



**Basingstoke  
and Deane**

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

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To all Parish Clerks

## **By Email Only**

Our ref: PH/SH

21 November 2025

Dear Parish Councils,

We suspect many of us are experiencing a very strong sense of déjà vu because we've been here before, almost exactly two years ago, when we decided to take our first draft Local Plan to public consultation.

A lot has changed since then.

As we all know, the most significant new development has been the change of government, with its clearly stated desire to 'build, baby, build'. For us here in Basingstoke & Deane, that has meant a significant jump in the housing target that our next Local Plan needs to meet, from around 830 new houses per year under the old rules to around 1,150 now. That works out at around 6,300 extra new houses over the life of the Local Plan.

This change has meant that we've had to go back to the drawing board with our Local Plan process, but we're doing it and the result is an updated spatial strategy.

We'll be the first to admit that developing an updated draft spatial strategy has been a real challenge. It's involved us making some very difficult decisions and we've been forced to include sites that we were able to keep out of previous iterations. We don't take any pleasure from that.

We genuinely believe that continuing with the Plan making process is better than the alternative of either allowing rampant speculative development or having our planning powers taken from us by the government. That really is the choice; don't let anyone else tell you otherwise: we either take this Plan forward and make some decisions ourselves; or we let others make those decisions for us.

Chief Executive Russell O'Keefe  
Deputy Chief Executive Rebecca Emmett

Director of Resident Services Fiona Darby  
Director of Regeneration Sarah Longthorpe  
Director of Customers, Digital and Improvement Katy Sallis

We have now taken a decision to go out to a further round of public consultation – a second Regulation 18 consultation. We want to ensure that we continue to engage with residents on the early stages of plan making.

I know from correspondence with residents that there are a number of misconceptions about what's happening. There is a lot of misinformation being circulated.

We're NOT making any decisions on planning applications related to the sites contained in the Local Plan. In many cases, planning applications are still years away from being submitted and when they're ready, the decision will be taken by our Development Control Committee rather than by Cabinet.

We're NOT making any final decisions on which sites we're going to include in our Local Plan. There will be another round of consultation next year (Regulation 19) before submitting our plan to the Secretary of State for examination. If you wish to be heard by the appointed Inspector, you can ask to take part in the examination - so this is far from the only opportunity that you have to get your points across.

We're NOT planning to develop these sites ourselves, in the vast majority of cases. We're not progressing the Plan because we want to make money from housing developments!

So we're still at an early stage of the process – and there's plenty more that we need to do to get the Local Plan finalised.

We need to move fast. The government has set Local Planning Authorities who want to progress a Plan under the current planning system a deadline of December 2026, by which time Plans must be submitted for review by one of its Inspectors. So we only have around 12 months to get it all done.

Interestingly, the government won't tell us what will happen if we miss that deadline – we've asked, and they've not given us much detail – but it's unlikely to be good news for us. At the very best, we'll end up having to submit a new Local Plan under a system that may give us less opportunity to set local policies than this one. At the very worst, the government may decide to make the Local Plan for us. Neither of those options would be good news for our Borough's residents.

It is important to remember that this whole process began back in 2019. It's taken 6 years to get to this stage. When we took over as the Cabinet running the council in May 2023, we made it our priority to get a plan completed because, after years of delay, our borough was wide open to speculative development and we did not have a five year housing land supply. Moving forward, finalising an up to date Local Plan is the only way that we can regain control of planning in our borough.

We encourage you to take part in the Regulation 18 Consultation. Please consider that we have had to find 6,300 more houses than before. This is not straightforward in any way and we want to be honest and open with you about the situation

To that end, we are happy to come and visit any and all parishes to hear your views and talk with you about the process. Please contact us and we will arrange a time that works.

Yours sincerely



Dr Paul Harvey  
Leader  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council



Cllr Andrew Konieczko  
Cabinet Member: Strategic Planning &  
Infrastructure  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council