



Hertsmere's draft Local Plan published



Last Modified September 14, 2021

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Hertsmere's draft Local Plan has been published setting out how the borough could grow over the next 15 years and beyond, by providing homes for the next generation as well as the infrastructure and jobs needed to support this growth.

The document outlines how Hertsmere will meet the central government requirements to plan for at least 760 homes per year in the borough until 2038. It is available to view at www.hertsmere.localplan.com, along with further information, including summaries of what the plan covers, what it could mean for each of the borough's main areas, an overview of the next steps and frequently asked questions. Residents will get a chance to have their say on the draft plan during a six-week engagement which is set to kick off next month.

All councils are required by central government to develop a local plan to identify suitable locations for new homes, infrastructure and jobs. Development is best managed with an up-to-date local plan setting out clearly how and where future growth should take place, and taking into account the needs for infrastructure and services.

Leader of Hertsmere Borough Council, Cllr Morris Bright MBE, explained: "Hertsmere is a fantastic place to live which we should rightly be proud of, but this popularity does cause pressures for homes and services.

"By planning for growth locally we can ensure that we deliver the homes we need alongside the jobs, infrastructure and services to support this growth.

"Without an up-to-date plan, development can be taken out of local hands and it could mean less money for delivering the facilities and services our residents want and need."

The draft plan will be considered at an Executive meeting on Tuesday 14 September, before it is due to go to a full council meeting on Thursday 30 September, which can be viewed live via the council's webcast system.

If councillors agree to the plan moving to public engagement, a six-week period of engagement will start on Monday 11 October, giving residents and community groups a further opportunity to comment on the plan.

Portfolio Holder for Planning, Cllr Harvey Cohen, added: "We know that, as a small borough, we don't have enough space in our towns and villages to accommodate all the homes required.

"Eighty per cent of our borough is currently Green Belt but not all of that is high quality, unspoilt countryside and a lot of it is not accessible to the public. By planning for growth locally we will maximise opportunities to create more public open space for residents.

"Essential to this plan is working with a range of organisations who will deliver the infrastructure we want to see in the borough, from Hertfordshire County Council on roads and schools to our local Clinical Commissioning Group on health services. We also need to work with neighbouring authorities to ensure that our plan works alongside theirs.

"Preparing a Local Plan is a complex process, and we still have some way to go, but it's what our borough needs; planning for growth in a way that enhances what is special about Hertsmere, keeping it distinctive, connected, and creative, while ensuring that we remain a green, healthy and happy borough."

Hertsmere's emerging plan has been developed responding to feedback from other organisations and residents, as well as evidence from specialist studies and Government requirements.

There will be a further opportunity to comment on the final plan next year, before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for formal examination.

Posted on Tuesday 7th September 2021

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