

# OUR FUTURE – HOW DO WE PLAN FOR IT?



*Issues and Options Consultation  
for the next Local Plan*

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# FOREWORD



Development is inevitably an important topic of interest for local communities. We are now at the beginning of the process of preparing our new Local Plan and we want your feedback to ensure that we meet our residents' development needs in the right locations.

You might be asking why we are looking to draft a new Local Plan so soon after adopting the current plan in 2016. The reason for this is that the government is revising the national planning guidance and we need to be in the best position to react to this.

This issues and options document sets out key matters that we will need to consider as we begin a five-year process to prepare our new Local Plan for the period up to 2036. The role of the Local Plan is to meet the borough's development needs in terms of housing, jobs and infrastructure, while at the same time protecting key environmental assets. It forms the basis for determining all planning applications within the borough.

As well as working closely with parishes and the Romsey Future and Andover Vision initiatives to establish local priorities, we are keen for you to tell us what you think is important. We would like you to share any problems or concerns you may have and ideas about how best to address them through the Local Plan.

This document sets out a number of questions but we would welcome you to raise anything you think we haven't covered. This is your opportunity to help us to plan for the borough's future and your feedback will help to frame the next stage of the process. There will, of course, be further opportunities for you to have your say as we progress drafting the new Local Plan.

New development affects everyone in the borough and it is important that we seek to minimise its impact on existing communities while maximising the benefit for all. I look forward to working together to help shape the future of our borough.

*Councillor Nick Adams-King, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning*

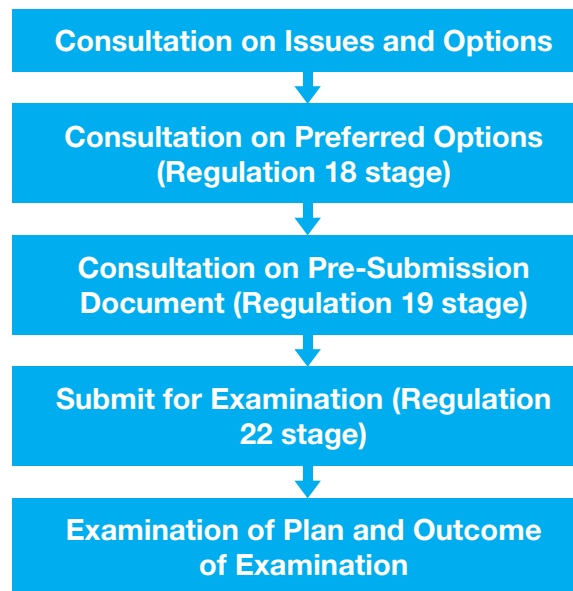


# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** We are preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough looking at the period up to 2036 and welcome your participation in its preparation.
- 1.2** The next Local Plan will set out the level of new homes, jobs and infrastructure needed to support the Borough's communities, and include planning policies which by law the Council is required to use as a starting point to determine planning applications in its area.
- 1.3** This consultation aims to get your views on the issues that the Borough, and those that live and work in Test Valley, will face and how best to deal with them.
- 1.4** When a Local Plan is produced it has to be based on national planning guidance, the evidence that we have to take account of and what the Council and its communities see as the key planning issues. This consultation is about collecting this information on those issues, and showing what options we have to address these options. It is not about identifying possible development sites and asking for opinions on them. The options we've identified may not be the only ones. If you think there are more these can be suggested as part of this consultation. We will use the results to prepare a 'Preferred Options' Local Plan. This will be a first draft plan and contain

more detailed policies and proposals.

- 1.5** The new Local Plan will take approximately five years to prepare and following this consultation there will be at least two further opportunities for you to have your say. Following these consultations, the final draft plan will be submitted to the Government for independent examination.



- 1.6** The Council adopted the current Local Plan in January 2016. We've had to start reviewing the Local Plan because of a number of reasons:
- a) The Local Plan is a mechanism to help to deliver the aims and objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan and other strategies;
  - b) Changes in national planning legislation and guidance since the last Local Plan was prepared;
  - c) National planning guidance advises that "most Local Plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years"<sup>1</sup>; and
  - d) Most importantly, it ensures the Council can continue to shape the Borough and determine what should happen and when.
- 1.7** Comments are invited during a ten week period, which runs from **Friday 6 July to 4.30pm Friday 14 September**. Details of how to respond can be found in section 9.

<sup>1</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)  
Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 12-008-20140306

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE ISSUES & OPTIONS CONSULTATION

**2.1** The Issues & Options consultation gives residents, businesses and other interested parties an opportunity to help plan our future at the start of the process. It is anticipated that the main focus of the consultation responses is likely to be on issues around the number, type and location of new homes. Whilst this is an important issue the consultation will also cover employment, the environment and infrastructure needs.

**2.2** Your comments on these matters will help us develop and draft detailed policies for the next stage of the plan preparation.

### HOW DO WE IDENTIFY THE ISSUES?

**2.3** We have already started to bring together some of the things that we will need to include within the Local Plan. We have started talking to our communities about what issues they think are important. Work on the Romsey Future and Andover Vision strategies have highlighted lots of issues, some of which the Local Plan can help achieve.

**2.4** Since October 2017 the Council has been speaking to Borough Councillors; organisations and parish councils so that issues could be highlighted to us. The Council has hosted a parish council workshop which gave parish councillors a first opportunity to identify the issues which are important to them. Inevitably there were a diverse range of views. More of these events and opportunities for engagement will continue take place over the course of preparing the Local Plan.

**2.5** The issues we identify, and the approach that the Council will need to take, will need to comply with certain tests. These tests are set out in legislation and are required to be satisfied when preparing a Local Plan. These tests set out that a Local Plan:

- a) Must be positively prepared, effective and deliverable which includes showing how it is providing for development and infrastructure needed in the area
- b) Should be the most appropriate strategy to provide for local needs when taking account of reasonable alternatives which are available
- c) Should be based on a proportionate evidence base which provides justification
- d) Should be consistent with national guidance
- e) Must be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal
- f) Must have regard to the policies and proposals of other Councils and organisations

“Your comments on these matters will help us develop and draft detailed policies for the next stage of the plan preparation.”

**2.6** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s guidance on planning. Our future policies and proposals must be consistent with the NPPF. The Government is in the process of revising its national guidance. In February 2017 the Government’s Housing White Paper ‘Fixing our broken housing market’ was published. This contained a number of proposals aimed at improving the planning system in order to help deliver more homes. This was followed by the ‘Planning for the right homes in the right places’ consultation and further announcements at Autumn Budget. The Government has published a draft revised NPPF which reflects the changes proposed within earlier consultations and announcements. It is intended that a final revised NPPF be published in the summer. We will have to reflect any further changes in future iterations.

## EVIDENCE BASE

- 2.7** We have started work on updating our evidence base<sup>2</sup> to help understand some of the issues that we may face as well as highlighting possible options.

## SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 2.8** Sustainability appraisals are prepared alongside planning documents, such as the Local Plan, to show the options that have been considered. They set out the main effects that are expected to result from each of these options, including thinking about the economy, the environment and communities, to help identify the preferred options. It is a legal requirement to prepare a sustainability appraisal alongside a local plan.
- 2.9** The first stage of the sustainability appraisal process is to gather background information about the area so key issues can be identified. From this, sustainability objectives are prepared that can be used to assess different options. These are different to the objectives for the local plan itself (see section 4). This first stage has been completed through the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, which was approved in October 2017.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING

- 2.10** Test Valley Borough Council and the Test Valley Association of Town and Parish Councils have jointly developed a community planning toolkit<sup>3</sup> as a guide to the different types of community planning available. This includes neighbourhood planning and the production of village design statements.
- 2.11** The Council will continue to work with its parishes, including through the production of the next Local Plan. The next Local Plan will take into account emerging Neighbourhood Plans being prepared in the Borough as well as providing a basis for future Neighbourhood Plans.

## DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

- 2.12** Within the Localism Act 2011 there is a requirement for local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis on certain cross boundary matters with other Councils and organisations through Statements of Common Ground.
- 2.13** The Council has existing relationships with neighbouring authorities and this helps us to agree cross boundary issues such as housing numbers and infrastructure provision.

*“The Council will continue to work with its parishes, including through the production of the next Local Plan”*

<sup>2</sup> Latest information available at: <http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planningpolicy/evidence-base>

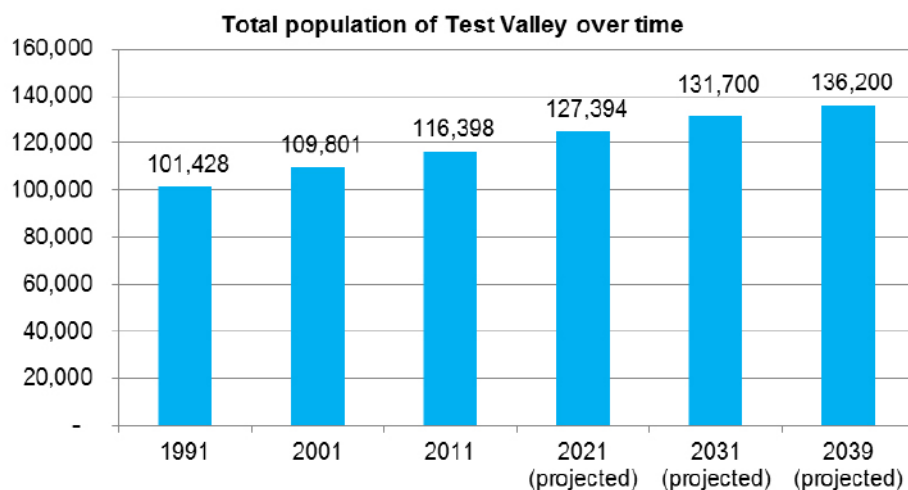
<sup>3</sup> Community Planning Toolkit 2016 available at: [www.testvalley.gov.uk/cpt](http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/cpt)

## 3 TEST VALLEY IN CONTEXT

### POPULATION

**3.1** The current population estimate is that Test Valley Borough has 125,170 residents as of 2017<sup>4</sup>, resulting in a population density of 1.99 persons per hectare. The population is expected to increase to 127,394 by 2021<sup>5</sup>, about a 1.8% increase (Figure 1).

Figure 1 – Total population of Test Valley, 1991 - 2039



**3.2** The majority of the population is concentrated in the Borough's urban centres, with 65% of Test Valley's residents living in Andover and Romsey.

Table 1: Forecast increases of Test Valley's resident age groups, 2024<sup>6</sup>

Age demographic	% increase in people by 2024	
	Test Valley	Hampshire
Infants (0-4)	+9.7%	+5.7%
Children and teenagers (5-15)	+13.4%	+9.5%
Working aged (16-64)	+4.8%	+5.4%
65 - 84	+17.7%	+14.2%
85+	+35.5%	+23.8%

**3.3** Test Valley has an ageing population. This is best understood when its demographic forecasts are contrasted against the data for Hampshire as a whole (Table 1). The proportion of the aged population (65+) in Test Valley is expected to increase at a higher rate (at 17.7%) compared to that of Hampshire (14.2%), with the proportion of residents aged 85+ expected to increase significantly in Test Valley (35.5%) compared to Hampshire (23.8%) by 2024.

**3.4** Test Valley is forecast to have a slower increase in the proportion of people of working age (16-64). By 2024 it is expected that there will be approximately 43 elderly people for every 100 people of working age in Test Valley, compared to 39 elderly people for every 100 in Hampshire as a whole.

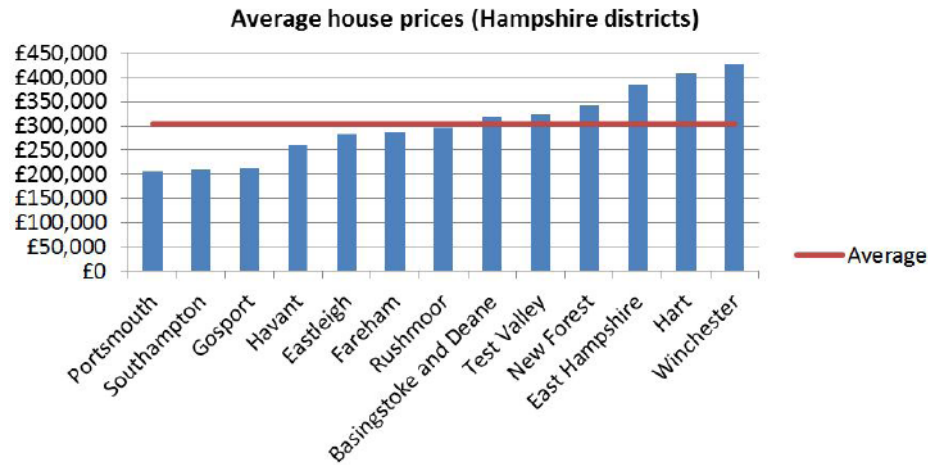
### HOUSING

**3.5** There are approximately 53,700 dwellings in Test Valley<sup>7</sup>. The average house price in Test Valley in November 2017 was £323,811 (Figure 2), which is the fifth highest average house price of all the local authorities in Hampshire and above the Hampshire average which is £304,5734<sup>8</sup>.

4 Small Area Population Forecast, Hampshire County Council (HCC), 2017  
5 Subnational Population Projections for Local Authorities in England, ONS, 2016

6 Small Area Population Forecasts, HCC, 2017.  
7 Small Area Population Forecast, Dwellings Forecast, HCC, 2017  
8 UK House Price Index England: November, Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2017

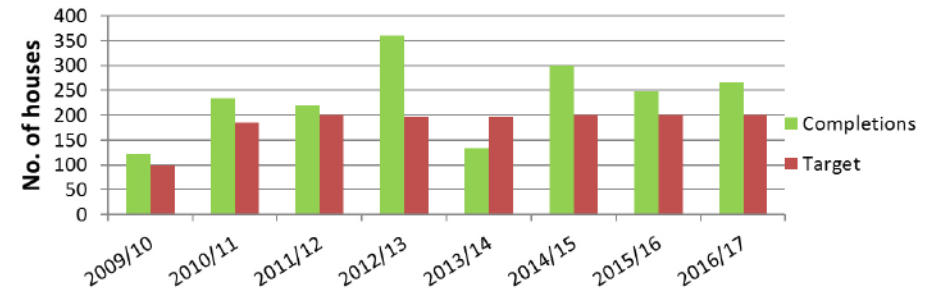
Figure 2 – Average house prices in Hampshire (2017)



**3.6** Affordability of housing has been identified as a key issue throughout the Borough. According to a 2013 study carried out by the Council<sup>9</sup>, 38.4% of Test Valley residents are unable to afford to purchase their own home. The inability to afford to buy housing without subsidies is highest amongst residents in and surrounding Andover (at 40.4%) and lowest in the rural South of the Borough in areas such as Ampfield and Braishfield, North Baddesley and Valley Park (at 31.3%).

**3.7** The Council has broadly met its affordable housing targets, with housing completions exceeding targets in all years aside from 2013/14 (Figure 3).

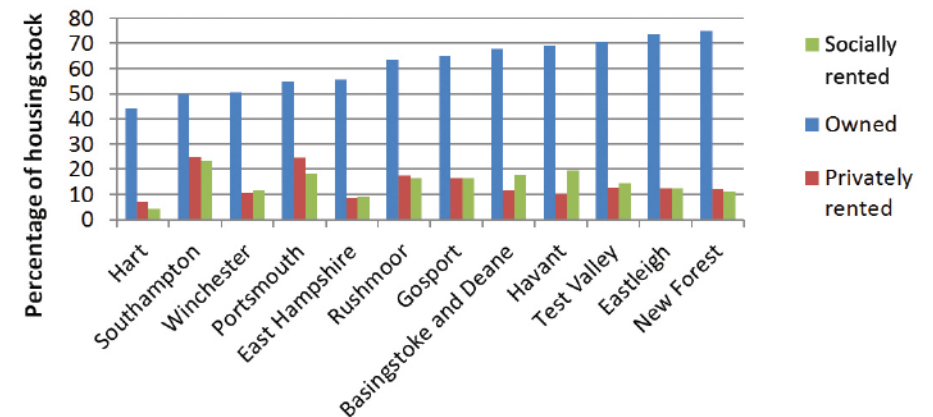
Figure 3: Affordable housing completions against housing targets in Test Valley, 2009 – 2017



**3.8** As shown in Figure 4, 70.4% of Test Valley residents own their own home either outright or through a mortgage or loan. This is the 3rd highest ownership rate in Hampshire, and higher than the English average (63.5%).

**3.9** The number of people privately renting their home in Test Valley (12.9%) is similar to the Hampshire average (12.5%), both of which are considerably lower than the national average, which is 16.8%.<sup>10</sup>

Figure 4: Household tenure within Hampshire, 2011 Census





## ECONOMY

**3.10** In the 2011 Census, 73.4% of Test Valley residents aged 16-74 were economically active. This refers to people within the working age group who are able to supply labour for the production of goods and services. Whilst this is a drop of 0.7% from 2001, it remains the 5th highest rate in Hampshire (Figure 5), as well as above the Hampshire average (73.3%) and the national average (70.1%).

**3.11** The number of people who are economically inactive, that is the number of people who are not in employment and who were unable to start work, or not seeking to work, in Test Valley is 26.6%. This is below the Hampshire average (30%) and the national average (29.8%).

Figure 5: Economic activity rates in Hampshire (2011)

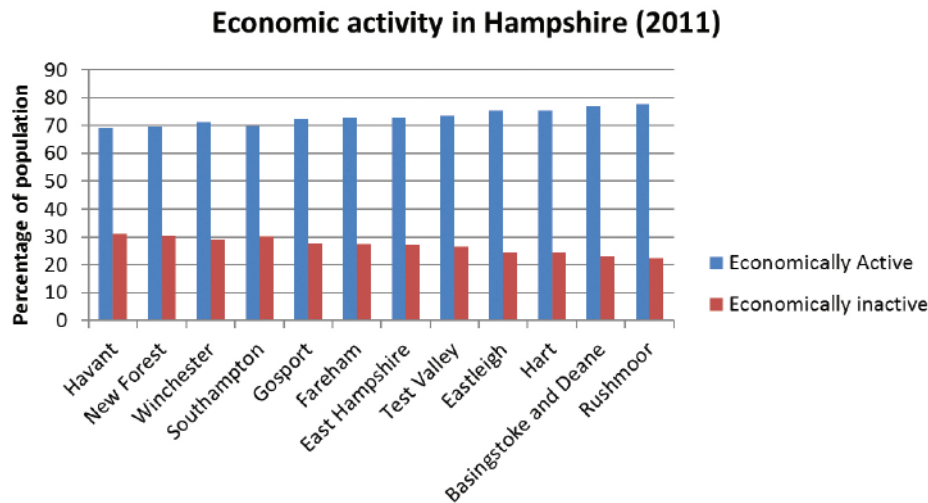
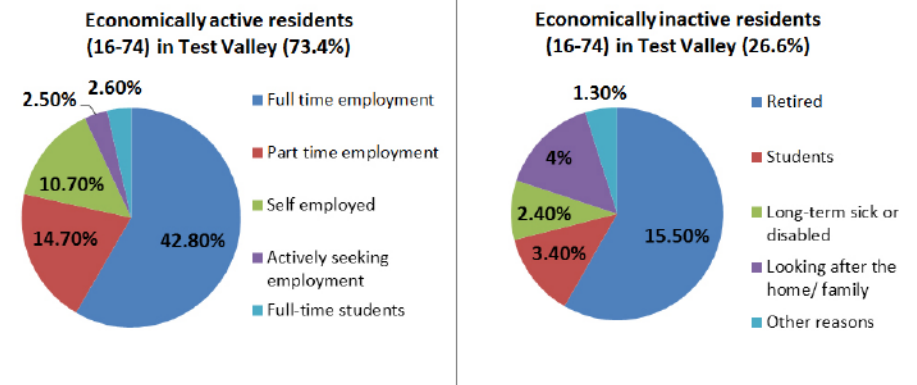


Figure 6: Economically active (left) and economically inactive (right) residents in Test Valley



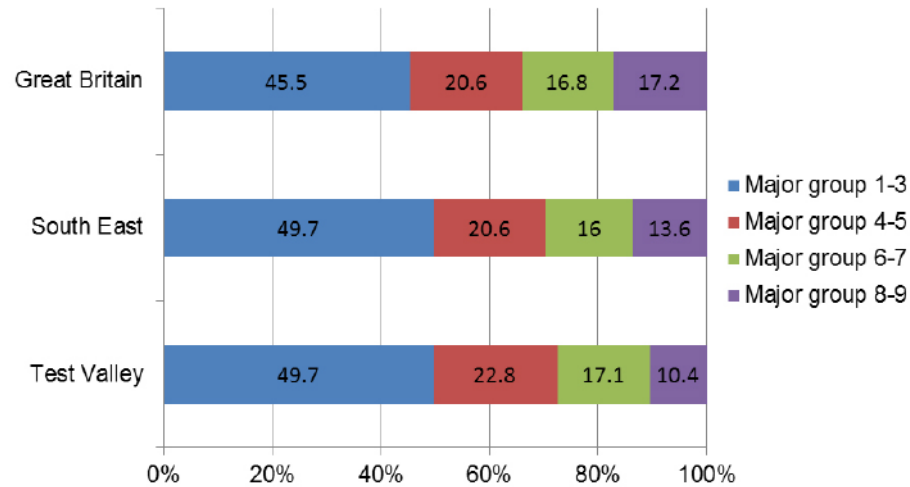
**3.12** Of the 73.4% of residents who are economically active in Test Valley, 57.5% are either in full or part time employment, with 10.7% of residents being self-employed.<sup>11</sup>

**3.13** Of the 26.6% of residents who are not economically active in the Borough, 15.5% are retired, 3.4% are students, 2.4% are long-term sick or disabled, 4% are looking after the home or family and 1.3% economically inactive for other reasons.

11 2011 Economic activity (QS601EW), Nomis.

**3.14** The graph below (Figure 7) compares the types of occupations Test Valley workers are employed in against the averages in the South East and Great Britain as a whole in 2011. It shows a higher proportion of workers in the Borough are employed in higher category occupations compared to the national average, as well as fewer numbers of people employed in more elementary occupations.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 7 – Occupation groups of workers in Test Valley



Group	Occupations
1-3	Managers, directors and senior officials; professional occupations; associate professional & technical
4-5	Administrative & secretarial; skilled trades occupations
6-7	Caring, leisure and other service occupations; sales and customer service occupations
8-9	Process plant & machine operatives; elementary occupations

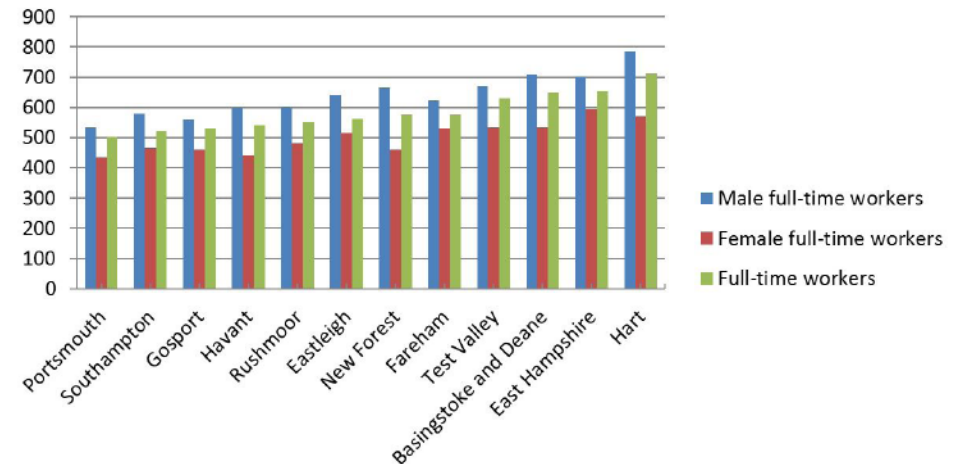
12 2011 Census Occupation groups, Nomis

## INCOME

**3.15** Figure 8 shows the average gross weekly pay for men in Test Valley in 2017 was £670.10, which is £31 higher than the Hampshire average and £70.80 higher than the English average. The average gross weekly pay for women working full-time was £534.30, which is £135.80 less than men (although it is £32.40 and £37.60 higher than the Hampshire and English averages, respectively).

**3.16** When considered together, the average gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Test Valley is £630.40, which is £46.30 higher than the Hampshire average and £74.60 higher than the English average. This is the 5th highest average pay rate within Hampshire<sup>13</sup>.

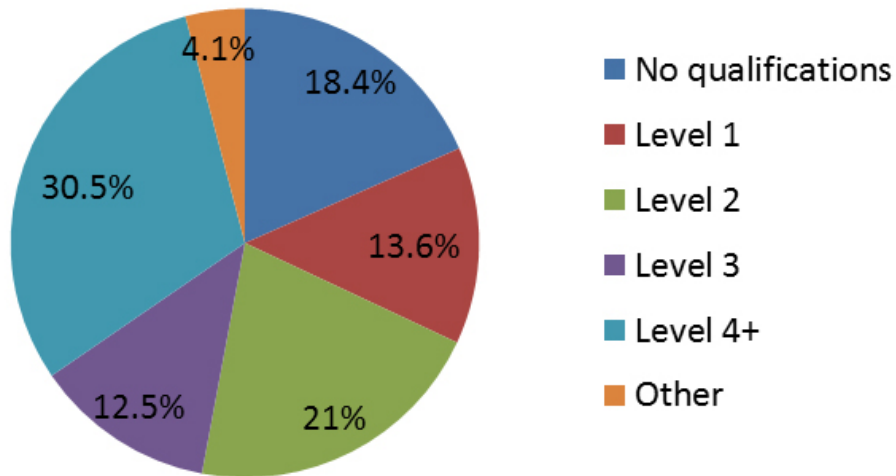
Figure 8 – Gross weekly pay within Hampshire, 2017



13 Annual survey of hours and earnings, Nomis, 2017

## EDUCATION

Figure 9 – Qualification levels of Test Valley residents (2011 Census)



Qualification Level	Description
No qualifications	No academic or professional qualifications
Level 1	1+O level passes, 1+ CSE/ GCSE any grades, NVQ level 1, Basic/Essential skills, NVQ Level 1.
Level 2	5+O levels, 5+GCSEs (grades A*-C), 1 A level, 2-3 AS levels, City and Guilds Craft, Apprenticeship, NVQ level 2.
Level 3	2+ A levels, Higher School certificate, NVQ level 3, City and Guilds Advanced Craft, BTEC National
Level 4+	Degree (e.g. BA, BSc), higher degree (MA, MSc, PhD, PGCE), NVQ levels 4 and 5, qualified teacher, nurse or accountant status, BTEC higher
Other	Level unknown, vocational/ work-related qualifications, foreign qualifications.

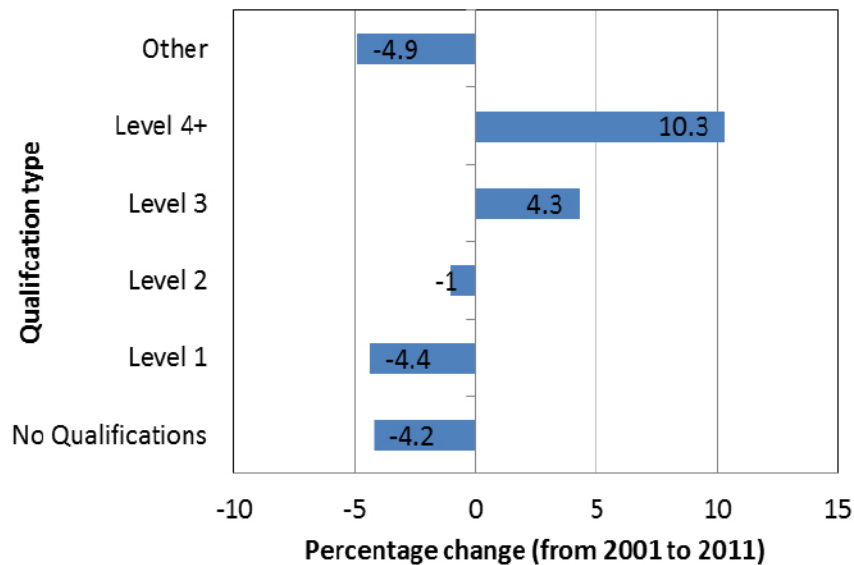
**3.17** Test Valley has a fairly well educated population, with the proportion of residents holding university level qualifications or higher (level 4+) being greater (at 31%) than the average across Hampshire (30%), the South East (30%) and England as a whole (27%). The Borough also has the least proportion of residents with no qualifications across the regions being compared; slightly below the Hampshire average but markedly below the English average.

Table 2: Educational qualifications (2011 Census)

Qualification	Test Valley (%)	Hampshire (%)	South East (%)	England (%)
No qualifications	18.4	18.5	19.1	22.5
Level 1	13.6	13.6	12.5	13.3
Level 2	21	16.5	15.9	15.2
Level 3	12.5	12.7	12.8	12.4
Level 4 +	30.5	29.7	29.9	27.4
Other	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.7

**3.18** Compared to the 2001 Census, residents in the Borough have generally become higher educated, with the largest increase being seen in those obtaining level 4 qualifications and above (an increase of 10.3%). The number of people with no qualifications has fallen to 18.4% (Table 2) from 22.6%, a fall of 4.2% (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Difference in percentage of residents in Test Valley obtaining various qualification types between 2001 and 2011



## COMMUTING PATTERNS

**3.19** According to the 2011 Census, the majority of residents in the Borough commute to work using a car or van (63%), with sustainable travel modes (walking, cycling and public transport) accounting for 17% of all work commutes. The reliance on private vehicles reflects the rural character of the Borough with some areas not well served by public transport. The percentage of households with a car has increased since 2001, from 85.5% to 86.5% in 2011. This is higher than the national average, where 74.2% of households owned a car in 2011.

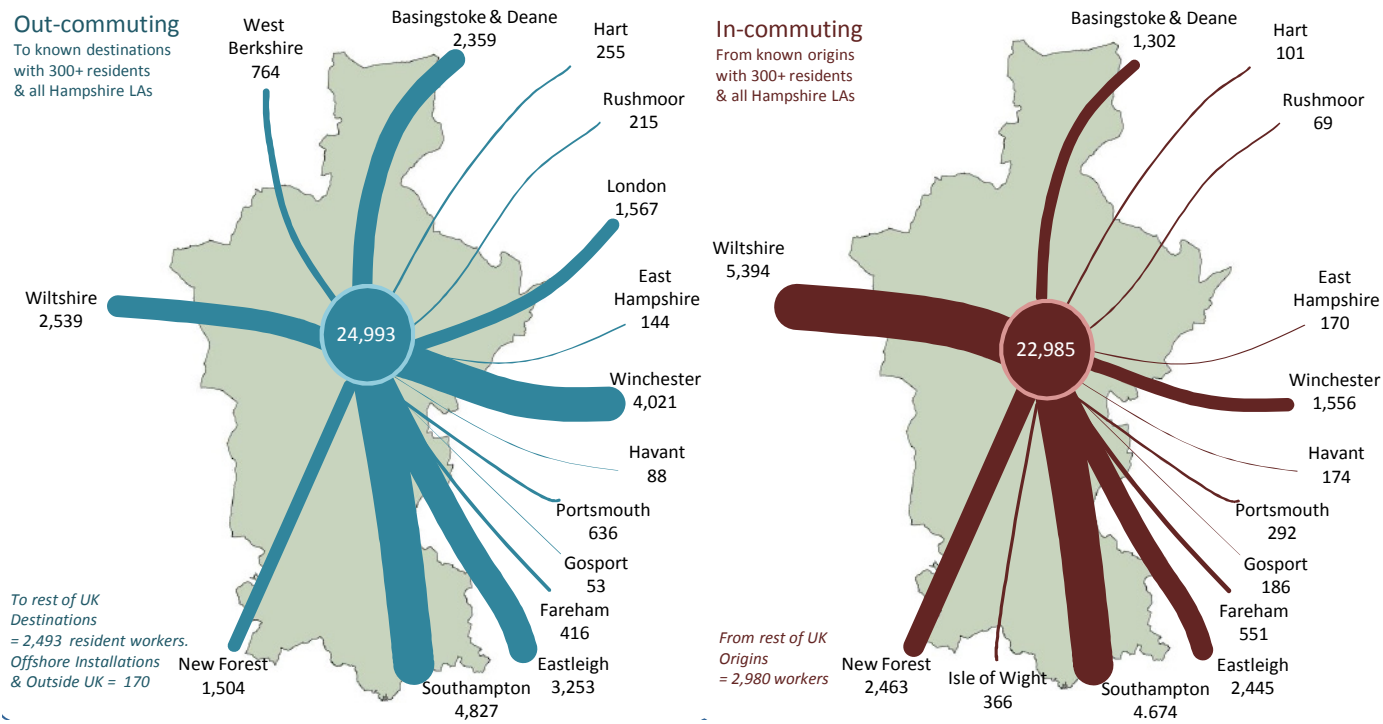
Table 3 – Main method of travel to work (2011 Census)

Geography	Car/ van	Car/ van passenger	On foot	Bicycle	Train	Bus	Homeworker	Other
Test Valley	63%	5%	9%	3%	3%	3%	13%	2%
Hampshire	67%	4%	9%	3%	4%	3%	6%	4%
South East	60%	5%	11%	3%	7%	4%	7%	3%
England	57%	5%	10%	3%	5%	7%	5%	8%

**3.20** When compared regionally and nationally (Table 3), the proportion of workers living in Test Valley who commute to work using a car or van is higher than the English and South East averages, but less than the average for Hampshire. Test Valley also has a higher proportion of homeworkers compared to the regional averages, and is almost double the national average.

**3.21** In terms of work journeys, 42% of residents (24,993 people) in Test Valley work outside the Borough. The top five out-commuting destinations are Southampton, Winchester, Eastleigh, Wiltshire and Basingstoke and Deane. Similarly, of all the workers within the Borough, 40% (22,985 people) come from outside Test Valley. The origins for in-commuters are Wiltshire, Southampton, the New Forest, Eastleigh and Winchester. Therefore Test Valley has a net commuting out-flow of approximately 2,008 workers (Figure 11).

Figure 11 - Summary of commuting flows for Test Valley from 2011 Census<sup>14</sup>



14 Prepared by Hampshire County Council.



## 4 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

**4.1** Our current Local Plan reflects the vision *“to create a Test Valley community where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and enjoy a good quality of life”*. This was developed in partnership with local organisations and service providers.

**4.2** Since this vision was agreed, the Council has been reviewing the way we work in partnership with our communities and key partners. This includes seeking more input at an early stage and recognising that the different communities within the Borough have different needs and aspirations. As a result the Council has been working more locally than ever before and supporting major community planning exercises in our main towns, such as Romsey Future and Andover Vision, as well as working with parishes to develop their capacity to undertake community planning and neighbourhood planning initiatives.

**4.3** Through this approach, the Council and its partners now have a much more complete and co-ordinated evidence-base informed by community engagement. This will inform and influence strategies such as the Council’s Corporate Plan and the next Local Plan.

**4.4** In developing a new vision for the next Local Plan, this is an opportunity to build upon the excellent partnerships developed through place-based initiatives such as Romsey Future, Andover Vision and our work with parishes. The vision will need to balance the ambition of the Council and the communities of Test Valley with preserving those elements of our communities and environment that make Test Valley the place it is.

**4.5** The current Local Plan also identifies 15 objectives relating to a range of topics including local communities, the economy, environment, and facilities and services within the area. These were used to help establish a series of spatial statements, which then helped establish the policy direction. The objectives and each of these statements needs to be reviewed.

**Q1:** *What is good about living and/or working in Test Valley?*

**Q2:** *What could be improved about living and/or working in Test Valley?*

**Q3:** *What should the Local Plan aspirations be for the next 20 years?*

## 5 LIVING IN TEST VALLEY

**5.1** Providing the right number of homes in the right location is one of the most important challenges that the Council will face. Any decision needs to be clear, robust and based on evidence and in line with national planning guidance.

### WHY DO WE NEED TO PLAN FOR GROWTH AND HOW MUCH?

**5.2** Test Valley is an attractive place to live and work with more people moving into the Borough from elsewhere than leaving. Additionally, households in Test Valley are getting smaller, so even with no population growth there is a need for more housing.

**5.3** If we don't plan to meet the housing needs arising from these factors, there is a risk that residents' needs won't be met, resulting in a situation where demand continues to outweigh supply. This will push up house prices making it more difficult for people to enter the housing market. By not planning for this growth there is also a greater risk that housing developments could be built in inappropriate locations.

**5.4** In identifying a local target, national planning policy requires Local Plans to meet their 'objectively assessed needs' for housing development. An 'objectively assessed need' is a technical calculation of how many

houses are needed in an area over a period of time. In the current local plan, the Council set out a figure of 588 homes per year between 2016 and 2029. This would deliver affordable housing, create jobs and ensure we have enough homes for our changing population.

**5.5** However, the Government has produced draft guidance<sup>15</sup> which includes applying a standard methodology for working out how many homes we need to plan for with the aim of being easier to understand, relies on publicly available data and recognises the affordability of homes locally. The standard methodology would provide the minimum number of houses that the Borough would have to plan for. The local plan can propose more homes than the standard methodology if there was an ambition for more employment within the Borough. The Government has already proposed a housing requirement for the Borough of approximately 570 homes per year based on a method which looks at projecting the number of homes we need based upon the expected growth in households and taking account of affordability.

**5.6** National guidance requires us to assess the housing needs based on Housing Market Areas (HMA). In summary a HMA is a geographical area within which most people tend to both live and work, without the need to commute further afield. There

<sup>15</sup> Draft National Planning Policy Framework, March 2018.

are two HMA that cover the Borough. Southern Test Valley forms part of the western or Southampton sub area of the South Hampshire HMA. The rest of Test Valley operates separately but has links to Winchester, Salisbury and Basingstoke.

**5.7** The current HMA boundaries can appear odd especially when you consider the size of the Borough. One option is that we review the boundary to see if they still reflect the definition.

**Q4:** *Should the Local Plan's housing requirement be consistent with Governments standard methodology?*  
*Do you have any evidence to support your view?*

**Q5:** *Should the Local Plan increase its housing requirement to help support economic growth? If yes, do you have any evidence to support this?*

**Q6:** *Do you think the HMA boundary is broadly right? If not, how and why do you think it should be changed?*

## WHERE SHOULD THE GROWTH GO?

- 5.8** Once we have established the right levels of growth, we need to consider where that growth is best located. Sustainable development is at the heart of planning and the distribution of development should contribute to achieving this. How new development is spread throughout Test Valley will have a major effect on the future of all our communities. It is a sensitive topic.
- 5.9** The existing Local Plan focuses the majority of its new growth around the largest settlements in the Borough with the best range of services and facilities, mainly on large sites, particularly at Andover and Romsey. Through the preparation of this new Local Plan, we will need to consider whether this is still the right approach moving forward to 2036. National planning policy states that development should be distributed in a way which reduces the need to travel, promotes regeneration of previously developed land (brownfield sites) and promotes and retains existing services and supports rural areas.
- 5.10** National guidance encourages the use of previously developed land and this is something that the Council supports assuming that these sites are in appropriate locations or aren't required for other uses, although there may not be enough brownfield sites to meet the future housing requirement of the Borough.

**5.11** As we are at an early stage of plan preparation further work needs to be done before we can consider potential sites to allocate for housing, or any other use. However, as part of the initial evidence gathering the Council undertook a 'call for sites' in 2017 which fed into the publication of our Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). This document lists all those sites which have been promoted to the Council. We will need to consider these in more detail when an approach for distributing housing across the Borough has been identified. The SHELAA can also help those parishes who have started a community planning initiative, such as neighbourhood planning or community right to build.

**5.12** The rural parts of Test Valley are characterised by small villages and dispersed settlements. Many people living in these areas are reliant on services and facilities provided in the market towns. Housing in rural areas is becoming increasingly unaffordable to families and young people. There are also those who wish to stay in the village by downsizing to smaller homes yet the supply may not be available.

**5.13** This affects the mix of people living in these areas with more people leaving to find affordable accommodation elsewhere. This could adversely affect longstanding family and social connections and undermine

the identities of settlements. An ageing population in rural areas can also create unbalanced communities which affect the provision of services, facilities, employment and housing.

**5.14** Key aspirations set out in national planning policy include to improve the rural economy and deliver homes and supporting facilities to enable people to live in the communities they have connections to.

**5.15** The current Local Plan promotes development in the rural settlements through community led planning and rural exception sites for affordable housing. Some parishes have embarked on producing neighbourhood plans whilst others have worked with landowners to bring forward individual schemes or are working on community land trusts.

**5.16** In reviewing the Local Plan, we need to consider what role our villages will have and whether they are suitable to accommodate new development over the next 20 years. Some of the things necessary to consider will be existing settlement size, provision and accessibility to services and facilities, transport infrastructure and housing need.



## WHAT OPTIONS DO WE HAVE FOR DISTRIBUTING DEVELOPMENT?

- 5.17** Considering how best to distribute development across the Borough, which towns and villages should grow and by how much is a sensitive topic. Our current development strategy is to concentrate development to existing main settlements where services and jobs are most accessible. This approach limits development in the less sustainable villages of the Borough. The next Local Plan gives us an opportunity to review this approach and consider possible alternatives within the limits of national policy.
- 5.18** To help seek views we have suggested a number of possible options. At this stage these are only suggestions and should not be seen as a preference. It should be noted there are many more options for how growth could be distributed and if you think there are other options than the ones listed please let us know.

## COMMUNITY LED DISTRIBUTION

- 5.19** The Localism Act 2011 introduced powers for Parish Councils to have a greater role in planning. Through both the Local Plan and the Corporate Plan the Council has supported those parishes who wish to embark on the Neighbourhood Planning process or other types of community led development. However, not all parishes have

chosen to take part in the community led development process.

- 5.20** The distribution of development across the Borough would be informed by the number and location of parishes which have embraced community led planning. The draft NPPF sets out that parishes can request a housing requirement for them to plan for within their Neighbourhood Plans. These parishes would be expected to put forward the housing figure which they will bring forward. The cumulative figure of those parishes who have undertaken community led planning will then be offset against the Borough's housing need to establish a residual figure. The next Local Plan will distribute this residual figure.

## PROPORTIONATE DISTRIBUTION TO PARISHES

- 5.21** This option would see the housing requirement distributed amongst the main settlements on a pro rata basis. For example if a parish's population is equivalent to 5% of the Borough's total population, the settlement would receive 5% of the total new development over the plan period.
- 5.22** If this were the preferred option the Council would work with the parish council to understand how best to meet this requirement. This could be through the Neighbourhood Plan process, other community led development tools or by allocation in the Local Plan.

- 5.23** This approach may require parish councils co-operating together either because of the way settlement and parish boundaries have been drawn or in identifying the most sustainable location for future development.

## LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATIONS

- 5.24** The approach taken in the current and previous Local Plans is for the Council to decide which are the most appropriate locations for housing with a small amount coming forward from sites we didn't identify (a windfall) spread across the Borough.

## NEW VILLAGE

- 5.25** Governments in recent years have promoted the creation of new garden villages to address the housing shortage. This approach would give an opportunity to plan a new community from the start with the creation of new facilities and services along with transport infrastructure.

## MIXED APPROACH

- 5.26** It may be that the preferred approach sees a combination of some of the options. We would also need to make sure we have contingencies to ensure that should there be a delay the Council has an alternative that can be used to meet its housing requirement.

**Q7:** Are there any other approaches to distributing development across the Borough that we should consider?

**Q8:** Do you have any comments on the approaches suggested above?

## SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

- 5.27** The Local Plan needs to give clear signals to developers, the community and infrastructure providers about where development will take place and where it will not take place. It will do this firstly by identifying specific sites to accommodate the growth needs of the Borough. However, there is also a need to ensure that development is controlled in certain locations in order to deliver the Local Plan's strategy for distributing development sustainably across Test Valley.
- 5.28** The Local Plan draws these boundaries along physical boundaries of existing buildings and curtilages rather than more loosely around the edge of the built up area. The plan makes clear that development will be focused within the settlement boundaries and on sites allocated for development.
- 5.29** Outside of the settlement boundaries, land is defined as open countryside where only certain types of development

are allowed. This policy approach gives clarity to developers, the community and infrastructure providers about how much development will happen where. It also helps protect the countryside and natural resources and prioritises the development of brownfield land.

- 5.30** However, in reviewing the Local Plan we need to be certain that this is still the right approach. We also need to reconsider how we define physical limits.

**Q9:** How should the settlement boundaries be defined in the next Local Plan?

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 5.31** House prices in Test Valley are more than 10 times average annual earnings. This means that many people in Test Valley cannot afford to buy their own home and rely on affordable housing to meet their accommodation needs.
- 5.32** Affordable housing can be rented housing provided by a housing association. It can also be in the form of shared ownership.
- 5.33** Our Housing Strategy (2017) sets out a target of 200 affordable homes being constructed each year. Meeting this target is primarily due to having schemes large enough to deliver affordable homes on-site. However the Council is also looking at ways to help meet housing need such as bringing empty homes back into circulation.

- 5.34** The current affordable housing policy seeks up to 40% of developments over 15 dwellings as affordable. However since the adoption of the existing Local Plan the policy has had to be amended with regards to triggering affordable housing from smaller schemes. This is because of changes to Government guidance which set out that affordable housing should not be sought from small scale developments. This guidance increased the trigger point of when affordable housing would be sought and varies it between the rural parishes of a certain size and the more urban ones.

- 5.35** National planning policy supports the development of affordable housing schemes on the edge of existing rural settlements where housing would not normally be permitted. These are known as 'exception sites'. The Council works in partnership with parish councils and the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) to enable the delivery of affordable housing to match housing needs in rural areas. National planning policy invites Councils to consider whether to allow market housing on these sites to help make them more viable and to encourage them to come forward for development. The existing Local Plan allows for affordable housing to be built on the edge of rural settlements but does not allow market housing to cross-subsidise them.

**Q10:** *Do you think we should continue with seeking up to 40% of new homes to be affordable, or should we change the percentage?*

**Q11:** *What should the trigger be for seeking affordable housing?*

**Q12:** *Should we allow market housing on rural affordable exception sites?*

## SELF BUILD HOUSING

**5.36** Nationally there is a growing number of people who would like to build their own homes, whether this is as an individual or as a group of people. We are required by legislation<sup>16</sup> to keep a register of people who are interested in self build and custom housebuilding and in order to meet any demand identified by the register, we will have to consider allocating sites for self build plots in the Local Plan.

**5.37** In Test Valley, the demand for self build is currently quite low and most of those who want to build their own homes are not linked to the Borough. Most have also indicated that they would like individual plots in the countryside.

<sup>16</sup> *The Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015*

**5.38** National guidance<sup>17</sup> recognises that houses can be built in the countryside if they meet certain requirements. One of these requirements is where it is of exceptional quality or of an innovative nature.

**Q13:** *How should we meet the requirement for Self Build plots? Should it be as part of sites over a certain threshold or separate sites?*

**Q14:** *Should we establish a policy that covers dwellings in the countryside which are of exceptional quality?*

**5.39** The type of households within the Borough are changing with the over 65 age group forecast to increase faster than any other age group. Housing types and sizes need to take account of changing demographics to ensure housing meets future needs. Local demand should be reflected in the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is provided, whether this is for affordable homes or for market homes for people to buy. How the Council identifies the mix of housing it needs is based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The study has to address the need of all types

<sup>17</sup> *National Planning Policy Framework (2012) paragraph 55*

## HOUSING MIX, SIZE AND TYPE

of housing both in terms of affordability and meeting the need of different groups in the community. Apart from affordable housing the Council does not stipulate the type of housing which should be provided.

**Q15:** *Should the Council change its approach and set out a requirement that certain sites should provide for the needs of such groups as the elderly?*

**Q16:** *Should we include a policy that requires a mix and type of housing, or should the housing market inform what mix and type of housing to build?*

## EXTENSIONS AND REPLACEMENTS OF RURAL DWELLINGS

**5.40** In order to help protect the supply of smaller properties in the countryside and any impact on the surroundings the existing Local Plan restricts the size of replacement dwellings. Normally schemes which see a replacement dwelling more than 50% greater in volume than the original is resisted. We need to consider whether this is the most appropriate way to deal with large extensions in the countryside.

**5.41** With regards to household extensions changes to permitted development legislation means that homes can be

extended significantly without planning permission. The existing Local Plan doesn't set a size restriction for extensions but compares the proposal's size and design against the existing dwelling and how it would look in the landscape. These considerations are also covered by other planning policies and we need to work out whether a specific policy is needed.

**Q17:** *Should we restrict the size of replacements and extensions to dwellings in the countryside to keep a range of dwellings?*

## HOUSING DENSITY

**5.42** Housing density, measured as the number of homes built per hectare of land, can have a big impact on the quality and appropriateness of design, as well as the quality of life of future residents. Higher densities can make more efficient use of land, reducing the amount of land developed, but this is not always appropriate in every circumstance and can result in poorly designed areas which do not reflect local character or result in usable layouts.

**5.43** Government guidance allows for Councils to set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances. More recent draft guidance proposed minimum density standards for town centres and locations that are well served by public transport.

**5.44** The Local Plan does not specify individual densities for particular areas of the Borough but leaves the density of schemes to be informed by and sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area and look to continue the density of the surrounding area.

**Q18:** *Should the Council establish density standards in the Local Plan?*

## HOUSING STANDARDS

**5.45** The Council has the option of applying standards for new housing which go beyond Building Regulations requirements. We can set standards for accessibility, adaptable and wheelchair user dwellings. We can also seek enhanced water efficiency standards. We are able to do this because of the importance of groundwater within the Borough to feed the various local rivers and streams. The Government has also adopted an optional nationally described internal space standard which we can choose to adopt through our Local Plans.

**Q19:** *Do you think we should establish internal space standards for future homes?*

**Q20:** *Do you think we should establish standards for accessible, adaptable and wheelchair user dwellings?*

## RURAL WORKERS

**5.46** Houses have been permitted in the countryside to meet the needs of agricultural, forestry workers or other traditional rural based industries. The permission has been based on whether there was a functional and financial need for such a dwelling. National guidance has expanded this to include 'rural workers' although this term is not defined. The existing Local Plan includes a policy which supports this approach although it does not attempt to define 'rural workers'.

**Q21:** *Should the Local Plan set out a definition of rural worker? And if so what should it include?*

## GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

**5.47** In the existing Local Plan we have a criteria based policy to determine planning applications for new gypsy and traveller sites and we are progressing with a separate Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) that identifies and allocates sites for this purpose. The criteria require new sites to be located where facilities and services are accessible and that the potential occupants meet the definition of gypsies and travellers.

**5.48** The Council worked with seven other Hampshire councils to commission an accommodation assessment for Gypsy and Travellers. The Council has started work on a Gypsy and Traveller DPD which will consider how we ensure there are sufficient sites to meet this need. This in turn should help strengthen the position of the Council in reducing the number of unauthorised sites.

**Q22:** *How do you think we should best meet Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's needs?*

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**5.49** The Council recognises that planning decisions can affect people's health and wellbeing. This includes access to public open spaces as well as providing services to meet their needs.

**5.50** In 2015/16, 17.4% of year 6 children (10 - 11year olds) were obese in Test Valley. This is higher than the average for South East England. Poor diet leads to health problems and potentially serious illnesses. The planning system can play a part by restricting the operation of food outlets that sell fatty or sugary foods on the high street and near to schools. This approach has been pioneered by some authorities. The Council may consider it is necessary to apply a similar approach in Test Valley.

**Q23:** *Do you agree that we should have a specific policy on health and wellbeing? What sort of issues do you think it should cover?*

## FACILITIES AND SERVICES WHICH SERVE THE COMMUNITY

**5.51** National planning guidance recognises the importance of community facilities and expects Local Plans to protect these where possible. The existing Local Plan gives protection to shops, pubs, community centres and other similar facilities. However, the protection afforded to facilities does not distinguish between their importance in the community. Equally, the Council does not wish to see vacant buildings because it has been too restrictive in trying to protect such facilities.

**Q24:** *Should some types of facilities and services be given more protection than others?*

**Q25:** *Should we continue to protect all existing community facilities and services?*



## 6 WORKING IN TEST VALLEY

- 6.1** The strength of the local economy and the employment opportunities it brings underpins the Borough's success and contributes to sustainable communities. The next Local Plan is an opportunity for us to set out clearly to developers and investors our ambition for the Borough.
- 6.2** If we don't plan to meet the business growth needs in the Borough, there is a risk that investment will be targeted elsewhere, meaning workers in Test Valley will increasingly need to travel further afield for work.
- 6.3** In 2017 we adopted an Economic Development Strategy within which a number of ways are identified to support the local economy. The most relevant to the Local Plan process includes:
- a) Supporting vibrant businesses
  - b) Supporting strategic infrastructure
  - b) Improving the town centres of the Borough
  - d) Securing 21st Century skills

**6.4** The existing Local Plan identifies strategic employment sites which are key to a successful local economy. These sites are protected from redevelopment and new employment development is supported. This helps maintain a balance of offices, warehouses and factories and ensures incompatible uses do not undermine the function of the employment area. The Council will need to consider through the new Local Plan whether to continue to protect these areas and whether the areas currently protected are the right areas to protect in the future.

**6.5** We will need to review our evidence to project the scale of employment we will need over the plan period. The existing Local Plan allocated 20.5 hectares of land for employment development.

**6.6** We need to understand the number and type of jobs that are likely to be created and delivered over the next 20 years but also be sufficiently flexible to adapt to allow for any change in circumstance. This includes recognising different ways of working including the growth in home working.

**6.7** The number of small businesses, especially the self employed, continues to grow significantly which suggests that these are more likely to offer the potential for economic growth and innovation. These businesses are spread across the Borough. The feedback we've had from the parish

council workshop is that smaller units would be supported.

**6.8** An issue for the Issues & Options consultation is whether we need to promote smaller workspaces as part of new development or allocate specific sites for this type of employment use.

**Q26:** *Should we allocate more land to enable more choice and flexibility to the market?*

**Q27:** *What are your views on promoting smaller workspaces within the Borough?*

**Q28:** *What provisions or controls should be made relating to people working from home?*

*“ The number of small businesses, especially the self employed, continues to grow significantly which suggests that these are more likely to offer the potential for economic growth and innovation. ”*

## RETAIL

- 6.9** The character of town centres is changing, including as a result of a significant shift towards internet shopping. Therefore we need to reflect on how town centres are evolving from not just meeting our retail needs but also as destination for leisure and recreation, as well as place to live and work. National planning policy places great emphasis on maintaining and improving the viability and vitality of town centres and states that local plans should be positive in promoting competitive town centres and should contain policies for managing centres over the plan period.
- 6.10** National Policy Guidance requires Local Planning Authorities to undertake an assessment of need and ensure a sufficient supply of sites. The type of need can be divided in two: comparison goods (i.e. white goods, books, clothes etc.) and convenience goods (food and drink).
- 6.11** The two main towns of the Borough, Andover and Romsey, whilst having their differences, are both facing similar challenges.
- 6.12** The Test Valley Retail Study (2018) shows that an increasing number of shoppers are using the internet for their comparison needs. The study shows that across the Borough 29.3% use the internet compared with 18.5% nationally.
- 6.13** In the south of the Borough, there is competition with neighbouring centres for convenience shopping. Of those surveyed in the south of the Borough, nearly 50% shop outside of Test Valley. This is due to its easier access and wider selection of goods in Winchester, Eastleigh and Southampton.
- 6.14** Better quality and choice of shops are identified as a way to improve the town centre. This needs to be coupled with recognising that our town centres need to evolve. In Andover the Council has aspirations to create a cultural quarter to the north of the town centre, centred on The Lights.
- 6.15** In Romsey, land south of the town centre has been recognised in the existing Local Plan as a location for a range of uses including retail and community uses. The Council will be working with the Romsey Future group and consultants to create a masterplan for the site. This will start with public consultation planned for the summer of 2018.
- 6.16** It is necessary to define the extent of town centres so it is clear where town centre policies apply and where it is appropriate to promote new retail and leisure development. We also need to define the areas within them that act as the primary shopping areas. Within these areas, local plans are encouraged to identify the primary shopping frontages where most retail uses should

be clustered and also secondary shopping frontages where a more broad range of retail and leisure uses could be accommodated. These designations can help the Council control the type of use that is permitted in the town centre to best protect and enhance the vitality of the centre.

**Q29:** *Should the Council continue to encourage retail uses within primary frontages or should a more flexible approach be taken with a greater range of uses being allowed?*



## SKILLS

- 6.17** The skills held by residents of the Borough is one of the key elements which contributes to a successful economy. The Council has played its part by helping businesses and education providers to recognise the skills needed. The planning system has a limited role in skills development. However, we can help by providing the necessary education infrastructure and help to deliver apprenticeships and seek contributions towards skills training in some circumstances. New development can play a role in helping to provide apprenticeships in the building trade and help fund training.

**Q30:** *How should we best continue seeking apprenticeships?*



## TOURISM

- 6.18** National planning policy supports building a strong and competitive economy, including the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses in urban and rural areas. It also encourages sustainable tourism which benefits businesses and protects the countryside<sup>18</sup>.
- 6.19** Test Valley is a popular destination, particularly for day and short stay visitors, with these visitors contributing an estimated £200million worth of income into the local economy<sup>19</sup>. However, the Council's Economic Strategy (2017-2019) identifies that improvements can be made to the tourism sector within the Borough to help it grow further.

**Q31:** *What should be included in any tourism policy in the next local plan?*

**Q:32** *Should there be measures to support tourism proposals, and if so, what?*

<sup>18</sup> NPPF paragraph 28

<sup>19</sup> Tourism South East 2014 – quoted from Economic Development Strategy, 2017



# 7 ENJOYING TEST VALLEY

**7.1** Our countryside is an irreplaceable natural resource. It supports biodiversity and defines the landscape. It provides a social and economic function, and supports communities and the rural economy, including agriculture and other local businesses. The countryside is an important place for leisure with Public Rights of Way.

**7.2** There is a wide range of landscape types within Test Valley from chalk downland in the north to heathland in the south. Parts of the Borough have nationally protected landscape because they either fall within the New Forest National Park<sup>20</sup> or North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**7.3** The Council has commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough which will help identify and conserve those features which make up our landscape.

## LOCAL GAPS

**7.4** Whilst national guidance does not contain a specific reference to Local Gaps, it is

<sup>20</sup> *New Forest National Park Authority is responsible for planning matters for that part of Test Valley that falls within the National Park boundary.*

**7.5** The NPPF gives Local and Neighbourhood Plans the ability to designate areas of open spaces of particular value to a community as 'local areas of green space' subject to meeting a number of criteria<sup>22</sup>.

**Q33:** *Should we continue to retain the principle of Local Gaps? Should we define specific boundaries or a more general policy which aims to avoid coalescence?*

**Q34:** *Should the Local Plan identify and designate Local Areas of Green Space or should this be undertaken via Neighbourhood Plans?*

## AIR QUALITY

**7.6** It is recognised that air quality is a major environmental factor that can affect human health, as well as influence and alter local ecosystems. Based on 2015 data, across the UK it has been indicated that domestic burning of coal, wood and other solid fuels accounted for about 40% of harmful particulate matter emissions, with about

<sup>21</sup> *NPPF paragraph 17*  
<sup>22</sup> *NPPF paragraph 77*

reflected in the core principles that underpin plan making stating that they should "contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment"<sup>21</sup>.

17% from industrial combustion and 13% from road transport<sup>23</sup>. The Government has also indicated that in terms of nitrogen oxides, road vehicles contribute about 80% of this pollution at the roadside<sup>24</sup>.

**7.7** There are no designated areas within Test Valley where air quality objectives are currently being exceeded; however there are some designated areas in close proximity to the Borough that are focused on road corridors.

**7.8** The Council recognises that new development is likely to increase vehicular movement; one way to help mitigate this may be by providing sustainable travel alternatives, such as cycle routes.

## WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

**7.9** Water is a valuable resource and brings us a variety of benefits. It is essential for the environment and local wildlife, has a significant impact on the local landscape, is important to our economy and our health. In Test Valley most of our drinking water comes from local groundwater or surface water sources (e.g. rivers and lakes). The River Test is a key asset within the Borough, which is of national ecological importance and a recreational resource.

<sup>23</sup> *Based on calculations in the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory for 2015.*

<sup>24</sup> *UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations, DEFRA and DfT, 2017.*

**7.10** There is particular pressure on water resources in the south east, where rainfall is generally lower and there are a greater number of people living in this area. Forecast changes in climate, along with changes to population and lifestyles, are expected to put more pressure on water resources in the future.

**7.11** Promoting more efficient use of water will be essential to help balance the need of the environment and communities. The current Local Plan requires increased water efficiency measures to be installed as part of new development.

**7.12** The quality of water bodies within the Borough is generally moderate to good based on the most recent assessment by the Environment Agency<sup>25</sup>. It will be important to ensure this position does not deteriorate, and where possible, opportunities are taken for improvement. There is scope for the planning system to support this, such as working with water companies to consider whether sufficient water treatment infrastructure capacity is available and seeking to manage sources of water pollution.

**Q35:** *Should the next Local Plan continue to promote water efficiency from new developments?*

## RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

**7.13** The Government has identified the role of renewable and low carbon energy sources in working towards national targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute towards a changing climate.

**7.14** National planning policy states that Councils should consider identifying ‘suitable areas’ for renewable and low carbon energy development in local plans. Councils should also support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy taken forward through Neighbourhood Planning. The Government has stated that wind farm developments should only be granted planning permission if the site is identified as a ‘suitable area’ in a Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan and the proposal has the backing of the affected local community.

**Q36:** *Should we identify suitable sites for renewable energy, including onshore wind, in the Local Plan?*

**Q37:** *If so, which areas of the Borough would be appropriate and for which types of technology (e.g. wind turbines, solar photovoltaic panels)?*

**7.15** The Government has indicated that sustainable construction standards and the energy performance of buildings are likely to be best dealt with via Building Regulations and not planning. The Government has set out an intention to review Building Regulations in relation to energy performance later this year. The Romsey Future vision document includes an ambition to take a lead in lobbying the government to change legislation and encourage the delivery of low energy homes.

**7.16** There are additional ways to encourage the take up of renewable and low carbon energy in new development. For example, some Councils have sought a certain percentage of energy used by new developments to come from renewable or low carbon sources and others are developing planning policies which require show homes on development sites to demonstrate options for reducing carbon emissions which can be easily added to a new home when bought off-plan.

25 *Through the River Basin Management Plan for the South East (2015).*

**Q38:** *Should the Local Plan encourage energy efficiency when constructing new development?*

## DESIGN

- 7.17** Good design is concerned not only with how development looks, but also how it feels and functions. The feedback we've had from those who live and work in our new communities is that there is scope for improving the design and layout of such schemes. This includes how schemes relate to the character of adjoining developments to the more practical issues of where refuse bins are stored.
- 7.18** National planning policy states that local plans should develop policies which set out the quality of development which will be expected. Local distinctiveness should be promoted, but particular architectural styles should not be imposed.
- 7.19** Some parts of the Borough have been defined as Residential Areas of Special Character. The purpose of this designation is to protect those areas which are characterised by large homes in large plots. The Council has consulted on a Supplementary Planning Document which includes a character appraisal for each area.

- 7.20** A number of our parishes have produced Village Design Statements with some looking to review them to take account of new development which has occurred. Village Design Statements are relevant when determining planning applications and the Council helps support their production.

**Q39:** *How can we improve design quality within the Borough?*

## PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

- 7.21** The Borough is well served by leisure provision with a good number of indoor and outdoor sport facilities. This is supplemented by the open spaces controlled by parish councils within the Borough as well as the network of Public Rights of Way.
- 7.22** Recently we have seen new sports facilities at Picket Twenty, Andover and Ganger Farm, Romsey be completed or get underway. Facilities like this will help to meet local demand in the near future. We will be reviewing our forecast for future formal sports provision as part of the next Local Plan to understand what type and amount of facilities we may need and how this can be met.
- 7.23** Well located public open spaces creates opportunities for walking, cycling and exercise, reducing the impacts of poor health.

- 7.24** The existing Local Plan includes a requirement that new development should provide allotments.

**Q40:** *Should the local plan be specific on the type of open space to provide or should it take account of existing provision/ future requirements?*

**Q41:** *Should we continue to set a per dwelling or per hectare standard for recreational open space provision on residential developments? Or, should the Council require the provision of recreational open space on residential developments to be based on the needs set out in the Playing Pitch Strategy?*

## BIODIVERSITY

- 7.25** National planning policy gives significant protection to biodiversity sites designated at an international and national level. Within Test Valley there are Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites, which are of international importance, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), which are of national importance.



**7.26** The Council helps at a local level by defining Local Nature Reserves and establishing new nature reserves such as Fishlake Meadows, Romsey in partnership with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

**7.27** The Council is committed to working with other local authorities and groups to develop and implement a strategic approach to protecting international and European sites from development, including recreational disturbance from the increase in population.

**7.28** In relation to providing mitigation for recreational disturbance of certain designations, the Council introduced an approach where either land or contributions would be taken to help deliver attractive alternative open spaces to those which are considered to be sensitive ecological areas. To date approximately 36 hectares have either been secured or allocated to provide alternative open spaces.

**7.29** Habitats function best where they are well connected to each other. To protect and enhance these networks, national planning policy advises that biodiversity should be conserved and enhanced at a landscape-scale. The intention is to identify, enhance and protect networks of interconnected habitats to benefit biodiversity in the long term. The Council along with other authorities in Hampshire are working with the Local Nature Partnership to identify these ecological networks.

**Q42:** *Should alternative open space for mitigation be provided as part of new developments or should land be specifically allocated, or a combination?*

## HERITAGE

**7.30** National planning policy provides details on how both designated and non-designated heritage assets can be protected and enhanced. This includes conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled ancient monuments, together with their setting. National policy looks for local plans to set out a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. We currently have a criteria based policy which was drafted with the input from Historic England.

**Q43:** *Is there anything additional which the Council should be taking account of?*

## 8 INFRASTRUCTURE IN TEST VALLEY

- 8.1** The term infrastructure covers the facilities and services that support both existing and future communities and enable our local economy to be successful.
- 8.2** The concern that the infrastructure can not cope with new development is often raised. This is especially with regards to when infrastructure is delivered. We have to balance these concerns with what the statutory organisations tell us as well as what we can justifiably seek from developers.
- 8.3** The type and scale of infrastructure needed will depend on the scale and pattern of development. The infrastructure required on-site would be met by the developer. The off-site infrastructure improvements may be met by a developer or through the combination of funds from a number of schemes<sup>25</sup>. The Council wants to ensure that we have the right amount of infrastructure to meet future demand. To do this we will need to work with other organisations to help guide us.
- 8.4** To help identify the improvements needed we will produce an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will identify the infrastructure projects required to make new development acceptable, this includes education and

25 Collected via Community Infrastructure Levy

health facilities. We are working with our partners and gathering evidence as part of this process. The IDP will be complemented by other Council documents and by the strategies and investment plans of other organisations. The next Local Plan will cover a period of 20 years and sometimes we and other infrastructure providers are not able to forecast what is required or how it may change.

- 8.5** The feedback we have received focuses on the capacity of those pieces of infrastructure which are most important to people's everyday lives – education, health, highways and utilities. As a Council we have a limited role in delivering new infrastructure but we do work with those organisations which have the responsibility for delivery. We will continue to work together to identify where improvements and enhancements to existing infrastructure is required.
- 8.6** High speed broadband connection is becoming more vital to our lives at both home and work<sup>26</sup>. National planning guidance encourages the installation of high speed broadband but we cannot require developers to provide it. The Council has experience of where broadband is installed after developments have been completed. We will encourage developers to install this infrastructure as part of installing all other necessary infrastructure.

26 Economic Development Strategy 2017-2019

## TRANSPORT

- 8.7** In Test Valley, many activities are dependent on the car as a means of transport. Much of the Borough is rural with nearly 40% of the population living in smaller communities outside of the towns of Andover and Romsey and settlements such as North Baddesley and Valley Park. In the rural area where public transport is limited or not accessible, non-car alternatives are not always achievable. Restricting the use of the car is therefore not a viable option for some of our population. However the Council can look to provide attractive and convenient alternatives in places where it makes sense to do so.
- 8.8** As a Council we have a limited role in delivering new infrastructure and work with other partners to ensure that it is delivered. The Department for Transport, Highways England and Hampshire County Council identify if the highway network should be improved to accommodate additional travel movements and what improvements are required.
- 8.9** Cycling and walking are also popular within Andover and the settlements in the south of the Borough. Bus and train use is below county and national averages. The Council will need to consider how the next Local Plan can promote more sustainable forms of transport. The Council is currently in the process of preparing a Cycling and Walking



Strategy which will identify other necessary improvements to the network within the Borough.

**Q44:** *How can the Council promote more sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport?*

## PARKING STANDARDS

**8.10** The provision of car parking is an integral part of the design and layout of new development. The amount of parking to be provided needs to take account of the location of the development, the demand that the new development is going to create and whether there are alternatives to the private car. It is also recognised that while promoting use of alternative travel modes, car ownership is likely to continue at a high level in Test Valley.

**8.11** The current Local Plan sets out a minimum standard of spaces to be provided on new residential developments having taken account of the type and mix of the homes being provided. However some of the feedback we've had from residents and Council employees who work in our new communities is that whilst the standards are being met the spaces are not being used because they are less convenient.

**8.12** We need to ensure that parking spaces are safe, easily accessible, secure and overlooked, practical and limit the likelihood of car being parked in places which causes inconvenience or obstruction to other drivers and pedestrians.

**8.13** There is a growing number of electric vehicles on the roads and future parking standards should take this into account, including the ease of access to charging points.

**Q45:** *How do you think the Council should be making provision for parking within new development?*

**Q46:** *Do you agree with the Council's current approach or are there changes you would like to see made?*

## 9. NEXT STEPS AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- 9.1** This Issues & Options document has set out the key matters that we are considering as part of preparing the next Local Plan. Your input would be welcome in helping to frame the next stage of the process, which will set our preferred options.
- 9.2** As noted in section 2, national guidance is in the process of being updated. We will need to ensure the next Local Plan accounts for this, as well as locally collected evidence and input from the local community.
- 9.3** Comments are invited on this document. Whilst we are particularly interested in your thoughts on the questions we have raised, if you have any comments on other planning policy matters that will help shape the next Local Plan then please provide them as well.
- 9.4** Comments should be submitted to the Planning Policy Team so they are received by **4.30pm on Friday 14 September 2018**. They need to be made in writing and directed to either:

Email: [planningpolicy@testvalley.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@testvalley.gov.uk)

Post: Planning Policy Team  
Test Valley Borough Council  
Beech Hurst  
Weyhill Road  
Andover  
SP10 3AJ

- 9.5** If you have any queries on the content of this document, please contact the Planning Policy Team using the above email address or via 01264 368000.
- 9.6** In your response please provide your name and postal or email address. If you are responding on behalf of someone else, please also provide the name of that individual or organisation.
- 9.7** If you respond to this consultation, we will keep you informed of future consultation stages unless you advise us that you want to opt out of such communication.



# GLOSSARY

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:**

Housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market.

## **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL):**

A levy that local authorities can choose to charge on new development. The charges are related to the size and type of the new development. The money collected can be spent on funding infrastructure which the Council has identified as being required.

## **CORPORATE PLAN:**

A plan that sets out the Council's vision and priorities for a four year period. It provides the Council's direction and focus for activities and services.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD):**

Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination and will form the Development Plan for a local authority area for the purposes of the 2004 Act. In Test Valley this will include a Local Plan and a Gypsy and Traveller document. Others may be produced if necessary. Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently of other Development Plan Documents. Each authority must set out the programme for preparing its Development Plan Document in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

## **DUTY TO COOPERATE (DTC):**

The duty to cooperate was created in the Localism Act (2011). It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis on strategic cross boundary matters.

## **EVIDENCE BASE:**

The Development Plan Documents should be based on evidence of participation and research. It should be as up to date as possible.

## **LOCAL AREA OF GREEN SPACE:**

Areas designated through plans that are identified of importance to local communities for example for its beauty, historic significance or recreational value.

## **LOCAL PLAN:**

This sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority area and the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision through development management policies and strategic site allocations. Local Plans have the status of a Development Plan Document.

## **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF):**

The NPPF sets out national planning guidance for plan making and decision taking. The NPPF was published in March 2012. The Government is in the process of reviewing the NPPF.

## **NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG):**

An online resource published by central Government which provides guidance on how to apply the NPPF

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:**

A plan prepared by a Parish Council that sets out planning policies.

## **RAMSAR SITE:**

Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

## **SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC):**

Areas which have been designated for the habitats and / or species they contain which are of European importance.

## **SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (SPA):**

Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within the European Union countries.

## **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI):**

This sets out the standards which authorities will achieve with regard to involving local communities in the preparation of planning documents and development management decisions. The Statement of Community Involvement is not a Development Plan Document.



## **STRATEGIC HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHELAA):**

This is a technical document which seeks to provide information on potential housing and/or employment sites promoted by landowners/developers with details on whether they are available, suitable and achievable.

## **SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA):**

This is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic considerations). There is a requirement in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that sustainability appraisals are undertaken for all Development Plan Documents.

## **VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (VDS):**

A VDS is a document that describes the distinctive characteristics of the locality, and provides design guidance to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the area.