss of the First Home.

There are likely to be some additional administrative burdens on LPAs as part of their role in the administration of the scheme. The Government are planning to issue template planning obligations for inclusion in s106 agreements. Where restrictions are not being implemented the Council will have determine what action to take. Government are monitoring pilot authorities to determine any resource implications but are not proposing funding support at this stage.

The Council will secure local criteria, marketing periods, obligations on developers and the requirements for future re-sale of homes through Section 106 agreements. This will also include a monitoring fee for Section 106 agreements, anticipated to be around £350 based on benchmarking with pilot Local Planning Authorities. This will be charged against each development to help cover costs the Council will incur in having to monitor the scheme.

Potential risks and mitigation

There are risks associated with First Homes that may impact on the housing market:

- The requirement to remove the initial price cap will have significant detrimental impact on affordability when First Homes are re-sold. In some areas of the borough house prices may rise increasing the barrier to accessing First Homes even after the application of the 40% discount. This would negate the benefits of of the discount and potentially put First Homes out of reach of key workers. This may also lead to an increase in

applications to remove the First Homes obligations from the title of properties in those areas should no eligible purchaser be found within a 6 month period – *In areas of higher value it may be more appropriate to seek more 1 – 2 bed units as First Homes to mitigate any subsequent rise in house prices. Where an application to remove title is made the Council will require compensation for the 'loss' of a First Homes unit to up to 40% of the OMV, these funds would then be reinvested in new First Homes provision.*

- Home owners of First Homes maybe disincentivised to invest in property they will be required to sell at a discount – *the initial price cap is removed for resales allowing the property to appreciate in value where improvements have been made.*
- Developers may be disincentivised to promote First Homes whilst local criteria is in place for the first 3 months – *the Section 106 Agreement will set out requirements developers will need to adhere to when marketing homes.*
- It will displace shared ownership which risks locking out residents who would have benefited from the gradual purchase of a property over a longer period of time – *The majority of affordable housing is secured through routes other than Section 106 Agreements, therefore these sites can continue to deliver shared ownership properties.*
- Future resales may distort the market – *Any future resale needs to be validated by the Council and the property should be valued in accordance with Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors guidance ensuring a fair market value before the First Homes discount is applied.*
- A strategic risk is a slump in the wider housing market that could put some homeowners in negative equity, this could potentially impact owners of First Homes – *Should this happen the Council would need to review and consider the impacts on affordable housing supply.*

Can First Homes be sold without restrictions?

In instances where a suitable buyer cannot be found the Council can include provisions in a section 106 agreement which allow a developer or First Home owner to sell a First Home on the open market and remove the title restriction.

It should be demonstrated that before a First Home is “lost” in this way, it have been marketed for at least 6 months and all reasonable steps must have been taken to secure a sale as a First Home, including the reduction in the asking price.

Where it is still not possible to secure a sale as a First Home the seller should compensate the Council for the loss of the First home property, based on the value of the discount the First Home was to be sold for, as a percentage of the final sale price.

Exempt developments

The following types of development are exempt from the First Homes policy:

- Build to rent developments – this would include Nu Place and Telford & Wrekin homes
- Specialist accommodation (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly or students)
- Self-build or custom house building; or
- 100% affordable housing schemes, entry-level exception sites or a rural exception site.

Exception sites

Government guidance allows for First Homes exception sites. These would be sites that are 100% First Homes or sites with some 'enabling' market housing. These could come forward in areas where there are tighter controls on open market housing such as on the edge of villages. Proposals should not be disproportionate to the location.

Consultation

In establishing the local criteria targeted consultation was undertaken with developers and registered housing providers that operate within Telford & Wrekin. The main feedback included:

- Consultees were supportive of the Councils approach
- The need to increase the initial sales cap to take account of house prices in higher value areas – the cap has been increased to £180,000
- The need to index link price and income caps – Consumer Prices Index (Housing) will be used.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES - None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Annex 1 – First Homes - Policy Position Statement

**Report prepared by Gavin Ashford, Strategic Planning Team Leader,
Telephone: 01952 384260.**

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Annex 1

Telford & Wrekin Council First Homes - **Policy Position Statement**

The purpose of this policy position statement is to provide guidance to (planning) applicants on applying the government's First Homes scheme to planning applications in Telford & Wrekin. The Council has created and applied local eligibility criteria to help deliver homes that are affordable for local people.

What is a First Home?

First Homes are a new form of discounted market housing for first-time buyers delivered through the planning system via developer contributions and exception sites. First Homes also meet the definition of affordable housing for planning purposes. A minimum of 25% of all affordable housing provided by developers on sites should be First Homes.

First Homes are not a form of 'Right to Buy' or shared ownership housing where another party retains a share of the equity.

When will First Homes be required?

The First Homes scheme was introduced in May 2021 through a Written Ministerial Statement and planning practice guidance.¹ First Homes will not apply to sites with full or outline planning permissions already in place or determined before 28 December 2021, or 28 March 2022 where there has been significant² pre-application engagement.

If an applicant wishes to amend a submitted application to include First Homes, they should discuss this with the Council before the application is determined. Where applications have agreed a resolution to grant permission subject to signing a S106 agreement and other issues are delaying the grant of permission, the Council may extend beyond the above dates, subject to developer agreement.

What level of discount will apply in Telford & Wrekin?

The Council are seeking to provide housing that is as affordable as possible for residents most in need. The Council have flexibility on the level of discount to be applied to First Homes and the price cap for the initial (first) sale, the following will apply:

- **Discount on Open Market Value** - The Council will apply a 40% discount³ to the open market value of First Homes.

¹ [Planning Practice Guidance – First Homes](#), 24 May 2021

² Any substantive discussions between the Council and the applicant relating to the proposed quantity or tenure mix of the affordable housing contribution associated with that application.

³ Where a developer can clearly demonstrate a viability case the Council may agree to reduce the level of discount to the national minimum discount.

- **Price cap on initial sale** - The initial sale of a First Home cannot be at a price greater than £180,000 after the discount has been applied (this does not apply to resales). The initial price cap will also include an uplift for Consumer Prices Index Housing (CPIH) to reflect inflation.

The discount on First Homes is maintained when the property is sold, meaning that new first time buyers are able to benefit in the future.

The price discount applies to the first sale and each subsequent sale of a First Home, across the entire borough. While First Home owners may be permitted to extend or improve their homes, when sold, they may not realise the full value of this as the entire home will be sold at the same percentage discount as applied on their initial purchase.

Both the discount on OMV and the price cap remain in place for the full 6 month marketing period for First Homes.

Who is eligible to purchase a First Home?

First Homes must be sold to first-time buyers⁴ who may be individuals or joint purchasers. Local residents will get priority in accessing First Homes through the local eligibility criteria set out below which includes a local connections test as well as ensuring that First Homes are affordable for key workers.

The local eligibility criteria would remain in place for 3 months after the start of the marketing period. At the end of the initial 3 month period the local eligibility criteria falls away and the national criteria would apply. This process would also apply to all future re-sales of First Homes.

First time buyers should have a mortgage or home purchase plan to fund the balance of the discounted purchase price. First Homes will initially be marketed for first-time buyers who meet the following local eligibility criteria:

- **Income cap:** Individuals or joint purchasers should have a **combined annual household income not exceeding £60,000** in the tax year immediately preceding the year of purchase. The income cap will be indexed to CPIH to take account of inflation.
- **Local connection test:** First-time buyers must complete a form to demonstrate their eligibility and how at least one of the eligible purchasers meet one or more of the following:
 - Has lived in the borough for 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years
 - Needs to live nearer to close relatives (parents, children, siblings or grandparents) who have lived in the borough of Telford & Wrekin for at least 5 years; or
 - Are permanently in full-time or part-time employment (working a minimum 16 hours a week) in the borough of Telford & Wrekin

⁴ First-time buyer as defined in paragraph 6 of schedule 6ZA of the Finance Act 2003 for the purposes of Stamp Duty Relief for first-time buyers

- **Key workers⁵:** The Council will, where possible, give priority for First Homes to key workers. Key workers are defined locally as public sector employees who provide services in areas including - doctors, nurses, paramedics, social care and other frontline health and social care staff, teachers, police, firefighters and military personnel, and childcare workers.

Armed Forces - Local connection criteria will be waived for all active members of the Armed Forces, divorced / separated spouses or civil partners of current members of the Armed Forces, spouses or civil partners of a deceased member of the armed forces (if their death was wholly or partly caused by their service) and veterans within 5 years of leaving the armed forces. This is In line with the Councils commitments through the Armed Forces Covenant.

How does this relate to the Council's local plan?

The Council's Local Plan Policy HO 5 requires proposals for 11 dwellings or more (or with a gross floor space greater than 1,000 sqm) to provide affordable housing as follows:

- 25% for schemes in Telford; and
- 35% for schemes in Newport or the rural area.

The government requires that, where affordable homes are secured through Section 106 agreements, a minimum 25% of the contribution is First Homes.

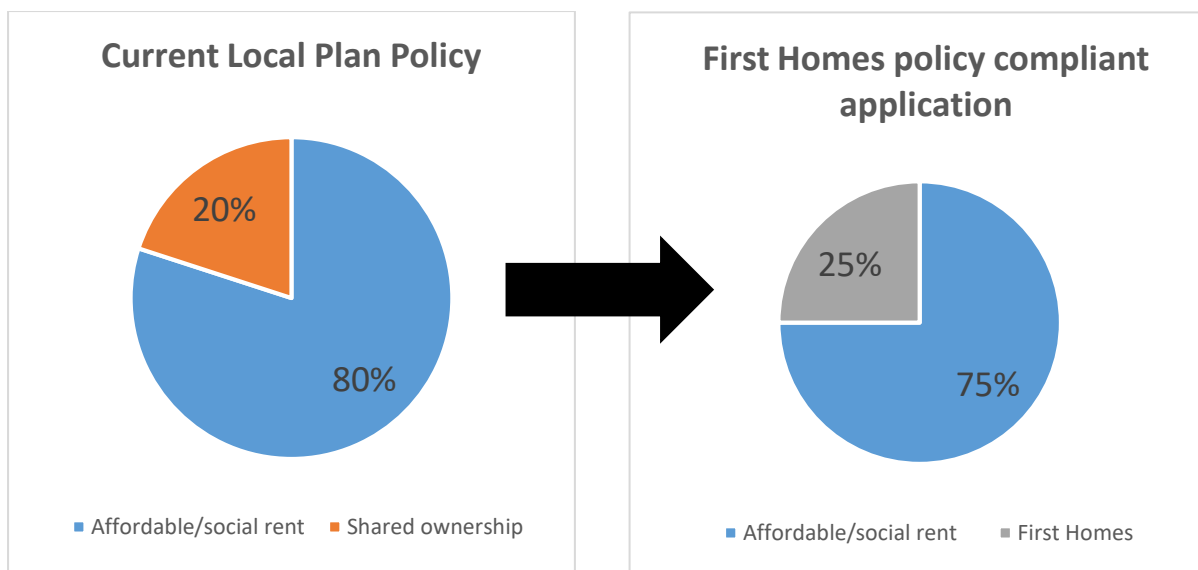
Since 2011 the Council have delivered on average over 300 affordable homes per annum. Since 2015 around 40% of those homes have been delivered through Section 106 agreements so based on past delivery the Council anticipate delivery of around 30 homes per annum through the First Homes scheme.

Where affordable homes on sites are provided by other means, such as Homes England grant, these affordable homes will not be subject to First Homes requirements. In these instances the Council will seek, through negotiations with developers and Registered Providers, a mix of rented and shared ownership tenures.

Therefore following introduction of the First Homes requirements the Council will secure a tenure mix of 25% First Homes and 75% social or affordable rented on applicable sites, this will apply to full or outline applications. In exceptional circumstances other tenures may be considered on a site by site basis and applicants should discuss this with the Council.

The first chart below set out the current split of tenures secured through the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan. The second chart demonstrates the impact of the introduction of the First Homes scheme including the displacement of shared ownership tenure and reduction in the number of homes available for affordable / social rent.

⁵ National Planning Policy Framework, essential local worker definition, page 67.



For example, on a 100-dwelling scheme in Telford, a policy compliant (where affordable housing is secured through a Section 106 agreement) application would comprise 25 affordable dwellings, of which 6.25 would be First Homes and 18.75 social or affordable rent (with financial contributions for the fractions of a dwelling, ensuring that 25% of all affordable housing is First Homes). Where financial contributions are secured for fractions of homes the Council will determine the most appropriate means of deploying this funding to secure, for example, a greater level of discount on future First Homes.

Are there any exemptions from First Homes?

The following types of development are exempt from the First Homes policy⁶:

- Build to rent developments
- Specialist accommodation (such as purpose-built accommodation for older people, disabled or students)
- Self-build or custom house building; or
- 100% affordable housing schemes, entry-level exception sites or a rural exception site.

What is the process for marketing First Homes?

First Homes will be sold on the open market, initially by developers or Registered Providers of new build dwellings and then via estate agents for resale properties. Developers will be expected to contribute to the net costs in administering the First Homes scheme in the borough through a monitoring fee per development, paid through the S106 legal agreement. They will also be responsible for obtaining a current (no more than six months old) independent valuation for the property by a qualified member of the RICS⁷.

⁶ Paragraph 65 National Planning Policy Framework

⁷ Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

First Homes will be marketed to buyers meeting the local eligibility criteria, including local income cap and local connection test, for **3 months**. Properties should be advertised as First Homes with the eligibility criteria made clear. If no buyer is found after 3 months, the local eligibility criteria falls away and First Homes will be marketed to first time buyers with an £80,000 household income cap (the national threshold) for a further 3 months. However, the discount levels and initial (first sale only) house price cap set by the Council, through a S106 agreement, do not change during the 6 months.

First Homes will be marketed to eligible buyers on a first come, first served principle. The buyer, together with their estate agent, conveyancer and mortgage adviser, will be responsible for completing an **application pack** to prove that the eligibility criteria is met. The Council will check that criteria have been met and give authority to proceed.

The Council will monitor delivery of First Homes in the borough and review its local eligibility criteria on an annual basis and consider whether any revisions are required.

The Council will consider enforcement action if First Home restrictions are not followed.

How will First Homes be secured on sites?

First Homes should be delivered on-site unless off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified. Any cash contributions for affordable housing should ensure a minimum 25% are used to secure First Homes. The cash contribution will be based on the difference in value between an open market and affordable dwelling on-site, in this instance an affordable First Home with the 40% discount on open market value.

Using the 100-dwelling example in Telford, 6.25 First Homes would be secured in a policy compliant scheme, with the 0.25 dwelling would be secured as a cash contribution.

First Homes should not be physically different from equivalent market housing provided on a site, in terms of quality and size. They should also be proportionately integrated across sites in small clusters. The nationally described space standards will apply to First Homes in accordance with Policy HO 4 of the Local Plan.

The developer or landowner should enter into a S106 legal agreement to secure First Homes and ensure that a legal restriction is registered onto a First Home's title on its first sale. This will appear on conveyancing checks as part of the sales process and ensure the **discount on market value is secured in perpetuity**. The government will publish a template legal agreement.

During the initial sale of a First Home, the builder/developers will commission an independent valuation from an RICS registered surveyor which will be shared with the local authority under the S106 agreement. Any further valuation undertaken by a lender as a part of the buyer's mortgage application will take precedence if it is lower than the RICS valuation.

Can First Homes be rented out?

In exceptional circumstances First Homes could be rented out on a short term basis, where circumstances require the owner to stay away from their First Home. This is limited to no more than two years under one ownership and the Council must be notified. This will not affect restrictions on letting a property prescribed by a mortgage lender and permission from them should be sought. Restrictions would be in place to ensure that First Homes are not acquired as buy-to-let properties.

What protections are in place for lenders?

A Mortgagee Exclusion Clause should be included in planning obligations for First Homes. Its purpose is to ensure appropriate protection for lenders in the event that they are enforcing their security against the property. Where a lender repossesses the property, the outstanding mortgage balance together with any associated costs and interest will be deducted before the payment is made to the local authority in compensation for the loss of a First Home. The payment to the authority will also be net of any additional stamp duty liability. The Mortgagee Exclusion Clause should provide that the property can be sold to anyone on the open market at open market value and the property will cease to be a First Home.

Can First Homes ever be sold without restriction?

First Homes are intended to be used as a person's sole or primary residence and should not be used for investment or commercial gain. There may, however, be instances where a suitable buyer cannot be found, even after the 6 month marketing period. If no buyer is found at the end of this period, an application may be made to the local planning authority for the home to revert to market sale.

The seller should compensate the Council for the loss of the affordable housing unit, based on the value of the discount the First Home was to be sold for, as a percentage of the final sale price. There should also be a requirement to market the home for at least 6 months in total and that all reasonable steps have been taken to sell the property (including, where appropriate, reducing the asking price). Such circumstances would be exceptional and the Council expects First Homes to be suitably marketed to eligible purchasers across the borough. Suitable marketing includes:

- Advertising the property as a First Home (with local and national eligibility criteria clearly stated on the advert/webpage)
- Adverts placed on the developer's website, and at least one other property website (local or national) with evidence of the dates and duration of marketing
- Contact with local housing associations and providers prior to the commencement of marketing (based on the list available at: https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20781/housing_association) ; and
- At each stage (3 months and 6 months from the commencement of marketing) a statement summarising the marketing efforts and any enquiries received, including reasons why any enquiries did not proceed.

What are First Homes exception sites?

First Homes exception sites are an exception site (a site that comes forward outside of local or neighbourhood plan allocations to deliver affordable housing) that delivers primarily First Homes. In the case of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan this would be sites in the rural area outside of key settlements⁸. They can come forward on unallocated land outside of a development plan and should:

- Comprise First Homes; and
- Be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in the National Planning Policy Framework⁹, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

What constitutes a proportionate development will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on local circumstances. The Council will consider:

- The Local Plan spatial strategy – which directs most new development to Telford and Newport. In the rural area Policy HO 10 supports a limited amount of housing in Edgmond, High Ercall, Lilleshall, Tibberton and Waters Upton. Elsewhere in the rural area small scale rural exception sites may be supported through Policy HO 11.
- The scale and physical relationship in relation to the settlement in which it is located; and
- The availability of local services and facilities and overall sustainability.

Applicants should proactively engage with the Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss their proposals.

A small proportion of market homes may be allowed on the exception site at the Council's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of First Homes without grant funding. The inclusion of market housing must be evidenced on viability grounds based on government guidance for viability assessments¹⁰ to be simple, transparent and publicly available.

A small proportion of other affordable homes may be allowed on First Homes exception sites where there is significant identified local need.

In both of the above instances, a small proportion will mean much **less than the amount and proportion of First Homes being delivered** (well below half).

Resale of First Homes

For future resales the discount on open market value will be secured through by a planning obligation under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enforceable by the local planning authority that ensures that a legal restriction is registered onto a First Home's title on its first sale.

⁸ See Policy HO11, Telford & Wrekin Local Plan, page 86.

⁹ Footnote 7 of the NPPF

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/viability#standard-inputs>

When the home is resold in future, the seller should secure a valuation in accordance with RICS's guidance.

When a mortgage or home purchase plan offer is being considered, the lender will also value the property in the usual way. The sale price of the property should not change unless this valuation is lower than the agreed sale price. In this case, the lender's valuation (after the discount has been applied) should act as a price cap for the sale of the property.

I want to discuss First Homes?

Purchasers should contact the developer where First Homes are proposed to discuss their eligibility and the procedure for completing an application pack.

For queries regarding the Council's local criteria or the provision of First Homes on individual sites (including planning applications or pre-application enquiries) please contact the Development Management Team at: 01952 380380 or email:

planning.control@telford.gov.uk

Monitoring and review

The Council will monitor roll out of First Homes and reserve the right to review the local criteria for the scheme. This includes potential to vary the level of discount, income caps and initial price caps in the future.

Agenda Item 6: Tibberton & Cherrington Neighbourhood Development Plan – Proceed to Making the NDP



“How an area is developed has a direct impact on people’s lives. Neighbourhood Development Plans are an opportunity for people to set out planning policies that will affect their local communities.

“Following a referendum on 11 November, people in Tibberton and Cherrington have voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Development Plan put forward by the parish.

“I am pleased to confirm that Telford & Wrekin Council will now formally adopt the plan and use it alongside national and borough wide planning policy to determine the outcome of planning applications in the area and ensure the views of local people are represented.”

Councillor Richard Overton, Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety and Customer Services

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TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 2 DECEMBER 2021

TIBBERTON & CHERRINGTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – COUNCILLOR DAVID WRIGHT

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Localism Act (2011) introduced legislation which allows Parish and Town Councils to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for their administrative area. This Report recommends that the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish NDP become the sixth NDP in the Borough to be adopted (made), reflecting the Councils commitment to engage local communities further in planning for development in their local areas.
- 1.2 Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Council submitted their NDP (the “Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan”) (TCNDP) to Telford & Wrekin Council as local planning authority in July 2020. In accordance with its statutory duties, Telford & Wrekin undertook a number of checks to ensure that all the procedural and other requirements had been met and completed a 6-week publication period which allowed written representations to be made.
- 1.3 Telford & Wrekin appointed an Independent Examiner (the Examiner), Mr Tony Burton, to conduct the Examination of the TCNDP and his report was submitted to the Council in July 2021. The Report recommended proceeding to Referendum, subject to a number of modifications. Those modifications have now been applied to the TCNDP and incorporated into a Referendum version of the TCNDP (Appendix 2).
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to recommend that Cabinet ‘make’ Tibberton & Cherrington Parish NDP following the outcome of the local referendum on 11th November. This will mean that the policies within the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish NDP will become part of the Development Plan for Telford & Wrekin and will be considered in the determination of planning applications in the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish NDP area alongside national and borough wide planning policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to make the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.**
- 2.3 That Cabinet authorise the Director: Housing, Employment & Infrastructure to exercise all of the Council’s relevant powers and duties and undertake all necessary procedural arrangements relating to the making of the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.**

3. IMPACT OF ACTION

3.1 The Local Planning Authority will be obliged to make the TCNDP, if the referendum results are in favour of the Plan. This will allow the TCNDP to be given full weight in the determination of planning applications with the Parish of Tibberton & Cherrington alongside national and borough-wide adopted policy.

4. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Co-operative Council: - Involving local people in planning and running services - As a Council, supporting our community to engage with the future development of their area
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	NDP's contribute to the local planning framework for future development within a designated area. Production of the TCNDP has involved the whole of the parish community and people have had the opportunity to provide formal comments on policies which will affect the future development of their area including a minimum 6-week formal publicising consultation period. The referendum stage provides an opportunity for the whole Tibberton & Cherrington Parish to vote on the plan prior to formally making the plan.
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	Subject to Cabinet approval, and the outcome of the referendum the final version of TCNDP would be presented to Cabinet in December 2021 to be made.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The costs associated with the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans, including the additional costs of designations, referendum and examinations have to be met by the Local Authority. DCLG confirmed in their letter dated 29 th June 2021 that, up to £20,000 funding is available to LPA's which would cover those costs. The Authority submitted a claim for these funds in August 2021, the funds will be received before 31 st March 2022. The cost of this NDP will be met from those funds. AEM – 28.10.21
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The provisions for the preparation of a neighbourhood development plan are set out in sections 38A, 38B and 38C of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 The referendum is due to take place on 11th November and if more than half of those voting (i.e. 50% + 1) have voted in favour of the TCNDP, subject to certain exceptional circumstances, the Council must make the TCNDP as soon as reasonably practical and in any event within 8 weeks of the referendum, unless it considers that the making of the plan would breach or otherwise be incompatible with any

		<p>European Union obligation or any of the Convention Rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 or where a legal challenge regarding the referendum has been brought.</p> <p>If the recommendation is agreed and the TCNDP is made, there are further statutory procedural requirements on the Council which include an obligation to publish its decision and its reasons for that decision. The Council also has to publish on its website the TCNDP as made and details of where and when it can be inspected.</p> <p>JL – 28.10.21</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	<p>The main risk associated with the referendum stage is if the referendum itself does not deliver a majority vote in favour of the Plan. In this context the Council would be unable to make the TCNDP. However, this is unlikely bearing in mind the level of engagement carried out by Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Council with the assistance of the Council, which has sought to address the key issues identified through the consultation process.</p> <p>Making of the neighbourhood plan allows it to come into force as part of the statutory development plan in Telford & Wrekin. The TCNDP must be made within 8 weeks of the referendum. A successfully made NDP raises the profile of the Council locally and nationally.</p> <p>Opportunities associated with the TCNDP include a strengthening of local engagement in the planning process.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	Edgmond & Ercall Magna

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5. INFORMATION

5.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. It provides the opportunity for a Parish/Town Council or local forum to produce a neighbourhood development plan with the involvement of local people, helping to inform future planning decisions in their area. Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Telford & Wrekin Council as LPA has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of the NP through the various statutory stages in the process. In accordance with the 1990 Act and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Council submitted their NP in July 2020 for Telford & Wrekin Council to complete the necessary checks and proceed to the next stages of publication, examination and referendum.

5.2 The referendum version of the TCNDP is in accordance with and supports the policy approach to Tibberton & Cherrington and the rural area in the adopted Telford & Wrekin Local Plan.

5.3 A Referendum relating to the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development

Plan was held on Thursday 11th November 2021. The question that will be asked in the Referendum is “**Do you want the Borough of Telford & Wrekin to use the neighbourhood development plan for Tibberton & Cherrington to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?**” The count took place on Thursday 11th November 2021 and 94% of those who voted were in favour of the TCNDP being used to help decide the planning applications in the plan, the Local Planning Authority are obliged to proceed and make the plan.

6. Considerations for Cabinet

6.1 The referendum has taken place and more than half have voted in favour of the TCNDP. The LPA is now obliged to make the TCNDP. The LPA can only decline to make the Plan if they consider that it would breach any EU obligations or any Convention rights. It is not considered that the TNDP breaches any EU obligations or Convention Rights. Therefore, following the result of the Referendum, it is recommended that the TCNDP is made by Telford & Wrekin Council. This will allow the TCNDP to be given full weight in the determination of planning applications within the Parish of Tibberton & Cherrington alongside national and borough-wide adopted policy.

6.2 Once the TCNDP is made, it will be published on the Telford & Wrekin Council website and used in the determination of planning applications for the Neighbourhood Plan area i.e. the Parish of Tibberton & Cherrington.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Council is the sixth “qualifying body” in the Borough to progress a NDP to this stage, working closely with their community to produce a plan which reflects local views on future development in the Parish and policies which, once the TCNDP is made, will be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications in the Parish of Tibberton & Cherrington.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 Once the Tibberton & Cherrington NDP is made, it will become part of the statutory planning framework for the Borough. In accordance with the ethos of neighbourhood planning, the TCNDP is based on extensive community engagement with policies reflecting their views.

8.2 In accordance with legal requirements, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Local Development Plan which, for the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish, would include the TCNDP (once made) as well as the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan. This is unless material considerations indicate otherwise, meaning the TCNDP policies must be balanced with other considerations as part of the decision making process by the Council.

9. PREVIOUS MINUTES

9.1 Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan: Consideration of

Examiner's recommendations and proposed modifications prior to Referendum (Cabinet, 23rd September 2021)

10. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Referendum Version (July 2021)
- Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Independent Examiners Report
- Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan – Examination / Regulation 15 Consultation Version
- Letter to Telford & Wrekin Council (TWC) accompanying the documents
- Consultation Statement (July 2020)
- Basic Conditions Statement (July 2020)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement
- Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Statement

Available at: www.telford.gov.uk/tibbertonandcherringtonndp

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tibberton & Cherrington Parish neighbourhood Development Plan – Made Decision Statement.

Appendix 2 – Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan –Referendum Version

Report prepared by Patrick Mottershead, Senior Planning Policy Officer, Strategic Planning Team Telephone: 01952 384252

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BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN
Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Decision
Statement Regulation 19 Neighbourhood Planning (General)
Regulations 2012

1. Summary

1.1. Following a positive referendum result Borough of Telford & Wrekin (“Telford & Wrekin Council”) is publishing its decision to make the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan is now part of Telford & Wrekin Councils Development Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1. In January 2019, Telford & Wrekin Council designated the area comprising the civic parish of Tibberton & Cherrington as a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (England), Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2. Following the submission of the Tibberton & Cherrington Neighbourhood Development Plan (Regulation 15) to the Borough Council in November 2020, the plan was publicised and representations were invited. The publicity period began on 9th November 2020 and ended on 4th January 2021.
- 2.3. Telford & Wrekin Council appointed an Independent Examiner, Mr Tony Burton, to review whether the Plan met the Basic Conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and satisfied certain other criteria as required under the legislation and whether it should proceed to Referendum.
- 2.4. The Independent Examiner’s report concludes that, subject to his recommended modifications being made, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions set out in legislation, and has been prepared in accordance with all other legal

requirements and should now proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

- 2.5. Having considered each of the recommendations made in the Independent Examiner's report, and the reasons for them, the Borough Council decided to make the recommended modifications to the draft Plan to secure that it meets the Basic Conditions set out in legislation. At its meeting on 23rd September 2021, the Council agreed that the Examiner's recommended modifications should be accepted and that the amended Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum.
- 2.6. A referendum was held on 11th November 2021 and 93.8% of those who voted were in favour of the plan.
- 2.7. Paragraph 38A (4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended requires that the Council must make the Neighbourhood Development Plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the plan.
- 2.8. However, the council are not subject to this duty if the making of the plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

3. Decision and Reasons

- 3.1. With the Examiner's recommended modifications, the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights and complies with relevant provisions made by or under Section 38A and B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended.
- 3.2. The referendum held on 11th November 2021 met the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 posing the question: '**Do you want the Borough of Telford & Wrekin to use the neighbourhood development plan for Tibberton & Cherrington to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?**'
- 3.3. The count took place on Thursday 11th November 2021 and greater than 50% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the plan area. The results of the referendum were;

Response	Votes	% of votes cast
Yes	198	93.8%
No	12	5.7%
Rejected	1	0.5%
Turnout –	211	
Electorate total	731	

3.4. Telford & Wrekin Council has assessed that the Plan, including its preparation, does not breach, and would not otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

3.5. The Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Plan has now been made and planning applications in the area to which the Plan relates i.e. the administrative area of the Parish of Tibberton & Cherrington, must be considered against the Tibberton & Cherrington Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan, as well as existing planning policy, such as the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance.

This statement is dated 12th November 2021

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Tibberton and Cherrington

Parish Council



TIBBERTON AND CHERRINGTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2020-2031

July 2021



FOREWORD

The Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington is a rural Parish, which over time has managed to maintain the rustic tranquillity of a country Parish. However parts, namely in the village of Tibberton, have seen considerable growth over the last couple of years, which has resulted in tremendous pressure on the roads and services throughout the Parish and beyond.

This Neighbourhood Plan is as a result of the Government's belief that decision-making should be not just at national and local government levels but also at a local level involving the whole community. This is because it is these decisions that will affect the community for years and generations to come.

The Plan will be in effect until 2031 and has been created by the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan Group – a group of residents from both Tibberton and Cherrington who have worked tirelessly over the last few years to try and reflect the concerns and wishes of those who live and work in the Parish. They have worked in conjunction with the Parish Council to produce a document which will help shape the future of our Parish.

Over the last few years the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the Parish Council have listened to residents through conversations whilst walking around the Parish, and public drop-in sessions to individual questionnaires – all of which has shown that although there is a feeling that the Parish must continue to evolve in order to maintain a thriving community, it must do so whilst retaining the heritage and pride in living in such a pleasant Parish.

We would like to thank the whole of the local community who through their honesty and time taken to make known their views in such detail have helped produce this document so that it reflects their thoughts. Without your comments this plan would not have been able to be made.

The Neighbourhood Plan will help to protect the character of the Parish and help ensure that any future development is suitable for the local need and located in sites which are suitable for development and which will not have a detrimental or harmful effect on the intrinsic character or beauty of the open countryside.

Nick Eyles

Chair of the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Jim Berry

Chair of Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Council

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INTRODUCTION

Our Neighbourhood Plan

This Neighbourhood Plan has been formulated on the basis of the public's response to all the Parish Council's consultations held between October 2017 and April 2020 as well as recommendations by an Independent Examiner. Inputs from the public and consultees received by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group were used to prepare a Draft Plan which was offered for public consultation during the Regulation 14 period¹. Following analysis of the responses, a revised version of the Plan was presented to the Parish Council on 16 July 2020, after a delay caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Following the Parish Council's approval, the revised version of the Plan, known as the 'Regulation 15' version, was submitted to Telford & Wrekin Council. A statutory consultation exercise was undertaken by the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the Plan and all accompanying documents comply with legal requirements. The Plan was then placed on the Local Planning Authority website for a further final eight-week consultation.

Comments and representations received during the period of statutory consultation were collated by Telford & Wrekin Council and forwarded, along with the Plan and supporting documents, to an Independent Examiner. In June 2021 the Independent Examiner issued a report stating that, subject to recommended modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions and could proceed to a final referendum of all eligible parishioners.

The Neighbourhood Plan that you have before you offers a vision for the future of Tibberton and Cherrington Parish and delivers a clear set of policies based on comments received. These policies have also been subjected to scrutiny by the statutory agencies (Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England) through a screening exercise related to environmental assessments (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening statements). Supported by the referendum, the policies enshrined within the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan have become part of the Borough's Development Plan, thus giving much greater weight to the views of the Parish in the decision-making process.

All relevant documents can be downloaded via the Telford & Wrekin Council website. www.telford.gov.uk/tibbertonandcherringtonndp

¹ 18 January 2020 to 29 February 2020 with a Supplementary Consultation period from 21 February 2020 to 10 April 2020.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

The Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington is in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and ceremonial county of Shropshire (Figure 22 on Page 8). It is located 4.8 miles (7.7 km) west of the town of Newport and approximately 11 miles (17.7 km) north of Telford town centre. The Parish population at the 2011 Census was 698, which was a 2% increase from 684 in 2001; however, this figure is forecast to rise to approximately 994 by 2021 due to recent housing developments, an increase of 42.4% since 2011.

Similarly, the housing stock in Tibberton increased by less than 9% in the 10 years between 1999 and 2009 but the rate trebled to nearly 27% (256 to 325 houses) during the following 8 years to 2017. This rise in the development of new homes will accelerate by a further 27% during the next 4 years from 2017 to 2021 (325 to 413 houses) as a result of those houses that are currently in build or are highly likely to be built. This represents an increase of 142 houses (52%) in the 10 years from 2012 to 2021 (inclusive). Additionally, another 3 houses on 3 separate plots have outline or 'reserved matters' planning permission. Planning applications that were granted full or reserved matters approval in each year for this period are shown on the map in Figure 3 on Page 9 and full details of the increases in housing stock and population are given in Annex C.

The Parish consists of 2 settlements, the village³ of Tibberton and the hamlet⁴ of Cherrington, which are set in a predominantly rural landscape that extends into the heart of these settlements. Agriculture is the dominant land use with 90% of land classified as Grade 2 or 3 (very good to moderate). The open rural character of the landscape of the Parish is an asset much valued by the community for its scenic amenity, recreational use and environmental value and establishes the principal context for the setting of Tibberton and Cherrington.

Cherrington has no local amenities or public facilities, although there are some small businesses. Over 43% of the historic core of the hamlet, sometimes known as Cherrington Green, are Grade 2 listed buildings (7 out of 16 dwellings). There is also a linear development of houses and agricultural buildings along the road leading from the B5062 towards Cherrington Manor.

Tibberton has one public house (The Sutherland Arms), a Village Hall, a Church of England primary school, a village community run shop and a Methodist Chapel. There is also an Anglican Church that is dedicated to All Saints' within the Archdeaconry of Salop and the Diocese of Lichfield. Additionally, there are over 22 small businesses, which provide employment to the local community. A recreation field, called simply "The Playing Fields", is used by both the School and outside teams for organised sport but it also caters for informal recreation by local residents. It has protection against residential development under the Borough's 'Green Guarantee' scheme.

Development in the Parish has naturally expanded and evolved over time but for centuries the two settlements consisted predominantly of scattered tenanted farms and small-holdings, interspersed with an occasional row of workers' cottages. Even well into the 20th Century the nominal centre of Tibberton, around the Church, original school building and the Sutherland Arms, was of low density surrounded by agricultural land. The paper mill by the River Meese, with its towering chimney, provided a stark industrial contrast to the otherwise rural scene.

Prior to the major dispersal sale in 1912, almost all the land and property in the Parish belonged to the Duke of Sutherland, hence the strong influence of the estate's preferred style of design on homes built in the 19th Century. The gabled dormers, elaborate chimneys, brick detailing and overhanging eaves of the typical 'Duke of Sutherland' cottage still provide a degree of architectural cohesion and local identity in the Parish and surrounding settlements.

² High definition version at:

<http://www.tibbertonandcherringtonpc.org.uk/UserFiles/Files/Neighbourhood%20Plan/Tibberton-Cherrington-Parish-Boundary.pdf>

³ The National Geographic Society defines a village as a settlement of between 500 and 2500 people.

⁴ The OED defines a hamlet as being smaller than a village, usually without a church.

The original linear pattern of development in Tibberton along its road network only began to change post 1945 into the more rectangular form recognisable today. Maslan Crescent was built in the 1950s, followed by further residential developments in the 1970s & '80s. The new school and adjacent playing-field established in 1970 also contributed to the change of use from agriculture to settlement in what was becoming the core of the village. This process of changing from a linear layout to a more rectangular form has accelerated with recent housing developments.

The Local Planning Authority specifically opposes any proposed development that would cause harm to the character of the villages or encroachment into the countryside⁵. However, the confines of Tibberton are not formally defined, leading to differing interpretations of where the 'built-up' area ends and 'open countryside' begins. This potential conflict of opinion has now been resolved by assigning a 'Settlement Boundary' to Tibberton, as shown at Figure 1 below. However, the hamlet of Cherrington is already defined as being in open countryside, therefore, it would be unnecessary and inappropriate to define a boundary for the settlement of Cherrington. Details of the rationale for the Tibberton boundary, together with a larger map, are at Annex A.

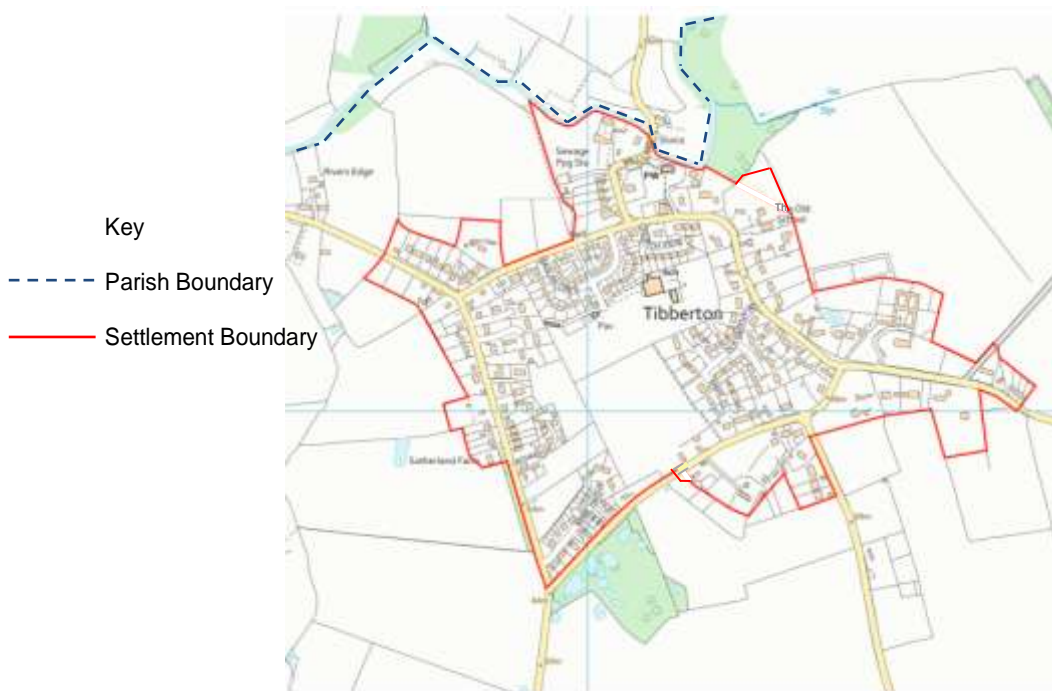


Figure 1: Tibberton Settlement Boundary

Apart from Tibberton and Cherrington, the Parish is otherwise rural. Both settlements have historic cores with 17 listed buildings recorded in the National Heritage List for England as buildings of special historic or architectural interest. Of these, 16 are listed at Grade II and one is at Grade II*, marking it out as being of particular national importance. Almost all the listed buildings are timber framed houses and cottages, the earlier ones with cruck construction. The other listed buildings consist of red brick houses, a church and a bridge over the River Meese. Other buildings of local interest include the 'Primitive' Methodist Chapel in Tibberton, which was built in 1844. Background information on Tibberton's and Cherrington's historic character is at Annex B and full details of the listed buildings within the Parish are at Appendix 1 to Annex B.

The full Parish Profile is at Annex C.

⁵ Telford and Wrekin Local Plan Policy HO10

Figure 2: Parish Boundary and Neighbourhood Plan Area

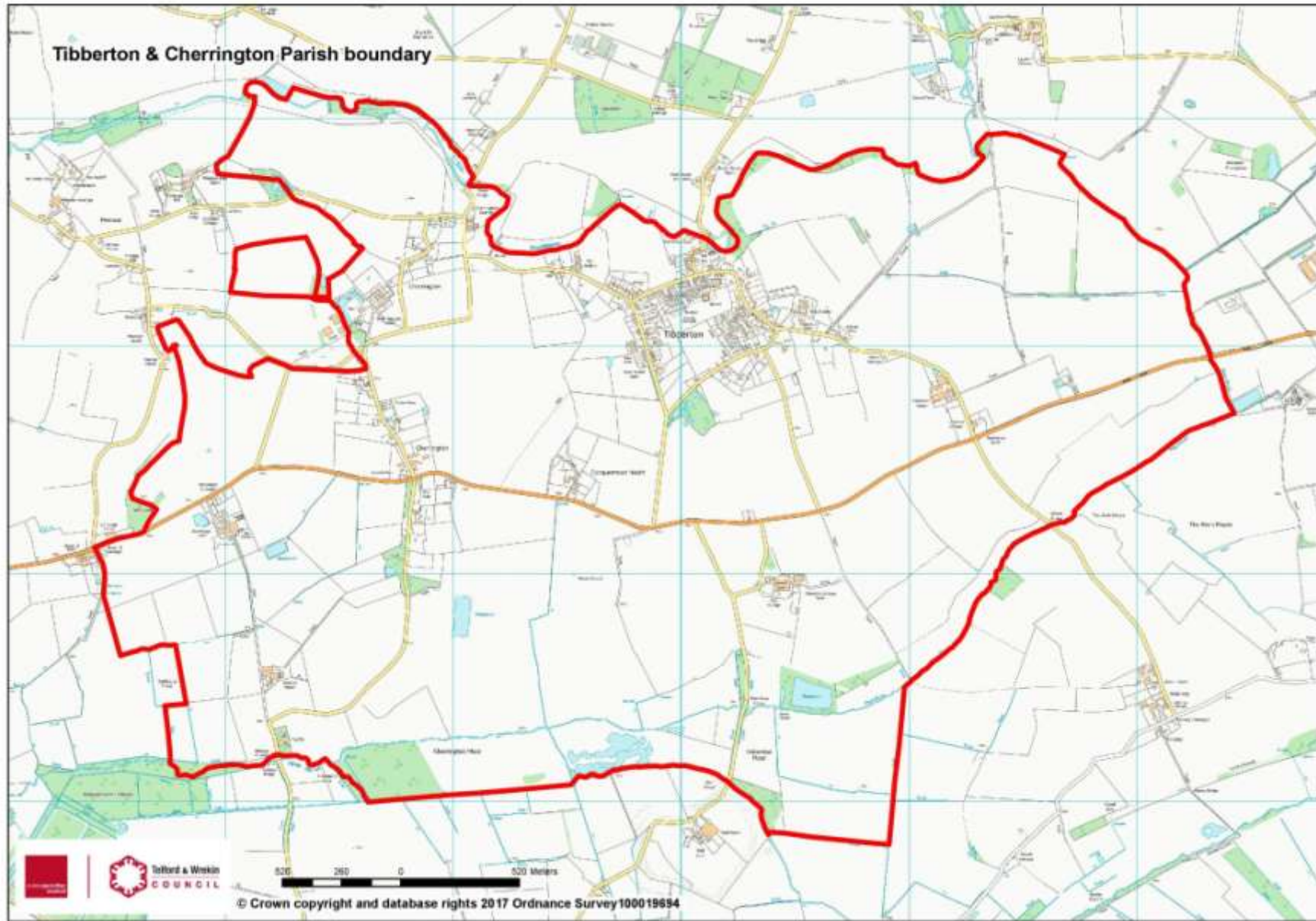
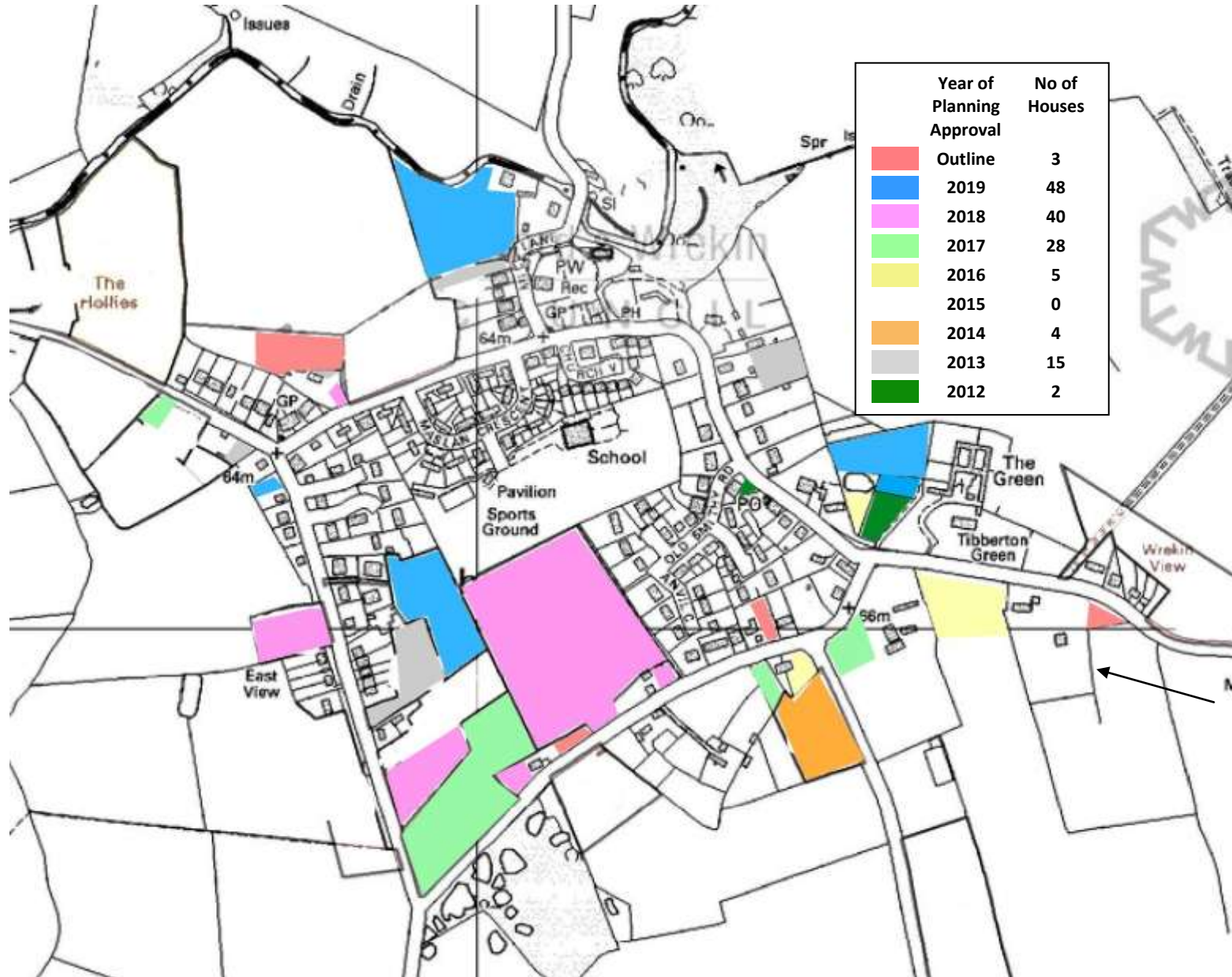


Figure 3: Tibberton Building Development Map 2012 - 2021



WHY WE ARE PREPARING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR TIBBERTON AND CHERRINGTON

Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Statutory Development Plan for an area. They are prepared by Parish Councils to promote, guide and control local development and importantly, are used to help determine local planning applications. For the first time, local communities can have a direct input into the planning process and have an influence on the shaping of the future of their community based on the views expressed through surveys of the local population and businesses.

Not all Parish Councils have chosen to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, in September 2017 Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Council decided that this was an important right to exercise, and applied to be designated a Neighbourhood Planning Body for the whole area covered by the Parish (Figure 2 on Page 8).

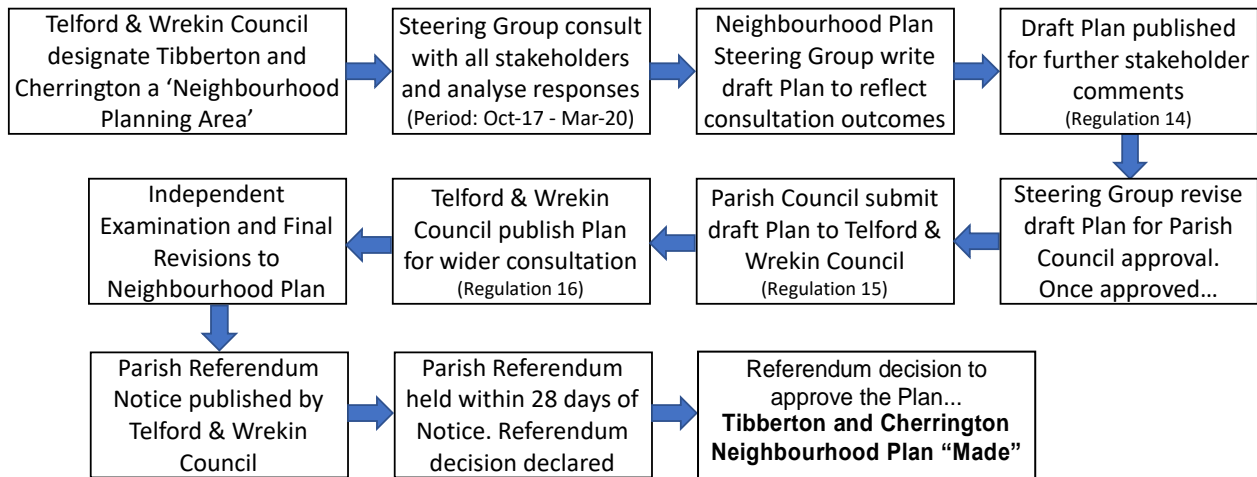
The Parish Council submitted its application to Telford & Wrekin Council for designation of its Neighbourhood Area in October 2018. After a formal six-week consultation which began on 15 November 2018 and ran until 10 January 2019, Telford & Wrekin Council resolved to support the Neighbourhood Area application made by Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Council and confirmed that the area shown in the application should be designated as a Neighbourhood Area. A formal notice was published on the 24 January 2019 that confirmed the designation.

The Parish Council's Steering Group has been preparing this Neighbourhood Plan since 7 August 2018. Following consultation with residents and stakeholders, the Plan was subjected to external examination before it proceeded to a final referendum of all eligible parishioners. The policies in this finalised Plan reflect the aspirations of the majority of the people of Tibberton and Cherrington who have all had an opportunity to play a part in shaping the future of their Parish.

PROCESS OF PREPARING THE PLAN

Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared following a procedure set by government (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The Neighbourhood Planning Process



Consultation with Tibberton and Cherrington parishioners on the Neighbourhood Plan began with a series of open-door drop-in sessions in Tibberton Village Hall during October and November 2017. The range of views expressed during these sessions was used to inform the development of themes for the Plan.

Further consultation took place in 2020. This second period was held with Tibberton and Cherrington Parish residents, businesses and consultative bodies over a 6 week period between 18 January 2020 and 29 February 2020 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. During this consultation period, many responses were concerned about the level of housing development in Tibberton, particularly during the last 3 years. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group therefore decided to develop a Settlement Boundary for Tibberton which delineates between the 'built up' area and 'open countryside'. As this was a significant change to the Plan, it was further decided to have a supplementary consultation period of at least 6 weeks from 21 February 2020 to allow further comment on this new initiative.

Following these consultations, the Neighbourhood Plan was revised to take account of comments received and issues raised. A further eight-week consultation by Telford & Wrekin Council took place following the Plan's submission under Regulation 15. The Plan, its evidence base and consultation responses, were then presented by Telford & Wrekin Council for Independent Examination. The process culminated in a local referendum on 11 November 2021 which agreed that the plan should be made part of the Statutory Development Plan for the Borough of Telford and Wrekin.

Telford & Wrekin Council's Local Plan 2011 - 2031 was adopted in January 2018. The preparation of the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan has been progressed in accordance with the Local Plan process, including the review of the Local Plan initiated by the Borough Council in December 2019.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan must take account of national planning policy. This is primarily contained in one document - the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF states⁶ that ‘neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies⁷. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.’

This means our Neighbourhood Plan must “...plan positively to promote local development” and must “...support the strategic development needs” set out in Telford & Wrekin Council’s Local Plan. Therefore, our Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in “general conformity” with Telford & Wrekin Council’s planning policies.

Telford & Wrekin Council’s strategic planning policy is contained in the adopted Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 - 2031. The previous Wrekin Local Plan (1995-2006) is now time expired and the existing Core Strategy policies have been superseded by the adopted Telford & Wrekin Local Plan. An appropriate and sensible approach therefore was to proceed with the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan based on the strategy and policies of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan and to work closely with Telford & Wrekin Council during the preparation of the document.

A revision to the Local Plan was submitted on 30th June 2016 and an examination in public was conducted during January and February 2017 by an independent Planning Inspector. Telford & Wrekin Council received the Inspector’s Report in November 2017 and the Local Plan was adopted in January 2018. Additionally, the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 places an obligation on Councils to review Local Plans within a five year period from the date of adoption. The purpose of a review is to take account of “changing circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy⁸”. A review, therefore, needs to be completed by January 2023.

Given these circumstances and opportunities, Telford and Wrekin Council decided in December 2019 that a review of the Local Plan be launched. This review would not be housing numbers driven but seek to embed key priorities for the Council and Borough. Four core objectives were agreed⁹ to underpin the review:

- Employment led growth through inward investment and job creation
- A ‘Forest Community’ approach which affords the protection, enhancement and accessibility of the natural environment and green spaces that characterise the Borough
- Support for regeneration of our Borough Towns, new town estates and infrastructure
- Meet local housing needs including providing more affordable and specialist accommodation to support people to live longer and healthier at home

The Parish Council recognised that the implications of the review launched in 2019 would need to be taken into account when developing the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, the development of policies within the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan are aligned closely with these core objectives, particularly the ‘Forest Community’ approach and the development of policies to meet local housing needs.

⁶ NPPF Paragraphs 29 & 30

⁷ Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

⁸ Paragraph 33, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

⁹ Minutes of Telford and Wrekin Cabinet meeting on 2 January 2020 Item CAB-40.

Strategic Framework

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (Policy HO10 - Residential Development in the Rural Area) already states that a limited amount of infill housing will be supported in Tibberton and so the development strategy for Tibberton and Cherrington has largely been set. However, Tibberton and Cherrington are separate settlements in planning policy terms and this Neighbourhood Plan will clarify the distinction between the Policies HO10 and HO11 (Affordable Rural Exceptions) as they apply to these villages. Consultation responses during the Neighbourhood Plan process show that there is no support within the Parish to pursue other development strategies. The options stage of the Local Plan preparation considered different approaches to development in the rural area alongside considerable consultation and dialogue with the rural parishes. This culminated in a spatial strategy which allowed for the inclusion of development in existing rural communities which could have positive effects if carried out at the appropriate scale consistent with the capacity of the rural communities, services and infrastructure. Small scale focused development could be undertaken to help encourage provision of services without changing the character of rural Telford & Wrekin.

Telford & Wrekin Council considers this approach has the greatest potential to achieve appropriate growth with minimal detrimental environmental effects. It recognises that careful consideration should be given to the location of new development to avoid sensitive sites, to optimise positive community effects and to take the opportunity to maximise the benefits of innovative sustainable design (by ensuring efficient use of land and resources) to mitigate any potentially significant negative effects.

The Spatial Strategy for the Borough is set out in Chapter 3 and policies SP1, 2 and 3 summarised in Table 9 of the Local Plan. Telford is the dominant settlement, and the importance of its continuing growth dictates that most development takes place here. As a historic market town with a population of around 11,000, it is appropriate that some new development be directed to Newport.

The small remainder of new housing development will be directed to the most appropriate rural 'named' settlements¹⁰ with access to services and other infrastructure in order to support rural economic activity whilst protecting sensitive landscapes and settings. Given the pre-eminence of the Borough's Spatial Strategy and the lack of realistic and appropriate alternatives, there is no justification in exploring, through the Neighbourhood Plan process, other development strategies for Tibberton and Cherrington.

To consider other strategies that seek to provide substantially more housing in the rural area would conflict with Government policy (NPPF) which seeks to promote sustainable development by encouraging effective use of brownfield land and locating as much housing as possible closest to existing infrastructure in larger towns such as Telford or Newport. Most housing in the rural area is expected to be delivered on two large brownfield sites at Allscott and Crudgington. Allowing for other existing supply, the remainder will be located through limited development in the five named settlements, including Tibberton, the selection of which is justified by the process set out in the Technical Paper – Rural Settlements (B2f) that considers the presence of primary and secondary facilities and services, accessibility and existence of previously developed land. Options exploring other strategies for distribution and/or additional development in the rural area would affect the successful implementation of these large brownfield sites. Further guidance on Rural Housing is included in the Planning Practice Guidance¹¹, which supplements the NPPF.

It is believed that there is sufficient remaining provision for development in the five rural settlements to meet the requirements of the NPPF to support a prosperous rural economy (paragraph 83), deliver affordable housing (paragraphs 61-64) and support community vitality, whilst avoiding isolated development in the open countryside (paragraph 79). In Telford & Wrekin

¹⁰ Donnington & Muxton, Edgmond, Ercall Magna, Lilleshall, Stirchley & Brookside, Waters Upton and Tibberton & Cherrington, all of which have, or are preparing, Neighbourhood Plans.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-needs-of-different-groups#rural-housing>

Council's adopted Local Plan, the Spatial Strategy for the rural area (policy SP3) and its approach to planning for rural housing (policy HO10) has been passed as consistent with government priorities to boost significantly the supply of housing generally but also takes account of the scale and context of the Borough's villages which, highlighted in the Technical Paper – Rural Settlements (B2f), do not have extensive infrastructure provision.

The Policy HO11 (Affordable Rural Exceptions) provisions apply outside the five main rural villages and, as stated in paragraph 5.3.2.2 of the Local Plan, new housing may come forward with justification on the basis of local need on sites not normally in accordance with local housing policies. Paragraph 5.3.2.3 adds that such proposals should be directed towards locations that help to enhance and maintain the vitality of rural communities, rather than be used as a means to gain planning consent for development in isolated locations.

EVIDENCE BASE

Consultation and Engagement

Being such a relatively small community, with 698 residents in 263 occupied houses (as at the 2011 Census), we were able to collect many more of the concerns and ideas of residents and stakeholders during face to face discussions than would be possible in a larger community. Following discussions at Parish Council Meetings, the process to produce a Neighbourhood Plan started with 3 public consultations in Tibberton Village Hall during October and November 2017¹² to gather initial views and to identify the areas to be considered for inclusion in the Plan.

Following the approval of the Designated Area, three additional public consultation sessions were held in January 2020¹³, after which any additional comments were listed for consideration in the Plan, thereby allowing further development of our guidance document.

Four key themes were identified as a result of the 2017 public meeting and these formed the basis for further public consultation at the January 2020 consultation sessions:

- Community Amenities
- Rural Character and Housing
- Environment, Open Spaces and Recreation
- Highways and Byways

Building on these four main headings and the responses from the public consultation sessions, a questionnaire was drafted for households and businesses, demonstrating how these themes could be translated into planning policies and asking whether people agree or disagree with the suggested draft policies. Approximately 338 questionnaires were circulated in January 2020 to all known businesses and households in the Parish and 102 responses were received.

The inputs from the January 2020 consultations, analysis of responses to the questionnaire and returns from statutory consultees, were used to develop the four themes further to enable the relevant planning policies to be agreed. Many of the responses received at the Regulation 14 stage were concerned with the Draft Plan's approach to Tibberton and Cherrington rural character and context. Consequently a decision was taken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to develop a Settlement Boundary for Tibberton which delineates clearly between the 'built-up' form of the village and 'open countryside'. Telford & Wrekin Council considered¹⁴ that this concept was justified as it provides support for the Local Plan strategy for infill housing and exceptions sites policies (Policies HO10 and HO11 respectively). However, it was also agreed with that such a boundary would be inappropriate for the settlement of Cherrington as it is considered to be in open countryside, therefore, the exceptions listed in Policy HO11 (Affordable Rural Exceptions) of the Local Plan would only apply in this location. Details of the Settlement Boundary for Tibberton are at Annex A. As this initiative was developed after the start of the Regulation 14 consultation period, there was a supplementary consultation period of over 6 weeks from 21 February 2020 to 10 April 2020 on the specific subject of the Settlement Boundary¹⁵.

To support this work, it was decided to commission additional technical evidence based work, which focused on a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) to address the concerns over protecting the rural character and context. However, this initiative was delayed by the Covid-19

¹² 19th & 23rd October 2017 and 4 November 2017

¹³ 18th, 20th and 21st January 2020

¹⁴ Email from Telford & Wrekin Council Strategic Planning Team dated 16 March 2020

¹⁵ TWC and one local resident responded to this consultation on the proposed settlement boundary for Tibberton.

pandemic in 2020. Therefore, the Steering Group agreed to proceed with the developing the Plan without an LCA whilst intending to commission an Assessment at the earliest opportunity in the future.

Other representations were received as a result of the pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation including those from Telford & Wrekin Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. These representations included responses from Statutory Consultees as given in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulation 2012.

The aim was for the Neighbourhood Plan to be focused and concise and to concentrate on those issues that could be influenced by town and country planning legislation. Other broader issues or those that are not controlled through planning legislation will be considered as part of a future Parish Council Action Plan.

The Regulation 15 Consultation Statement summarises all statutory and non-statutory consultation undertaken with the community and other relevant statutory bodies and stakeholders on the pre-submission Draft Plan. In particular, it describes how concerns have been addressed and what changes have been made to the Plan as a result of the consultation.

Technical Evidence

A great deal of additional technical evidence has been collated by the Parish Council in preparing the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. This has naturally been drawn from Telford & Wrekin Council sources; in particular, information compiled during the preparation of the Local Plan and contributing to its extensive evidence base. A list of the technical evidence considered by the Parish Council is available in Annex D.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Neighbourhood Plans must not breach, and must be compatible with national and international Human Rights obligations. Neighbourhood Plans therefore need to be considered against the Habitats and Strategic Assessment Directives and associated regulations and might, subject to their scope and the issues they are seeking to address, be required to produce an Environmental Assessment if the Plan is determined as likely to have significant environmental effects.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) are required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations). This regulation also prohibits the adoption or submission of a Plan before the responsible Authority has determined whether the Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment. It is not possible to categorically rule out the need for a SEA, without first carrying out a screening process to establish whether the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. A Screening Report was prepared and published for consultation alongside the draft Neighbourhood Plan at Regulation 14.

At this point the three statutory agencies, Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, were consulted as required by the regulations and their views used to determine whether a further formal SEA was necessary. All three agencies agreed with the findings of the draft Screening Report that there was no requirement for the Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Parish Council considers that the amendments made to the Neighbourhood Plan as a result of the Regulation 14 consultation are not significant enough to require an additional screening report or Strategic Environmental Assessment.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

VISION

To help shape the future of Tibberton and Cherrington Parish up to 2031

by enabling the community to have a positive involvement in where and how development should take place; working to retain and enhance the Parish's open rural character and historic identity; and by contributing to maintaining the Parish as an attractive, safe, secure and low crime environment to live, work and visit.

OBJECTIVES

Community Amenities

1. To protect existing facilities and services considered important for a vibrant community and support the development of new ones which will benefit the community.
2. To increase opportunities to access community facilities and to enhance the range of activities and facilities available for all.
3. To encourage suitable employment opportunities and communications connectivity (broadband and mobile 'phone).

Rural Character and Housing

4. To allow future infill development of a scale and type in keeping with the rural character and identity of the Parish.
5. To protect the character and setting of the Parish's historic housing (including listed buildings, and those of local or architectural interest) and ensure new development is in keeping with other buildings, with a particular focus on the 'Duke of Sutherland' style of housing.
6. To support the provision of a range of house types and tenures on appropriate sites within Tibberton and Cherrington villages and the wider Parish.
7. To ensure that residential developments will incorporate Secure by Design standards where it is reasonably possible to do so.
8. To maintain the rural nature of the Parish by discouraging developments with street lights or excessive external lighting, thereby delivering the Parish's strongly stated preference for a 'dark sky' environment.

Environment, Open Spaces and Recreation

9. To conserve and enhance local open spaces by protecting and enhancing existing green spaces and recreational areas of value to the community whilst ensuring the Parish retains its rural character.
10. To protect and enhance green areas, natural habitat, wildlife and biodiversity in and around the Parish; to encourage appropriate management and limit pollution and damage to the environment.
11. To protect and enhance features of significant nature conservation or landscape value.

Highways and Byways

12. To work to improve public transport options.
13. To encourage the provision of alternative, safe and convenient means of travel within the Parish so as to minimise the use of cars and reduce the associated problems of noise, pollution and parking.
14. To provide a safe, accessible and well-maintained network of roads, cycle routes, footpaths, rights of way and pavements, whilst retaining a rural character to support a more sustainable environment, reduce reliance on the car and offer healthier lifestyle options.
15. To improve safety by reducing vehicle speed and limiting access by heavy goods vehicles.

POLICIES

The following policies were devised to deliver the objectives listed above by guiding and influencing new development proposals and the decisions made about new development through the planning application process.

The policy framework is set nationally by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and locally by Telford & Wrekin Council's development plan – in this case the adopted Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031. Policies in a Neighbourhood Plan must align with the framework both nationally and locally and not conflict with or undermine it (NPPF paragraph 29).

1. Community Amenities

POLICY CA1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals will be supported that protect or enhance the following community facilities, as shown on the map, Figure 5 on Page 20:

- Tibberton C of E Primary School
- Village shop - wholly run by community volunteers
- Public House - The Sutherland Arms
- All Saints' Church
- Playing Field – Cricket & Football, including the Pavilion, Tennis Court and children's play area.
- Village Hall
- Methodist Chapel

Any proposal that would result in the loss of community facilities should satisfy the following criteria:

- The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or
- Satisfactory evidence is produced that there is no longer a need for the facility, through marketing evidence, assessment of the viability of the facilities and opportunities for re-use, where supported by local and community surveys.

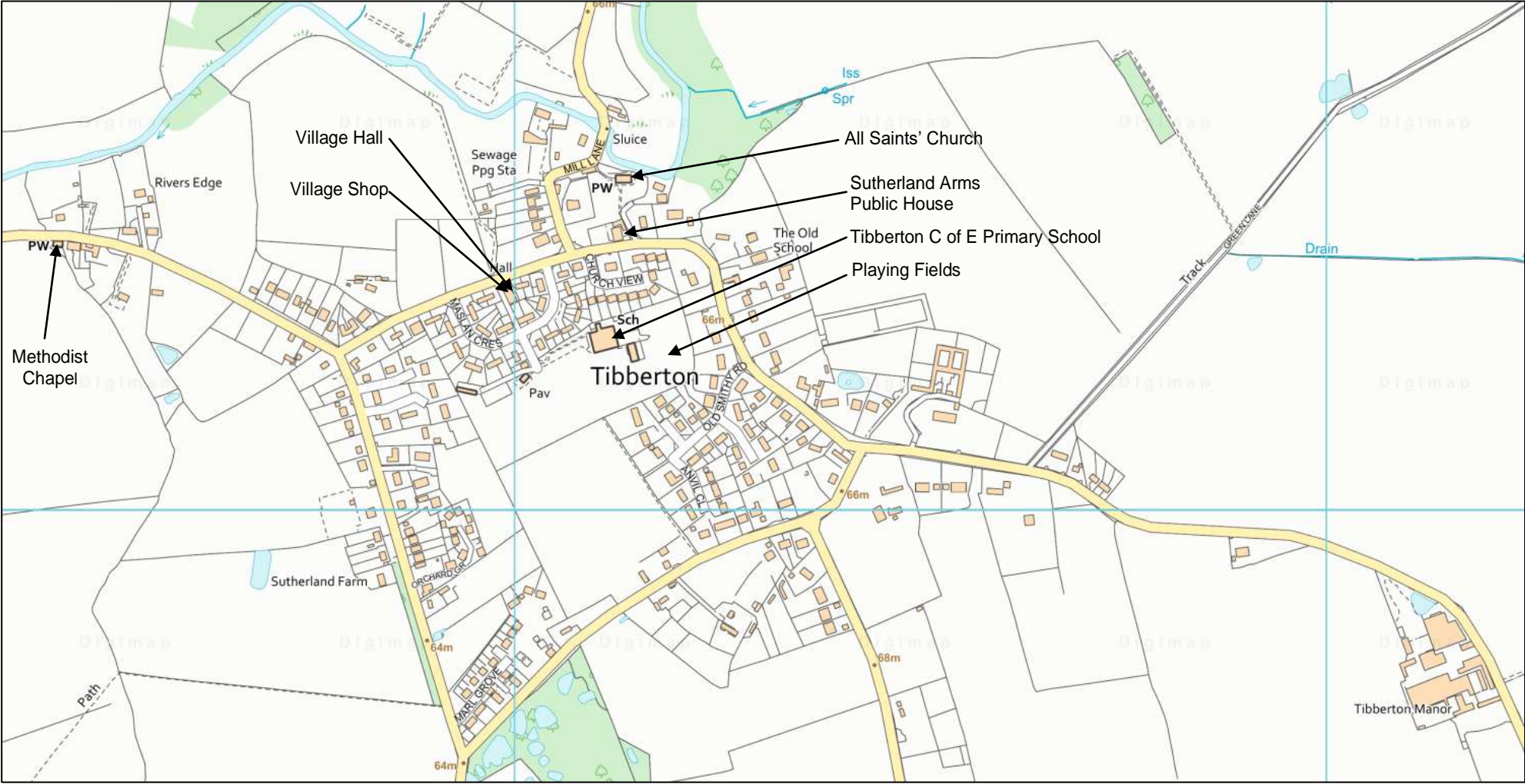
Proposals to expand or replace existing facilities will be supported, where appropriate, especially for a larger Village Hall and Shop, if the demand from an increased village population indicates that these are viable, needed and sustainable.

A particular concern to the community highlighted by consultation responses both to the Neighbourhood Plan and to the Local Plan was the need to ensure the retention of community facilities to keep the Parish a viable and active community whilst ensuring the level of house building does not place too great a strain on existing services. The Local Plan recognises the importance of community facilities in the rural area and stresses that it is especially important that these facilities are protected. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to build on this approach by identifying and seeking to protect the relevant facilities in the Parish. In particular, space may need to be identified to allow for the potential future needs of the community, especially in terms of a larger Village Hall and Shop in Tibberton, with adequate access and parking to meet all users' needs, either through the expansion of existing facilities or by the identification of new sites.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 20, 83d, 92 and 182.
- Local Plan policies: Policy SP4 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development; COM1 - Community facilities.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 1 and 2.

Figure 5: Community Facilities



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POLICY CA2: EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals that provide suitable, appropriate, employment opportunities will be supported. This could be through one of the following:

- Conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to the impact of provision on neighbouring properties, the local environment, the highway network and parking and subject to it being an appropriate use. This could, where feasible, include the re-use of existing farm buildings or be a part of farm diversification; or
- Provision of small well-designed new buildings within the built-up areas of the Parish, subject to it being an appropriate use and design

Proposals for the re-use of land or buildings on existing employment sites for uses other than employment purposes should demonstrate:

- It can be demonstrated through a viability appraisal that the on-going use of the premises or land for employment purposes is no longer viable
- The alternative proposal would provide demonstrable benefits to the local community and contribute to its long-term sustainability.

Consultation responses highlighted the need to ensure that opportunities for local small-scale employment development should be supported through the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote rural enterprise by supporting small scale employment uses which could be provided by new buildings, conversions of agricultural buildings, or other changes of use. While it is appropriate that the Local Plan directs larger-scale enterprises, or those more suited to urban locations, to either Newport or Telford, policy EC3 supports new employment development in the rural area.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 20, 83 and 84.
- Local Plan policies: SP3 - Rural Area; SP4 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; EC3 - Employment in the rural area; C3 - Impact of development on highways; C4 - Design of roads and streets.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 3 and 15.

POLICY CA3: TOURISM AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT

Development that improves the quality and diversity of existing, or creates new tourist facilities, attractions, accommodation and infrastructure will be supported where there is:

- No significant detrimental effect on the distinct character of the rural landscape and settlements and the development promotes tranquillity and the quiet enjoyment of the countryside
- No significant adverse effect on the surrounding infrastructure, particularly local road networks and water supply and sewerage
- Benefit to the local community through, for instance, provision of local employment opportunities and improvements to local service provision; and
- Development of a size and with landscaping appropriate to its rural location in the parish.

Appropriate tourism and leisure development proposals involving the re-use of existing buildings or as part of farm diversification will be supported.

Although not a major issue identified through consultation responses, it is felt that there is scope for small scale tourism or leisure development within the Parish to assist in the promotion of rural enterprise and local employment opportunities. The Local Plan encourages such development through policies EC3 and EC12 in particular. However, the Parish Council considers that as policy EC12 is Borough-wide in nature, some additional criteria relating to the rural nature of Tibberton and Cherrington should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraph: 20 and 83c.
- Local Plan policies: SP3 - Rural Area; SP4 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; EC3 - Employment in the rural area; EC12 - Leisure, cultural and tourism development; C3 - Impact of development on highways.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 3 and 12.

2. Rural Character and Housing

POLICY RCH1: CONSERVATION OF TIBBERTON'S AND CHERRINGTON'S HISTORIC CHARACTER

Development proposals will be supported that sustain and enhance the significance of historic buildings (including their settings) that contribute to local character and which make a positive contribution to the locally distinctive historic character of the Parish.

Proposals will be supported that:

- Make a positive contribution to the Parish through high quality design with buildings respecting the height, size, scale and massing of adjacent buildings, plot width and form
- Respect the local identity, characteristic pattern of development and built form of the village of Tibberton, including the use of traditional materials
- Retain buildings, structures and open spaces that contribute significantly to Tibberton and Cherrington's rural character
- Avoid substantial demolition, alteration, extension or other development of a Duke of Sutherland cottage that causes significant harm to its significance, including its setting
- Use the historic character of the Parish's buildings to inform the design concept for new development, including proposals for additional buildings within farmsteads
- Protect or enhance the setting of listed buildings through appropriately sited and designed developments
- Involve the conversion or extension of historic agricultural buildings to residential use when accompanied by evidence that there is no appropriate alternative employment development
- Are of innovative design which fits sensitively into the Tibberton's and Cherrington's frontages and street scenes; and/or
- Retain and/or increase hedgerows, tree cover and sandstone boundary walls, as these are essential components of the village character.

Development proposals likely to have a significant impact on local historic character and distinctiveness and/or on heritage assets should include evidence as to how this is taken into account by the proposal.

Particularly strong support was expressed through the consultations, for the Parish to have a specific policy recognising the importance of protecting or enhancing its unique qualities. Locally important buildings include the 'Primitive' Methodist Chapel, which was built in 1844. Responses

also made reference to the fact that it is the rural setting of Tibberton and Cherrington and the importance of open green spaces in the Parish that contribute to its distinctive character and give them their unique nature.

This policy builds on Local Plan policy BE1 and recent responses by the Parish Council to planning applications in Tibberton and Cherrington highlighting the importance of the Parish's historic character. The above criteria should be validated against the proposed LCA, when available.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8, 20, 28 and 184 - 187.
- Local Plan policies: SP4 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development; HO10 - Residential Development in the Rural Area; BE1 - Design Criteria; BE4 - Listed Buildings; BE6 - Buildings of local interest.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 4, 5 and 9.

POLICY RCH2: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN TIBBERTON

Proposals for new housing development will be supported on suitable infill sites within the Tibberton Settlement Boundary (Figure 1 on Pages 7 and A-5).

The Neighbourhood Plan interprets the planning context set by national planning policy and the district wide local plan policies, into the specific context of Tibberton and Cherrington Parish. The Telford and Wrekin Rural Settlements Paper (B2f) states that 'preserving the integrity of the character and scale of the [Parish] and being responsive to the constraints of the small highways which pass through and beyond the settlements provide a justification for discouraging substantial numbers of additional new homes. A critical challenge is the poor road links between Tibberton and Cherrington and the B5062 to the south.' The Local Planning Authority also specifically opposes any proposed development that would cause harm to the character of the village or encroachment into the countryside.

Most consultation responses understood the need for limited infill development in the Parish but were also in favour of protecting the character of the area from too great a scale of new development.

Consequently, this policy builds on Telford & Wrekin Local Plan policies SP3 and HO10 which support new development where it meets the needs of rural communities and seeks to direct a limited amount of new housing development within the Tibberton Settlement Boundary to infill sites only. Local Plan policy HO11 will apply to the rest of the Parish area (including Cherrington) outside of the Settlement Boundary.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 9, 69, 71, 110, 127, 130, 185 and 192.
- Local Plan policies: SP3 - Rural Area; SP4 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development; HO10 - Residential Development in the Rural Area; HO11 - Affordable Rural Exceptions.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 4, 5, 6, and 10.

POLICY RCH3: DESIGN OF NEW HOUSING

Where residential development is proposed, the following criteria should be met:

- a) It demonstrates high quality design that is in keeping with the scale and character of buildings and layout in the area
- b) It complements the existing external materials seen locally
- c) It provides variety in house design and elevation treatment
- d) It incorporates Secured by Design standards where it is reasonable to do so
- e) It provides high quality boundary treatment that is appropriate to maintaining the rural character of the Parish
- f) It provides good pedestrian, cycling and horse riding connections to existing routes
- g) It provides adequate storage for bins and recycling
- h) It does not result in loss of amenity for neighbouring properties
- i) It has regard to the importance of retaining the Parish's dark skies
- j) It provides proactive measures to support the wildlife environment¹⁶ and biodiversity
- k) It contributes to reducing environmental and climate impacts; and/or
- l) Traffic generation and parking does not have significant adverse impacts on road and pedestrian safety. Proposals that exceed the parking standards in Appendix F of the Local Plan will be supported

Consultation responses stressed the need for new housing to be in keeping with the character of the Parish and sympathetic to existing design and materials. This policy approach is seen as particularly important when dealing with proposals for infill applications to avoid inappropriate developments. This policy complements the criteria set out in policy BE1 of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan which seeks to promote good design in line with the requirements of the NPPF which recognises that good design contributes positively to improving people's quality of life.

Additionally, by advocating Secured by Design, it will ensure that developers properly consider the measures involved in designing out crime to create and maintain a sustainable community.

It has also been the long-held preference of the Parish Council, with strong support from parishioners¹⁷, for the principle of maintaining the rural nature of the Parish by reducing light pollution and discouraging developments with street lights or excessive lighting, thereby delivering the Parish's stated preference for a 'dark sky' environment.

As with the other policies that affect the rural nature and local character of the Parish, this policy should be validated against the proposed LCA, when available.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8b, 28, 71, 79, 91b, 95, 102, 110, 124 - 132 and 170.
- Local Plan policies: SP4 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development; HO10 - Residential Development in the Rural Area; BE1 - Design Criteria; C3 - Impact of development on highways; C4 - Design of roads and streets; C5 - Design of parking; NE1 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 2, 7, 8, 12, 13, and 14.

¹⁶ Such as initiatives to install 'Hedgehog highways' and green corridors that will help other small animals, frogs, birds and insects.

¹⁷ 90% of respondents to the Regulation 14 Questionnaire agreed with this policy.

- Design for Community Safety Supplementary Planning Document (June 2008).
- The National Design Guide (2019).

POLICY RCH4: TYPE OF HOUSING

Homes for smaller households of a size and type suited to the younger and older generations will be supported, subject to meeting a clearly evidenced local need.

Many consultation responses referred to the need for suitable housing to be available for those members of the community who need smaller or more affordable homes. This was felt to be important to assist elderly households to downsize or for younger households to access the housing market. Many people commented on the importance of ensuring that affordable housing should be made available only to local people with a local connection in perpetuity. Such developments are normally brought forward in conjunction with a Housing Association and in close cooperation with the Local Authority's planning and housing functions.

This policy seeks to align the type and tenure of proposed housing developments with the strategy for delivery of rural affordable housing outside the Settlement Boundary for Tibberton as set out in RCH2, the Local Plan policy HO11 and the NPPF. The above policy should be validated against the proposed LCA, when available.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8b, 61 - 63 and 77.
- Local Plan policies: HO4 - Housing Mix; HO5 - Affordable housing thresholds and percentages; HO6 - Delivery of Affordable Housing; HO11 - Affordable Rural Exceptions.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 4 and 6.

3. Environment, Open Spaces and Recreation

POLICY EOR1: GREEN SPACES

Development proposals that would cause loss of or significant harm to The Playing Fields, including the children's play area, (see Table 1 and Figure 6) will not be supported, with the exception of those associated with community facilities (including the expansion of the school and the enhancements of facilities supporting the playing fields).

Significant support for the protection of open spaces has been a feature of the responses to the consultations. Responses have highlighted the importance of these open spaces both to the community in terms of their recreation and amenity value but also their importance to the character and the rural setting of the Parish. Therefore, Telford & Wrekin Council incorporated the Playing Fields into a 'Green Guarantee' scheme in 2016 to protect them from future development. The 'Green Guarantee' scheme is a commitment to safeguard Council owned green spaces valued by local communities for the wildlife they support, the opportunities they provide for leisure and recreation and the positive effect they have on health and wellbeing.

Tibberton Playing Fields are a key element in meeting the anticipated growth needed in the provision of sport within the Borough. This has been highlighted in Telford & Wrekin's Playing Pitch Strategy, that is due to be adopted soon. Sport England also have a statutory consultee role in protecting playing fields, with a presumption against the loss of playing field land. Following an enquiry about the central section of the fields it was established that the fields, with the exception

of the School and children's play area, were bought by the Borough Council in the 1970s and now belong to TWC. This central section was not covered by the 'Green Guarantee' scheme but is included within the boundaries covered by this Policy, as shown in Figure 6 (Page 27).

The Playing Fields could also meet the criteria for designation as a Local Green Space in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 99 and 100, which specifies that Neighbourhood Plans can seek to protect areas of open space of significant importance to local communities. This attribution should only be used where the site is in close proximity to the settlement, it is demonstrably special and is local in character. The Borough's Local Plan also states that: 'The Council is not designating any Local Green spaces through the Local Plan but supports designations through neighbourhood development plans'. However, as the Playing Fields are already protected by the TWC 'Green Guarantee' Scheme, the merging Telford & Wrekin Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport England's remit to protect playing fields, it was decided that seeking designation as a 'Local Green Space' under the NPPF policy was not necessary at this time.

Although the Playing Fields are the only Public Open Space (POS) in the Parish, the creation of additional POS will be supported where possible.

This policy complies with national planning policy and is consistent with Local Plan policies NE1 and NE3 by protecting the area to contribute to provisions for sport, recreation and biodiversity as well as local health and well-being. Tibberton C of E Primary School is considered a key community asset and is important to the vitality of the village. There is a need to ensure that the long term sustainability of the school can be maintained should there be any alterations or remodelling of the school site. Policy COM1 in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan supports improvement to existing community facilities to meet the need of local residents. This means that the construction of new buildings for development would be inappropriate with the exception of the provision of appropriate additional/enhanced educational and community facilities in connection with the existing education and Playing Fields.

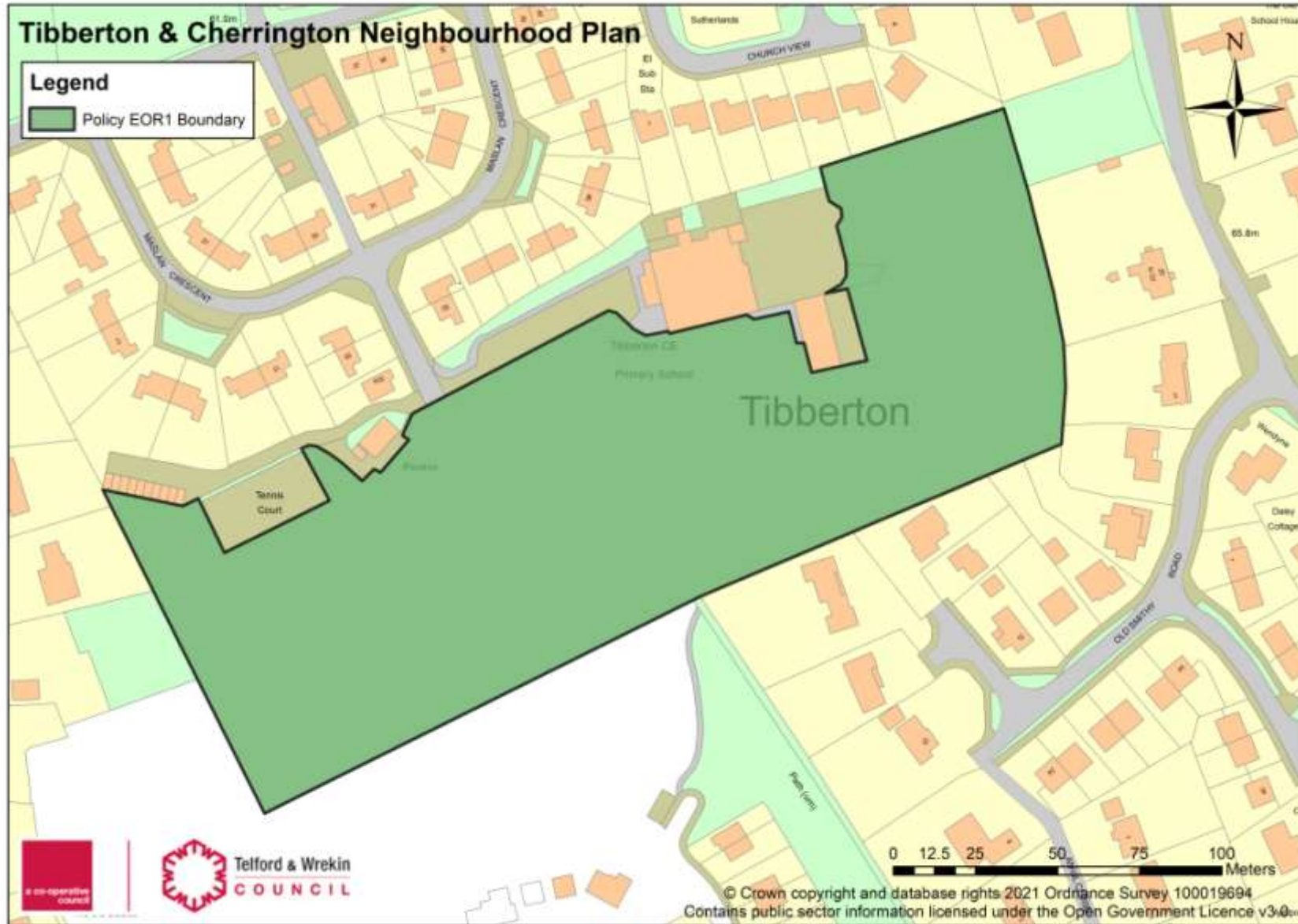
Table 1: POS protected under 'Green Guarantee' Scheme

Name of Site and Distance from centre of Tibberton village (All Saints' Church)	Special Qualities/Local Significance
The Playing Fields <500m	The Playing Fields in Tibberton are connected to and essential for Tibberton C of E Primary School and outside teams for organised sport but they also cater for informal recreation by local residents.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8, 96, 97, 99, 100 and 101.
- Sport England Playing Fields Policy.
- Local Plan policies: SP4 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; NE1 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity; NE3 - Existing public open space; COM1 - Community facilities
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 9 and 10.

Figure 6: Green Spaces



POLICY EOR2: ECOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE

Development proposals should protect and enhance features of significant nature conservation or landscape value, including mature trees, established hedgerows, rivers (especially the River Meese corridor), ponds and existing areas of woodland where appropriate. Improvement of the environmental connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be encouraged to enhance the green infrastructure of the Parish.

A recurring theme throughout the consultation process has been the protection of the landscape and green or 'biodiversity' elements in the Parish, with particular emphasis on the replacement of trees and bushes which have been lost as the result of recent building developments. Many responses stressed the importance of the environment and the need to ensure that all developments respect and wherever possible improves the local environment through appropriate measures. This policy will aim to preserve, enhance and improve all known sites of ecological or environmental importance, as well as designating new sites that are identified in the future which are currently unprotected; it should be validated against the proposed LCA, when available.

This policy complements Local Plan policies NE1 and NE2 by seeking to protect the biodiversity and landscape assets of the Parish.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8, 20, 149, 170, 174, 175 and 180.
- Local Plan policies: SP4 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; NE1 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity; NE2 - Trees, hedgerows and woodlands; BE1 - Design criteria.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 1, 2, 9, 10 and 11.

4. Highways and Byways

POLICY HB1: LINKAGES AND CONNECTIONS

Proposals for the enhancement and improvement of the existing Public Rights of Way will be supported where appropriate. All new planning applications should demonstrate safe and accessible routes for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders to local services, facilities and existing networks, particularly where they link with public transport. The addition of pavements or any other measures serving the same function should be in keeping with the rural nature of the Parish and local character.

Consultation responses reflected a desire to seek to protect and improve the network of rights of way and pedestrian links. Traffic generation by new developments should be mitigated by improved links to public transport in order to minimise the additional carbon footprint generated by new housing. Although strictly speaking not controlled by planning legislation these are certainly affected or influenced by new development and appropriate enhancements can be sought through the planning process.

Most roads in the area are narrow, bounded by grass verges or banks, with only a few pavements in Tibberton and none in Cherrington; those that have been provided are sporadic and of very limited width. Additionally, a critical challenge is the poor road links between Tibberton and Cherrington and the B5062; access to this road is not satisfactory. As well as the narrow width of the feeder routes, the 3 junctions onto the B5062 from Tibberton and 1 of the 2 from Cherrington have particularly poor visibility for vehicles exiting onto the main road. The Borough Council consider that the constraints of the small highways in the Parish and the surrounding area provide a justification for discouraging

substantial numbers of additional new homes¹⁸.

This policy is reflected in Telford & Wrekin Council's Local Plan which seeks to improve existing or deliver new linkages and connections under a variety of policy headings including the natural environment, connections and the built environment.

This policy conforms to:

- NPPF paragraphs: 8, 91, 98, 102 and 110.
- Local Plan policies: SP4 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; C1 - Promoting alternatives to the private car; C3 - Impact of development on highways; C4 - Design of roads and streets; BE1 - Design criteria.
- It will help to deliver Neighbourhood Plan Objectives: 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14.

¹⁸ Telford & Wrekin Rural Settlements Paper (B2f).

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is expected that Telford & Wrekin Council, as the Planning Authority, will continue to monitor progress relating to the number of dwellings and number of affordable homes delivered during the period of this Neighbourhood Plan, as part of the wider monitoring responsibilities for the Borough set out in their Annual Monitoring Report.

The Plan covers the period until 2031. For long-term success it is essential that developments in the Plan Area are reviewed against the Plan's objectives and policies.

Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Council will monitor the delivery of its policies and work to ensure that benefits to the communities within the Parish are achieved.

Each agenda for the Parish Council meetings will include an item 'Tibberton and Cherrington Neighbourhood Plan' which will ensure that the item is continually reviewed and reported upon during its life.

On the anniversary of the adoption of the Plan, the Parish Council will assess the impact of the Plan during the previous year and discuss the implementation of the Plan for the forthcoming year, taking into consideration any significant changes that have come about. The Parish Council will bring to the attention of the Borough Council any matters or problems that have been identified and this will be used as part of their contribution to the Annual Monitoring Report produced by Telford & Wrekin Council.

In 2025 and 2030, there will be thorough 5-year reviews of progress by a recruited community-based Steering Group. The purpose of these more comprehensive reviews will be to hold the Parish Council to account by assessing how/whether the 'Objectives' are being achieved. Continued confidence in the Plan for the next Plan period will depend upon ensuring that all current and relevant information is taken into account. Each 5-year review will be assessed along with the combined Annual Monitoring Reports, and their results will inform any decision on the need for a 'Full Formal Review'. If there is a need for a Full Formal Review, up-to-date data on Housing Needs Survey, Parish Profile, Census results etc. will be used.

In 2031, or before, a community-based Steering Group will be re-formed to undertake a Full Formal Review to decide on the need for a subsequent 15-year Plan, and to oversee the development of this new Plan if required. This should coincide with work at the Local Authority on the Local Plan for Telford & Wrekin.

In conjunction, Telford & Wrekin Council will undertake its statutory role and continue to monitor Neighbourhood Plans as part of its monitoring framework set out in Local Plan Appendix A; Tables 12- 18.

The Parish Council may be best placed to monitor the progress of certain elements of the Neighbourhood Plan; the division of responsibility will be agreed with Telford & Wrekin Council. This might mean that Telford & Wrekin Council leads on monitoring the strategic delivery of housing while the Parish Council monitors local delivery. Monitoring arrangements are to be recorded in a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Authorities.

The Parish Council's monitoring could take the form of a spreadsheet listing all planning applications and the decisions made on them. It should be possible to see the extent to which the Neighbourhood Plan has been successful in influencing planning and development decisions by recording which policies are being used in decision making and the outcomes. Hence, we should be able to assess how well policies are providing the expected outcomes. Findings from this should be shared with other interested parties to inform future Plans.

Table 2: Example of Policy Monitoring:

Policy	No. of times used	Decision in accordance	Decision against policy	Commentary

ANNEX A

SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

The majority of the Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington is open countryside, with only Tibberton having a significant development of buildings. The Local Planning Authority specifically opposes any proposed development that would cause harm to the character of the villages or encroachment into the countryside. However, the confines of Tibberton are not formally defined, leading to differing interpretations of where the 'built-up' area ends and 'open countryside' begins. This conflict of opinion has been resolved by assigning a 'Settlement Boundary' to the village. All of Cherrington is deemed to be in open countryside, therefore, there is no need to delineate the boundaries of this settlement.

Settlement boundaries are a well utilised planning tool for guiding, controlling and identifying limits to development for an individual village. It consists of a line that is drawn on a plan around a village, which reflects its built form; this is also known historically as a 'village envelope'. The settlement boundary is used as a policy tool reflecting the area where a set of plan policies are to be applied but does not necessarily have to cover the full extent of the village nor be limited to its built form.

In general, there is a presumption in favour of development within the settlement boundary. Any land and buildings outside of the boundary line are usually considered to be open countryside where development would be regulated with stricter planning policies. However, it should be noted that any land which has been included within the boundary line does not have a guarantee of approval of planning permission, as there will be other planning policies which will need to be adhered to also, for example; the protection of the character of a settlement.

There are some advantages and potential disadvantages to defining a settlement boundary¹.

Advantages of Settlement Boundaries

- Defining the boundary with a line plotted on a plan makes it easy to identify the 'settlement' from 'open countryside'.
- Settlement boundaries are an understood and accepted planning tool for guiding and controlling developments.
- Ensures a more plan-led and controlled approach to future housing growth by allowing development sites to be allocated within the villages.
- Protects the countryside from unnecessary development and prevents ribbon development.
- Co-ordinated and consistent approach providing a firm basis for refusing planning applications which are unacceptable in planning terms.
- Allows for more certainty to developers/land owners with sites/land within the boundary, as long as they adhere to all other plan policies.
- Allows the development of small sites which cannot be identified as allocations.

Disadvantages of Settlement Boundaries

- Potentially increases land values within the settlement boundary.
- Increases hope values for land adjoining but outside the boundary.
- The use of settlement boundaries has led to criticism that they result in cramming within the village as every available area of land competes for development resulting in a potential reduction in the landscape quality and character of that village, unless other policies are in place.

¹ Herefordshire Council Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20.

- Settlement boundaries can be crude and inflexible.
- The character of properties and the village could be altered if development is allowed within the gardens of these houses within a settlement boundary.

Defining a Settlement Boundary

Some criteria used to define the Tibberton Settlement Boundary are detailed below. These were used in addition to local circumstances and knowledge.

- Lines of communication - The boundaries trace the edge of the built up area, therefore exclude roads, paths and other lines of communications.
- Physical features - Wherever possible the boundaries follow physical features, such as: buildings, field boundaries or curtilages. However, in order to conserve the character and to limit expansion, the settlement boundaries exclude large gardens, orchards and other areas. This may mean that occasionally the boundaries do not relate fully to the physical features surrounding the village.
- Planning History - Planning permissions, recent refusals, planning appeal decisions and previous Local Plan inspector's comments concerning areas on the edge of the village have been used to help define the settlement boundaries.
- Village enhancements - Settlement boundaries include buildings and associated land that make up the village form. In some edges of village areas, boundaries may need to include small areas of land and/or buildings which offer the opportunity for improvements to the entrance of the village or ensure infrastructure improvements or a general enhancement to the village.
- Recent development - Where appropriate, the settlement boundaries include new developments which have occurred recently. They also include sites that have received planning permission within the settlement boundary.
- Important amenity areas - These form part of the character of the settlement and should be identified and protected by policy and included in the settlement boundary due to their contribution to built form.
- Land allocated for housing, employment or other uses will be included within the boundary.
- The settlement boundaries have been drawn to facilitate an appropriate level of proportional growth within the plan period. If land within the boundary is not formally allocated, there will be a requirement to demonstrate that there is enough available capacity within the boundary to enable development to take place.

Tibberton Settlement Boundary

The existing built form of Tibberton village is around the primary quadrangle of development, close to the primary school, church, public house, village shop and access to public transportation links². The Settlement Boundary follows this built form, which leaves some options for limited infill within the boundary.

The Parish population at the 2011 Census was 698, which was a 2% increase from 684 in 2001; however, this figure is forecast to rise to approximately 994 by 2021 due to recent housing developments, an increase of 42.4% since 2011. Similarly, the housing stock in Tibberton increased by less than 9% in the 10 years between 1999 and 2009 but the rate trebled to nearly 27% (256 to 325 houses) during the following 8 years to 2017. This rise in the development of new homes will accelerate by a further 27% during the next 4 years from 2017 to 2021 (325 to 413 houses) as a result of those houses that are currently in build or will definitely be built. This represents an increase of 142 houses (52%) in the 10 years from 2012 to 2021 (inclusive), which far exceeds the development envisaged in the Borough's Spatial Strategy policies SP1, 2 and 3

² Planning Officer Statement in TWC/2019/0251.

and which were summarised in Table 9 of the Local Plan. These policies envisaged a small amount of housing development (approximately 80 houses) to be directed towards the 5 named rural settlements³; however, Tibberton has delivered 177% of this requirement on its own.

The year-on-year building development within the proposed Settlement Boundary since the Borough’s last Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)⁴ in 2012 is shown on the map at Figure 7 below, whilst the increase in housing stock in Tibberton between 1999 and 2020 is shown graphically at Figure 8.

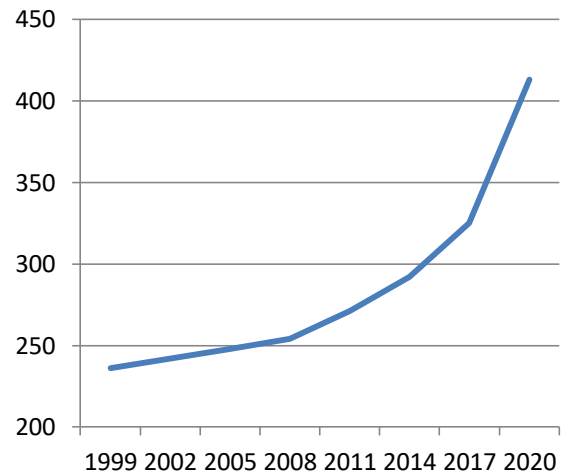
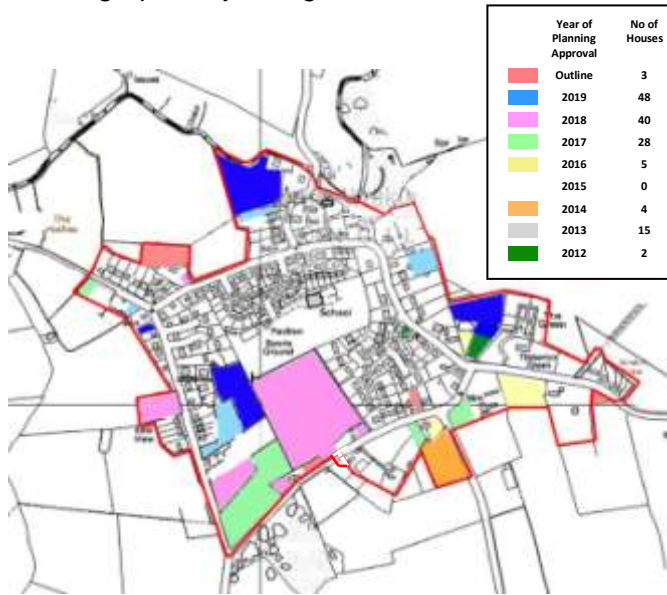


Figure 7: Development within Settlement Boundary

Figure 8: Increase in Housing 1999 - 2020

Of the 20 sites in Tibberton identified in the SHLAA, 9 are undeveloped sites which fall outside of the Settlement Boundary⁵; all of these were defined in the SHLAA as being ‘outside of suitable settlement’. Of the remaining 11 sites a further 9 have been developed and are therefore contained within the boundary, whilst the remaining two⁶ also lie within the Settlement Boundary, with no known constraints, but have not been developed.

Additionally, a further 3 sites have outline planning permission and a planning application for the land south and west of Tibberton Motor Repairs⁷ for 21 houses has had reserve matters granted. All sites are within the proposed Settlement Boundary for Tibberton.

Western Limit of Tibberton Settlement Boundary

The field to the west of No 45 Cherrington Road, ‘Willowbank’⁸ has been defined by a Planning Officer as ‘Not in the rural settlement and considered to be in open countryside.’⁹ This decision was supported in the delegated report for a previous planning application¹⁰ where the Inspector’s decision letter and the delegated report for the appeal application both indicated that the site is located outside of the village. The Inspectors decision is particularly helpful on this point where in paragraph 18 of the report, he concluded that the site falls within open countryside. Therefore, No 45 Cherrington Road forms the western edge of the Settlement Boundary for the village of Tibberton.

³ Edgmond, Erccall Magna, Lilleshall, Waters Upton and Tibberton & Cherrington.
⁴ See Annex C Pages C-10 to C-12.
⁵ SHLAA Sites 366, 515, 516, 574, 622, 699, 734, 749 and 770.
⁶ SHLAA Sites 33 and 509.
⁷ TWC/2019/0177 and TWC/2014/1080
⁸ Part of SHLAA Site 366 as shown in Figure 11 in Annex C Page C-10
⁹ TWC/2019/0251
¹⁰ TWC/2016/0891

Eastern Limit of Tibberton Settlement Boundary

The eastern edge of Tibberton is clearly defined by the current built form of the village.

Northern Limit of Tibberton Settlement Boundary

The River Meese and the built form of the north-eastern side of Tibberton form a distinct settlement boundary to the north of the village. A planning application has been submitted for the land south-west of Tibberton Motor Repairs Mill Lane⁷, with reserve matters granted, therefore this site has been included within the boundary.

Southern Limit of Tibberton Settlement Boundary

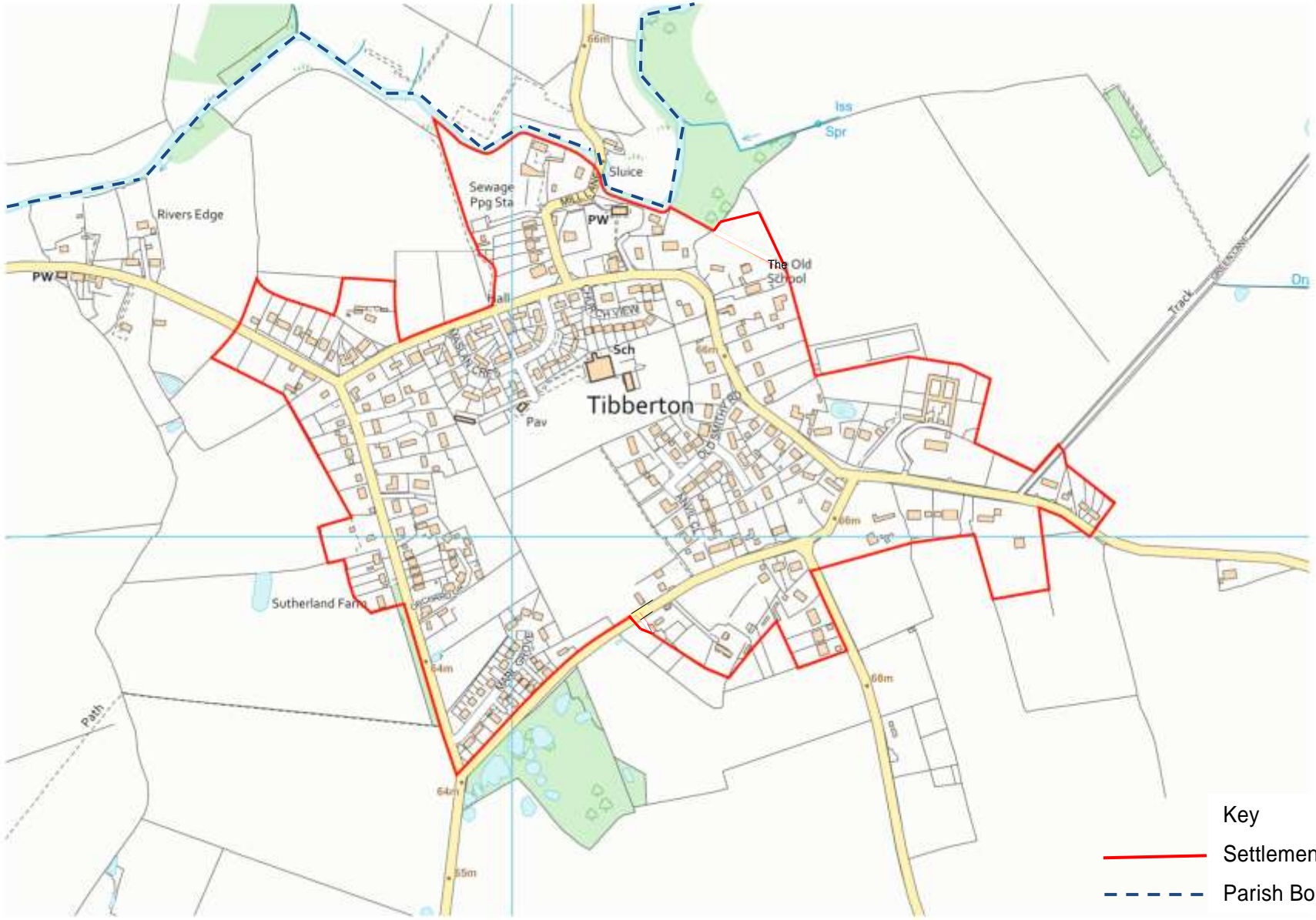
Although there is some housing to the south of Plantation Road, in refusing an application to develop 3 houses on the site of 62 Plantation Road, the Planning Officer noted that 'It is therefore reasonable to consider the site as 'locally important incidental open land' that contributes to the village's undeveloped character on this side of Plantation Road and its development would represent an encroachment into the open countryside on the southern edge of the village'¹¹. Hay Street marks the south-eastern boundary of Tibberton village, with a proposed development to the south east of Grangefield, to the east of Hay Street, considered to encroach unacceptably into the countryside¹². Therefore, the Tibberton Settlement Boundary has been drawn along the line of Plantation Road, but including existing housing and recent developments.

The Settlement Boundary for Tibberton is shown at Figure 1 on Page A-5 below.

¹¹ TWC/2016/0016

¹² TWC/2017/0606

Figure 1: Tibberton Settlement Boundary



ANNEX B

TIBBERTON'S AND CHERRINGTON'S HISTORIC CHARACTER

Following the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, much of area was granted to James Leveson of Wolverhampton, who subsequently passed the land to the Duke of Sutherland. Despite much other property development throughout the twentieth century, both Tibberton and Cherrington owe a substantial debt to the Duke of Sutherland and not just for the style of architecture found in houses old and new in the Parish. The older houses built at the end of the nineteenth century have been described as 'spacious and dignified but not spectacular ... built at low a density, the cottages had large gardens which were well kept'. The writer also commended the church, the bridge and the Sutherland Arms which is 'pleasantly simple'.

In addition to this heritage, Tibberton and Cherrington both have historic cores with 17 listed buildings recorded in the National Heritage List for England as buildings of special historic or architectural interest. Of these, 16 are listed at Grade II and one is at Grade II*, marking it out as being of particular national importance. Almost all the listed buildings are timber framed houses and cottages, the earlier ones with cruck construction. The other listed buildings consist of red brick houses, a church and a bridge over the River Meese. A full list of these buildings is at Appendix 1.

The historic linear pattern of Tibberton village has evolved in the post war period into a quadrilinear form covering four roads around a central field and a school. This new form has become more pronounced following the granting of planning applications TWC/2017/0355 (land off Plantation Road), TWC/2016/1127 (land off Back Lane and Plantation Road) and TWC/2016/0446 (land north of 61 Plantation Road). The Council has successfully resisted major applications subsequently following the release of its five year land supply statement in March 2015 (for example TWC/2014/0236 at 12 Tibberton) but has lost a planning appeal on land that is part previously developed at Mill Lane (TWC/2019/0177). Smaller infill schemes continue to be approved and built in the village.

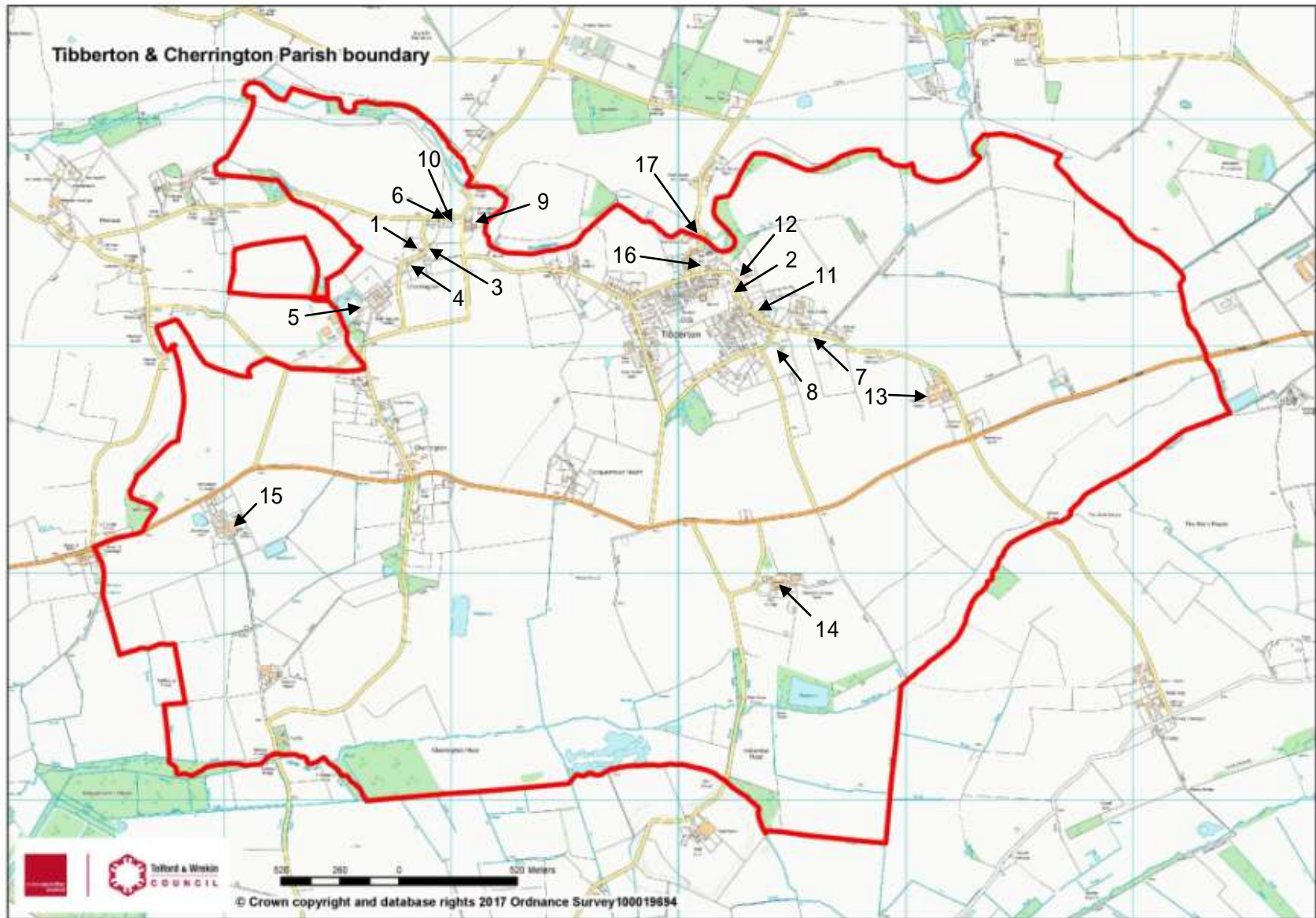
Over 43% of properties in the historic core of Cherrington, sometimes known as Cherrington Green, are Grade 2 listed buildings (7 out of 16 dwellings). There is also a linear development of houses and agricultural buildings along the road leading from the B5062 towards Cherrington Manor. Most development in recent years has focused on converting barns into housing at Cherrington Grange and Cherrington Manor with limited additional buildings elsewhere.

APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX B**NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST FOR TIBBERTON AND CHERRINGTON**

Name and location	Date	Notes	Grade
1 Cruck Cottage Cherrington	16th century	A timber framed cottage with cruck construction and painted brick infill on a sandstone plinth, and with a thatched roof. There is one storey and an attic, and three bays, and the cottage contains three pairs of cruck trusses. The windows are casements, and there are three eyebrow dormers.	II
2 Tibberton House , No 21	1611	A timber framed cottage with plastered infill and a tile roof. There is one storey and an attic, and three bays. On the front is a gabled porch, and the windows are casements. There are three large dormers with oversailing gables, the right gable is on shaped brackets, and is dated.	II
3 7 Stackyard Lane Cherrington	Early 17th century (probable)	A timber framed cottage with cruck trusses, red brick infill, and an asbestos tile roof. There is one storey and an attic, and three bays. The windows are casements, and there is a gabled dormer.	II
4 Longacre, Cherrington	Early 17th century (probable)	A timber framed cottage with cruck construction that has been restored. It has plastered infill, the northeast end is in painted sandstone, and the tile roof is gabled and hipped. There is one storey and an attic, and three bays. The windows are casements, and there are two gabled dormers.	II
5 Cherrington Manor House	1635	A timber framed house with painted brick infill and a tile roof. There are two storeys and an attic, and three gabled bays, the centre bay a two-storey projecting porch. At the rear are 19th-century extensions. The upper storeys and the gables are jettied with moulded bressumers, and the gables have bargeboards and pendants. The doorway has a rectangular fanlight, the windows are casements, and under the upper floor windows are carved blank arches.	II*
6 5 and 6 The Green, Cherrington	17th century	A pair of timber framed cottages, refronted in red brick and partly rendered, with exposed timber framing at the rear, and a tile roof. There is one storey and attics, and four bays. The windows are casements, and there are four gabled dormers.	II
7 7 Tibberton	17th century	A restored and extended timber framed cottage, with brick infill, the extension in brick, and a tile roof. There is one storey and an attic, and three bays. On the front is a gabled porch, the windows are three-light casements, and there are three gabled dormers.	II
8 12 Tibberton	17th century	A timber framed house with painted brick infill and a tile roof. There is one storey and attics, a front of five bays, and to the right is a 19th-century gabled wing with a porch in the angle. The windows are casements, and there are three gabled dormers.	II
9 Cherrington Grange	17th century	A timber framed house, later encased in brick and painted. It has a dentilled eaves course, a tiled roof, one storey and an attic, two bays, and a 19th-century rear wing. In the centre is a porch, and a doorway with pilasters and an entablature. The windows are casements with segmental heads, and there are two gabled dormers.	II
10 Peartree Cottage, No 4 Cherrington	17th century	A timber framed cottage with later extensions in sandstone, it has painted brick infill and a tile roof. There is one storey and an attic, two bays, an 18th-century one-bay extension to the left and a later extension to the right. The windows are casements.	II
11 Rose Farmhouse, Tibberton	17th century	A timber framed farmhouse that was altered in the 19th century. It has plastered infill, a tile roof, two storeys, two bays, and a lean-to at each end. In the centre is a timber porch, and the windows are casements.	II
12 Sutherland Forge, Tibberton	17th century	A timber framed house with painted plaster infill and a tile roof. There is one storey and an attic, two bays, and later extensions. On the front is a gable porch, the windows are casements, and there are two large dormers with oversailing gables.	II

	Name and location	Date	Notes	Grade
13	Tibberton Manor House	1796	A red brick house with a tile roof, three storeys and three bays. In the ground floor is a gabled porch flanked by bay windows, the upper floors contain sashes, and above the middle window in the central bay is a tablet with a coronet and the date.	II
14	Tibberton Grange	1810	A red brick house with a slate roof, three storeys, three bays, and flanking recessed two-storey one-bay pavilions. In the centre is a porch with pairs of openwork iron columns, and a doorway with pilasters and a semicircular fanlight. The windows are sashes, those in the ground floor under white rendered lunettes.	II
15	Day House	1819	A farmhouse on a model farm, it is in red brick, and has a tile roof with coped gables and moulded kneelers. There are two storeys and three bays. In the centre is a porch with pilasters, a pediment and an elliptical arch, and the doorway has a semicircular fanlight. Flanking the porch are canted bay windows, in the upper floor are sash windows with stone lintels, and above the middle window is a plaque with a coronet and the date.	II
16	All Saints Church	1842	The church is in sandstone, and consists of a nave, a south transept, a square chancel, and a west tower. The tower has clock faces, and an embattled parapet with pinnacles. The windows have pointed arches and contain Y-tracery.	II
17	Bridge over River Meese	Circa C18	Circa C18 or earlier sandstone rubble road bridge over River Meese north-west of the Church of All Saints'. Two segmental arches with cut-water between and with parapet above. Widened in brick on east side and with iron lock mechanism for mill pool to the former mill which has been demolished.	II

Figure 9: Listed Buildings in Tibberton and Cherrington



ANNEX C

TIBBERTON AND CHERRINGTON PARISH PROFILE

This profile of the Parish draws on a number of data sources including the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, the Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Plan 2005/2006, the Telford & Wrekin Rural Settlements paper (June 2016) and local knowledge.

Location

Tibberton and Cherrington Parish is situated in the rural north of the borough of Telford & Wrekin, north of Telford and west of the town of Newport.

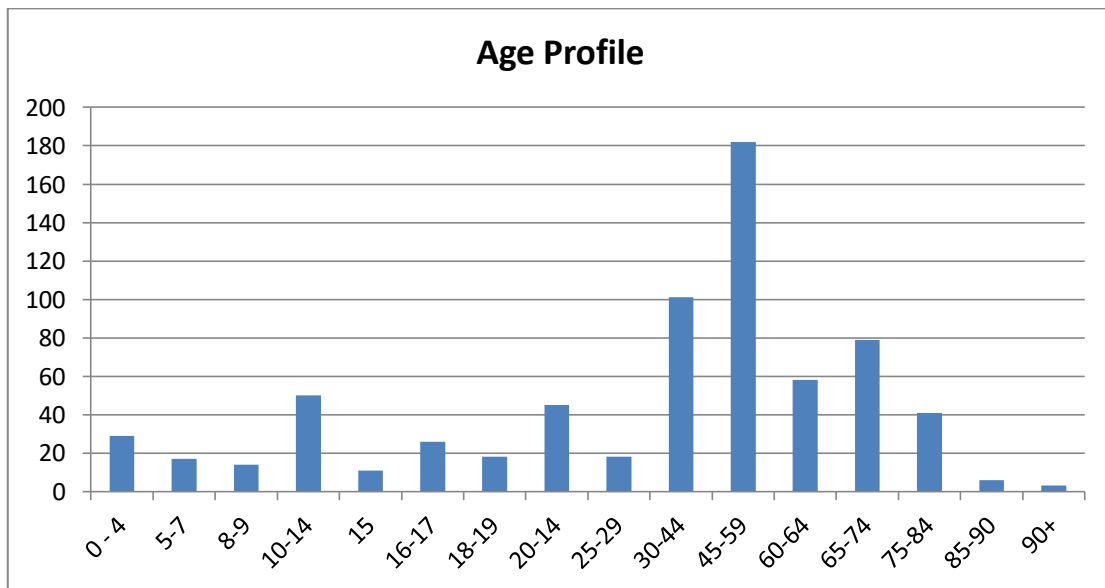
PEOPLE

Population

The 2011 Census recorded a population of 698 people, a rise of 2% since 2001, when population was 684. However, this is forecast to rise to approximately 994 by 2021 due to recent housing developments; this is an increase of 42.4% since 2011. With a Parish area of 1,042.16 hectares, this gives a population density of 0.7 persons per hectare in 2001 rising to 0.95 persons per hectare in 2021.

Age Profile

Figure 10: Parish Age Profile (as of 2011. Source: ONS, Table KS102EW)



With a mean age of 42.6 years, Tibberton and Cherrington Parish has a higher age profile than other rural areas in the Borough, where the mean age is 38.1 years. However, the Parish has a similar proportion of school age (16.9% are age 5 - 17 years) but a significantly higher percentage of retirement age (18.5% are over 65, compared with 14.4% in the rest of the Borough).

Educational Attainment

The 2011 Census of educational attainment reflects a relatively highly skilled population in Tibberton and Cherrington (Figure 11). The number of residents with Level 4 qualifications (equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education) is 20% above the rest of the rural area and 75% above the rest of Telford and Wrekin.

Figure 11: Highest Level of Qualification - comparison between Tibberton and Cherrington, the rest of the Rural Area and the whole of the Borough and Telford & Wrekin (%) (Source: ONS, Table QS501EW)

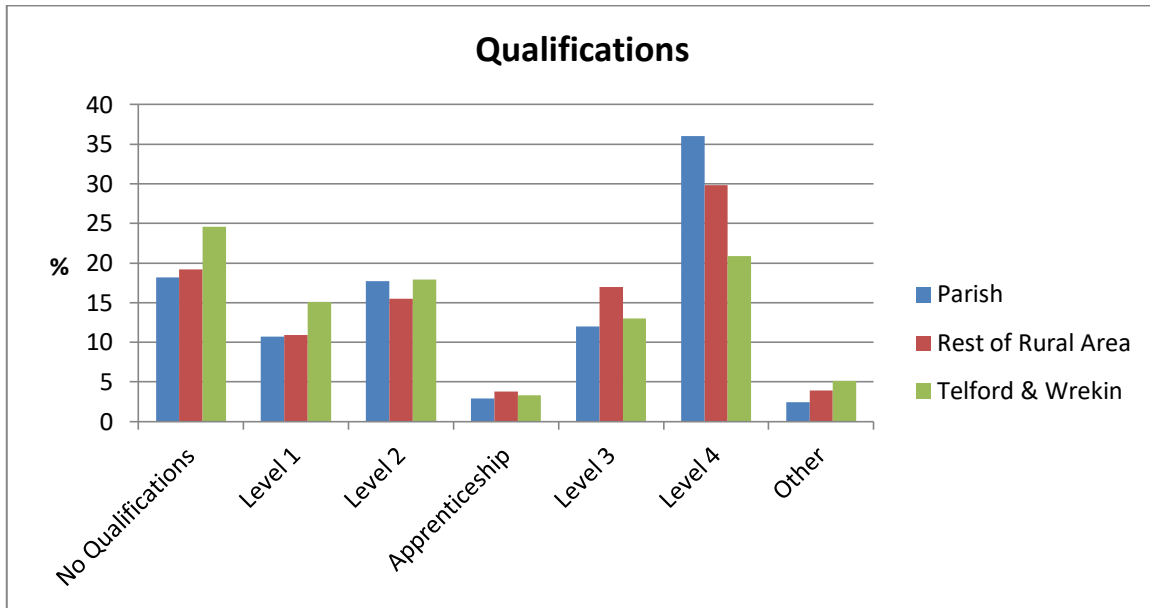


Table 3: Student Population - comparison between Tibberton and Cherrington and the whole of the Borough and Telford & Wrekin (%) (Source: NOMIS KS501EW).

Student Population	Tibberton and Cherrington %	Telford & Wrekin %
All categories: Student Population	100	100
School Children and full-time students Age 16 - 17	4.2	27.1
School Children and full-time students Age 18 and over	5.9	36.5
Level 2 qualifications	17.7	17.9
Full time students Age 18 - 74: Economically active: in employment	0.9	12.4
Full time students Age 18 - 74: Economically active: Unemployed	0.0	2.3
Full time students Age 18 - 74: Economically inactive	5.0	21.7

Tibberton Church of England Primary School is very popular and achieved an ‘Outstanding’ Ofsted rating in 2013¹.

Deprivation

The Index of Deprivation 2015 ranks the Tibberton and Cherrington as being in the top 20%-30% of the least deprived neighbourhoods in England².

¹ Ofsted.gov.uk/provider/files/2200145/urn/123474.pdf

² Telford & Wrekin Indices of Deprivation 2015.

HOUSING

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

Telford & Wrekin Council produced a SHLAA in 2012, with updates in 2014 and 2016. The aim of the SHLAA was to consider sites offered for potential housing development, make an assessment of their suitability and deliverability before calculating how many dwellings could be built and when. This assisted the Council in identifying the capacity of the borough to accommodate new housing development. A map of the SHLAA for Tibberton and Cherrington is at Figure 14 on Page C-10 and details of the 20 specified sites are shown in Table 9 on Page C-11.

The SHLAA provides an evidence base of site potential to inform new planning policy documents. However, the inclusion of sites in the SHLAA should not be taken to imply that they will be allocated for development, or that the Council will consider planning applications favourably. As shown in Table 9, eight of the sites identified in the SHLAA have been developed since 2012, despite 6 of these being considered to be 'outside of suitable settlement'. One further site is the subject of a planning application, although that is also 'outside of suitable settlement'.

In January 2020 Telford & Wrekin Council invited land owners once again to submit sites which may be suitable for future development. The intention is to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for economic development, housing and other uses, such as renewable energy leisure developments, with a priority of identifying land for employment development. The results will be published in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and provide an evidence base of potential sites to inform future planning policy work.

Housing Stock

Table 4 sets out the Parish's housing stock by dwelling type in 2011. However, this figure rose from 271 to 325 by 2017 (a rise of 20%) and there has been a significant increase in housing developments in Tibberton since that date. The forecast total, based on housing currently in build or highly likely to be built, will result in a total of 413 houses by circa 2021, an increase of 52% over the 2011 housing stock levels. Additionally, another 3 houses on 3 separate plots have outline or 'reserved matters' planning permission.

Table 4: Housing Stock in Tibberton and Cherrington (Source: ONS, Table QS402EW)

Dwelling type		%
All Household Spaces	271	100
Household spaces with at least one usual resident	263	97.0
Household spaces with no usual residents	8	3.0
Whole house or bungalow: Detached	163	60.1
Whole house or bungalow: Semi-detached	94	34.7
Whole house or bungalow: Terraced (including end-terrace)	8	3.0
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Purpose-built	2	0.7
Flat, maisonette or apartment: Part of converted house	1	0.4
Flat, maisonette or apartment: In a commercial building	2	0.7
Caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	1	0.4

Household Type

As would be expected in a rural Parish there are a significantly greater proportion of households with members over 65 years old. There are also relatively few one-person and lone-parent households in the Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington - a reflection of the urban/rural split that is seen across the Borough. The presence of some accommodation for Harper Adams students is reflected in the comparatively high level of households in the Parish which are all full-time students.

Table 5: Household Type in Tibberton and Cherrington (source: ONS Table KS105EW)

Household Type	Tibberton and Cherrington	Telford & Wrekin
	%	%
One person household	17.5	25.2
Aged 65 and over	11.4	10.7
Other	6.1	14.5
One family household	76.0	67.6
All aged 65 and over	12.9	7.6
Married, Same-sex, civil partnership couple	52.5	48.2
No children	20.5	19.5
Dependent children	20.9	22.0
All children non-dependent	11.0	6.7
Cohabiting couple	6.1	11.9
No children	2.3	5.7
Dependent children	3.4	5.6
All children non-dependent	0.4	0.6
Lone parent	4.6	11.7
Dependent children	2.7	8.1
All children non-dependent	1.9	3.6
Other household types	6.5	7.2
With dependent children	2.3	2.9
All full-time students	1.9	0.3
Other	2.3	4.0

Housing Tenure

As a relatively affluent Parish, home ownership is predictably high among the settled permanent population with more than four in five households owning their own home, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Housing Tenure (ONS, Table QS405EW)

Tenure	2011	%
All categories: Tenure	263	100
Owned: Total	211	80.2
Owned: Owned outright	117	44.5
Owned: Owned with a mortgage or loan	94	35.7
Shared ownership (part owned and part rented)	0	0
Social rented: Total	26	9.9
Social rented: Rented from Council (Local Authority)	7	2.7
Social rented: Other	19	7.2
Private rented: Total	24	9.1
Private rented: Private Landlord or Letting Agency	22	8.4
Private rented: Other	2	0.8
Living rent free	2	0.8

House Prices. The Parish has house prices that are amongst the highest in the Borough, with median prices being in the most expensive band of £200,000+³.

Table 7: Comparison of Tibberton and Cherrington Ward and Telford & Wrekin house prices in 2014 and 2015 (Source: SHMA 2016 – Table 3.1)

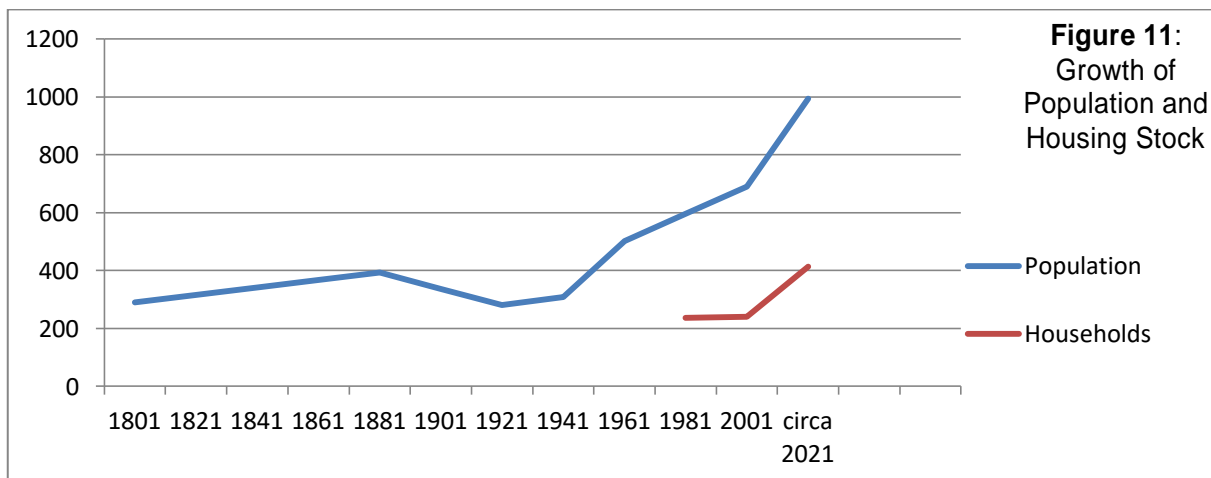
	Lowest quartile (25%)	Median figure
Tibberton and Cherrington ⁴	£205,000	£284,167
Telford & Wrekin	£108,000	£140,000

A more detailed review of the Land Registry database for house sales in the “TF10 8” postcode area for 2015 and 2016 (up to November 2016) showed that the median price for a house sold was £247,000.

Growth of Parish Population and Housing Stock

The population of the Parish showed steady growth during the nineteenth century, from 289 in 1801 to 392 in 1881. However, there was a steep decline at the turn of the twentieth century, down to 250 in 1931, when farming jobs were disappearing and local services were increasingly supplied from the surrounding towns. With improved health care, transport, the successful development of Telford, increasing levels of movement out of cities and towns towards rural areas, the population of the Parish rose to 653 in 1991, with a commensurate rise in housing stock. Whilst the period up to 2011 showed modest growth in the population and housing stock of Tibberton and Cherrington, the last 10 years has seen a significant rise in both these indices.

The population of the Parish grew by 2% from 2001 to 2011, but is predicted to increase by over 40% in the following 10 year period from 2011 to 2021. Similarly, the housing stock in Tibberton increased by 15% in the 12 years between 1999 and 2011; however this total increased by 20% in the next 6 years between 2011 and 2017 (271 to 325 houses) and will rise by a further 27% (325 to 413 houses) during the following 3 years to 2021 as a result of those houses that are currently in build or are highly likely to be built. This represents an increase of 52% (142 houses) in the 10 years from 2012 to 2021 (inclusive).



Heritage

The Parish has 17 listed buildings and structures in the Parish. Details are at Appendix 1 to Annex B.

³ Telford & Wrekin SHMA Report 2016.

⁴ This extends beyond the parish boundaries and cover part of Ercall Magna Ward and Edmond Ward.

TRANSPORT

Transport Infrastructure

The Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington has adequate east-west connections with other rural areas of the Borough; however, north-south connections are predominantly along narrow roads, which are often single track with passing places. The B5062 (Shrewsbury Rd), a single lane local distributor road, runs to the south of Tibberton and Cherrington and connects Shrewsbury with Newport. A critical challenge is the poor road links between Tibberton and Cherrington and the B5062; access to this road is not satisfactory. As well as the narrow width of the feeder routes, the 3 junctions onto the B5062 from Tibberton and 1 of the 2 from Cherrington have particularly poor visibility for vehicles exiting onto the main road. The Borough Council consider that the constraints of the small highways in the Parish and the surrounding area provide a justification for discouraging substantial numbers of additional new homes⁵.

Most roads in the area are narrow, bounded by grass verges or banks, with few pavements in Tibberton and none in Cherrington; those that have been provided are sporadic and of very limited width. There is an increasing volume of traffic in Tibberton as a result of recent housing developments and a significant number of large farm vehicles also use these roads. An additional issue is that roads through the Tibberton and Cherrington are used as a shortcut onto the A41 at Stanford Bridge, further increasing the volume of traffic. The Parish is not an accident hotspot; a review of traffic accidents in the period 2010 to 2019 shows that there were 18 injury accidents of which 2 were fatal, 3 were classified as ‘serious’ and 13 as ‘slight’. However, these figures do not include other accidents where there was no injury.

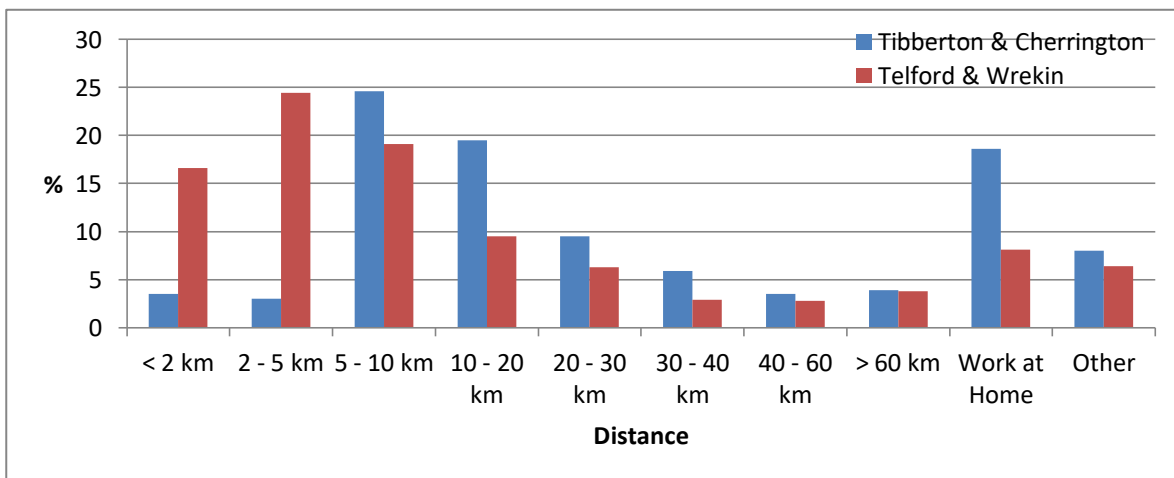
Public Transport

There is a two-hourly weekday bus service (#519) that connects Tibberton and Cherrington with Newport and Shrewsbury. The Wrekin Rider bus also operates around Tibberton, Cherrington and adjoining villages, taking people to Newport. There is no direct link to Telford town centre.

Travel to Work

Most residents of working age in Tibberton and Cherrington commute to work with a mean travel to work journey of 21.5 km compared with 15.3 km for the whole Borough of Telford and Wrekin. It is notable that 18.6% of all people in employment work from home, over 2.5 times the rate in the whole of rest of the rural area of Telford & Wrekin and over five times the average for England⁶.

Figure 13: Travel to Work Patterns (Source: NOMIS Table QS702EW)



⁵ Telford & Wrekin Rural Settlements Paper (B2f).

⁶ Ibid (Page 11)

The population figures in Figure 12 on Page C-5 hide the occupational make up of the Parish. In the nineteenth century Tibberton and Cherrington had three blacksmiths, two pubs and a beer retailer, a tailor, a carrier, a brick and tile maker, a boot and shoe maker, several carpenters, butchers and wheelwrights and even a straw bonnet maker. The vast majority of the rest of the Parish worked on the farms where they would be employed either on the land or for domestic service. Today, most of the population work away from the local area in the surrounding towns of Telford and Shrewsbury, with some further afield in Birmingham, Wolverhampton and even London. Consequently, more people from the Parish travel greater distances to work than is the norm for the rest of the Borough, as shown in Figure 13 above.

Car Availability

The relatively poor public transport links coupled with high levels of affluence, and the travel to work patterns already identified, mean that residents in Tibberton and Cherrington, as with other parts of the rural area of the Borough, are highly dependent on the car, the use of which is likely to change over the next ten years in response to environmental concerns.

Table 8: Car Availability (Source: ONS, Table QS416EW)

Cars	Tibberton and Cherrington %	Rural Area %	Telford & Wrekin %
All categories: Car or van availability	100	100	100
No cars or vans in household	3.4	7.2	20.6
1 car or van in household	27.8	33.1	43.1
2 cars or vans in household	44.9	40.2	25.8
3 cars or vans in household	17.1	13.2	5.9
4 or more cars or vans in household	6.8	6.2	2.1

Rights of Way

There are 6 Public Rights of Way in the Parish (Figure 15 on Page C-13) consisting of 5 footpaths (numbered 1-5) and one bridleway (marked 'A'). It is important that these rights of way are accessible and maintained and that stiles and way-markers are in place.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mobile 'Phone Coverage

The coverage offered by all mobile 'phone providers is poor indoors throughout the Parish and variable outdoors. With the development of 5G infrastructure requiring a significant number of masts to provide the network it is unlikely that this will be available in a majority of rural areas in the near future. This is likely to be a significant constraint to established and new local businesses which could restrict the growth and number of parish-based enterprises.

Broadband

Superfast broadband (>24 Mbps) is available throughout the Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington and to 98.3% of the Borough of Telford and Wrekin⁷. This compares with the Government's target of 95% availability.

⁷ www.superfast-telford.co.uk

GEOGRAPHY

Farmland quality

Much of the surrounding countryside is of high quality agricultural land (Figure 16 on Page C-14) with 80% classified as Grade 2 (very good, which often has a presumption that it should not be developed for building) and another 10% as Grade 3 (moderate to good)⁸.

Geology

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines a mineral safeguarding area as: 'An area designated by Minerals Planning Authorities which covers known deposits of mineral which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.' In the Parish of Tibberton and Cherrington, the underlying solid geology (beneath any surface drift deposits from the last ice age) comprises the Kidderminster Formation which is part of the Sherwood Sandstone Group. The Kidderminster Formation comprises red, yellow and brown sandstones, which is part pebbly. The strata is free draining and is an important aquifer. Outcrops of the deposit are well exhibited at Sheep Bridge, to the north of All Saints' Church near the site of the former paper mill and Bobaston Quarry.

Apart from the aforementioned outcrops of the Kidderminster Formation the remainder of the Parish is overlain by glacial drift deposits of sandy boulder clay and unbedded sandy clay. Where the clay fraction is thick they have been exploited for marl as at the western end of Plantation Road. Boulder clay deposits are impermeable and often exhibit impeded drainage characteristics which can lead to flooding during periods of high precipitation. The valley of the River Meese is overlain by post glacial material of alluvium and terrace deposits, the latter comprising a mix of sand and gravel with interbedded clay lenses.

The Mineral Safeguarding Map for the Parish is at Figure 17 on Page C-15.

Water and Flood Risk

Telford & Wrekin Council has commissioned a number of Borough-wide studies concerning water quality and flood risk⁹. One or two properties in the Parish have either been flooded or have had outbuildings flooded. The continuing blocking of some drainage ditches may also result in more flooding if rainfall / snowmelt accumulates. See Figure 18 on Page C-16 for flood zones in Tibberton and Cherrington Parish.

The recent Telford and Wrekin Detailed Water Cycle Study¹⁰ stated that 'the drainage network in Tibberton and Cherrington is an historic combined system and is at or near capacity. Prior to any development taking place Severn Trent Water must be consulted to assess what impacts this development would have and what necessary improvements will be required.'

OTHER FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Economics

A review of Telford & Wrekin Council business rates records identifies over 22 small retail and service businesses in the Parish. Much of the adjoining rural land is used for farming.

⁸ Agricultural Land Classifications of England and Wales, Section 2.

⁹ Scoping Study Water Cycle Study 2012 and Strategic Flood Risk Assessments prepared to support the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan.

¹⁰ C6iii TWC Detailed Water Cycle Study - Update 2016.

Access to Facilities and Services

Most community facilities and services are centred within the village of Tibberton. These include the following community facilities:

- A volunteer run community Village shop (limited opening hours)
- Public House - The Sutherland Arms
- All Saints' Church
- Playing field
- Methodist Chapel
- Village Hall

Tibberton Community Shop (TCS) opened in December 2011 and is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. TCS has over 170 members with 60 volunteers and is run by its own Management Committee. The Shop's community received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service on 2017. Tibberton Village Hall is owned under Trust and is also managed by its own Management Committee. Both Committees use the Village hall as their meeting place, together with the Parish Council.

There are a number of active community groups in the Parish which meet regularly at the Village Hall including: Scouts; Cubs; Beavers; Brownies and Guides; Keep Fit, Pilates; the Bridge Club; Table Tennis; Art Classes; the Women's Institute; Mums and Toddlers; Knit, Sew, Craft and IT for ALL.

Additionally, a number of other clubs and activities are centred on the village, including: the Cycling Club, Walking Club and the Bell Ringers who are based at All Saints' Church.

Public Open Space

The Playing Fields in Tibberton are connected and essential for Tibberton C of E Primary School and outside teams for organised sport but it also caters for informal recreation by local residents.

Following an enquiry about the central section of the field it was established that this is Church land, including where the school buildings are situated. The remainder of the fields were bought by the Borough Council and now belongs to TWC, which has granted protection against residential development under the Borough's 'Green Guarantee' scheme. The Tibberton and Cherrington community values the green spaces, including the school fields.

Designated Wildlife Site and Geological Site

Kynndersley Moor Woods in the south of the Parish is designated a Local Wildlife Site and Shray Hill, Cherrington, on the western border of the Parish is a Local Geological Site. These are shown in Figure 19 on page C-17.

Strategic Landscape

To the south of the B5062, the Parish contains a small section of the Weald Moors Strategic Landscape, which is one of only two such areas in the Borough to be afforded special protection – the other being the Wrekin Forest. The two most direct routes into The Weald Moors from Tibberton and Cherrington have both been designated as 'Quiet Lanes' to help maintain the tranquillity and character of the area and to discourage their use as 'rat-runs' to and from Telford.

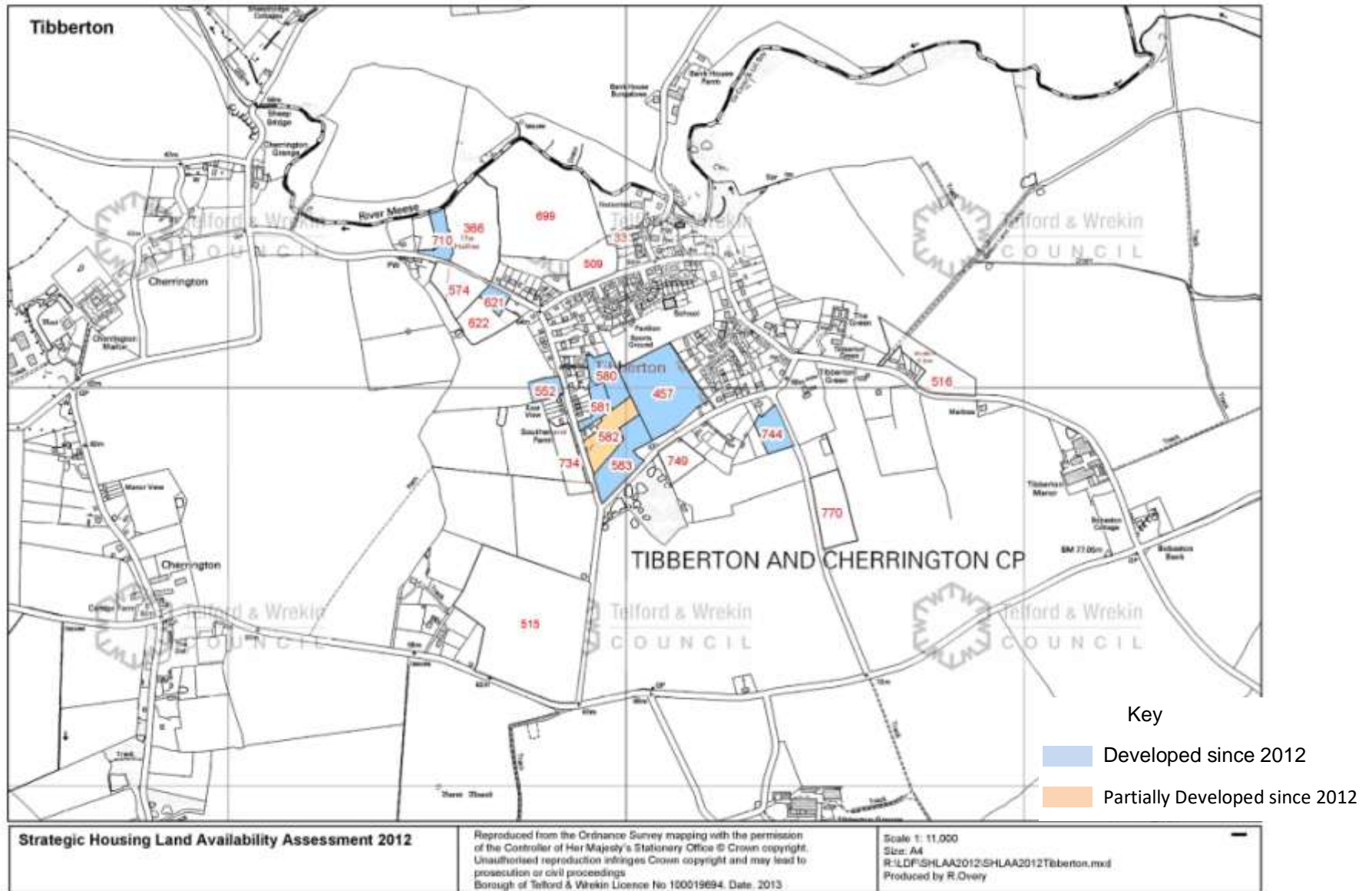


Figure 14: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012

Table 9: SHLAA 2012 Appendix 1 - Tibberton

The inclusion of sites in the SHLAA should not be taken to imply that they will be allocated for development, or that the Council will consider planning applications favourably. This site schedule should be read in conjunction with the SHLAA document itself.

SHLAA	Site Name	Constraint	Mitigation	Mitigation Date	Issue summary	Density	Site area	Dwellings	Available	Suitable	Achievable
33	Land Opposite 39 Mill Lane	No known constraints		2012		25	0.148	4	✓	✓	✓
366	Land adjacent to Hollies Farm, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement. Flood Zone 3a	Planning Policy Review. NPPF - Exceptions Test, application SFRA Level 2.	2015	Flood Zone 2.	25	2.630	66	✓		✓
457	Plantation - 5, Tibberton	Outside of suitable settlement	Planning Policy Review	2015	TPO	25	2.991	75	✓		✓
509	Opposite Tibberton Shop	No known constraints		2012		25	1.056	26	✓	✓	✓
515	Land south-west of Tibberton	Outside suitable settlement	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	9.047	226	✓		✓
516	Land at Tibberton	Outside suitable settlement	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	1.702	43	✓		✓
552	Sutherland farm Tibberton	No known constraints		2012		25	0.413	10	✓	✓	✓
574	Land to the south of Cherrington Road, The Hollies, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	1.096	27	✓		✓
580	Plantation - 1, Tibberton	No known constraints		2012	TPO	25	0.770	19	✓	✓	✓
581	Plantation - 2, Tibberton	No known constraints		2012	TPO	25	0.455	11	✓	✓	✓
582	Plantation - 3, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	1.104	28	✓		✓
583	Corner of Plantation Road and Back Lane, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	1.372	34	✓		✓
621	Land adjacent to 44 Cherrington Road - Site 1	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	0.318	8	✓		✓
622	Land adjacent to 44 Cherrington Road - Site 2	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	0.960	24	✓		✓

SHLAA	Site Name	Constraint	Mitigation	Mitigation Date	Issue summary	Density	Site area	Dwellings	Available	Suitable	Achievable
699	Land adjacent to site 509, opposite Tibberton shop.	Out of suitable settlement. Flood Zone 3a	Planning Policy Review. NPPF - Exceptions Test, application SFRA Level 2.	2015		25	6.216	155	✓		✓
710	Land and buildings to the north of Cherrington Road, The Hollies, Tibberton	Flood Zone 3a. Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review. NPPF - Exceptions Test, application SFRA Level 2.	2015	Flood Zone 2.	25	0.529	13	✓		✓
734	Site 2 at Sutherland Farm, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	0.964	24	✓		✓
744	Land South of, Grangefields, Hay Street, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	0.679	17	✓		✓
749	Land at Hay Street, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015	TPO	25	0.738	18	✓		✓
770	Land east of, Hay Street, Tibberton	Out of suitable settlement.	Planning Policy Review	2015		25	1.493	17	✓		✓

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Key

- Developed since 2012
- Partially Developed since 2012

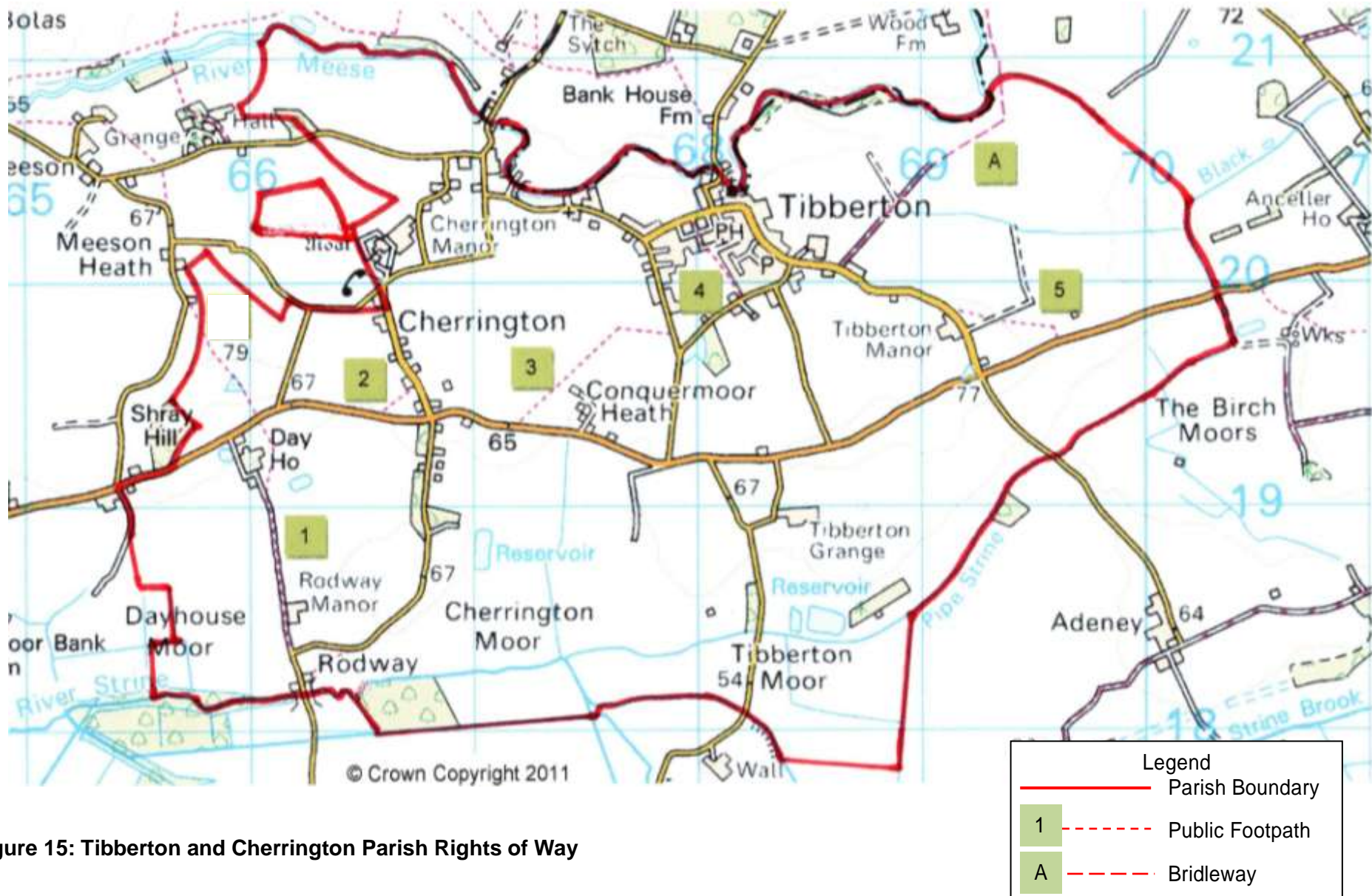


Figure 15: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Rights of Way

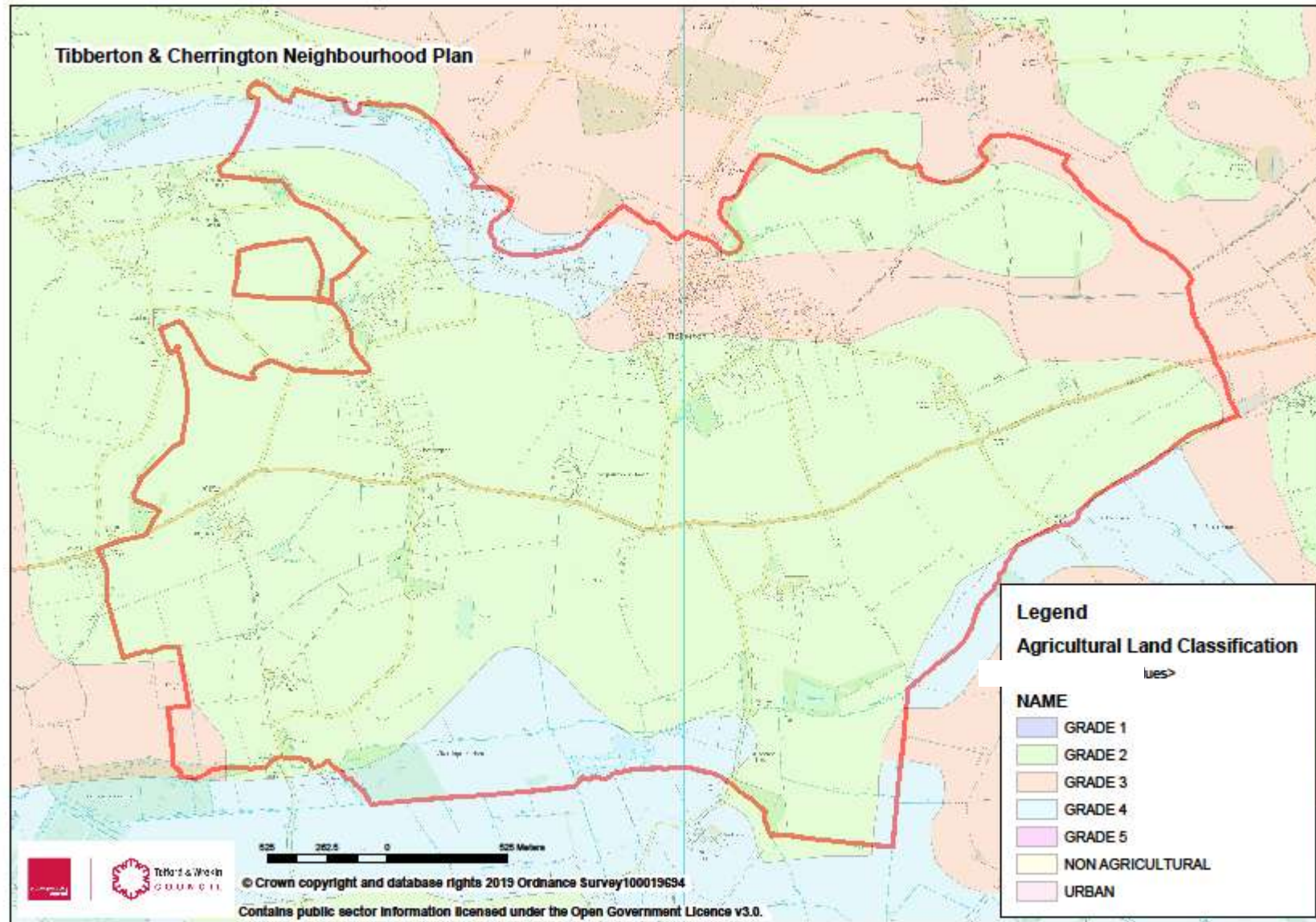


Figure 16: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Agricultural Land Classification

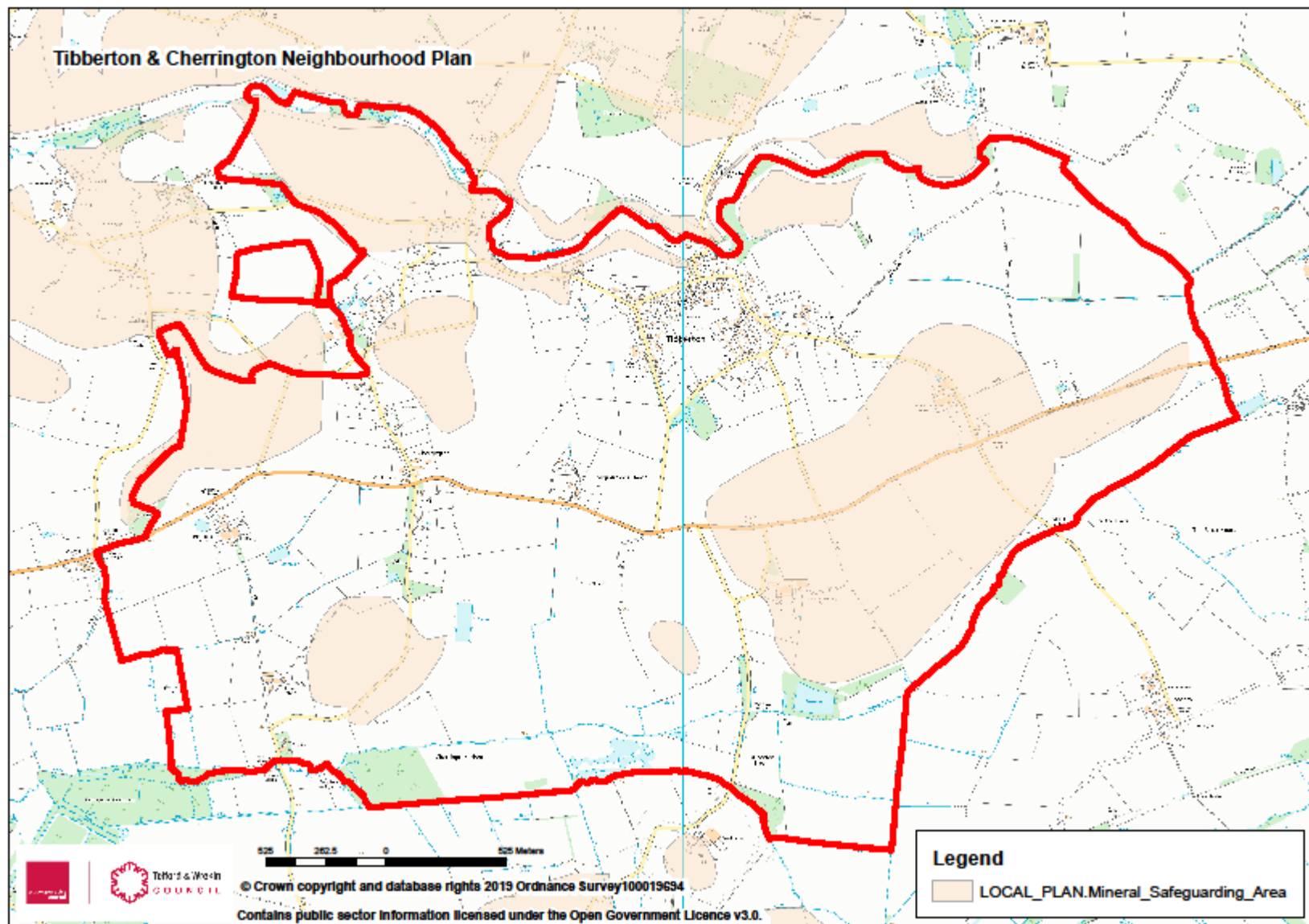


Figure 17: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Mineral Safeguarding Areas

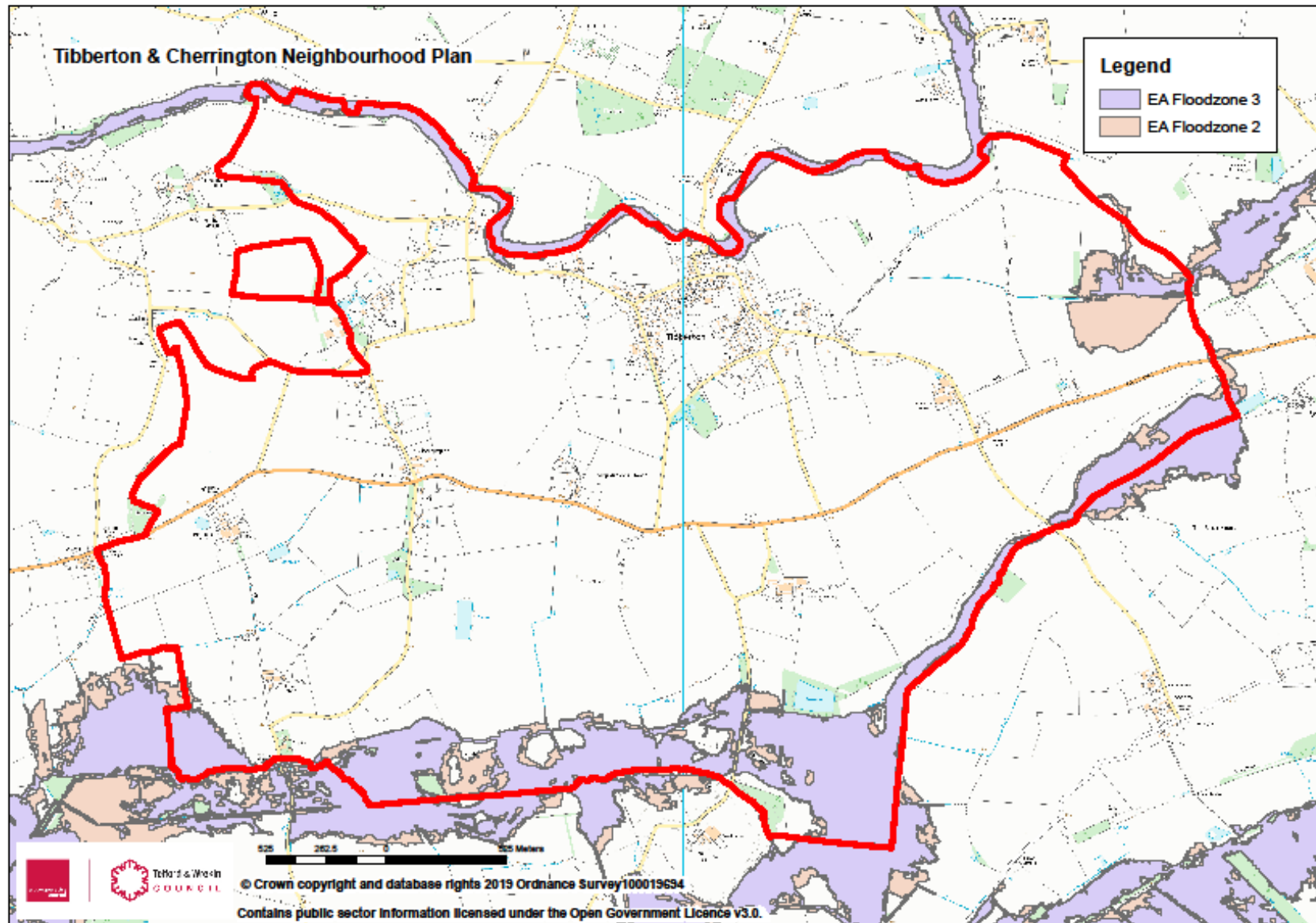


Figure 18: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Flood Risk Areas

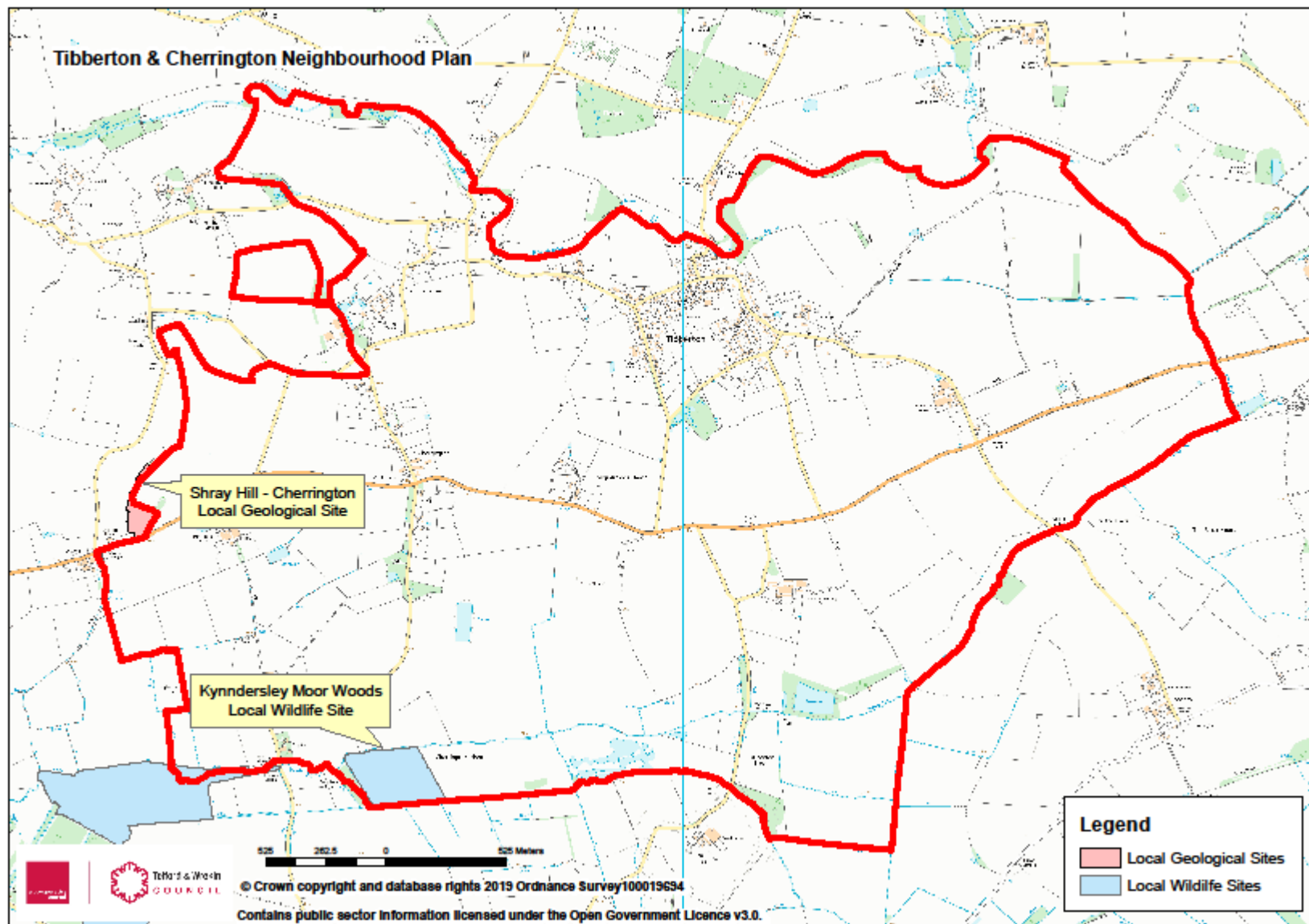


Figure 19: Tibberton and Cherrington Parish Local Wildlife Site and Local Geological Site

ANNEX D

ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL EVIDENCE

1. National Heritage list for Tibberton and Cherrington. <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results/>
2. National Planning Policy Framework. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf
3. Planning Practice Guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-needs-of-different-groups#rural-housing>
4. Telford & Wrekin Neighbourhood Planning Advice and Guidance https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20453/neighbourhood_planning/3934/neighbourhood_planning_advice_and_guidance
5. Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 – 2031 Submission Version_ http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4486/a1_telford_and_wrekin_local_plan_2011-2031_-_submission_version_low_res
6. Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 – 2031 – Integrated Appraisal http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4362/a3_twlp_intergrated_appraisal_-_submission_version
7. Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 – 2031 – Representations http://telford-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/local_plan/local_plan/twlp?tab=list
8. Telford & Wrekin Statement of Community Involvement 2019 https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1372/statement_of_community_involvement_2012
9. Telford & Wrekin Local Development Scheme 2020 - 2023 https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1447/local_development_scheme_2013
10. Telford & Wrekin Annual Monitoring Reports_ http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20172/planning_policy_and_strategy/124/annual_monitoring_report_amr
11. Telford & Wrekin Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012 https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20457/housing/126/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_shlaa
12. G2 - Telford & Wrekin Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (update 2016) https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4659/g2_-_telford_and_wrekin_strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_shlaa_update_2016
13. Telford & Wrekin Strategic Housing Market Assessment http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4427/c2b-it_and_w_strategic_housing_market_assessment_shma_2016_-_final_report
14. Telford & Wrekin Water Cycle Study http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4456/c6c-iii_twc_detailed_water_cycle_study_-_update_2016
15. Telford & Wrekin Strategic Flood Risk Assessment_ http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4460/c6e_twc_ifra_flood_risk_management_strategy

16. Telford & Wrekin Local Plan Technical Paper B2f – Rural Settlements_
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4379/b2f_rural_settlements_update
17. Telford & Wrekin Strategy and Options – Shaping Places 2013_
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1383/strategy_and_options_document
18. Telford & Wrekin Strategy and Options – Sustainability Appraisal 2013
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4395/d2b_shaping_places_lp_sustainability_appraisal_strategy_and_options
19. Telford & Wrekin Strategy and Options - Consultation report 2013
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1395/shaping_places_local_plan_strategy_and_options_summary_of_comments_december_2013
20. Telford & Wrekin Strategic Landscape Study 2017
https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20459/natural_environment/1161/strategic_landscapes_study
21. Sport England Playing Fields Policy: <https://sportenglandproduction-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/finalplaying-fields-policy-and-guidance-document.pdf>
22. Shropshire Landscape Typology study 2006 <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/1803/the-shropshire-landscape-typology.pdf>
23. 2001 Census – Population and Household Statistics
https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/275/tibberton_and_cherrington_parish_profile_2001_census
24. 2011 Census – Population and Household Statistics
https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20121/facts_and_figures/61/census
25. Design for Community Safety Supplementary Planning Document (June 2008)
https://www.telford.gov.uk/info/20451/development_plans/128/supplementary_planning_documents_spd
26. The National Design Guide (2019)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957233/National_Design_Guide.pdf
27. The Parish Plan of Tibberton and Cherrington 2005/2006.
28. Tibberton Parish Geology. Mr G White BSc FRICS FIQ CEnv. Chartered Mineral Surveyor.

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Agenda Item 7: Equality and Diversity Strategy



“The Council is committed to opposing unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity in all that it does. The new Equality & Diversity Strategy takes into account our legal duties and responsibilities and also the type of culture we want to promote through our workforce and in the way we treat our residents and customers.

“The strategy includes a clear commitment and vision for our approach to equality and diversity, with new objectives and a supporting action plan that we will use to report progress against annually.”

Councillor Paul Watling, Cabinet Member for Co-Operative Communities, Engagement and Partnerships

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TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 2 DECEMBER 2021

DRAFT EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

REPORT OF DIRECTOR: COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMER AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR PAUL WATLING, CABINET MEMBER FOR CO-OPERATIVE COMMUNITIES, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. BACKGROUND AND MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report follows on from the Equality and Diversity Progress Update report (October 2021), which highlighted positive steps that the Council has made in improving access to services, co-ordinating community response to hate crime incidents, celebrating diversity through a range of events and activities, and increasing training and guidance for Council employees.
- 1.2 This previous report also led to Cabinet approving a recommendation to condemn and speak out against any discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or any other characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010, and to formally adopt the International Holocaust Memorial Alliance (IHMA) working definition of Antisemitism, and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia.
- 1.3 Cabinet also recognised that despite the good progress that has been made, there is much more that we want to do as an organisation, and so pledged to bring forward a new draft Equality & Diversity Strategy, which accompanies this report.
- 1.4 The attached draft strategy sets out the Councils revised approach to equality and diversity through a new 4-year strategy that replaces the existing Equality Policy. It takes account of our legal duties and responsibilities and also the type of culture we want to promote throughout our workforce and in the way that we treat our residents and customers.
- 1.5 The strategy is currently in draft form and includes a clear commitment, vision and new set of objectives all of which will be driven by a supporting action plan that the Council will report against on an annual basis.
- 1.6 The intention is for this strategy to inform and complement, not duplicate other strategies, many of which focus on reducing inequality too.
- 1.7 The draft strategy includes four main areas of focus:
 - Leading our organisation and communities;
 - Supporting our workforce and elected members;
 - Serving our customers;
 - Celebrating and promoting diversity.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the new draft Equality & Diversity Strategy and approve this draft as the basis for further community engagement.**
- 2.2 That Cabinet endorses the approach to public accountability by agreeing to publish our new equality objectives in the revised Council Plan once finalised;**
- 2.3 That Cabinet agrees to annual progress reporting against the Strategy and Action Plan;**
- 2.4 That Cabinet agrees to the Council appointing an independent facilitator to carry out further engagement within our communities before the strategy is finalised (as set out in section 4.6).**

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	The proposals in this report will benefit people with a range of protected characteristics (specific aspects of a person’s identify defined by the Equality Act 2010 – see <u>Protected characteristics Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)</u>)
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Timescales are set out in Section 4.3 of this report	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	Costs associated with engagement and consultation activities will be met from existing budgets and reserves. Any financial implications identified from changes made to the final Strategy and Action Plan following consultation will be detailed in the report to Cabinet in April 2022. MLB 21.10.21
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	The Council is required, when carrying out its duties, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010 (‘the Act’.) It must strive to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act. The Council must advance equality of opportunity between those who do and do not share a protected

		<p>characteristic under the Act. The Council must also foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>The implementation of this new strategy will assist the Council to demonstrate that it is complying with its legal duties and ensure progress is measurable against its objectives.</p> <p>RP 18.10.21</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	As well as benefiting people with a range of protected characteristics, and helping to ensure that the Council meets its legal duties as set out above, the proposals in this report should contribute to improving community safety and cohesion.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough wide impact

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 The Council has been working on a new strategy that sets out our approach to equality and diversity. As a large local employer, and provider and commissioner of services, we want to go over and above our legal responsibilities. We want the many and diverse communities of Telford and Wrekin lying at the heart of everything we do, the decisions we make and the services we provide.
- 4.1.2 We have reviewed our data, considered local issues, taken account of people's needs and had some initial conversations with employees and residents to support the development of this work. We have also looked at best practice examples across local government.
- 4.1.3 The Council's culture and values also play an important role in the development of this strategy.

4.2 Vision and Objectives

- 4.2.1 The Council is committed to opposing unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity in all that it does. To drive and embed this, the new strategy needs a clear and workable vision for the whole council and the communities it serves along with a set of meaningful and realistic equality objectives for the short, medium and long term that will be achieved through a number of different strategies. We are therefore proposing:

4.2.2 Our Vision:

An inclusive and open Council that works with local residents, organisations, partners and employees to build communities that are great places to live and work – where our leaders are committed to equality, and take positive action to ensure that everyone feels they belong - diversity is celebrated and thrives at all levels of our organisation, and that every community can access the services and support they need.

4.2.3 Our Objectives:

- **Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment** – we will lead the Council in an inclusive and visible way with zero tolerance of any form of discrimination. We will also encourage, inform and engage with our partners and the rest of the borough on this agenda;
- **Diverse workforce** – we will be recognised as an employer of choice, working proactively to ensure that our workforce reflects the communities we serve, and that all employees are supported to achieve their full potential;
- **Accessible and responsive services** – we will encourage all service areas to better understand our communities and actively engage with local people and organisations to help people participate in decision-making, and get involved in public life. We will design, commission and deliver services that offer the best possible customer experience and that are accessible to all;
- **Celebrating diversity** – we will advance equality and positive relationships by promoting and celebrating diversity.

4.3 Public accountability

To demonstrate our leadership and commitment to this agenda we are proposing publication of our vision and objectives in the revised Council Plan so they can be monitored and reported on each year. This will be in addition to the full Strategy and Action Plan being accessible from the Equality & Diversity web page on the Council's website.

4.4 Priority areas for action

To capture everything set out in our vision and objectives, the Strategy will be split into 4 priority areas:

4.4.1 Leading our organisation and communities – which is all about:

- **Ownership** – top level commitment from Council Leaders and champions that will help drive the agenda throughout the Council
- **Initial impact analysis is carried out** at the start of any new proposals being developed.
- **Full equality impact assessments are carried out** where proposals are likely to impact significantly – either financially or on particular groups within our communities.
- **Decision making is evidence based in everything we do** – for example policy/strategy development, Cabinet Reports, Scrutiny reports, procurement specifications and service procedures.

4.4.2 Supporting our workforce and elected members - which is all about:

- Becoming a more **diverse and inclusive employer**
- Ensuring **all of our employees will have opportunities to be heard** and inform what we do as an organisation
- Ensuring our **learning and development** offer enables our workforce to have the **awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity**

4.4.3 Serving our customers

We deliver a lot of our services to a lot of customers on a daily basis with many customers coming from different backgrounds and having different needs.

It is important to recognise that in a lot of cases, we are the only provider for some of these services so our customers don't always have a choice to go elsewhere. So this section is all about:

- **Better understanding who our customers are and what their needs are**
- **Improving relationships with those who face barriers accessing our services or have specific needs in the borough**
- **Making sure all Council services are accessible to all, regardless of their needs** (including physical accessibility, digital accessibility, translation and interpretation) – actions to improve accessibility of services will be detailed in the updated Customer Strategy.

4.4.4 Celebrating and promoting diversity of the borough

By recognising and raising awareness of the different communities in Telford and Wrekin and celebrating the different cultures and faiths. This focusses on:

- **Awareness raising campaigns** - organised by the Council or in partnership with local community groups (see **Appendix 4**)
- **Hosting events** – to celebrate diversity (see **Appendix 4**)
- **Co-ordination of the different cultures and faiths** – to support the Council with service planning, and keeping officers/members informed

4.4.5 To give you a flavour of the work we are already doing around awareness raising, inclusion and celebrating diversity here are some examples of recent events we have taken part in:

South Asian Heritage Month

The Council's Multicultural Development Team supported this campaign in our schools and with the wider community. Working with Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council they held workshops to promote key messages around Equality and Diversity with a focus on cultural diversity. Pupils were asked 'what is my identity?' getting them to reflect on what being British truly is today – thinking about their faiths, the types of food they eat and the different cultures and communities that are living together in the UK and why mutual respect is so important.

Adult Mental Health Event on 21 October 2021

The 'Calm cafe' provides low level emotional and mental support and has been running in Telford for almost 2 years. Working to amend the stereotype that the black communities are hard to reach and difficult to engage with our adult mental health social care workers along with Telford Mind organised an event to celebrate these communities and have open conversations with them about mental health issues. The event was opened by Telford's Mayor and included guest speakers who talked about their lived experiences. Caribbean cuisine was provided by local caterers and a number of activities were held including African Drummers who ran a workshop for participants.



Pictured: Rob Wilson (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer), The Mayor, Cllr Amrik Jhawar and Sherrel Fikeis from Onevoice

At the same time we used the opportunity to have conversations with attendees on how to continue engaging with these communities around mental health issues. Just over 100 people attended and we are now looking to employ 2 engagement workers to continue with this important work.

UK Disability History Month

Running until 18 December 2021, the Council is currently promoting this campaign and has arranged a number of events throughout the period to promote the rights of people with disabilities and their struggle for equality.

Examples include a Chatty Café, an Experts by Experience Panel (being held at the Independent Living Centre) and a chance to hear from Sinclair Thomas - a local Paralympian who represented Great Britain at the Paralympic Games in 2000 and 2004. He will be talking about his life experience as a wheelchair user and answering questions afterwards.



4.5 Engagement on the draft Strategy

- 4.5.1 We have already started to engage with a range of stakeholders on this strategy. We conducted initial engagement with some groups including the Council's internal Black Lives Matter Group, Employee Engagement Group and Telford & Wrekin Interfaith Council. We updated them on the development of the draft strategy and sought their views on the main proposals. The groups welcomed us involving them at this stage and endorsed the overall direction of the strategy.

- 4.5.2 As customers and employees are a key focus it was important that we linked in with the reviews of the Customer Strategy and new Workforce Strategy and as such have had regular discussions with the service leads in these areas.
- 4.5.3 The Equality and Diversity Steering Group has also been kept informed and has acted as a sounding board on the development of the action plan.
- 4.5.4 More recently we have also sought specialist external advice from David Weaver, a former Home Office Advisor, who ran a facilitated a discussion with the Council's Senior Management Team and Cabinet in June. This was followed by a workshop with the Equality and Diversity Steering Group in September to look at progress with the Strategy so far and to inform the development of the vision and objectives.

4.6 Next Steps

- 4.6.1 Whilst a lot of consideration has already been given to the strategy and supporting action plan, there is more engagement needed to make sure it truly reflects the needs and feedback of our local communities, organisations and partners as well as from our workforce. We are therefore proposing to continue working with David Weaver, to facilitate a series of engagement workshops on the Council's behalf.
- 4.6.2 We hold a stakeholder list containing contact details for a range of voluntary and community groups and business partners as well as harder to reach groups that we will approach to engage with. Once the engagement has been completed we will use the feedback to inform the final strategy and action plan and bring a report back to Cabinet for approval.
- 4.6.3 The proposed timeline to finalise the strategy is:
- Community engagement – to be completed by mid-February 2022
 - EDI Steering Group to consider feedback from this consultation and make appropriate changes to the final Strategy and Action Plan – by early March 2022
 - Report for Cabinet - April 2022

5 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 5.6 None.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.6 Equality and Diversity Progress Update Report (presented to Cabinet on 7 October 2021).

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Telford & Wrekin Council Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy

2022 – 2026



Note:

If you have any questions or require assistance to access this information, for example in an alternative format, such as audio, large print or translation, please contact us at your Yourviewsmatter@telford.gov.uk or telephone 01952 382104.

Foreword

Telford & Wrekin Council works to Protect, Care and Invest in our services and our communities, and this strategy sets out our commitment to equality and diversity both as a large local employer and as a provider and commissioner of services. This means working to ensure that Telford & Wrekin is free from discrimination but also doing everything we can to positively promote equality and diversity across our Borough.

It sets out our proposals for not only fulfilling our legal and ethical duties but also to promote a culture where the diversity of our workforce and our communities is positively valued. Legislation places a duty on the Council with which we have to comply, but we strive to go beyond our duty.

The challenges we have faced in recent years have highlighted the importance of communities working together, and the key role that a diverse range of community groups and volunteers in Telford & Wrekin have played in responding to flooding and the Covid pandemic. The Black Lives Matter movement has further raised awareness of the importance of equality & diversity and the need to continue to build on the strong foundation we already have in the Borough.

I am delighted that this Equality and Diversity Strategy can be published and will formalise and put into action our message of inclusiveness across everything that we do.



Cllr Paul Watling

Cabinet Member for Cooperative Communities,
Engagement and Partnerships

This strategy sets out:

- **Our commitment** 5
- **Our vision** 5
- **The local context** 6
- **Our legal duties and objectives** 8
- **Our approach – including the values and principles that will guide us in addressing these challenges** 10
- **Our main priorities over the next four years** 11
- **How we will measure progress** 13
- **Our action plan (Appendix 1)** 14

1 Our commitment

We recognise that within our society there is widespread inequality.

The Council is committed to opposing unlawful discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity.

In October 2021, the Council resolved to condemn and speak out against any discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or any other characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010, and formally adopted the International Holocaust Memorial Alliance (IHMA) working definition of Antisemitism, and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia.

Telford & Wrekin Council recognises its obligations under various pieces of legislation relating to equality of opportunity (see section 4 for further information).



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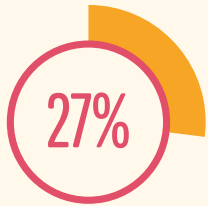
Our vision

An inclusive and open Council that works with local residents, organisations, partners and employees to build communities that are great places to live and work – where our leaders are committed to equality, and take positive action to ensure that everyone feels they belong. Diversity is celebrated and thrives at all levels of our organisation, and that every community can access the services and support they need.



3 The local context

3.1 Our Community



- **Our population is growing and ageing** – we currently have a population of **181,322** (ONS mid-2020 estimate). (This is projected to grow to 197,500 by 2030, with a predicted 27% increase in the 65 and over age group).



- **The population of Telford and Wrekin is growing at a greater rate than the West Midlands and England** – 2020 estimates show that the borough had the third highest growth rate in the West Midlands.



- **Working age population** – there are around 107,900 working age residents in the borough, representing 60% of the borough's total population.

Religion*

- At the time of the 2011 census two thirds of borough residents indicated that they had a religion.
- 61.7% of residents said that they were Christian with 1.8% Muslim, 1.3% Sikh and 0.5% Hindu.

Ethnicity*

- The borough is becoming more ethnically diverse. In the 2011 census the proportion of residents from a non-white British background had increased from 7.0% in 2001 to 10.5%. The proportion of Asian/Asian British residents increased from 2.9% in 2001 to 4.2% in 2011 and the proportion of residents from other White backgrounds increased from 1.0% in 2001 to 2.7% in 2011.
- In 2011, 7% of borough residents had been born outside of the United Kingdom with 3% coming from EU member countries and 4% from other countries.

* The latest available data we have on Religion and Ethnicity comes from the 2011 Census. We will have more up to date information on this once data from the 2021 Census starts being released (which is scheduled to be from late Spring 2022 to October 2023).



In terms of what our residents think:

- 68% of residents say they agree or strongly agree that **their immediate local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together** (with 11% disagreeing) (Residents Survey 2020).

However, many of our residents have specific needs and our 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows us that more needs to be done to tackle the inequalities in the borough.

3.2 Our Workforce

Information about our workforce is published annually and is available on the Council's website.

In terms of what our employees think (Employee Survey, 2020):

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	Stongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am treated fairly at work	43%	45%	8%	3%	1%
I am treated with respect by the people I work with	46%	43%	7%	3%	1%
I am treated with respect by internal customers and clients	34%	53%	11%	2%	0%
I am treated with respect by external customers and clients	26%	51%	21%	2%	0%
I feel valued for the work that I do	28%	44%	17%	9%	2%
I think that the Council respects employees regardless of their ethnicity, sexuality, religion or disabilities	49%	41%	8%	2%	1%

4 Our Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010

Prescribes a number of aims that as a local authority we must pay due regard to in relation to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation.

This requirement is known as the General Equality Duty. The Act also identifies a number of Specific Equality Duties placed on us as The General Equality Duty states, '...that the council in the exercise of our functions, must have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Specific Equality Duties say that we must;

- **Publish equality information.** This includes information about how we have made our decisions, the evidence that we have used and the conclusions we have drawn. There is an expectation that the data behind a decision is made available so that people can see, understand and challenge the decision making process from a fully informed perspective.
- **Publish Equality Objective(s).** The objective(s) should be based on evidence, set every 4 years and reported upon annually.



Our equality objectives are:

- **Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment** – we will lead the Council in an inclusive and visible way with zero tolerance of any form of discrimination. We will also encourage, inform and engage with our partners and the rest of the borough on this agenda;
- **Diverse workforce** – we will be recognised as an employer of choice, working proactively to ensure that our workforce reflects the communities we serve, and that all employees are supported to achieve their full potential;
- **Accessible and responsive services** – we will encourage all service areas to better understand our communities and actively engage with local people and organisations to help people participate in decision-making, and get involved in public life. We will design, commission and deliver services that offer the best possible customer experience and that are accessible to all;
- **Celebrating diversity** – we will advance equality and positive relationships by promoting and celebrating diversity.

All of these will be achieved through ongoing engagement and partnership working with our employees, residents, local organisations and key partners.

Key actions to achieve these objectives are set out in **Appendix 1**.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty is an obligation placed on public authorities to help deliver the objectives of the Equality Act 2010. More information on this can be obtained from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) at <https://equalityhumanrights.com/en/corporate-reporting/public-sector-equality-duty>



5 Our approach

Our values are exercised throughout the council, defining how we do things, both collectively as an organisation and individually. For more information on our values see [Council Plan 2020 Values & Priorities circle diagram](#).

We will continue to build on these values and utilise existing governance and engagement structures as the context for all policy and decision making.

We will therefore continue our work on equality and diversity as part of this approach, looking at new and different ways of working where we can, but always ensuring that the many and diverse communities of Telford and Wrekin lie at the heart of everything we do, the decisions we make, and the services we provide.

Underpinning all of this we need the confidence to know that we are well informed when decisions are made and take 'due regard' when planning services for all our residents. So as part of our decision making processes we adhere to 6 key principles:

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- **Knowledge** – Those making decisions are informed regarding their duties and this is brought to their attention at appropriate times;
 - **Timeliness** – equality is integrated from the beginning of a process or its initial stages and is considered throughout the process;
 - **Real Consideration** – rigorous and documented decision making has taken place supported by an appropriate audit trail;
 - **Sufficient Information** – for those making decisions there is enough information to be fully informed and it is brought to their attention;
 - **Responsibility** – that decision makers ensure that consideration has been equitable and takes place at the appropriate time. It is not possible to delegate this responsibility. For example, contracting a third party will mean both the Council and the third party have the duty placed on them.

- **Review and Record Keeping** – there are adequate assurance steps to ensure that the intended consequences or impacts have taken place and future unidentified impacts can be dealt with and are recorded.



6 Priority areas for action

Our vision (see Section 2) and equality objectives (see Section 4) will direct our work moving forward and sets the context for priority areas for action over the next four years.

To ensure that we work towards our vision and deliver identified priorities, we have developed an action plan that supports this policy and sets out the key activities we will undertake (see **Appendix 1**)

In summary this action plan focusses on 4 key areas which are summarised below:

Priority area 1: Leading our organisation and communities

As a local authority it is important our residents understand our position on equality and diversity and what to expect from us as an employer, through our service delivery and our decision making processes.

Any proposals for change should be assessed on an individual basis, taking account of any impacts they are likely to have on our customers or workforce.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Ownership** – top level commitment from Council leaders and champions that will help drive the agenda throughout the Council;
- **Public awareness and accountability** – clear messages that set out our commitment to equality and diversity along with clear objectives and targets that we will publicly report against;
- **Impact analysis - initial impact analysis is carried out** at the start of any new proposals being develop and **full equality impact assessments are carried out** where proposals are likely to impact significantly – either financially or on particular groups within our communities;
- **Decision making is evidence based in everything we do** – for example policy/strategy development, Cabinet Reports, procurement specifications and service procedures.

Priority area 2: Supporting our workforce and elected members

We take our responsibilities as an employer very seriously. Telford & Wrekin Council's Equal Opportunities Charter sets out our [Employment Equality Promise](#). This gives an undertaking that all of our employees, and those who apply for employment, will be treated with equal fairness, respect and dignity, regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment, care of dependants, age, disability, religious or political beliefs, pregnancy or maternity, or unrelated criminal conviction.

We ensure that our employees have an influential voice in shaping our Council priorities, policies, workforce strategy and through employee groups. We place a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion in all our employment practices. All employees are recruited using fair processes and whilst in employment, they are supported and developed so they can thrive at work and deliver the best services they can for local people.

Key areas of focus include:

- Becoming a **more diverse and inclusive employer**;
- Ensuring all of our employees and elected members will have **opportunities to be heard and inform what we do as an organisation**;
- Ensuring **our learning and development offer** enables our workforce to have the **awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity**.

Priority area 3: Serving our customers

Our customers include residents of the borough, people working in the borough and tourists visiting the area.

We deliver a lot of our services to a lot of customers on a daily basis (for example, we receive on average over 900 calls a day to our contact centre). Many of our customers come from different backgrounds and have different needs.

It is important to remember also that in a lot of cases, we are the only provider for some of these services (like benefits, Council Tax and Adult Social Care for example) so our customers – many of which are vulnerable, do not have a choice and cannot choose to go elsewhere.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Better understanding who our customers are and what their needs are** – through more intelligent use of Council data;
- **Improving relationships with those who face barriers accessing our services or have specific needs in the borough** – through improving customer engagement across all service areas to make sure these groups are kept informed and have the opportunity to have their say and influence Council decisions;
- **Making sure all Council services are accessible to all**, regardless of their needs (including physical accessibility, digital accessibility, translation and interpretation) – actions to improve accessibility of services will be a key priority within the Council's Customer Strategy.

Priority area 4: Celebrating and promoting the diversity of the borough

By recognising and raising awareness of the different communities in Telford and Wrekin and celebrating the different cultures and faiths. We will encourage our communities to better come together which in turn will help to break down barriers and further support one another.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Awareness raising campaigns** - organised by the Council or in partnership with local community groups);
- **Hosting events** – to celebrate diversity;
- **Co-ordination of the different cultures and faiths** – to support the Council with service planning, and keep officers/members informed.



7 Progress monitoring and reporting

It is essential that we monitor our performance against our equality objectives and continue to challenge progress. We will do this by monitoring our:

- **Action plan** (see **Appendix 1**);
- **Customer feedback** (comments, complaints and compliments);
- **Performance indicators**, which will be reported as part of the corporate performance framework and where possible will be broken down demographically. These measures include:

Corporate measures:

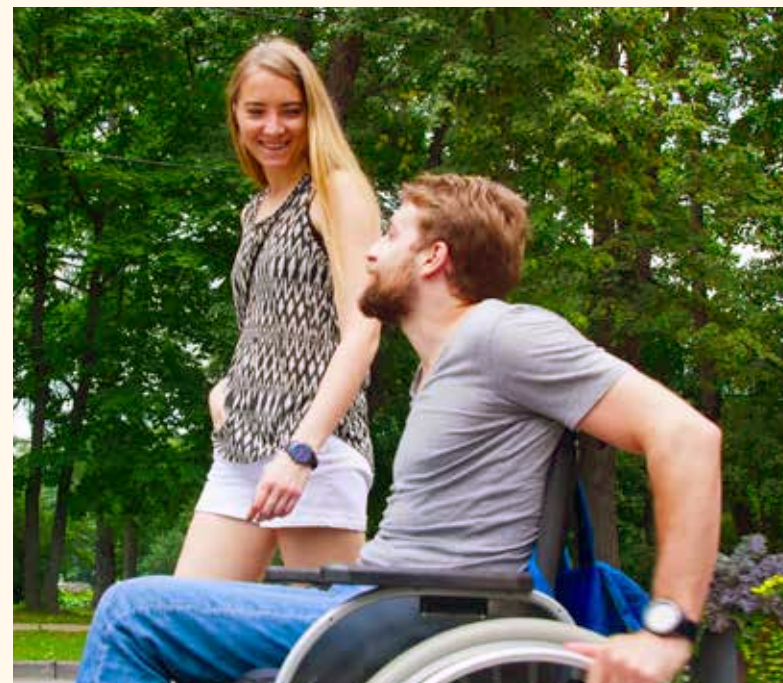
Note: these corporate measures link to our Residents Survey results and won't necessarily be updated annually.

- % of residents who had contacted the Council in the last 12 months who were satisfied with how their contact was handled
- % of residents who agree that the Council listens to their views
- % of residents who agree that their immediate local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- % of residents who agree that the Council treats all people fairly
- Number of complaints received by the Council that are based on discrimination or unfair treatment

Workforce measures:

- Workforce – by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and religion/belief
- % of staff at different levels of the organisation, including senior managers
- Gender and ethnicity pay gap
- Completion of equalities training by employees and elected members
- Staff survey results

We will publish an annual report on our progress against our performance indicators and a summary of what we have achieved against our action plan.



Appendix 1: Draft Action Plan

Priority area 1: Leading our organisation and communities

Action	Lead Area
Ownership - top level commitment from Council leaders and champions that will help drive the agenda throughout the Council	
Identify opportunities for senior managers to better understand the unique challenges faced by employees from under-represented groups, for example through reverse mentoring	Organisational Development
Set Directorate targets specific to their service areas around recruitment of under-represented groups	Senior Management Team
Cabinet Members, Senior Managers and role models within the organisation publish their job history internally to show different career paths	Cabinet Members and SMT
Incorporate management of Equality and Diversity into senior managers APPDs	Executive Directors
Partnership boards to take account of the E&D strategy, how it applies to their work and adopt relevant targets/actions	Partnership Management Team
Support the work of the ICS around the Equality & Diversity Pledge	Adult Social Care
Review, co-ordinate and provide rapid responses to reports of serious incidents in the borough through a Trusted Panel	Childrens Services
Ensure the Equality and Diversity Steering Group monitor progress with the E&D action plan and drive this agenda across the Council	SMT leads
Continue with the work done to create a range of employee working groups that act as 'Champions' (that can drive key pieces of work that will influence how we support our staff and serve our customers)	Human Resources
Review existing commissioning strategies to ensure they adequately cover all aspects of equality and diversity	Commissioning
Review our ICT project mandate process for new systems to ensure accurate recording of protected characteristic information is captured where appropriate to do so	ICT

Action	Lead Area
Continue to be a member of the West Midlands Local Authority Equality Network – for benchmarking purposes, sharing best practice and keeping up to date with the latest guidance to help inform/ support our agenda	Community Services
Public awareness and accountability	
Declare our commitment and incorporate our equality objectives into the Council Plan	Organisational Development
Publish an annual report on progress made against the E&D Strategy action plan, performance indicators, and update with further actions to be delivered	Community Services
Adopt and publish a new Zero Tolerance Policy – with a clear statement on discrimination and clarity on how staff should report hate speech and hate crime	Human Resources
Install clear public messages in Council buildings about ‘being kind’ and our zero tolerance of discrimination	Communication Team
Develop a comprehensive communications plan to raise awareness in a variety of formats about equality and diversity for residents, partners and staff	Communication Team
Improve communications for staff that do not have access to the intranet or a TWC email address	Communication Team
Clear guidance and understanding on Impact Analysis and Assessments	
Review the processes and procedures in place to support the organisation– including training, toolkits, training and Forward Plan	Community Services
Decision making is evidence based in everything we do	
Review reports templates, etc. to ensure equality and diversity is picked up in the appropriate way through service delivery and to help inform the decision making process	Community Services
Review and publicise more effectively the different routes in which communities can get involved and have their say on Council decisions	Community Services
Ensure we publish the results of all consultations and explain how they have informed our decision making processes	Community Services

Priority area 2: Supporting our workforce and elected members

Action	Lead Area
Becoming a more diverse and inclusive employer	
Review recruitment advertising strategies to ensure we are encouraging applications from groups who are currently underrepresented within the Council, including for Kick Start and Apprenticeship Programmes and work experience placements	Human Resources
Update Job Description/Person Specification templates to include a statement around equality, diversity and inclusion	Human Resources
Collate comparative data (comparing with the local community as well as other similar local authorities) and work with WM Jobs to develop equality reports in relation to job applicants/shortlisted candidates/successful candidates	Human Resource
Comprehensive review of policies to ensure that any barriers in recruitment, development and progression are removed and to allow fair treatment and opportunity for all	Human Resources/ Organisational Development
Wherever possible ensure that we have diverse interview panels and/or identify ways we can involve diverse stakeholders in recruitment processes	Human Resources
Ensure all members of recruitment panels are appropriately trained on Equality and Diversity	Human Resources
Agree recruitment targets with all members of senior management	Human Resources
Report ethnicity pay gap alongside statutory gender pay gap reporting	Human Resources
Review talent management programmes across the Council – prioritising staff from under-represented groups to attend Leadership Programmes to help increase diversity	Organisational Development
Encourage gender pronouns on email signatures – that set out what an individual wants to use	SMT/Corporate Communications
Promote and encourage more staff to update their personal data – explaining why it is important and how it can help us better meet their needs	Human Resources
Ensuring all of our employees will have opportunities to be heard and inform what we do as an organisation	
Lead and embed inclusion into our employment policies and practices in all areas of the organisation	Human Resources

Action	Lead Area
Ensure that employees whose views sometimes go unheard are given opportunities to engage with the organisation and inform policy development (through employee groups – each of which will have a Senior Management Team sponsor)	Human Resources/ Organisational Development
Continue to provide and develop ‘safe spaces’ for employees to raise concerns and talk about their experiences- including external services/support if required	Human Resources/ Childrens Services
Ensure that our learning and development offer enables our workforce and elected members to have the awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity	
Ensure all elected members complete basic E&D training as part of their role/ induction	Democratic Services
Ensuring all Council employees complete the basic E&D training as part of their induction (and do a refresh as part of Essential Learning)	Organisational Development
Introduce more detailed training for those that require it as part of their job role	Service Leads
Review and update our Equality and Diversity training and development to adequately support our workforce and elected members	Organisational Development

Priority area 3: Serving our customers

Action	Lead Area
Better understanding who our customers are and what their needs are	
Carry out a review of our local demographic data following the 2021 Census	Organisational Development
Complete a review of the complaints process to incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion including the nature and types of complaints received and the protected characteristics of the customer	Customer Services
Service areas to periodically gather customer feedback where relevant – based on service provision and customer satisfaction	Service Delivery Manager
Continue with our mystery shopper programme of work	Customer Services
Build diversity into communications and develop some simple case studies and data profiles – to help residents and services better understand the diverse needs of our borough and the barriers they face	Corporate Communications

Action	Lead Area
Making sure all Council services are accessible to all	
Raise awareness of the Accessibility Standards and our accessibility web page and incorporate Equality and Diversity into some refreshed customer services training	Corporate Communications / Customer Services
Ensure Equality and Diversity is included in the Council's revised volunteering policies and practices to support as many people as possible to volunteer for the Council	Community Services
Produce a checklist for Service Delivery Managers to conduct peer to peer service reviews to assess accessibility and equality of different services	Customer Services
Service Delivery Managers to conduct at least one peer to peer review on accessibility each year	Service Delivery Managers
Improving relationships with those who face barriers to accessing our services and those with specific needs in the borough	
Appoint an independent facilitator to carry out engagement on the Council's draft EDI Strategy – ensuring our harder to reach groups are made aware and have the opportunity to get involved	SMT leads
Review and regularly update our stakeholder list - of a range of community contacts reflecting all protected characteristics – and promote as part of a toolkit to support ongoing dialogue and relationship building across the Council	Community Services
Make sure that when carrying out consultation activity, we reach out to all these stakeholder groups as appropriate, to ensure they are aware and understand how they can get involved and have their say	Community Services
Build on the Community Connector volunteer scheme – to recruit volunteers within these groups to act as 'communicators and ambassadors' to support the Council with passing on messages and involving members of their communities so they feel informed and involved and increase participation	Community Services

Priority area 4: Celebrating and promoting the diversity of the borough

Action	Lead Area
Awareness raising campaigns	
Develop and update our Diversity Calendar containing a range of celebrations/events that are nationally and/or locally recognised for publication on the Council's website and to support awareness raising through corporate communications and within our own workforce	Community Services
Explore ways for new street and building names in the borough to demonstrate diversity	Planning
Hosting events	
Promote and engage with community groups on the diversity calendar and work in partnership to promote, organise and engage in local events	Communications and Events Teams
Co-ordination of the different cultures and faiths	
Continue building on the working relationship with Wolverhampton EDI network to deliver joint awareness raising campaigns e.g. Black History Month	Childrens Services

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Appendix 2: Supporting policies and strategies

Although Equality and Diversity runs through all that we do there are some strategies and procedures that are particularly relevant for supporting delivery of our vision in both service delivery and employment:

Service Delivery

- **Customer Strategy (currently being updated)** – setting out our strategic approach for how we offer services to our varied and diverse residents through the use of online, face to face, telephone and self-service channels.
- **Customer Contract (currently being updated)** – details of our commitment to customer service and what our service users can expect from us
- **Compliments, Complaints and Feedback** – how we receive and handle information from service users
- **Health and Wellbeing Strategy** – focussing on creating more resilient, happier communities and preventing poor health & wellbeing in the borough.
- **Housing Strategy** – all about the future of housing in Telford and Wrekin and providing a decent place to live.
- **Specialist and Supported Housing Strategy** – helping vulnerable people into good quality homes.

- **Belonging Strategy** - to develop a more consistent, borough wide approach to including children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs within the changing context of Local Authority provision.
- **Community Safety Strategy** – putting in place measures to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, prevent the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and prevent re-offending.
- **Adults with Learning Disabilities** - providing quality support in a personalised way so that people with a learning disability can receive the assistance they need to enhance their independence and enable them to lead meaningful, valued lives.
- **Communication and engagement toolkits** – around how we provide support for individuals with communication needs, and guidance on how services can engage with their service users to improve outcomes and customer satisfaction.
- **Procurement Procedures** – how we buy services including clauses that allow us to request certain social conditions, such as apprenticeships, and to ensure we only do business with reputable companies and individuals.
- **Service User Choice** – provision for selecting the person delivering intimate personal care on the basis of gender but not other characteristics.

Employment

- **Workforce Strategy** - placing a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion in all our employment practices.
 - **Flexible Working** – details how employees are able to tailor working arrangements to meet their individual needs, for example caring or family responsibilities, religious, belief or cultural requirements.
 - **Recruitment and Selection** – how we advertise, select and recruit employees recognising that a transparent and open system promotes the employment of the best talent from the widest possible pool of available applicants.
 - **Induction training** – Initial training to ensure employees have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and appropriate behaviours through our customer focussed approach.
- Resolving Workplace Issues** – a policy that sets out a positive approach for dealing with situations where an employee may feel they have not been treated fairly or with dignity and respect.
- Annual Performance and Development Discussion (APDD)**
– our employee review and development process to ensure continuous improvement of skills and opportunities through the identified needs of the individual and business.

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

We have produced this glossary of terms to help everyone understand the principles of our Equality and Diversity policy.

We use these definitions because local and national self-organised groups have agreed them and because they are used in legislation. The glossary will adapt overtime to reflect changes in society and terminology.

Age and ageism

Age is one of the nine protected characteristics included within the Equality Act 2010. Generally speaking, it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone because of age, although there are exceptions when goods and services and other things can be prioritised for specific age groups, such as providing care services or concessionary travel discounts to older people.

Ageism can be defined as any attitude, action or institutional structure, which through its actions ends up making people subordinate because of their age (sees them as inferior, less, less important, less able...).

Age discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their age and particularly affects young and older people.

Alternative formats

This refers to when information is produced in other or additional methods so as to make it easier to read and understand/ easier to access the information, and often means producing information in other languages either in written word or spoken word, in British Sign language, in an easy read version for people with a learning disability,

or perhaps in a larger size to meet the needs of someone with reduced or loss of vision.

Producing information in alternative formats can form an example of a reasonable adjustment for disabled people, or as positive action to tackle race inequality.

Anti-Semitism

In 2020, the Council adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Anti-Semitism which states:

“Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/ or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The full definition and examples are shown in section 2 of this appendix.

Bisexual

Bisexual is the term which refers to a man or a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of both sexes.

Black Asian and Minority Ethnic

Whilst there is no single word or phrase which fully covers all members of minority ethnic groups in Britain, the term black Asian and minority ethnic is often used to summarise all of the groups which fall under this category. This phrase has replaced earlier examples which are no longer seen as appropriate. When people refer to themselves as black or Black this usually mean they are from an African-Caribbean and Asian origin to show a shared experience of discrimination and exploitation (in Britain and abroad).

People who are both white and black increasingly refer to themselves as dual heritage rather than using the term mixed race, which is the term which was used in the last census in 2011.

Bullying

Bullying can be defined as offensive behaviour which violates a person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment, or which humiliates or undermines an individual or group. Bullying can take various forms, from name calling, sarcasm, teasing, and unwanted criticism, to threats of violence or actual physical violence. Such behaviour can be vindictive, cruel or malicious.

Bullying can cause stress and employers may fail in their duty to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of employees, if they do not take steps to prevent it or respond to it effectively.

Carers

Carers are people who, without payment, provide help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without this help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, learning disability, addiction or disability. The carer may be an adult, child or young person.

Civil partnership

Same sex couples can legally undergo a marriage or civil partnership. If they form a civil partnership they have the legal status of civil partner. This brings with it a range of legal rights and equal treatment for things such as tax, benefits, pensions, parenting responsibilities etc.

Deaf

Whilst most people use the word deaf to mean loss of hearing it can also be used with a capital D to refer to the Deaf community, those with hearing loss who use British Sign Language as the first language.

Disability and the Social Model of Disability

Disability has a legal definition within the Equality Act 2010. For the purposes of our Policy we have adopted what is known as the Social Model of Disability and accordingly a broader meaning of disability:

“Disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity arising out of how society regards people who have a disability, failing to make adjustments to enable disabled people to enjoy full and free access to all aspects of society and the environment. Disability is not caused by an individual's impairment but by the way society fails to meet their needs.”

However, when we need to identify our duties towards employees and customers, we will sometimes need to complete an assessment in order to ascertain whether a person's impairment has a long-term and significant limiting impact on their daily life and will require individual reasonable adjustments of support.

Disabled people

We will use the term Disabled people and not phrases such as “The disabled” as this recognises people as individuals.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of a protected characteristic. For example, recruiting a male applicant for a job rather than a more qualified woman because of irrational, prejudicial or stereotypical views, or not accepting a disabled person on to a course because it is assumed they would

not be able to meet the required course standards due to their disability, would constitute direct disability.

Diversity

Diversity means the different backgrounds and beliefs of people we serve or work with. Diversity recognises that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued. They may include, but are not limited to, differences protected by equalities law known as protected characteristics.

Easy Read

A method of presenting written information to make it easier to understand for people with difficulty reading. Typically, involving pictorial representations and sentences that are short and have just one idea and one verb. A method useful for supporting people with learning disabilities although often welcomed by everyone.

Equal opportunities

Equal opportunities, or equality of opportunity, may be defined as ensuring that everyone is entitled to freedom from discrimination, where individuals have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. The term Equal Opportunities has mostly been replaced by Equality and Diversity in recent years.

Equal pay

Equal pay is generally used to refer to the provisions of the Equal Pay Act 1970 which requires men and women to be paid the same where they are employed on like work, work rated as equivalent under a valid pay evaluation scheme, or work of equal value, unless the pay difference can be objectively justified.

In order to comply with equal pay legislation it is recommended that employers have a job evaluation scheme in place and that they carry out an equal pay audit to highlight and rectify any disparities.

Ethnicity, Race and National origin

Views of what constitutes ethnicity, race and national origin generally include a common understanding of culture and a shared history. Ethnicity and race are seen as something fluid and socially influenced. Culture (one of the key components) is increasingly seen as constantly developing and reproducing our ethnic identities.

Equality

Equality is about eliminating disadvantage, discrimination, deprivation and treating people fairly. Equity is where groups have parity.

Gender

This is the sex-role identity used by humans to emphasise the difference between females and males. The words “gender” and “sex” are often used to mean the same thing, but sex relates specifically to the biological and physical characteristics which make a person male or female at birth, whereas gender refers to the behaviour and experiences associated with members of that sex. Gender stereotypes lead to sexism.

Gender identity

The gender to which you feel you belong.

Gender re-assignment

This is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and relates to when a person changes from one gender to another, with or without medical treatment. The term Trans or Transgender is often used when referring to people who are or who have undergone gender re-assignment.

Harassment

Harassment is behaviour which is unwanted, uninvited, and which fails to respect the individual. Harassment can happen in and around the workplace, in communities, and has a harmful effect and creates negative feelings. It is left to the person experiencing the harassment to determine if the treatment is offensive and unacceptable.

Harassment is often subtle and long term, and can include a wide range of behaviours including unwelcome comments;

- offensive material and graffiti
- verbal insults, threats or obscene behaviour
- malicious complaints
- being ignored; overlooking or shunning particular employees
- unwanted physical contact; and offensive jokes
- bullying
- unjustified or unconstructive criticism
- violence

Heterosexual

Heterosexual is the term which refers to a man or woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex.

Heterosexism/heteronormativity

Heterosexism is the assumption that every individual is heterosexual. This has been institutionalised in the family, as well as culture and the law.

Homophobia

Homophobia describes the aggressive or fearful feelings and behaviour directed at lesbians, gay men and bisexual men and women. This can range from jokes, graffiti, insults and threats, discrimination, to physical threats and violence.

Impairment

We use the word impairment to describe the grounds on which people are disabled.

Indirect discrimination

This is when a provision, criterion or practice is applied in a way that creates disproportionate disadvantage for a person with a protected characteristic as compared to those who do not share that characteristic, and this is not a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Intersex

Intersex people are individuals born with anatomy and physiology that differs from contemporary ideas of what constitutes “normal” male and female. Genitalia may be ambiguous, but can often appear totally male or totally female. Often, but not always, people choose to present as either male or female.

Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a form of irrational hatred or fear of people who follow Islam. It is often replicated as discrimination, harassment, abuse or hate crime towards people of Asian and Arabian origin, sometimes this will include people who do not follow Islam.

In 2020, the Council adopted the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims which states:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

The full definition and examples are shown in section 3.

Lesbians and gay men

Lesbian and gay are terms which most lesbians and gay men prefer rather than homosexual. Lesbians often prefer the term “lesbian” rather than gay woman because it reflects their separate identities and experiences.

LGB, LGBT and LGBTQ

This is used as the collective term for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or who consider their identity to be subject to homophobia, transphobia or heterosexism.

Monitoring

This is one way that we can find out more about whether people from different backgrounds or equalities groups are using our services and are they being employed throughout the Council. We do this by asking people to complete confidential monitoring forms.

The information is stored separately from an individual’s personal information or protected in situations where discrimination could take place from those making decisions, such as in recruitment, to ensure

people get considered fairly, but also so that we can monitor the experiences of different groups of people who apply for our jobs.

Positive Action

Positive action is where there has been discrimination in the past, so we target our resources to work with people to overcome discrimination. It can be used in service delivery and employment and training. It is often used to address inequality and to address under-representation or remove barriers to equality.

Prejudice

An unfavourable opinion or feeling, formed beforehand or without knowledge or awareness, based on partial knowledge or selective use of knowledge. It is also unreasonable feelings, opinions or attitudes, especially hostile ones.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 has defined 9 protected characteristics:

Age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, race; religion or belief; pregnancy and maternity; sex and sexual orientation.

It is unlawful to discriminate on grounds of someone’s protected characteristic status, or because they are associated with someone who has such a status.

Race equality

Race equality is equality based on ethnicity, race and national origin.

Racism

Racism is the negative behaviour towards people because of their ethnicity, race or national origin. It often takes the form of discrimination in key areas of society.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are adjustments which can be made for disabled people, pregnant women, and people undergoing gender re-assignment, to assist them at work or in relation to the consumption or access to goods and services.

The law places a requirement on service providers and employers to make reasonable adjustments. Traditionally and most commonly this is for Disabled people by making changes to an environment, workplace, working arrangements, to aid communications and access, or by altering policies and processes to make services and employment more accessible and easier to gain.

Reasonable adjustments depend on a range of things, the individual, the employer or service provider's capacity to make such adjustments, and the context for the needed adjustment.

Religion and belief, including non-belief

For equality law purposes, the Equality Act 2010 provides a definition of religion and belief, including non-belief. In short a religion tends to have a clear structure and belief system.

Philosophical beliefs are defined as a belief that is genuinely held and more than an opinion. It must be cogent, serious and apply to an important aspect of human life or behaviour. These beliefs could include vegetarianism or climate change.

Sex

The term sex (as in women and men are different sexes) refers to the biological differences between men and women.

Sexism

Sexism is discrimination based on sex. Traditionally such discrimination has operated against women by limiting employment and other opportunities, or by restricting rights such as voting rights.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person. In other words it is about who you are attracted to, fall in love with and want to live your life with.

Stereotyping

This refers to having a fixed mental impression about particular groups of people. Stereotypes have developed whereby large groups of people are labelled as having the same limited, usually negative, characteristics. Even though most of the people in the group are nothing like the stereotype, the characteristics of a tiny minority are used to maintain the stereotype.

Transgender

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity/ or gender expression differs from their birth sex. The term may include, not is not limited to, transsexual people and others who see themselves as not clearly fitting into male or female identities. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/ or surgically.

Transsexual

A person who feels a consistent and overwhelming desire to transition and fulfil their life as a member of the opposite sex. Someone in this position will have the medical condition gender dysphoria. This term should only be used as an adjective: individuals should be referred to as transsexual people not as transsexuals.

Travellers, Gypsies and Roma

Travellers, Gypsies and Roma (Eastern European Roma) often face prejudice and discrimination and that anti-racist strategies must tackle the needs and experiences of these communities.

Young

The definition of young changes over time and depending on the context or service responsibilities, so it could mean children of school age and younger, or people under 25, for example.

1 IHRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism

In the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration that states: “With humanity still scarred by ...antisemitism and xenophobia the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils” the committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial called the IHRA Plenary in Budapest 2015 to adopt the following working definition of antisemitism.

On 26 May 2016, the Plenary in Bucharest decided that:

“Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic. Anti-Semitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Anti-Semitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of anti-Semitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are anti-Semitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Anti-Semitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

2 The APPG Definition of Islamophobia

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims was established on 18 July 2017 to build on the work of the APPG on Islamophobia, but with a wider remit to examine a broad range of issues that British Muslims care about, and are affected by.

APPGs are composed of Members of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are informal, cross-party groups that have no official status within Parliament, are not accorded any powers by Parliament or any of its Committees, and are independent of Government.

Following two years of consultation, on 27 November 2018, the APPG on British Muslims published a report titled “Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia.”

This report contained the following definition:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/ fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic ‘threat’ posed by Muslims or of a ‘Muslim takeover’.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.
- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the ‘Ummah’ (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying Muslim populations the right to self-determination e.g., by claiming that the existence of an independent Palestine or Kashmir is a terrorist endeavour.

- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, e.g. loyalty tests.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. Muhammed being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being 'sex groomers', inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
- Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.

Telford & Wrekin Council Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy

2022 – 2026

Agenda Item 8: Progress update on recommendations from the Customer & Digital Peer Review and Key Actions from the Customer Strategy



“As a council, we want our customers to have an excellent experience when they use our services. We are always investing in new ways to make it quicker and easier for residents to work with us and seeking regular real-time feedback on how we are doing.

“It is fantastic to see that 95% of those asked at our customer contract centre say they are satisfied with the service they have received but we won’t stop there. We are now striving to achieve Institute of Customer Service service mark accreditation to drive further improvement and customer service excellence.”

Councillor Richard Overton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety and Customer Services

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TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 2 December 2021

CUSTOMER STRATEGY, CUSTOMER SERVICES & DIGITAL PEER CHALLENGE – UPDATE ON ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT OF DIRECTOR: COMMUNITIES, CUSTOMER & COMMERCIAL SERVICES

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR RICHARD OVERTON, DEPUTY LEADER AND
ENFORCEMENT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES**

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Our customers are at the heart of everything we do, and we want to ensure that we are delivering the best possible customer experience. Our ‘Everything Speaks’ approach, aims and priorities are set out in our Customer Strategy, and this report provides an update on how this is being embedded across the Council, and highlights examples of positive steps that have been taken to improve our customer experience.
- 1.2 We are also committed to learning from best practice, both from across local government and other sectors. In May 2021, we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to carry out a Customer Services and Digital Peer Challenge. A report on the findings and recommended actions was previously approved by Cabinet on the 8th July 2021, and Section 5.6 of this report provides an update on progress in delivering the agreed actions.
- 1.3 In order to build on the learning from the LGA Peer Challenge, this report also includes a proposal that the Council becomes a member of the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) in order to access a wide range of benefits as set out in Section 5.5. In particular, this would enable us to benchmark our customer service performance against other organisations within our own sector (and other sectors) on an ongoing basis, and to work towards attaining the ICS Service Mark, an independently and rigorously assessed accreditation of commitment to and achievement of customer service standards.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes progress in delivering actions in the Customer Strategy and in responding to the feedback and recommendations from the Local Government Association Customer Services and Digital Peer Challenge, as set out in Section 5 of this report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the recommendation that we sign up to a three year “Discovery Roadmap” membership of the Institute of Customer Services, the benefits of which are set out in Section 5.5 of this report.

3.0 SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	All customers of the Council
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	See action plan in Section 5	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	Progress in delivering actions outlined in the action plan in section 5 have mainly been met from existing Council budgets. The cost of developing the MyTelford app has been met from the ICT capital programme. A 3 year membership to the Institute of Customer Services, as referenced in section 5.5 of this report, costs £23.5k in total. This will be funded from Customer Services reserves. MLB 27.10.21
LEGAL ISSUES	No	
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The peer challenge action plan and the proposal to join the Institute of Customer Services provides an opportunity for the Council to reflect on and further improve its Customer & Digital Services.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough-wide impact

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January 2021, we published a new Customer Strategy, which focused on consistent customer service standards, training and development, involving customers and employees in improving services, developing our online services, and removing barriers to ensure we are accessible to all.
- 3.2 Underpinning the strategy is our aim to develop an ‘Everything Speaks’ culture where employees take pride in the services we deliver, act as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the Council to report issues and suggest improvements, and know that every detail of what we do affects our customers’ experience and satisfaction.
- 3.3 The Customer Strategy built on previous work done, including improved telephone call handling performance in our main Contact Centre, a reduction in the time taken to respond to complaints across all Council Directorates, the launch of a customer insight programme and a significantly increased take-up of online services.
- 3.4 To take stock of progress, and to give an independent view of what we were doing well but also how we could improve further, we took part in a Local Government Association (LGA) Customer and Digital Services Peer Challenge in May 2021. Peer challenges are a recognised improvement tool and are not formal inspections. They involve a

team of officers and councillors spending time at a Council to provide challenge and share learning.

- 3.5 Overall feedback was very positive, with the peer challenge team recognising the Council's focus on good customer service and the commitment of members and staff at all levels to 'get things right for residents'. The team also praised the extensive range of ways we seek feedback from customers and the desire to engage and involve people.
- 3.6 There were however some recommendations for further improvements and developments for consideration. This feedback was reported in detail to Cabinet on the 8th July.
- 3.7 This report is intended to provide an update to Cabinet on progress against delivering the actions in the Customer Strategy and recommendations from the peer challenge report.

4. FEEDBACK, RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 Since the publication of the Customer Strategy, we have implemented a range of actions to further improve our customer service. Some key highlights include:
- Launch of our Customer Contract and guidance for staff
 - Our Web chat facility has been expanded to a wider range of service areas
 - The new 'Ask Tom' chatbot was launched and has seen an average of 1,100 enquiries being answered each month, along with extremely positive user feedback
 - Launch of the new MyTelford app which saw 1,500 new registrations in its first month.
 - Recognition of customer service excellence by the inclusion of a Customer Care category in the recent employee awards,
 - Launch of a new online Customer Service Excellence training course for all staff, with a particular focus on the principles of "Everything Speaks"
 - Increased performance monitoring – monthly at SMT, publication of info @ [Statistics - Customer Service Performance - Telford & Wrekin Council](#)
 - Introduction of real-time satisfaction monitoring in the corporate contact centre, that shows a 95% customer satisfaction score
 - Introduction of real-time feedback at our physical locations through the roll-out of QR code surveys that allow service users to give instant feedback of their experience to service areas
 - Introduction of a new ward member enquiry process
 - New corporate branding guidelines due to be presented later this month
 - Mapping and promotion of all facilities and tools that can assist a customer to bridge the accessibility gap to council services
 - Invested £120k to help local residents to get online. We are now working with local community organisations and partners on a range of projects, looking at both access to technology and digital skills. Projects include:
 - Developing a new Digital Directory, a one-stop shop of information, such as where you can access computers and public Wi-Fi for free
 - Courses and 1:1 support available to develop skills and confidence.
 - We are also aiming to extend a number of schemes already being piloted, including a device loan scheme, drop-in support sessions and recruiting more digital volunteers.
- 4.2 We have also been focusing on following up the peer challenge team recommendations, which are set out below at 5.6, along with our proposed actions and current progress position.

- 4.3 One area that the peer challenge team raised was the number of different Channels we were offering to customers. Whilst they recognised the advantages of providing a range of channels for customers, including maintaining more traditional channels for people that need them, they queried whether we could deliver consistency across a large number of channels, and recommended that we develop a longer-term channel strategy. Having considered this recommendation further, we have concluded that the existing Customer Strategy already provides sufficient clarity on our vision and ambitions for providing access to Council services, and that we believe it is best for residents to continue to offer a wide choice of channels.
- 4.4 Having experienced the peer challenge process, we want to continue to benchmark what we do, and to learn and seek challenge from others, in order to continue to improve. Therefore this report also seeks approval for the Council to become members of the Institute of Customer Services (ICS) for a period of 3 years, benefits include:-
- **Information, advice and guidance, Performance benchmarking** – including access to the UK Customer Satisfaction index report, enabling us to compare our service performance to other organisations in our sector from perspectives of both customers and employees.
 - **use of the CSI logo highlighting our commitment to customer service;**
 - **Customer and employee feedback** – including surveys to assess customer satisfaction, identify strengths and areas for development, and an annual survey of employees to assess engagement with our Customer Strategy;
 - **training programmes** available for staff including webinars,
 - **publications on breakthrough research** on key topics publications to ensure we are up to date with the latest innovations and thinking on customer service;
 - **Accreditation (Service Mark)** - independent accreditation of our commitment to and achievements in customer service.
- 4.5 It is proposed that we join the ICS for 3 years, as this is the length of time that most organisations take to gain Service Mark accreditation. The Service Mark provides a rigorous and structured framework that would help to drive further improvement and is synonymous with customer service excellence.
- 4.6 The table overleaf provide a progress update on the actions approved following the Customer & Digital Review and implementation of our Customer Services Strategy :-

Agreed Actions	Progress update November 2021
Continue the planned migration of more services into the corporate contact centre in order to rationalise the number of published telephone numbers and further improve the consistency of the customer experience.	We have reviewed call volume data and identified Leisure Services as the service that receives the highest volume of calls which are not currently managed through a contact centre. Leisure are introducing a new suite of Websites in November 2021, along with >100 chat-bot questions, which will enable a greater level of channel shift to online services. Once this has been implemented we will review the impact this has had on call volumes and bring forward a proposal regarding the best options for Leisure call handling.
Continue our customer insight programme, including capturing instant feedback from customers, to monitor the quality of the service provided and drive improvement;	Customer feedback surveys are now located in all of our front facing public buildings and many of our public spaces which can be accessed via QR codes that can be scanned by a mobile device. We have also introduced end of call satisfaction feedback at the end of all calls into the Corporate Contact Centre. This feedback is reported to the lead Cabinet Member on a monthly basis and will be included in the annual customer feedback report from 2022.
Review opportunities to resolve more enquiries at the first point of contact, with a particular focus on more complex services where a higher proportion of issues are currently passed on to case-workers;	<p>We are using call handling performance data to target this to specific service areas, for example we are currently working with The Place to deal with more complex theatre enquiries in the contact centre.</p> <p>We have introduced a regular staff development and service improvement session for contact centre staff, which will allow team members to have a greater input into the shaping of service delivery, as well as ensuring we upskill them to undertake more enhanced and complex enquiry types</p>
Explore becoming a member of the Institute for Customer Service (ICS) in order to benchmark our customer service against other organisations, and work towards Service Mark accreditation;	This report is recommending that we sign up to the Institute of Customer Service 'Discovery Roadmap' service for a period of 3 years so that we can work towards Service Mark accreditation;
Launch the new MyTelford app	The new MyTelford app launched in early 27 th September 2021 following a period of user testing, with very positive initial feedback and which also saw 1,500 new registrations in the first month;
Ensure web editors regularly check all web links to ensure these are functioning and up to date;	Further clarity has been sort from the peer review team who have confirm that there was just one specific webpage where they found broken links. This page has now been rectified and reminders have been sent to all of the Council's web editors;
Review our approach to managing life events to consider how things could be	It is proposed that a project group is set up in Spring 2022 to investigate this specific issue whether there is a need to

made simpler for customers, for example following a bereavement.	enhance the current processes that are in place through the existing 'Tell Us Once' scheme
Continue work to replace PDF forms on the Council's Website with online forms that link into back office systems where possible	The new Tascomi system going live in Public Protection will address the remaining 16 PDFs on the Website live by the end of the year
Develop and implement a Customer Relationship Management roadmap to reduce the number of separate systems used by the contact centre team and further streamline online services for customers.	ICT have engaged a 3 rd party CRM specialist to conduct an independent review of our current position which will inform the development of this road map. This will be concluded by the end of December 2021.
Enable people to report complaints anonymously online;	Online complaints forms have been amended from 22 nd September 2021 to allow for anonymous complaints to be submitted;
Build on existing feedback mechanisms to mystery customers, such as the annual newsletter, by providing more immediate feedback after an assignment has been completed, for example through a 'we said, you did' thank you event;	2 nd Annual newsletter to Mystery Customers will be issued in November 2021. Specific feedback will be provided to those customers who undertook user testing of the MyTelford and MyTLC apps on the changes that were made to the products based on their feedback. As standard practice whenever we use Mystery Customers to test or review Council services we will update them on any 'quick wins' that we implement. A thank you event is in development for active Mystery Customers which is scheduled to take place before March 2022 (subject to Covid restrictions);
Involve engagement forums, such as the new Community Panel and Making it Real Board more regularly in the planning of services and carry out more user testing to co-design new services, such as the new MyTelford app.	Extensive user testing and feedback was incorporated into the project planning for the MyTelford app, and AskTom chatbot. Feedback received led to changes to be made to the final products before launch;
Update the key actions in the Customer and Digital Strategies to not only reflect timescale for delivery, but also the relative priority of each action, ensuring that this also links through into relevant business plans.	A clear set of priorities were agreed for actions to be completed up until 2022/23. It is proposed that a report be brought to Cabinet in June 2022 to provide updated priorities for the Customer & Digital Strategies until 2024/25.
Build evaluation of key projects into Customer Relationship Board meetings	Take-up and user satisfaction data is now included in the monthly performance reporting to the lead Cabinet member

and performance reviews with lead Cabinet member	in relation to the recently launched new customer service initiatives;
Work with Corporate Communications to: Develop a simple and concise definition of 'Everything Speaks' and communicate this through internal channels and refreshed customer service training.	A new "Customer Experience Awareness" online course has been developed that will become part of the essential learning for all Council employees. A significant focus of this training is on the concept of 'Everything Speaks' with lots of examples of how this can be applied to real life scenarios. This new course will be launched in November 2021.
Create new brand guidelines and review sub-brands in order to ensure branding of council services is clear and consistent.	New brand guidelines developed and will shortly be presented to SMT and Cabinet In November.

5 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 5.5 CAB-42 Cabinet report of the 7th January 2021
- 5.6 CAB-91 Cabinet report of the 8th July 2021

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None

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