

A Neighbourhood Plan for Belstead?

Thanks for sparing the time to visit our event

The exhibition explains:

- what Neighbourhood Plans are
- how they're prepared
- and seeks your views as to whether we should prepare one

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is a relatively new kind of planning document designed to allow local people to play an active part in planning their area.

When complete, the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, meaning the District Council and Planning Inspectors will have to take note of what it says when considering planning applications.

The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside national and local planning policies when decisions are made on planning applications



Neighbourhood Plans...

- rely on community involvement throughout their preparation and must be approved in a Parish Referendum before they can be used
- contain planning policies for matters that require planning permission
- must not conflict with the Local Plan or national planning policies
- will need to be backed up by evidence that supports what they're seeking to achieve
- are intended to allow local people to play an active part in planning their area. They can guide the development and conservation of the area
- attract an uplift to the Parish Council proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) arising from development in the area from 15% to 25%

Neighbourhood Plans can:

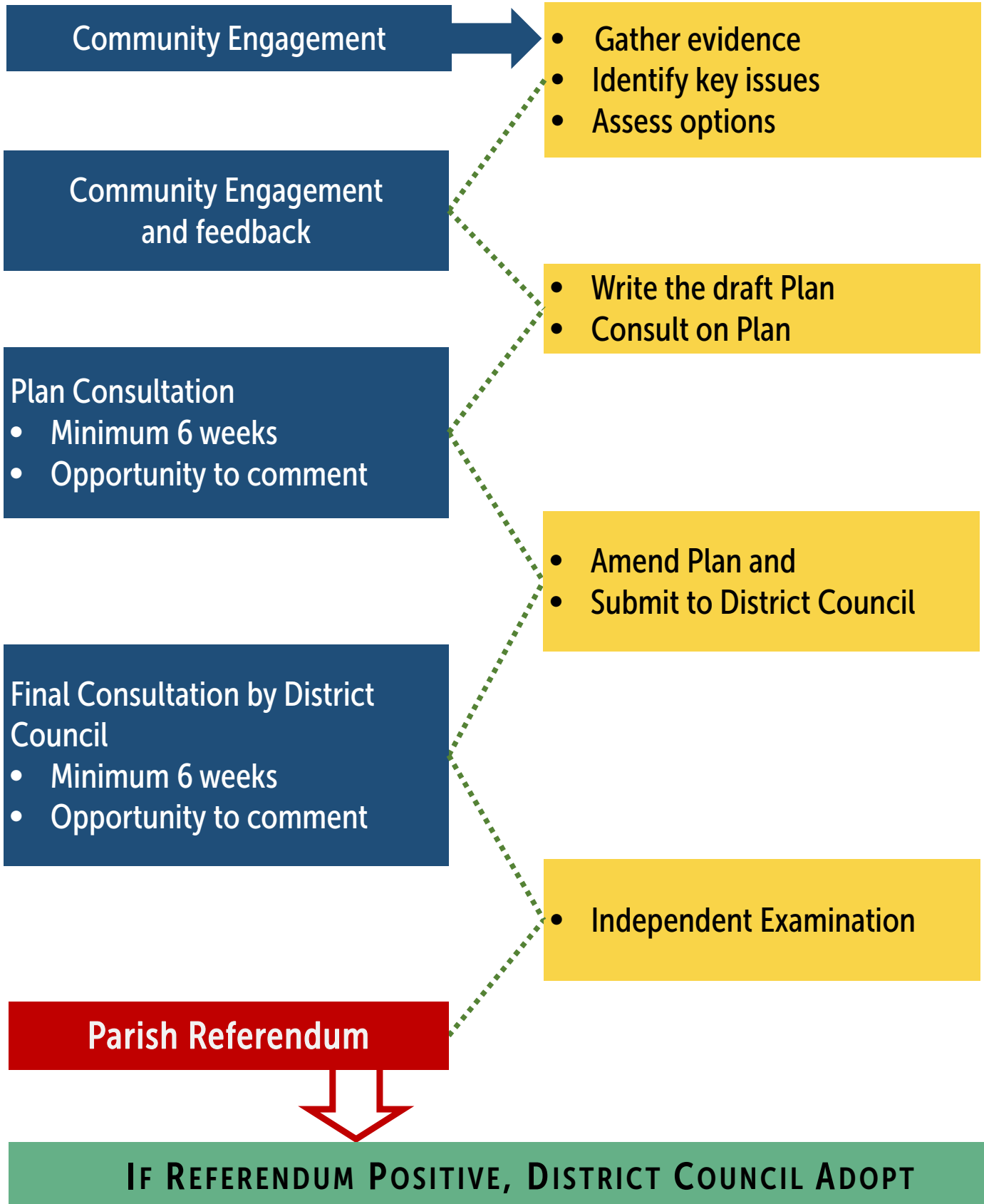
include proposals for:

- improving areas;
- enhancing current and providing new facilities;
- developing sites;
- protecting sites and areas of environmental or historic quality; and
- protecting facilities of community importance (such as open space, village halls and shops)



The Process

The process for preparing a new neighbourhood plan is guided by government regulations and so there is no short cut.



Are they worth it?

Put simply, yes, they are

When a planning application is decided, the District Council starts with looking at what the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan says about how proposals should be considered.

Likewise, if a planning application is refused and the applicant appeals the decision, Government Planning Inspectors have to take the same approach

Example:

Outline Planning Application - 15 Dwellings (including 5 affordables). Land West Of Willows Nursing Home, Bury Road, Lawshall

Site located outside Settlement Boundary

Refused by Babergh DC:

The proposed development, by virtue of its scale, density, siting and location would result in the loss of a valued settlement gap, harmful to the local character of the Lawshall village, contrary to Policy LAW3 and LAW9 of the Lawshall Neighbourhood Plan 2017, Policy CS11 and CS15 of the Babergh Core Strategy (2014) and paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Refused at Appeal

I conclude that the appeal scheme would have a harmful effect on the setting of Lawshall within the wider landscape. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CS11 and CS15 of the Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy and Policies (Part 1 of the New Babergh Local Plan) (2014) (the Core Strategy and Policies) and Policies LAW3 and LAW9 of the NP.

Example:

Construction of up to 9 dwellings with associated vehicular access. Melford Road, Lawshall.

Site located outside Settlement Boundary

Refused by Babergh DC:

The proposal is contrary to the Babergh Core Strategy, Babergh Local Plan and the Lawshall Neighbourhood Plan (Policies LAW1 and LAW3 2017 - adopted 2017), which are consistent with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Refused at Appeal:

I conclude that the proposed development would not be in a suitable location for new residential development. As a result, it would fail to accord with policies CS1, CS2, CS11 and CS15 of the BCS which collectively set out the development strategy for the area. It would also fail to accord with policies LAW1 and LAW3 of the Lawshall Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

What if we don't prepare a Plan?

Planning decisions will continue to be made by the District Council without having locally based evidence and policies to inform the decision.

For example, they do not have locally specific design guidance for new development or identified important views that could be harmed by development.

Content

Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity for us to identify what's important about the village and should be preserved, and maybe opportunities for improvement.

We may also need to consider identifying a site or sites for housing development over the next 20 years. See the Local Plan board later in this display

Our Plan could also:

- Designate important green spaces and protect them from development
- Identify key features of the landscape and protect important areas
- Set criteria for the design of all new development that will reflect local styles and materials
- Identify important views
- Identify facilities to be protected from being lost.

It also provides an opportunity to explore whether there are local initiatives that we, as a community, could bring forward

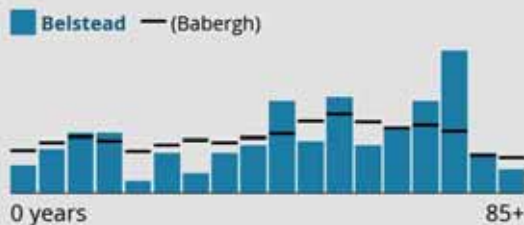
“Community Aspirations” can be included in the Neighbourhood Plan addressing matters that are not planning related. For example, encouraging tree and hedge planting or establishing community events.

You would be able to have an input into these as the Plan progresses.

Belstead in numbers

Age profile

2022



0 years 85+
% of all people, 5 year age bands

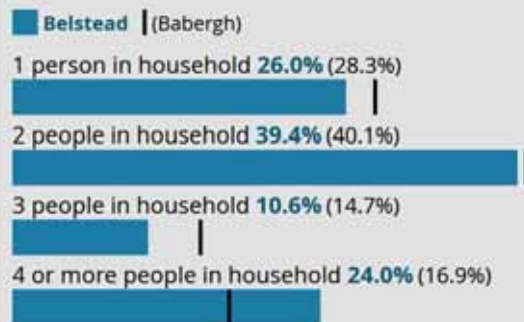
Source: Office for National Statistics - Mid Year

Population Estimates

Small area: Output area

Household size

2021



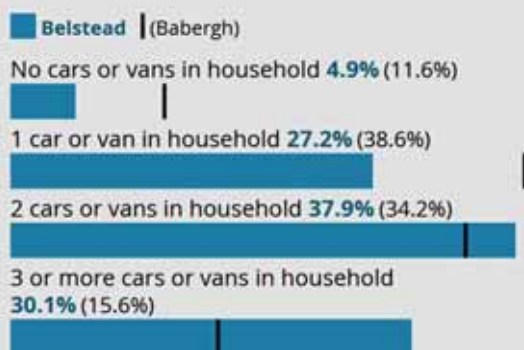
% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Number of cars or vans

2021



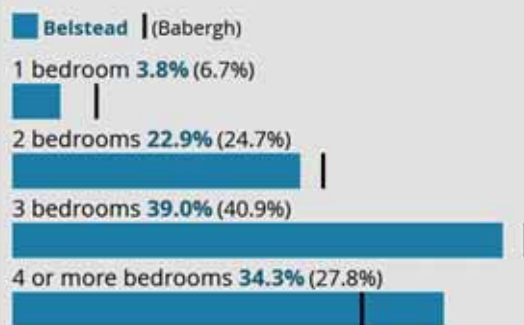
% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Number of bedrooms

2021



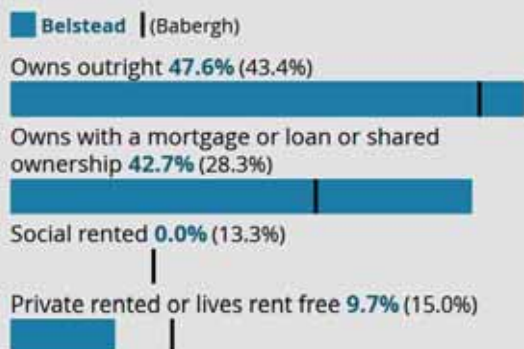
% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Tenure of household

2021



% of all households

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Small area: Output area

Economic activity status

2021



% of people aged 16 years and over

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

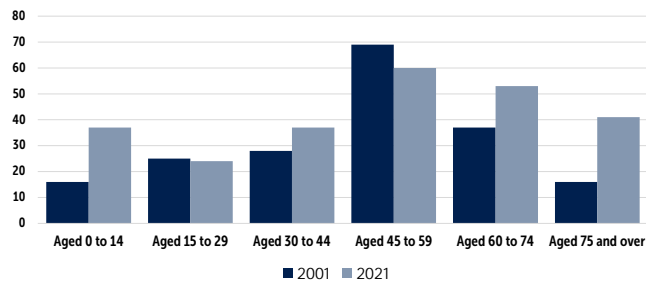
Small area: Output area

Belstead facts

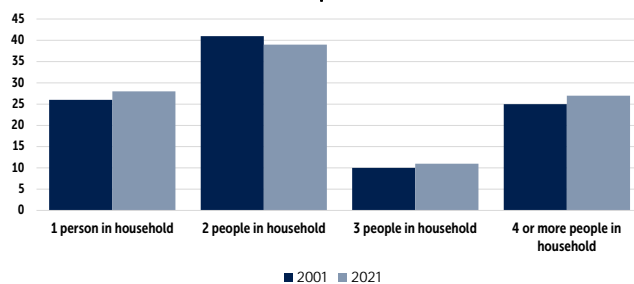
The 2021 Census results show that:

- the parish population has increased by 30% between 2001 and 2021
- There were 12 more homes in the parish in 2021 than in 2001
- In 2021, one third of the village population was aged 65 or over, compared with just over a quarter for Babergh district.
- In 2001 only 20% of households had 3 or more cars. By 2021 that had increased to 30%
- There are 16 listed buildings in the parish and a large conservation area in the village centre
- Old Hall Wood and Brockley Wood (both at the southern end of the parish, are County Wildlife Sites.

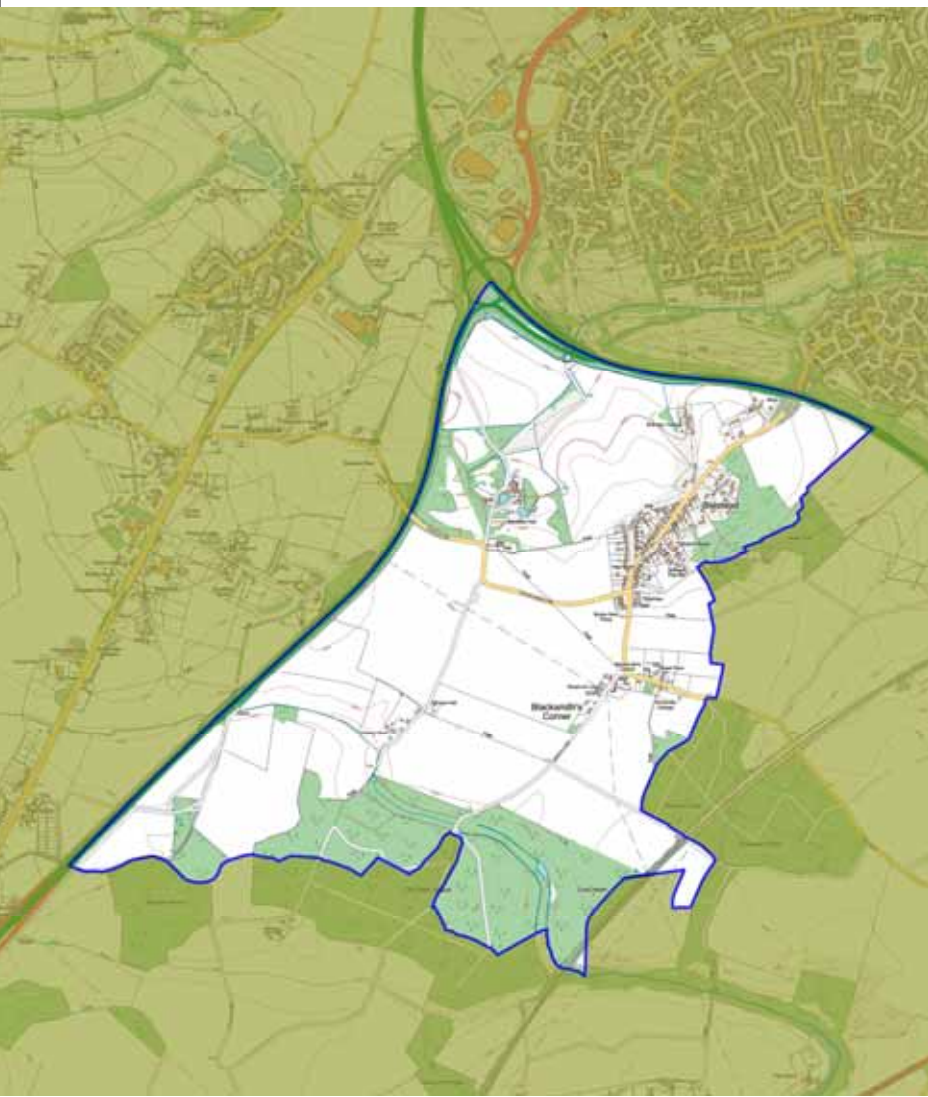
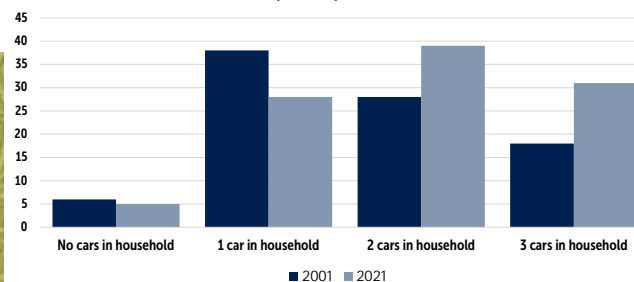
Population change 2001 to 2021



Household size comparison 2001 and 2021



Car ownership comparison 2001 - 2021



The Local Plan

Local Plans set out proposals for the amount and location of new development over a set period, typically between 15 to 20 years. A neighbourhood plan have to conform with the growth proposals in a Local Plan.

For Babergh a Local Plan was completed in 2023 and although it identified the amount of housing growth that was required at the time, it did not set out where this growth would take place.

Early this year the District Council announced that it would be preparing a new Local Plan that would identify the location of growth for at least the next 20 years.

You may be aware of the Government housing growth agenda. For Babergh it means that the annual housebuilding rate will have to go up from an average 416 new homes a year to 775 – **that's an 86% increase!**

We will not know what this means for Belstead until public consultation is carried out on the new Local Plan. We think this could be early next year, but it could take 4 years to complete the Local Plan.

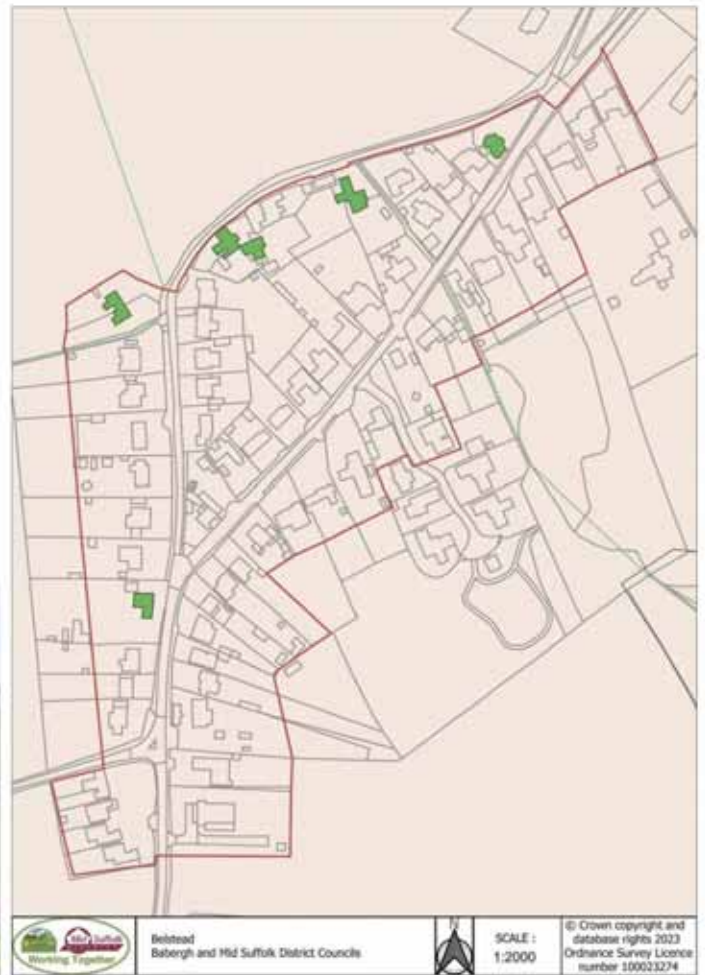
Local Plans are required to identify growth levels for each of the 'Neighbourhood Areas' in their district. That provides the opportunity for communities preparing neighbourhood plans to decide where that housing should go.

The Local Plan identifies a Settlement Boundary for Belstead, is illustrated.

Settlement boundaries are a planning policy tool that help to manage the spread of towns and villages into the open countryside. Where they are defined in a local or neighbourhood plan, the principle of development within them is supported while development proposals outside a settlement boundary is only supported in exceptional circumstances.

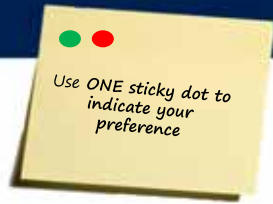
The Settlement Boundary was drawn up in 2006 and has not been updated since. It is now significantly out-of-date and does not include recent development that was approved primarily towards the end of the last decade.

Belstead



Should we prepare one?

The Parish Council would like to know whether residents support the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish.



Having read the display so far, would you support this?

Belstead should have a Neighbourhood Plan

Belstead should not have a Neighbourhood Plan

Unsure

Would you get involved?

If the Parish Council goes ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan, we would be looking to establish a small working group of volunteers, assisted by professional planning consultants.

Working Groups typically meet once a month but often would not need to meet when consultants are working on reports.

The Working Group will have the support of the Parish Council and could typically be involved in the following tasks:



Working Group

Others

Residents' Survey

Residents' Survey Design
 Deliver survey forms
 Residents' Survey input of paper returns
 Analyse results – what are the headlines?

Consultants print and host online
 Consultants run the results report

Character Appraisal

Identify the distinct characteristics of areas in the village
 Write draft Appraisal

Consultants will guide the work and produce final published document

Information gathering

Could include Census data and other matters

Consultants provide guidance

Possibly identify development site

Carry out a "call for sites" that landowners would like considering for development

Consultants will provide independent assessment of suitability of sites

Community Engagement

Ensure opportunities are taken to keep residents up to date

Consultants will provide material for engagement

Plan Preparation

Agree content
 Review draft Plan and agree amendments

Consultants will write the Plan
 Prepare final draft Plan ready for consultation

Consultation

Assist with consultation by attending drop-in events, delivering leaflets

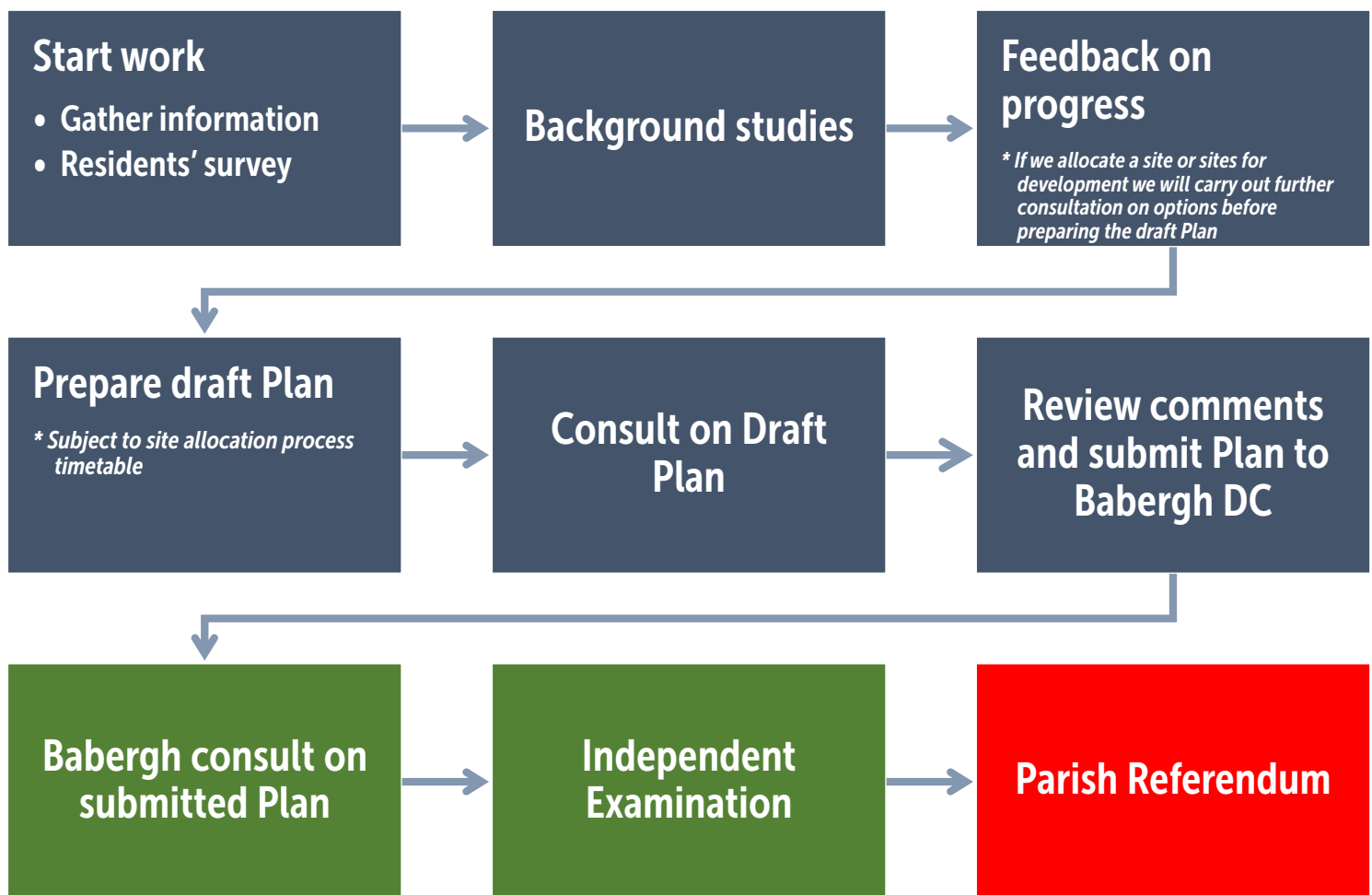
Consultants will provide full back up

If you would like to be part of the Working Group, or could assist in other ways, please talk to a Parish Councillor today

What next?

The Parish Council will make a decision as to whether to proceed at a future meeting.

If we go ahead, these are the main stages. It is impossible to put a timetable on this work, but most Plans take around two years to complete.





If local government reorganisation happens before we finish the Plan, the new Council **MUST** take over the process and use the Plan if it is successful at Referendum

Once the Plan has been submitted to Babergh DC there is very little work for the Working Group as the remainder is organised by the District Council

Your feedback

What do you cherish about living in Belstead in 2025?

 
Use post-it notes to tell us and green dots if you agree with a comment that's already there or red dots if you disagree with it

Your feedback

What would you like to see change in Belstead?

● ●
Use post-it notes to tell us and green dots if you agree with a comment that's already there or red dots if you disagree with it

Your feedback

What issues you do think Belstead faces over the next 20 years

Use post-it notes to tell us and green dots if you agree with a comment that's already there or red dots if you disagree with it