

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

FAVERSHAM CREEK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan which is not drawn up by Swale planners but takes into account the views of the community.

This type of plan arose as a result of the Localism Bill in 2011. Where there is a parish or town council, they are responsible for preparing the plan. In this case, the Steering Group which includes representatives from Faversham Town Council, Swale Borough Council and the Creek Consortium, is accountable to Faversham Town Council.

A Neighbourhood Plan has to be financially viable and deliverable. It also has to be accepted by over half of the people voting in a referendum to become part of the Swale Local Plan. It will have a 20-year horizon with periodic reviews.

Why have a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Plan will set out the mix of uses and amount of development that is considered to be suitable on sites around the creek. It will include potential improvements to the townscape and footpaths that would enhance the character of the creek area. It will contain an appendix which identifies additional important elements of the area's heritage.

The Plan is intended to ensure that schemes for development are well-designed and contain a desirable mix of elements themselves and with streetscape work and moorings would make the area more attractive. Some areas will change very little.

Without such a Plan, as a result of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is likely that development would be permitted with no such regulation as the Framework only requires that development is 'sustainable'. In the past, rather bland housing schemes along the creek have been allowed on appeal and such decisions would be more likely.

The advantages of a Neighbourhood Plan for Faversham Creek are that it should:

- set out a locally derived coordinated future for the area
- seek to retain the best historic assets in the area
- provide a context for an opening bridge into the basin
- define a sustainable and deliverable future for a number of sites
- enable the coordination of a number of improvements to local infrastructure such as a creekside footpath and improved open spaces
- ensure that an up-to-date locally produced plan is in place on which the Borough Council can make consistent decisions on planning applications
- allow people from the town the ultimate say in the future of their area through public engagement and ultimately a referendum

WHO'S WHO ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Faversham Town Council

Cllr Nigel Kay (Deputy Mayor and Chairman)

Cllr John Coulter

Cllr Trevor Payne

Cllr David Simmons (Mayor)

Jackie Westlake OBE (Secretary)

John Sell, architectural consultant

Swale Borough Council

Cllr Michael Cosgrove

Cllr Michael Henderson

Faversham Creek Consortium

Anne Salmon

Andrew Osborne

Planning Support

Natalie Earl, Senior Planning Officer, Swale Borough Council

Tony Fullwood, Independent Planning Consultant.