



Shaping the future of West Byfleet

# West Byfleet Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2027

**Draft for  
Community  
Consultation**

**11 June to 23 July  
2016**



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## Foreword

The 2011 Localism Act led to the establishment of Neighbourhood Forums and the development of Neighbourhood Plans by those Forums in consultation with local residents, businesses and other interested parties. Neighbourhood Plans are intended to allow local people and communities to directly influence – and establish general planning policies for – the development and use of land in their neighbourhoods and to give the local community the opportunity to have a say in planning policies and decisions covering the location and development of new houses, employment opportunities, shops and other amenities.

The aim of this document is to set out:

- The scope and context of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Plan (**“The Plan”**)
- The vision and objectives for the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Area (**“The Area”** – see 1.2 below)
- The policies developed by The West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum (**“The Forum”**) relating to the Area’s:
  - Built Environment
  - Commercial Environment
  - Infrastructure
  - Open Spaces
  - Social & Community

The process for how The Plan has been developed by The Forum is set out in the Appendices to The Plan (see Section 7). Full details of the consultation process involved are provided in the Consultation Statement under separate cover. All supporting documents are available on the Forum website [www.wbnf.org](http://www.wbnf.org).

By obtaining approval of The Plan, The Forum hopes to address some of the issues facing the neighbourhood at the present time and to shape a viable and sustainable future for The Area while maintaining and enhancing its special character. Once adopted, The Plan has legal status and has to be taken into consideration by Woking Borough Council (**“WBC”**) and Surrey County Council (**“SCC”**) when taking planning decisions or formulating new planning policy.



## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Scope and Context

A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan prepared by a neighbourhood forum for a particular area – in this case the designated area of West Byfleet (see Section 1.2). It is a planning document that sets out planning policies in relation to development and use of land in The Area for the period from being ‘made’ (subject to approval by referendum) through to 2027. It offers an opportunity for communities to shape the area where they live and work and have some influence on its future development. It can also highlight projects of significance to the community which are not covered by land-use planning policies or which cannot be delivered through a Neighbourhood Plan (see Section 5). The policies in The Plan are specific to The Area. They are complementary to existing planning policies and guidance covering The Area and seek not to repeat those policies.

Requirements for a neighbourhood plan are laid down in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup> and explained in Government Planning Practice guidance<sup>2</sup>.

Among these requirements is the need for The Plan to support sustainable development i.e. development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The NPPF states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

The Plan must also be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Woking Core Strategy (Local Plan) drawn up by WBC and adopted on 25 October 2012<sup>3</sup>.

The Plan needs to conform to some key principles:

- It should be community-initiated – i.e. led by the local community, not the Council (although the Council has a duty to cooperate)
- It must be based on sound evidence and agreed through consultation with the local community
- It cannot plan for less growth than set out in the Local Plan although it can influence where development should be located in the Area. It should not adopt an anti-development stance
- It should involve local businesses in The Area
- It should be credible and deliverable, not a wish-list with no expectation of delivery.

It is only possible for The Plan to include policies for The Area. It should also limit itself to items which are not covered by the NPPF or the Local Plan. It is, however, possible to comment on contiguous areas where their development could have an impact on The Area.

<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2)

<sup>2</sup> <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> Woking Core Strategy, October 2012, Woking Borough Council  
[www.woking2027.info/corestrategy/adoptedcorestrategy](http://www.woking2027.info/corestrategy/adoptedcorestrategy)

## 1.2 The West Byfleet Neighbourhood Area

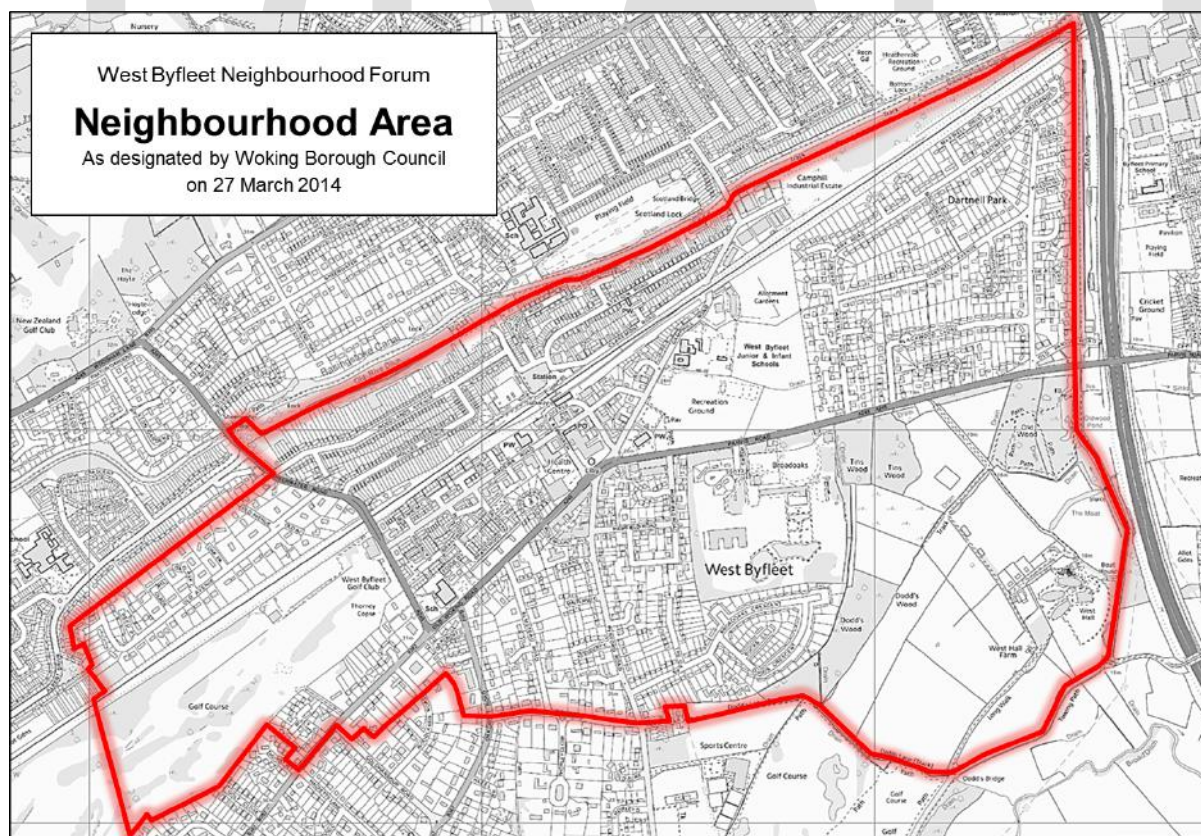
The Area was designated by WBC at a Council meeting on 27 March 2014. The Area is situated between the two Neighbourhood Areas of Pyrford and Byfleet and is for the most part in the ecclesiastical parish of St John's Church, West Byfleet – St John the Baptist, which lies within the Borough of Woking, Surrey. The boundary between the Pyrford and West Byfleet Neighbourhood Areas was agreed after several meetings between the two groups.

The Area is described as follows:

- North: Between the Wey Navigation/Basingstoke Canal junction and Sheerwater Bridge, following the Woking Borough boundary defined by the Old Rive Ditch which runs along the end of the gardens in Woodlands Avenue.
- West: Between Sheerwater Bridge and the Old Woking Road, including Old Avenue and part of West Byfleet Golf Course. A portion of this boundary is coincident with that of the Pyrford Neighbourhood Area.
- South: Between the Old Woking Road and Dodd's Bridge, following the old Wisley with Pyrford parish boundary, with some alterations to accommodate modern homes and road layouts. This portion of the boundary is coincident with that of the Pyrford Neighbourhood Area.
- East: From Dodd's Bridge to the Wey Navigation/Basingstoke Canal junction, following the course of the River Wey and Godalming Navigations. This portion of the boundary is coincident with that of the Byfleet Neighbourhood Area.

The map below shows the boundaries of The Area (note that these boundaries differ from ward boundaries and that The Area contains parts of both the Byfleet & West Byfleet Ward and the Pyrford Ward).

**Figure 1: The West Byfleet Neighbourhood Area**



## 2 About West Byfleet – Summary of the key characteristics of The Area

### 2.1 History

West Byfleet sits between the two ancient villages of Byfleet and Pyrford and shares two of its boundaries with these villages, along with the River Wey and Godalming Navigations which were built in the 1600s.

Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the area which became West Byfleet was largely undeveloped, with much of the land either woodland or used for the growing of flowers to produce perfume mainly for soaps (this is reflected in the names of some of the roads). At that time it consisted of a few cottages grouped around the junction of roads to Woking, Byfleet, New Haw and Pyrford and was known as Byfleet Corner.

The railway from London to Woking opened in 1838 and even though West Byfleet did not have a station at the time, the railway owners indicated they wanted to open one. In 1887 it duly opened and was called Byfleet & Woodham station. The area was originally developed for high quality housing but many properties were shortly redeveloped to provide shops and commercial premises during the early Edwardian period. In 1906 for example, the grounds of 'Rosemount', only 30 years old, were used for road widening and for the shopping parade which bears its name.

Most new homes were detached but some higher density housing of the 'small villa' variety was built to the north of the station in Station Road and Claremont Road and to the south of the station in Camphill Road and Lavender Park Road. Elsewhere the building was generally at low densities with large detached houses in tree-lined streets and with a good deal of the existing woodland retained for landscaping. Many of the large houses in West Byfleet built in the early 1900s were by the master builder Walter George (W.G.) Tarrant.

Dartnell Park, east of the new village and south of the Basingstoke canal, became one of the most exclusive of the low density estates in the Woking Area. The land was enclosed from the wet heath in 1806 but was too poor to be used for agriculture. By 1870 Dartnell's Wood, named after a previous owner, was thickly grown with conifers. It was parcelled out into building plots in 1884-98 in several phases.

St John's Church, designed by W.D. Caroe in 1910, was built in 1912 and the parish of West Byfleet was established in 1917. Our Lady Help of Christians, the Catholic Church, was built between 1955 and 1956.

In 1962 and 1966 SCC re-zoned land in Woking and West Byfleet as a 'High Density Area'. The zone in West Byfleet covered the area between Old Woking Road, Sheerwater Road and the railway station. Within this area redevelopment by private building firms was actively encouraged, there being a stated preference for flats, maisonettes and terraced housing (although there were strict limitations imposed on the removal of mature trees of the existing properties). As well as housing, this area was developed to provide business space, shops, a library and multi-storey offices, the largest building being Sheer House at seven storeys.

Around this time the Brantwood estate, between Old Woking Road and Madeira Road, was built, comprising a mix of three storey flats and terraced two storey homes in the densest building seen in West Byfleet.

Since the 1950s land values have been high enough for homeowners to sell gardens or part thereof to allow infill building, although in the last ten years that process has slowed as fewer potential sites exist.

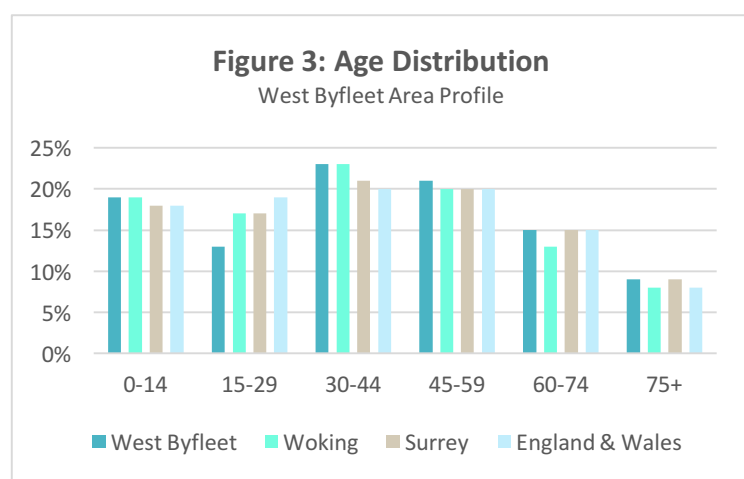
## 2.2 Demographics

Data sources for this section include a profile of West Byfleet prepared by WBC<sup>4</sup>, Surrey-i and the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Plan. These sources draw their information from 2011, 2013 and 2015 census data.

A demographic summary of West Byfleet (see Figure 2) shows a population of over 5,600 spread over 2,320 households. Figures show the population to be in better health than average, with higher than average educational attainment levels, lower than average levels of child poverty, and a crime rate well below Surrey levels.

**Figure 2: Demographic Summary**

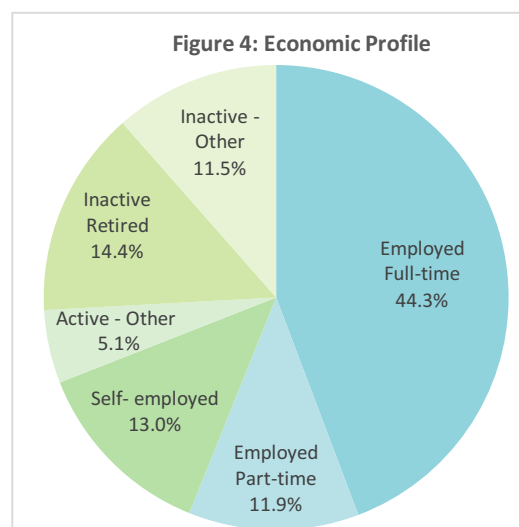
Topic	Category	West Byfleet	Woking	Surrey	Eng. & Wales
<b>Population</b>					
	Resident Population	5,626	99,198	1,132,390	56,075,912
	Number of Households	2,320	39,467	455,791	23,366,044
	Average household size (No. of people)	2.41	2.49	2.38	2.36
	Density of population (people per Hectare)	16	15.6	7	4.1
%	Proportion of Borough	5.70	100	-	-
%	Proportion Male	48.12	49.54	49.1	49.2
%	Proportion Female	51.88	50.46	50.9	50.8
<b>Health &amp; Well-being</b>					
%	All people with day-to-day activities limited by long-term illness	11.86	12.99	13.5	17.6
%	People with day-to-day activities limited a lot by long-term illness or disability	4.48	5.53	5.7	8.3
%	People with bad or very bad health	2.13	2.62	2.7	4.2
<b>Children &amp; Young People</b>					
%	Children living in poverty	5.3	12	9	-
	NEET - Number of young children not in education, employment or training	2	63	978	-
%	Lone parent households with dependent children	3.7	4.62	4.7	-
%	Pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSE	77	63.7	61.4	-
<b>Crime Rate</b>					
	Number of notifiable offences (per 1000 population)	1.94	3.44	4.32	-
	Number of recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour (per 1000 population)	1.94	2.28	1.92	-
	Number of incidence of Domestic Violence (per 1000 population)	0.71	1.08	0.98	-



Age distribution in West Byfleet is very similar to that of Woking, Surrey and England – with the exception of 15-29 year olds. This group is notably smaller than in other areas.

<sup>4</sup> Profile of West Byfleet, Riette Thomas, Corporate Strategy, WBC, February 2013; Data Sources ONS Census 2011 and Surrey-i

Approximately 75% of the population is economically active (similar to Woking and Surrey) but there is a higher proportion of people who are retired, self-employed or running a home. There is a notably lower proportion of students (both economically active and inactive).

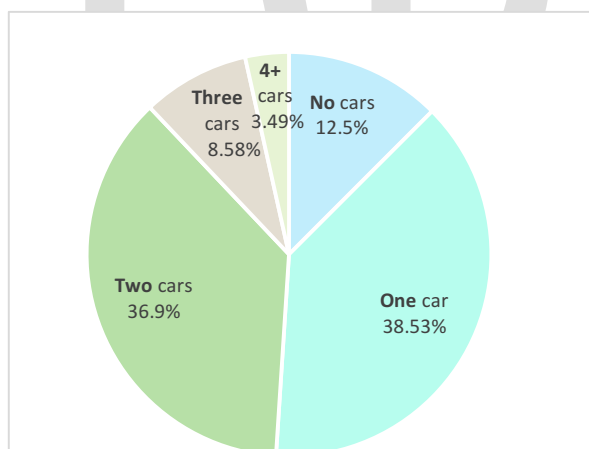


**Figure 5: Household tenure**

Categories	West Byfleet	Woking	Surrey	Eng. & Wales
TOTALS	2,320	39,467	455,791	23,366,044
Owned	76%	71%	73%	64%
Part-owned	0%	1%	1%	1%
Private Rented	18%	16%	13%	17%
Social Rented	5%	12%	11%	18%
Rent-free	1%	1%	1%	1%

A higher proportion of households own their properties. The proportion of 'socially rented' properties is significantly lower than average – less than half of Woking and almost a quarter of the national average.

**Figure 6: Cars per household in West Byfleet**



Comparison of numbers of cars per household shows that West Byfleet has an extremely similar profile to Surrey. However it is in distinct contrast to England, with a much higher proportion of cars per household in most categories and only half the England figure in the 'No vehicle' category.

**Figure 7: Car ownership levels in West Byfleet**

Cars (or vans) per household	West Byfleet %	Woking %	Surrey %	Eng. & Wales %
No vehicle	12.50	15.16	13.1	25.8
One vehicle	38.53	41.24	40.4	42.2
Two vehicles	36.90	32.99	34.2	24.7
Three vehicles	8.58	7.61	8.7	5.5
Four or more vehicles	3.49	3.01	3.5	1.9
Average per household	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.2





A further stage of home building in The Area saw the construction of homes in the new roads of Hollies and Woodlands Avenues (Zone B). Built in the 1930s, these comprise a mixture of two storey and bungalow homes all brick built and tile hung, set back from the roads with wide grass verges and hedges on the boundaries. Most have driveways with off-street parking.



Development of Dartnell Park (Zone C) also continued, with generally larger, three- or more bedroom, detached houses set in their own plots with gardens to the front and rear, in low densities. There has been infilling of newer homes over the years in similar style. The only semi-detached homes result from the dividing of larger previously individual homes. Most of the roads have grass verges, some with mature trees.



Many homes have gardens

containing mature trees and are bordered by natural hedging. All homes have driveways with multiple spaces. This zone is designated an 'Urban Area of Special Residential Character' in Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted by WBC in April 2000<sup>6</sup>. Urban Areas of Special Residential Character are areas of low density housing which are generally well treed and are considered in the guidance to be particular features of Woking Borough worthy of retention. Key characteristics are formed by the density and layout of development and the relationship of trees and hedges to buildings.



The southern part of The Area (Zone D) mostly contains a similar style of housing to that described above but only part is designated an 'Urban Area of Special Residential Character'. Zone D also contains the Ministry of Defence (MoD) service families' accommodation at the rear of The Oaks and in Hobbs Close.

In the 1970s a denser mix of apartments and terraced housing was built, known as the Brantwood estate (Zone E). There are narrower roads on the estate than in the rest of The Area, with parking in the road or shared spaces behind the homes. The apartments are three storeys; generally gardens are small or non-existent but there is communal green space facing onto the Old Woking Road. There are no pitched tile-hung roofs and the whole area has a more urban feel than the rest of The Area, with more use of concrete in the construction rather than brick.



<sup>6</sup> Urban Areas of Special Residential Character, Supplementary to WBC Local Plan 1999, Policy HSG20





Old Avenue and its side roads (Zone F) contain the larger detached homes in The Area. It has been designated a 'Conservation Area' (see below) due to its Arcadian environment of substantial family



homes of interesting architecture and large gardens with driveways. Old Avenue is also defined as an 'Urban Area of Special Residential Character'.



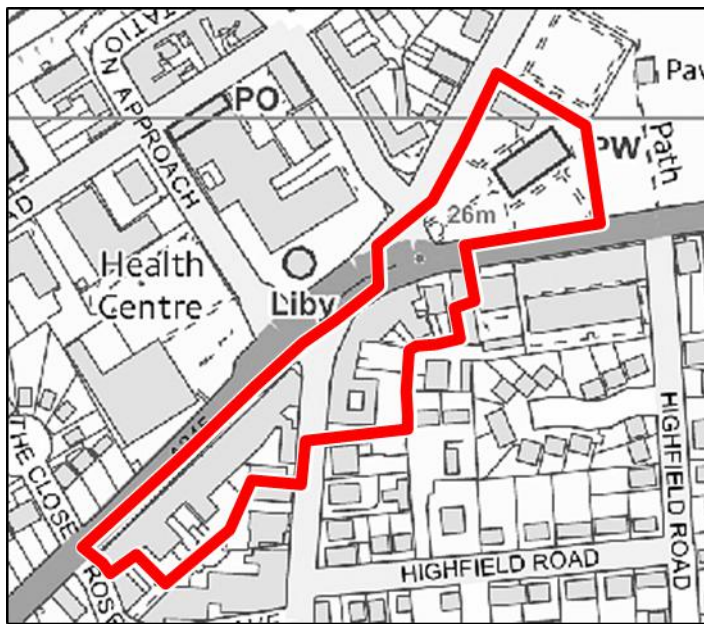
Within the District Centre (Zone G) there are few detached homes. This area has seen the conversion of most space above retail units into homes and the building of purpose built apartment blocks of up to five storeys. The conversion of several office buildings to apartment blocks has taken, or is currently taking, place. None of these homes have gardens and off street parking is extremely limited.

The last notable area is mainly at the top and north of Madeira Road backing onto the railway line (Zone H). Here most of the original early twentieth century housing has gone and been replaced with detached, semi-detached and terraced housing in neo-Georgian style with small front and rear gardens and some off-street parking.

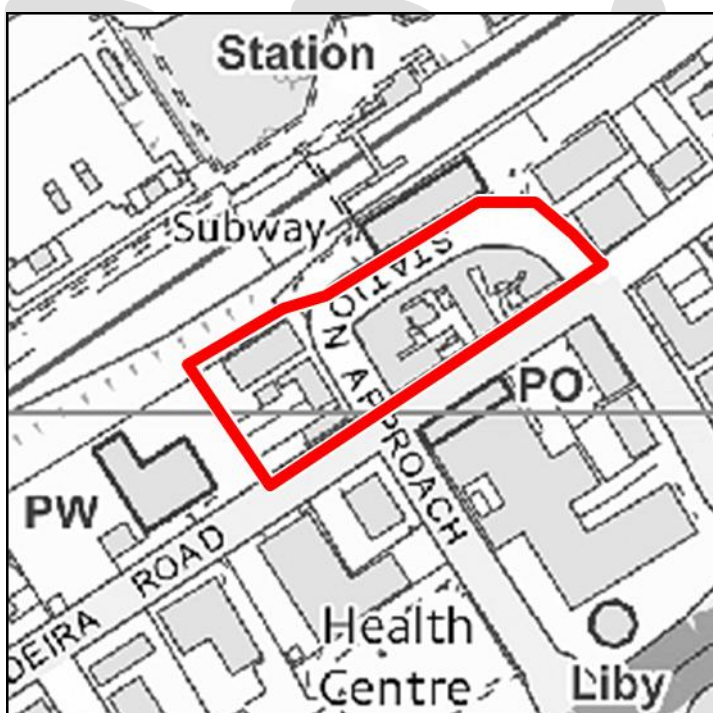
There is an abundance of mature trees and hedging in the residential roads of The Area, giving it a strong green character and forming the impression of a more rural environment than the overall density of housing would suggest. The Area also includes numerous roadside green verges which enhance the landscape by giving wider boundaries between roads, pavements and buildings. West Byfleet is one of five areas in the Woking Design SPD<sup>7</sup> described as 'Arcadian', with typically under 15 dwellings per hectare.

In addition to the Urban Areas of Special Residential Character described above, there are five designated Conservation Areas in The Neighbourhood Forum Area. These are described below.

<sup>7</sup> Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); WBC, February 2015

**Figure 9: Byfleet Corner/Rosemount Parade Conservation Area**

All properties in Rosemount Parade with some adjoining and fronting Pyrford Road as well as 1-3 Parvis Road and St John's Church.

**Figure 10: Station Approach Conservation Area**

Includes 15-39 and 49-57 Station Approach.

The two Conservation Areas of Byfleet Corner/Rosemount Parade and Station Approach were designated in 1992 in order to protect their special architectural and historic character and reflect the late Victorian/Edwardian origins of the village that grew around the railway station. The Byfleet Corner Parade dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and is a good example of the late Victorian period which has largely survived intact. Rosemount Parade is from 1907 and later. Surrey Master Builder W.G. Tarrant, who was the developer of St George's Hill and the Wentworth Estate in Surrey and is associated with the work of Lutyens, was involved in the earlier parts of this development (as well as building many individual houses in West Byfleet). The parade was originally tree-lined.



The Station Approach conservation area was constructed prior to World War One and was also designed by Tarrant. Although the parades were constructed as a single development they were specifically designed in an 'Arts & Crafts' style to have the appearance of a collection of individual cottage scale buildings. This was achieved by introducing domestic scale building forms into the elevations and using a variety of facing materials.



Both parades of shops have a strong 'Arts & Crafts' influence with a high standard of architectural design. Station Approach contains many original interesting features, such as the colonnade along the western frontage and a large 'catslide' roof which drops to ground floor level and forms a canopy over the parade. Many shops still retain their original Edwardian shop fronts.



The most significant landmark within the Conservation Areas is St John the Baptist Church which forms an important view from Byfleet Corner (see front cover). The large gable on the bank at the junction with Pyrford Road forms a secondary landmark. The more architecturally interesting buildings which have largely retained their period detail are included on the statutory and local lists.

**Figure 11: Birchwood Road Conservation Area**

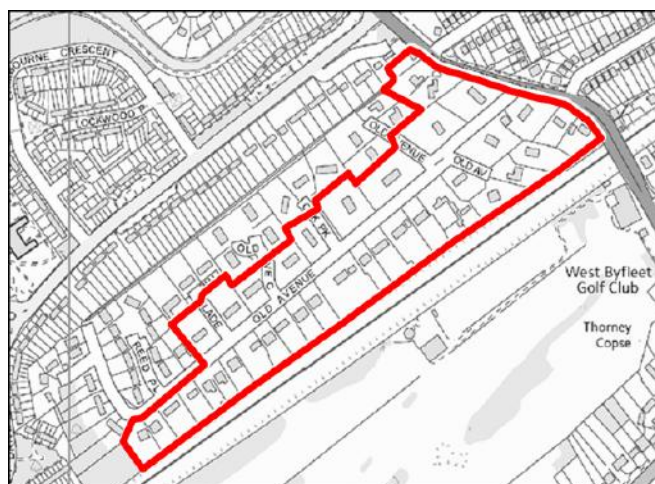


Includes all properties in Birchwood Close, the Station Hotel and some adjoining properties fronting Station Road.

The Conservation Area of Birchwood Road is an estate of houses constructed for local workers by the Birchwood Tenant Company (owned by local philanthropist Frederick Cornelius Stoop) and is an early example of affordable housing for local workers. The architects are

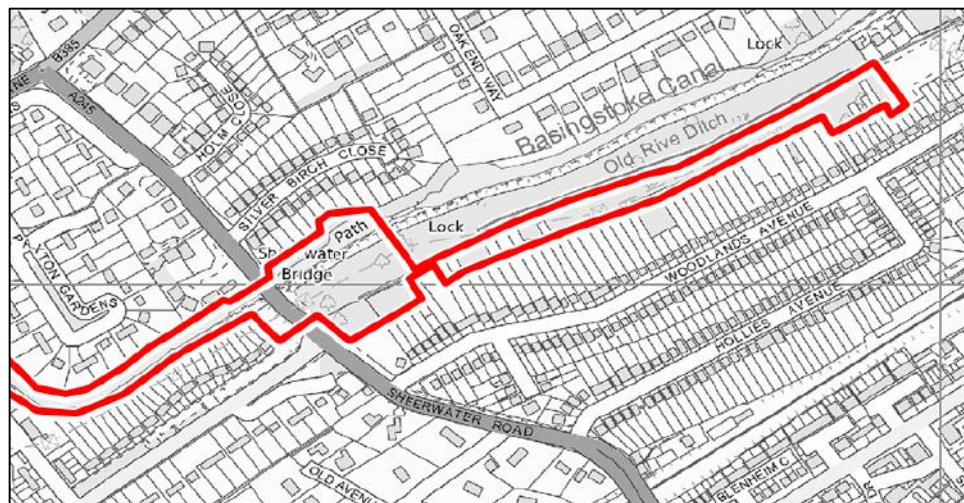


recorded as being Richard Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin, designers of both the Letchworth Garden City and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

**Figure 12: Old Avenue Conservation Area**

Most of the properties fronting Old Avenue, including some infill rear properties on the south side. Also includes properties fronting the west side of Sheerwater Road from the railway almost to Albert Drive.

Old Avenue is a modest sized estate developed during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, notably around the First World War and originally comprised a number of very large plots. Most of the original dwellings remain and are large, wide frontage properties of 2½ storeys, individually designed in the 'Arts & Crafts' style. 14 of these are included on the local list<sup>8</sup>.

**Figure 13: Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area**

Land fronting Sheerwater Road and either side of the canal plus a strip between the pylon line and gardens north side of Woodlands Road but excluding land adjacent to the canal.

As well as contributing to the development of Rosemount Parade and Station Approach, the Surrey Master builder W.G. Tarrant, described as “a man of vision and enterprise...with a reputation for high quality materials and good workmanship”<sup>9</sup> built extensively in West Byfleet, Pyrford and Woking (the new commuter areas of Surrey) in the early 1900s and was seen as one of the most influential and prolific builders in Surrey at that time. Tarrant’s larger houses were generally built from hand-made bricks and tiles in the Surrey style, with tall chimneys, dormer windows, gables and leaded lights. Examples of his individual houses remain in West Byfleet in roads such as Highfield Road and Madeira Road.

<sup>8</sup> The Heritage of Woking, An Historic Compendium, C.L. Fairlamb, WBC Planning Officer, Amended 2000

<sup>9</sup> Swenarton, Mavis (1993) 'WG Tarrant: Master Builder and Developer' (Walton & Weybridge Local History Society, Monograph 54)



**Taking all of the above into account, it can be seen that West Byfleet has a special and distinctive character and ‘village feel’ – a factor recognised by the people who live and work in The Area. Together, the policies of The Plan will aim to preserve and, where possible, enhance, this special character and village feel.**

### 2.3.2 Built Environment Issues

As West Byfleet has grown and developed as described above, the availability of parking has become a major issue in both residential and commercial areas, with a resulting impact on highway safety, residential amenity and commercial vitality. There appears to be a range of contributory factors:

- High car ownership levels: car ownership is at a higher level in West Byfleet than in Woking and considerably higher than the national average (see Figure 7). The number of households with no vehicle at all is lower than the Surrey average and considerably lower than the national average.
- Insufficient parking spaces for residents in new developments of flats, resulting in cars parking in neighbouring residential roads.
- Commuter parking in uncontrolled roads – two roads on the north side of the railway station (Hollies Avenue, Birchwood Road) have experienced emergency access problems as a result.
- Insufficient parking spaces at the West Byfleet Health Centre (which also services the surrounding villages) as a result of significant year on year growth in activity and failure to obtain planning approval for an underground car park in 2003. The practices claim that “Patients are frequently late for appointments because they have difficulty parking. This situation is likely to worsen considerably with any increase in local population”<sup>10</sup>. This has led the practices to employ a security firm to stop all-day and unauthorised use of the parking area, which is required for doctors, district nurses, health visitors and midwives as well as patient parking.
- Limited parking at St John’s Church (27 spaces). The Parochial Church Council (PCC) states that “We are frequently approached by people wishing to make an arrangement to use the car park on a regular basis, something we are unable to agree to. The limited size of the car park means that there are numerous occasions when there is insufficient space even for authorised users, and we are experiencing a growing problem with unauthorised parking...We are considering how best to address these issues given that impending new business and housing developments will only increase the number of cars circulating in, or commuting to, the village.”<sup>11</sup>
- No designated parking for schools in The Area. The PCC allows parents and carers, under specific terms and purely for safety reasons, to use the St John’s Church car park for drop-off and collection of children from West Byfleet Junior and Infant Schools.
- A high proportion of service business within the District Centre (dentists, physiotherapists, solicitors, hairdressers) requiring parking facilities for elderly customers or patients.

## 2.4 Commercial Environment

The village of West Byfleet is a standalone commercial centre with office accommodation and a variety of shops as well as a major chain supermarket. The shopping comprises an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century parade and block

<sup>10</sup> Practice administrator, NHS North West Surrey CCG; email to WBNF, April 2016

<sup>11</sup> Priest-in-charge, St John’s, West Byfleet; email to WBNF, May 2016

adjacent to the station and a parade fronting the A245, later supplemented by a 1960s centre with offices above. The centre is showing signs of decay mainly due to a lack of investment in the public areas.



The village centre is dominated by Sheer House, a seven-storey 1960s office building. This is generally disliked due to its architecture which, residents feel, jars with the character of the village. WBC Design SPD<sup>12</sup> says of Sheer House “The scale of Sheer House is at odds with the prevailing scale and character” [of West Byfleet] and “The height of Sheer House in West Byfleet is inappropriate for the centre”.

The two attendant retail blocks, in the same ownership and developed at the same time in the same architectural style, are also disliked but to a lesser degree.



WBC recognises West Byfleet as the borough’s second most important commercial centre and has designated it as the only District Centre in the borough. WBC’s aspirations for the village centre are stated in the Core Strategy to 2027.

The District Centre (see Figure 14) forms a well-used alternative economic centre to Woking town centre and benefits from a station with services to central London and other commercial centres, such as Guildford. The office population brings trade to the remainder of the village and helps support its economic viability. Other facilities include a modern health centre housing three GP practices and support practices, and a library.

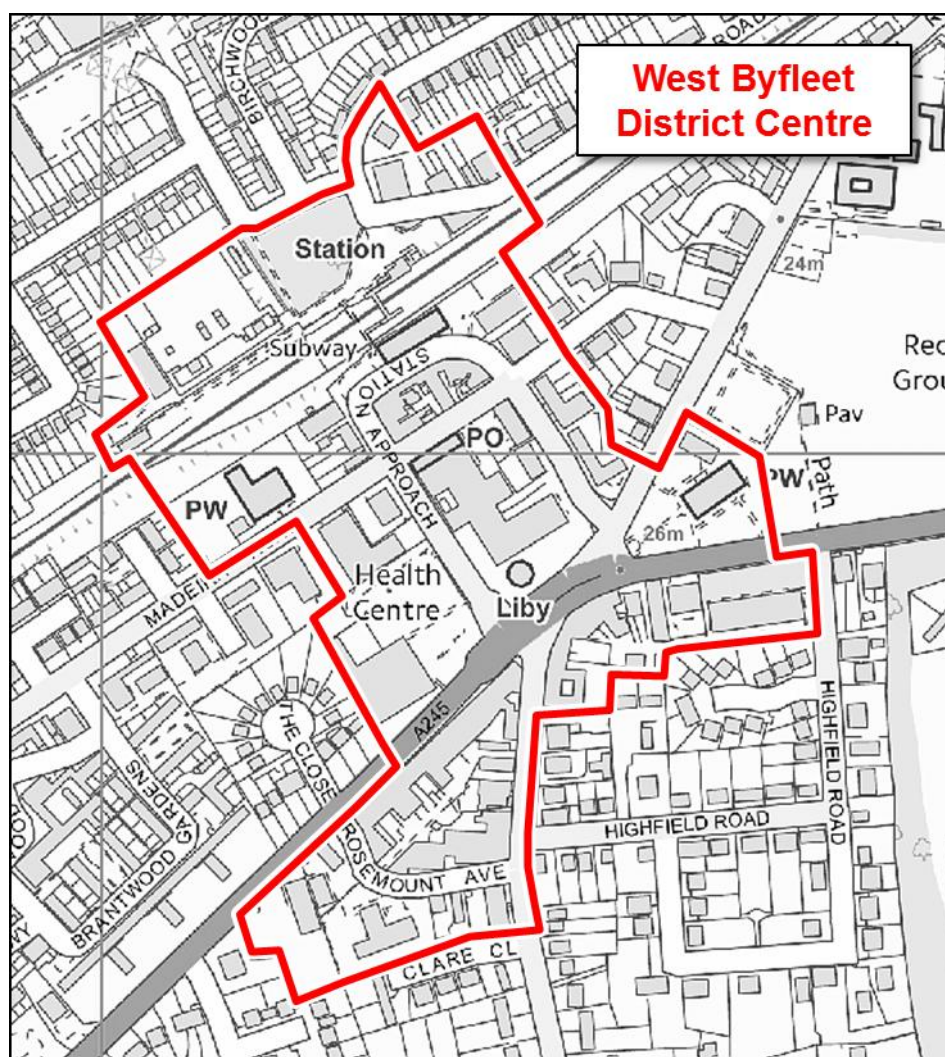
There are some 70 shops in the District Centre but it is felt by residents that the retail offer lacks diversity. This is largely due to space being converted to service uses such as nail, beauty, and hair salons (11 in all). There are 16 restaurants and take away food outlets in the District Centre, as well as three coffee bars, two licensed premises and a club which cater for a wide range of tastes. The food outlets serve the office community and shoppers during the day and bring life to the village in the evening. The office accommodation floor area is currently greater than the retail and service space but is being depleted by the changing use of buildings.

The District Centre also contains a pedestrian subway under the railway line which forms an important and well-used link between the parts to the south and the railway station and residential areas to the north. Residents strongly feel that this subway needs significant improvement and renovation (see Section 5).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 7, pp58 and 61



Figure 14: The West Byfleet District Centre



The West Byfleet Neighbourhood Area also contains Broadoaks Business Park which is a former MoD site with an area of approximately 15 hectares and a substantial frontage to Parvis Road lying with a few hundred metres of the village centre. It is severed from the retail, service and office central area by housing to such a degree that it is not a natural extension to the commercial area.

Today the site is occupied by the original Broadoaks Manor, a listed building, and its formal gardens, a former home of the Charrington brewing family. In 2007 a development company constructed a speculative building of 10,000 sq m comprising a bunker for data storage of about 5,000 sq m with a further 5,000 sq m of offices in two floors above. This remains unoccupied.

The site is the largest and one of the most significant commercial development sites in the borough. It is now the subject of a major planning application by its new owners to develop the site with some 150 dwellings and convert the one new building into a school.

Also within The Area is the Camphill Road Industrial Estate which has a site area of approximately two hectares and was developed in the 1960s with a variety of mainly single-storey industrial units, together with some two-storey ancillary offices totalling approximately 9,000 sq m. There has been limited redevelopment with one industrial unit at the front and Apex Court, an office complex adjoining of some 1,100 sq m, being redeveloped in the 1990s. The freehold of the estate is owned by the Byfleet United Charity which has granted ground leases on individual plots with some 50-60 years unexpired.

The estate is sandwiched between the railway and the Basingstoke Canal and suffers from access unsuited to commercial traffic. At the rear of the estate is a former waste tip of some four hectares which is unlikely to be developable in the medium term due to contamination.

## 2.5 Infrastructure

### 2.5.1 Roads

The A245, also known locally as Parvis Road and Old Woking Road, is classed as one of Surrey's principal highways and passes through the heart of the West Byfleet community as well as neighbouring areas in, generally speaking, an east-west corridor.

Since the early 1970s, the growth in vehicle movements in both directions has been pronounced and has become a cause of concern for both residents and businesses in The Area, similarly affecting the communities in Byfleet, Pyrford, Sheerwater and Woodham. Traffic congestion is always present during the morning and evening rush hours but it is now also a feature of the weekday picture at the so-called quieter times of the day, mid-morning and mid-afternoon, as well as throughout the weekend. The number of vehicle movements, in both directions, is generated in part by local residents/retailers but also by 'through traffic' – originating outside the area and passing through the area. There have been few in-depth studies and therefore there is little reliable data available. However, in 2002, the A245/A320 Multi Modal Traffic Study<sup>13</sup> carried out by SCC concluded that the A245 was 'over-trafficked' and 'burdensome to local communities'. The Strategic Traffic Assessment 2015<sup>14</sup> published in June 2015 by WBC addresses the impact of the proposed 'West Hall' housing development and shows that the levels used to categorise the performance and capacity of sections of a road, giving the desirable maximum congestion, would be greatly exceeded on Parvis Road by any housing development on the West Hall site.

Junctions 10 and 11 of the M25 are each within five miles via A Class roads. Heathrow is within 20 minutes' drive and Gatwick within 40 minutes.

### 2.5.2 Public Transport

The village acts as a local transport hub with bus services to different parts of the borough. West Byfleet railway station has four services an hour to Waterloo in off-peak time: two 'fast' trains (under 30 minutes journey time to London Waterloo) and two stopping services; peak time services are more frequent but are generally stopping trains with journey times around 45 minutes. There are also services to the south coast as well of much of Surrey and southern England.

### 2.5.3 Healthcare

The principal healthcare facility within The Area is the West Byfleet Health Centre in Madeira Road. The original health centre was built in the 1970s but was replaced by the present building in 2003. About 30,000 patients are registered with the three separate general practices which treat patients from New Haw, Pyrford, Woodham, Byfleet and Wisley as well as from West Byfleet. Although this represents only a modest increase in patient numbers from 28,000 in 2003, the practices claim their workload "has doubled" in that time "due to the transfer of work from hospitals to General Practice and increasing numbers of elderly patients with multiple pathologies"<sup>15</sup>. With various clinics and surgeries the practices see about 3,000 patients each week.

The main concern to the practice management is that there is now very little capability to expand the level of service. They believe that "An increase in local population would put further strain on the services we

<sup>13</sup> A245/A320 Transportation Study, Surrey County Council, 11 September 2002

<sup>14</sup> Strategic Traffic Assessment 2015, Woking Borough Council, June 2015

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 10



provide... Any plans for additional housing would probably need to incorporate provision of new premises to allow for an expansion of primary healthcare facilities for the increased population..."<sup>16</sup>.

There are no other doctors registered in the West Byfleet area. However, there are several dental practices, podiatry clinics and a sports injury practice, each well used by residents.

## 2.6 Open Spaces

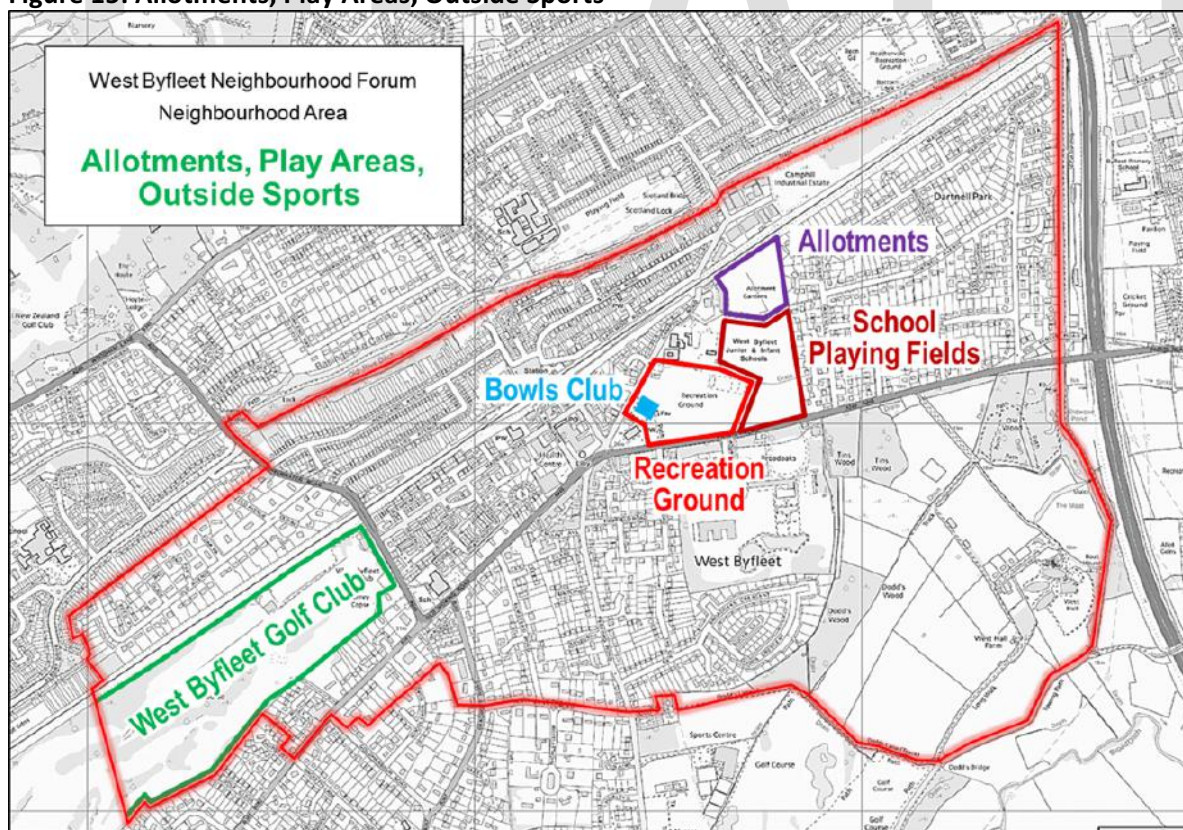
West Byfleet open spaces cover a wide range of green infrastructure assets:

- Allotments, play areas and outdoor sports
- Natural and semi-natural open spaces
- Green Belt
- Dodd's Lane
- River Wey and Godalming Navigations
- Biodiversity.

These open spaces and all other elements of the green infrastructure are important to the residents of West Byfleet because there are only a small number within The Area. Both the NPPF and WBC Core Strategy stress the importance and need to protect and develop green infrastructure assets wherever possible. All agree that this is essential to the wellbeing of the community. Any development proposed for The Area would need to ensure that the present limited number of green infrastructure assets would not be eroded.

### 2.6.1 Allotments, play areas, outside sports (see Figure 15)

### Figure 15: Allotments, Play Areas, Outside Sports



<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

Allotments, Leisure Lane, off Camphill Road, 2.42 ha.

This is a large site conveniently located relatively near West Byfleet centre and considered by residents to be a valuable community resource (there is currently a waiting list to acquire an allotment). It is located so that many residents can walk to the site if they wish but most users drive. This area does not have an open space designation.

West Byfleet Golf Club, Sheerwater Road, 49.49 ha.

A traditional community golf club established in 1906 and owned by its members, this is one of the best golf venues in the Surrey Heathland area serving local residents and visitors. The club house is located southwest of Sheerwater road; approximately half of the golf course falls within The Area while the other half is contained within the Pyrford Neighbourhood Forum boundary. This area does not have an open space designation.

West Byfleet Bowls Club, Camphill Road, 0.3 ha.

This is an established and important part of the neighbourhood sport and recreation facilities and is one of the few community recreation facilities attracting more elderly residents. It is located in the southwest corner of the recreation ground adjacent to St John the Baptist Church. It is designated as an Urban Open Space at present.

West Byfleet Recreation Ground, Camphill Road, 4.8 ha.

The recreation ground is well used by residents of all ages, with three football pitches, a cricket pitch with pavilion, and many community activities and events (such as 'West Byfleet:Live'). There is a popular children's play area in the northwest corner. In the northeast corner there is a relatively new combined basketball and five-a-side football court, a further basketball court in poor repair and three derelict tennis courts. The 4.8 ha recreation ground was acquired by the community in 1913 thanks to the generosity of local philanthropists the Stoop family of West Hall and the Charrington family of Broadoaks. The land in question was made over to the Council 'to be devoted to the purposes of public recreation for the use of the whole parish for all time coming'<sup>17</sup>. During the First World War the land was used for food production. It was grassed over after the war and formally opened on 6 July 1921. It is designated as an Urban Open Space at present.

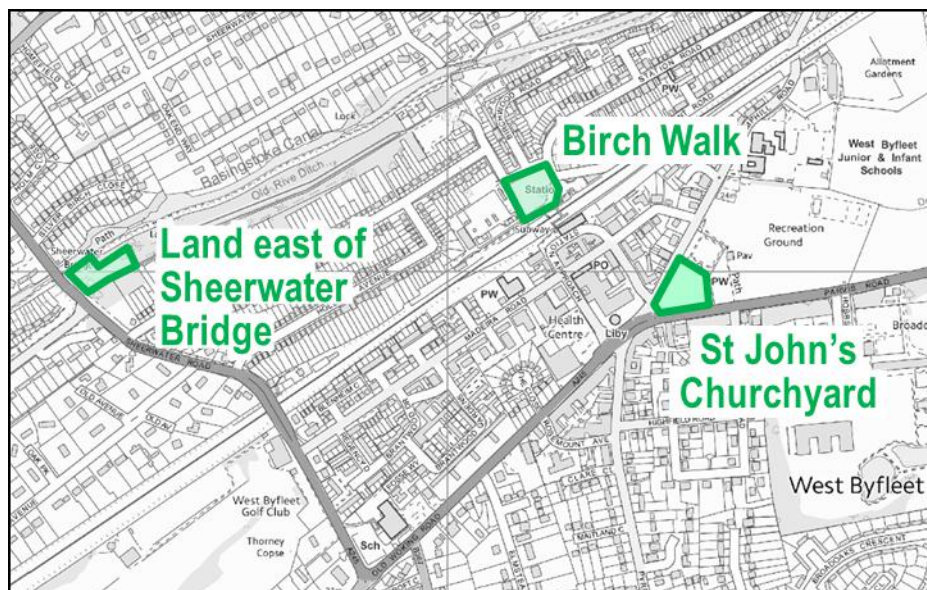
West Byfleet Junior and Infant School Playing Fields, 4.67 ha.

This open space is designated as Green Belt and includes the land east of the recreation ground (approximately 1.6 ha). It is an important asset for these fast-growing schools.

<sup>17</sup> Byfleet Parish Council minutes, 1921



## 2.6.2 Natural and semi-natural open spaces (see Figure 16)

**Figure 16: Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces****Land East of Sheerwater Bridge, Sheerwater Road, 0.49 ha.**

This is the only open green space at this end of The Area. At the present time it is designated as Urban Open Space. Although relatively small it has a special attraction for residents in that it is adjacent to the Basingstoke Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

**Birch Walk, Woodlands Avenue/Birchwood Road, 0.40 ha.**

This area is described as the “village green” in the Woking Design SPD and is greatly appreciated by residents. It is known locally as “Birch Green”. At the present time this space does not have planning policy open space designation.



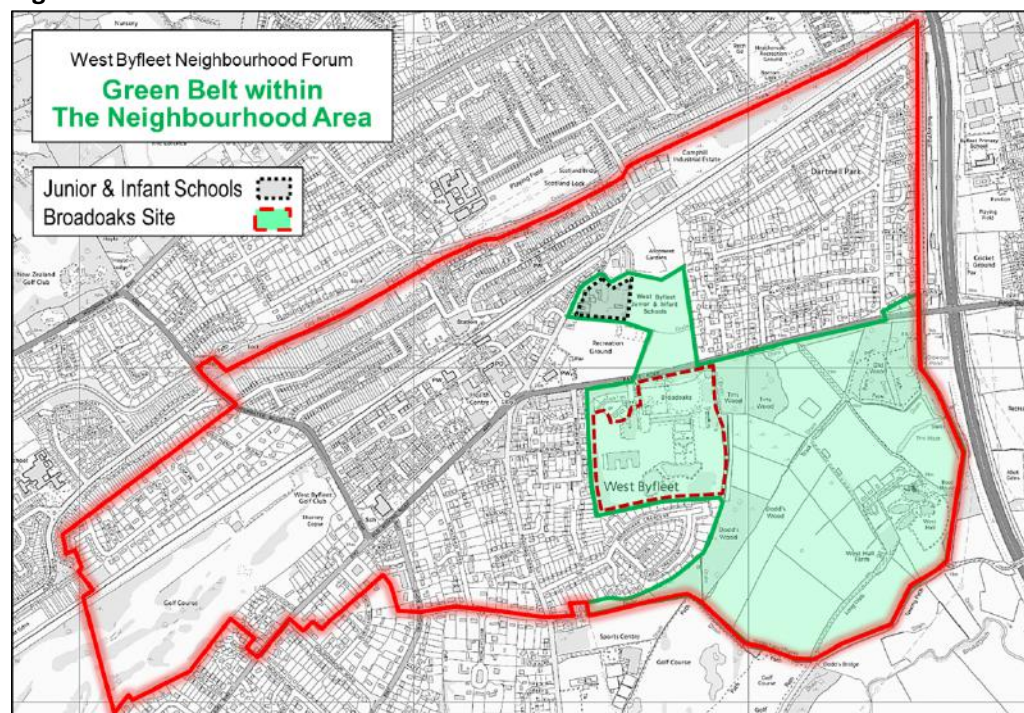


St John the Baptist Church, 0.5 ha.

St John the Baptist Church, the surrounding green open space, car park and village war memorial occupy an area of approximately 0.5 ha and are located in a prominent position between the centre of West Byfleet and the recreation ground. The church is a Grade II listed building and the whole area lies within the Byfleet Corner/Rosemount Parade Conservation Area. The open space is approximately 0.3 ha. This is a tranquil community area enjoyed since the beginning of the twentieth century by residents and used for community events.

### 2.6.3 Green Belt (see Figure 17).

### Figure 17: Green Belt



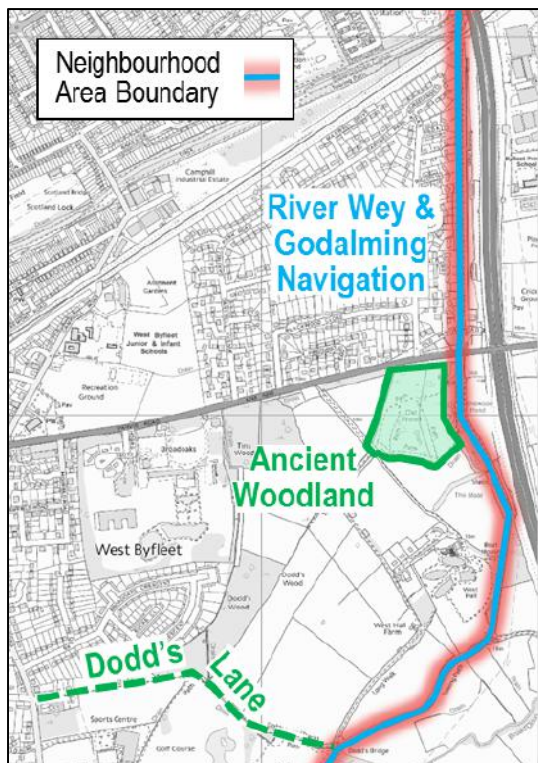
The Green Belt is particularly important to the residents and the community because of the small number of open spaces in The Area. Within The Area, there are two significant sites – the West Byfleet Junior and Infant Schools and Broadoaks (a major development site within the Green Belt) – that have been, or will be, built over. Although they are designated as Green Belt and are subject to Green Belt policies, they can no longer be considered as open spaces. The schools’ playing fields, however, remain in the Green Belt as open spaces.

The two other areas of Green Belt within The Area are West Hall (59.3 ha) and the small area to the east of the Pyrford Road and north of Dodd's Lane (1.80 ha), The Area's southern boundary. These two areas are part of the Green Belt which extends to the south and east.

The Area covers approximately 294 ha of which 85 ha or 28.9% is officially designated as Green Belt. As the two sites noted above can no longer be looked upon as open space, the open space provided by Green Belt reduces from 85 ha to 68 ha, or 23% of The Area. These are important aspects and statistics to bear in mind if proposals are made in the future to remove Green Belt land and redefine its boundary elsewhere in the borough. West Byfleet's Green Belt is fundamental to the locally distinct character of The Area and the local community strongly supports its retention (see Section 3.2.1.5).

#### 2.6.4 Dodd's Lane (see Figure 18).

**Figure 18: Dodd's Lane, Ancient Woodland and River Wey and Godalming Navigations**



Dodd's Lane, designated as a bridleway and off-road cycle route, runs from the Pyrford Road, opposite Hollybank Road, to the National Trust-owned Wey Navigations at Dodd's Bridge and forms part of The Area's southern boundary with the Pyrford Neighbourhood Forum Area. The lane is a main pedestrian and cycle access for West Byfleet residents to the Wey Navigations and offers attractive rural views to right and left across Green Belt land. It connects with a designated cycle route leading towards Woking at the Pyrford Road end and with the footpath and cycle route along the Wey Navigations towing path to Byfleet at the Dodd's Bridge end.



Byfleet, Pyrford and Byfleet. Those using the lane include families with young children and prams, recreational walkers, dog walkers, joggers and cyclists enjoying the open countryside.

Cyclists use the route as a short and safe route linking Byfleet and Pyrford avoiding the busy and often congested Parvis Road (A245). This route encourages a reduction of car use.

#### 2.6.5 River Wey and Godalming Navigations (see Figure 18).

Part of the River Wey and Godalming Navigations, owned and maintained by the National Trust, forms the eastern boundary of The Area. One of the first British rivers to be made navigable, the River Wey was opened to barge traffic in 1653. The length of the Navigations forming The Area's eastern boundary is a canal and runs from Walsham Lock in Pyrford, between West Byfleet and Byfleet, through Addlestone, to Weybridge Lock in Weybridge.

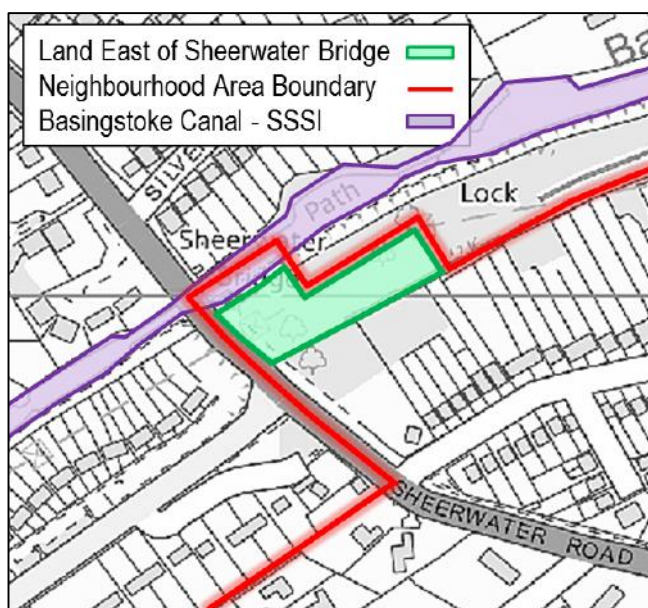
The towing path along the canal connects with Dodd's Lane and the towing path along the Basingstoke Canal. These connected paths are well used by residents for recreation and to enjoy the plant and wildlife of the canals and the beauty of the surrounding Green Belt areas.

#### 2.6.6 Biodiversity (wildlife and plant habitat)

##### Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (see Figure 19)

The Basingstoke Canal, an SSSI, falls within The Area at the northern side of Sheerwater Bridge and is of national importance for aquatic plants and invertebrates. It contains approximately half (87) of Britain's native aquatic higher plant species and is botanically the most species-rich aquatic system in England. Twenty-four species of dragonfly occur and other insects, including two nationally rare species.



**Figure 19: Site of Special Scientific Interest**

The majority of the Basingstoke Canal lies outside, but adjacent to, The Area's northern boundary. As can be seen from Figures 1 and 20, a short section of it falls within The Area's boundary.

Ancient Woodland, Parvis Road, 5.2 ha. (see Figure 18)

The Ancient Woodland, called Old Wood, is located immediately south of Parvis Road adjacent to the Wey Navigations and is part of the West Hall Estate. The Ancient Woodland is located within the Green Belt.

In England, an ancient woodland is a woodland that has existed continuously since 1600 or before. Before this, planting of woodland was uncommon, so a wood present in 1600 is likely to have developed naturally. In most ancient woods, the trees and shrubs have been cut down periodically as part of the management cycle. Provided that the area has remained as woodland, the stand is still considered ancient. Since it may have been cut many times in the past, ancient woodland does not necessarily contain very old trees.

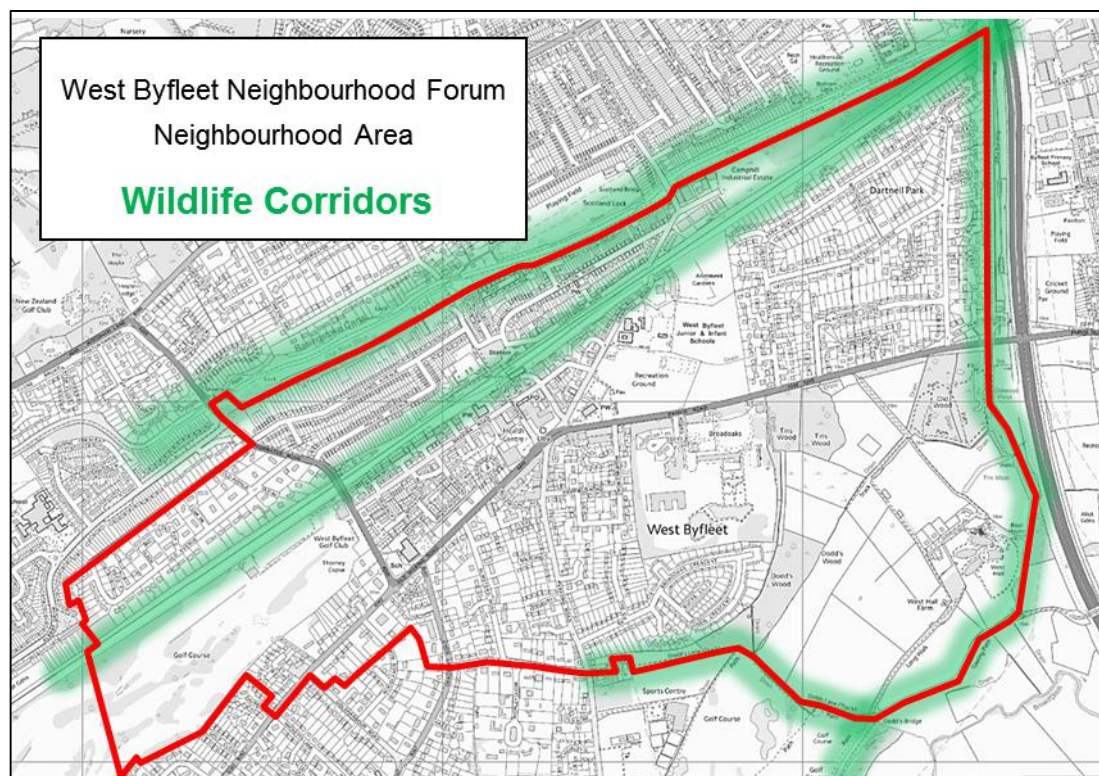
#### Trees and hedges

The Area has many fine trees and hedges lining the majority of its roads. These are particularly important to West Byfleet not only to preserve and maintain the character of The Area but also in helping to reduce pollution from traffic by absorbing some of the contents of exhaust fumes. A number of individual trees and rows of trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.



Wildlife Corridors (see Figure 20)

**Figure 20: Wildlife Corridors**



A wildlife corridor is a link which joins areas of similar wildlife habitat. They are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations. By providing connections between area of habitat, corridors enable migration, colonisation and interbreeding of plants and animals.

There are four main wildlife corridors important to The Area: The River Wey and Godalming Navigations, Basingstoke Canal, the railway embankment and Dodd's Lane. These corridors are connected. The Basingstoke Canal, although just outside the Forum's boundary, runs the full length of the northern boundary and connects with the River Wey and Godalming Navigations, which in turn run the full length of the eastern boundary to connect with Dodd's Lane running along the southern boundary to the Pyrford Road. These wildlife corridors ensure that habitats are not fragmented and facilitate the integrity and harmonious integration with the adjacent open spaces, residential areas well populated with trees, and the surrounding areas of the borough.

## 2.7 Social and Community

The NPPF recognises the need to take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. In The Plan, 'social and community infrastructure' embraces 'social, recreational and cultural facilities' (as discussed in the NPPF) and includes educational and sporting provision.

In 2011 WBC conducted a Social and Community Facilities Audit<sup>18</sup> and the section for West Byfleet includes:

- Cornerstone Centre, St John's Church
- West Byfleet Scout Hut

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/policy/ldfresearch/commfac/socialandcommfacil>

- West Byfleet Junior School
- The Marist Catholic Primary School
- West Byfleet Community Infant School.

The audit, which provides evidence to underpin future planning policies, is incomplete and needs updating. It does not include, for example, the West Byfleet Guide Hut in the school grounds at Camphill Road.

Importantly for the residents of The Area, there are no non-faith meeting facilities available to residents to provide a focus for community activities – unlike both Pyrford and Byfleet and the majority of villages in the borough – and there is a shortage of capacity in the current facilities. Activities named as requiring a village hall included: evening classes, community meetings, groups catering for each of the different age ranges, music, drama, film nights.

#### 2.7.1 Facilities for Scouts and Guides

The Scouts and Guides undertake important work with young people in West Byfleet. The scout hut has a limited lease and the guide hut is at the end of its building life. There is wide local support for these organisations to have improved built facilities (see Section 3.2.1.6).

#### 2.7.2 Sports Facilities

West Byfleet currently has a number of different sports facilities but it is felt by residents that these need improving and shared use between schools and the community needs to be optimised in order to achieve greater benefit for the community (see Section 3.2.1.6).

#### 2.7.3 Parking and Traffic Management

There is no dedicated parking provision to serve the recreation ground. When planning new social and community facilities, access to adequate car parking needs to be taken into account. Planning proposals that affect the area in and near Camphill Road will need to consider measures that address local traffic congestion and the parking problems currently associated with the Infant and Junior Schools.

#### 2.7.4 Funding of Social & Community Facilities

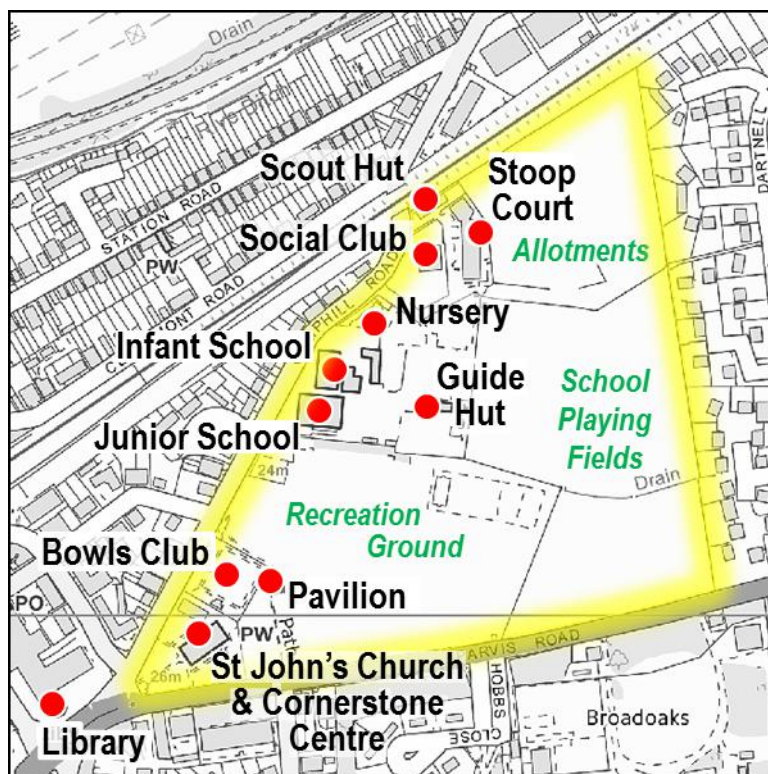
The Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) allows councils to charge developers to pay for infrastructure if and when planning applications are approved, with some of the revenue available for the local community to benefit the neighbourhood in which the development occurs. This levy applies to development with over 100sq m of new floor space and is determined in accordance with the Council’s schedule of charges<sup>19</sup>. Affordable housing and charitable developments are exempt from CIL. If an application is approved for development in The Area, 15% of the levy will be ring fenced for spending on projects in The Area. When The Plan is brought into force (‘made’) that figure rises to 25%.

There is a strong feeling in the community that, if further housing development occurs in West Byfleet, developers should make a contribution to improve community and social facilities within The Area (see Section 3.2.1.6).

#### 2.7.5 Future development of Social & Community facilities

The area marked A on Figure 21 below is of particular significance for social and community use. It includes the Scout Hut, Stoop Court (independent living residence), the allotments, West Byfleet Nursery School, West Byfleet Infant and Junior Schools including the adjacent sports fields, the Guide Hut, the Bowls Club, Cornerstone Centre, St John’s Church, the recreation ground and the lower sports field between the recreation ground and Dartnell Avenue. Ownership is with the Church, Byfleet United Charity, WBC and SCC. Planning control is across two local authorities: WBC and, because of the educational element, SCC.

<sup>19</sup> [www.woking.gov.uk/planning/service/contributions](http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/service/contributions)

**Figure 21: Area A – Community Facilities (Area A is marked in yellow)**

In the event of future development of this area, The Forum believes there is a risk of sub-optimal use of land and assets if each landowner or stakeholder of Area A pursues their own objectives in isolation. For example, there are plans for the existing sports pavilion in the recreation ground to be renewed – the proposed replacement pavilion could be located to serve both the recreation ground and the sports fields behind the schools. The proposed policy<sup>20</sup> for the renewal of the Scout facility as part of housing provision on its existing site could be reconsidered and the building of a new shared Scout/Guide facility near to open space/sports fields might be considered to be more appropriate.

Where appropriate, a Concept Plan should be created for Area A by the developer, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, before any future development occurs. This would not be a complete land use plan or

design, but a general representation of the elements that the community and stakeholders would like to see incorporated into any future plans for the area defined above. The objective of the Concept Plan would be to provide a cohesive plan for the provision of educational, recreational, community and sporting provision for The Area.

<sup>20</sup> WBC Policy UA52 Re-provision of the existing community facilities on site as a part of any redevelopment scheme  
<http://www.woking2027.info/allocations/allocationsdpdua26ua52.pdf>



### 3 Vision and objectives

#### 3.1 Vision

The vision and core objectives for The Plan were developed in consultation with the local community through surveys, questionnaires and a series of community engagement events. They form the foundation of The Plan.

The Area covers two distinct environments: residential areas and the commercial centre. The Forum's vision for The Area as a whole attempts to address the different needs of these.

#### The Vision Statement

**To maintain, enhance and protect The Area's distinctive and special residential character – especially its green spaces – while supporting sympathetic and sustainable development to maintain a vibrant village with improved community facilities and a thriving centre with opportunities for local employment.**

At a public consultation meeting The Forum held with residents in November 2015, all residents present (55 in total) voted in favour of the Vision Statement above.

#### 3.2 Plan Objectives

The objectives of The Plan are based on the views of local residents, businesses, community leaders and other stakeholders consulted during its preparation, and the issues raised in these consultations. These were gathered by a diverse range of means to ensure all residents felt able to contribute – including email and paper-based surveys, public meetings, library drop-in sessions, stalls at local events and one-to-one meetings carried out with residents over a period of 12 months, from May 2014 to April 2015. Details of these are set out in the Consultation Statement (see [www.wbnf.org](http://www.wbnf.org)).

##### 3.2.1 Residents' Views

The views of residents about West Byfleet were canvassed in a number of different surveys carried out by The Forum:

<b>Survey 1: Drop-in Survey</b>	<b>May 2014; 75 responses</b>
<b>Survey 2: Main Survey</b>	<b>November 2014; results published February 2015; 'Shaping the Future of West Byfleet'; 372 responses.</b>
<b>Survey 3: Social &amp; Community Drop-in Survey</b>	<b>February 2015; 51 responses; results displayed at the April Drop-in event</b>
<b>Survey 4: Supplementary Survey</b>	<b>April 2015; 125 responses</b>
<b>Survey 5: Draft Policies Survey</b>	<b>November-December 2015; 211 responses</b>

Survey results are available on The Forum website [www.wbnf.org](http://www.wbnf.org)

The views expressed by the community and the key issues emerging from these surveys are set out below.

##### 3.2.1.1 Residents' Views – General

**Parking** – There is concern about on-road parking resulting from the lack of provision in recent developments. In Survey 2, 96% of residents responded that new housing developments should be required to provide adequate off-street parking. 56% believe more parking should be provided in the village centre. In Survey 4, 91% were in favour of improved parking and traffic management for local schools and the provision of adequate parking for social and community facilities.

**Village centre** – There is consensus on the need to improve the built environment of the village centre. In Survey 2, The Forum received over 10 printed pages of comments relating to the development of the village centre. Salient views were as follows:

- There is strong feeling about the ugliness and lack of fit of Sheer House and some of its surrounding buildings. Descriptions included: “the sixties monstrosity”, “ugly 60s buildings”, “horrible 1960s office and shop complex”, “total eyesore”, “ugly concrete structure”.
- The great majority of residents would like Sheer House to be demolished or significantly refurbished to fit more sympathetically with the other, smaller scale, buildings of the village.
- Residents would like more diversity in the type of shops available, particularly independent shops rather than chains.
- There is significant support for pedestrianisation of the area around Sheer House and more pavement space (for example for cafés) – “a better streetscape”.
- Many cited the need for more trees and greenery, particularly replacing the mature trees lost to previous developments.

### 3.2.1.2 Residents’ Views – Built Environment

Views expressed in Survey 2 were as follows:

- Only 33% believe more housing is needed in West Byfleet, whereas 55% did not. Of those in favour of more housing, the preference is for family homes (85% agree) and affordable homes (80% agree).
- The style and character of housing in residential streets should be retained (85% consider important) but a high standard of design and quality of materials is considered more important than matching the style of existing housing (60% agree).
- Adequate off street parking is required for all new housing developments (96% agree). Note that 100% of respondents surveyed had travelled by car in the previous week.
- Development of flats should be restricted to certain areas (64% agree).
- Back garden/infill developments are generally not welcomed (61% are against them).

### 3.2.1.3 Residents’ Views - Commercial Environment

- Key views from Survey 1 were that the village centre, and Sheer House in particular, are in need of sympathetic regeneration and more retail variety is required:

Likes	Dislikes	Areas for improvement
Village amenities (22.3%)	Sheer House (14.7%)	Village centre buildings (17.2%)
Trains and transport (10.5%)	Traffic (13.7%)	Variety of shops (16.8%)
Shops in general (10.1%)	Poor variety of shops (9.3%)	Village recreational facilities (12.9%)
Restaurants (9.7%)	Parking (8.8%)	Traffic (9.5%)
Village atmosphere/ community feel (9.7%)		
Location (8.1%)		

Note: Percentages relate to % of total mentions in unprompted questions

In addition, Survey 2 found that:

- 57% believe there is a need for more local employment opportunities.
- 80% shop ‘often’ in the village; 56% agree there is a shortage of parking available for the services and retail shops in the District Centre.
- 67% would like to see mixed development on the Broadoaks site on Parvis Road.

### 3.2.1.4 Residents' Views – Infrastructure

The key views expressed by residents in Survey 4 included:

- Through traffic on the main road through West Byfleet, the A245, is a major issue (89% expressed as a concern); residents support studies to find ways of reducing current levels (91% support).
- Air pollution caused by traffic is a concern for 63% of respondents.
- Developments in neighbouring areas will impact infrastructure in The Area – 91% are concerned about the impact any further development may have on traffic, parking, health services and schools.
- Pylons are an unsightly part of the West Byfleet landscape; 68% believed it is important to encourage their removal in favour of underground cabling.

### 3.2.1.5 Residents' Views – Open Spaces

The key views expressed in Survey 2 included:

- Green belt boundaries should be kept and robustly protected (89% agree).
- Woodland, trees, plant and wildlife habitats should be protected and more trees planted (92% agree).
- Footpaths and cycle paths should be defined and protected (97% agree).
- Wildlife corridors should be protected (92% agree).

### 3.2.1.6 Residents' Views – Social and Community

In Survey 3 residents were very supportive of the proposal for developers to fund improvements in local facilities, with 98% agreeing that, if further housing development occurred in West Byfleet, they would like to see a contribution from developers to improve community and social facilities.

In Survey 3 90% of residents said they would like West Byfleet to have its own village hall, as do Byfleet and Pyrford.

The key views expressed in Survey 4 included:

- Improved facilities are required for scouts/guides and associated groups (78% agree)
- Improved sports and recreational facilities are required that can be shared by local schools and the wider community (76% agree)
- Parking and traffic management for local schools needs improving and adequate parking for social and community facilities is required (91% agree).

## 3.2.2. Core Objectives

The views set out above have informed the core objectives for each of the areas studied. These are as follows:

### 3.2.2.1 Core Objectives – Built Environment

- To contribute to the WBC Core Strategy target for the borough of 292 new homes per annum while seeking to preserve – and where possible enhance – the special character of West Byfleet by ensuring high quality design and construction.
- To provide homes for a growing community that meet the needs of all ages in an environment that is safe, pleasant and desirable with sufficient facilities and amenities for the residents.



- To ensure adequate parking facilities are provided for all new developments.
- To ensure changes to the built environment in West Byfleet complement the strong green character and 'village feel' of The Area, whilst meeting the needs of the growing population.

### 3.2.2.2 Core Objectives – Commercial Environment

- Development in the District Centre to offer mixed use, increasing the overall retail space, providing some offices and introducing new residential units to improve overall social, cultural, employment and business activities.
- To discourage the loss of retail space.
- The design, configuration and scale of new buildings to complement the character of the village and be cohesive in order to encourage overall environmental and economic uplift.
- Development of the Sheer House Complex ("SHC") to be phased, where practical, to preserve continuous trading and the vitality of the village during development, with developers working with local businesses and residents during the consultation and development periods to minimise disruption to commercial life in the village and to continue to provide essential services.
- To improve pedestrian areas in the District Centre, particularly those around Station Approach, Rosemount Parade and the current Sheer House site, to provide easy and safe movement and pleasant and welcoming public space.

### 3.2.2.3 Core Objectives - Infrastructure

- To encourage the provision of measures to reduce existing levels of traffic congestion along the A245 in both directions and when new developments (adjacent to the road) are proposed, to require the impact of the additional traffic movements to be assessed and taken into account when development proposals are examined.
- To ensure highway safety by encouraging the provision of improvements to mitigate the potential impact of any growth of vehicle movements along the A245 in both directions resulting from any development of Broadoaks or West Hall or any other sites within The Area.
- To encourage an extension of the current air quality monitoring programme along roads in The Area where it has been reported that peak levels of air pollution have periodically exceeded national air quality objectives (A245, Camphill Road, B367), to establish accurate benchmarks for mean levels so that the likely impact of new residential or commercial developments may be properly assessed and taken into account in determining planning applications.
- To encourage the regular assessment of infrastructure development in areas such as healthcare, education, parking provision, to ensure these keep pace with the level of housing development in The Area.
- To encourage the removal of pylons in favour of underground cabling.

### 3.2.2.4 Core Objectives – Open Spaces

- To enhance and protect all existing green spaces, including roadside verges, within the neighbourhood to ensure that they remain for the benefit of the community,
- To ensure the Green Belt continues to fully serve its fundamental purpose and maintains its essential characteristics as set out in the NPPF and WBC Core Strategy.

### 3.2.2.5 Core Objectives – Social and Community

- To enable the delivery of appropriate community facilities to ensure that The Area remains an attractive place in which to live and work and retains a sense of community.
- To ensure, by the creation of a Concept Plan where appropriate, that the recreation ground, school lands, sports fields and adjacent areas continue to benefit the community in terms of educational, recreational, sporting and social and community provision.
- To ensure CIL monies arising from future development in The Area are spent on projects that benefit the local community.

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## 4 Policies

While Section 3 of The Plan sets out the overall vision for The Area and the core objectives of The Plan, this section sets out the policies to support and deliver that vision and the core objectives, set out under the headings:

- 4.1 Built environment
- 4.2 Commercial environment
- 4.3 Infrastructure
- 4.4 Open Spaces
- 4.5 Social and Community

The draft policies were tested in a consultation with residents between November and December 2015 (Survey 5)<sup>21</sup>. Support for each policy was overwhelmingly positive. Since then the policies have been further developed and refined.

### 4.1 Policies – Built Environment

**BE 1** Development should respect the existing character of The Area. Major development (as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)), should be designed to retain or enhance the village feel\*.

\*Note: ‘village feel’ in the context of West Byfleet’s local character is considered in Section 2.3.1 of The Plan.

**BE 2** Proposals for new housing must be of high quality and designed to reflect and enhance The Area’s special character (see section 2.3.1). Proposals for housing development must demonstrate how they meet the following criteria:

- New development should be designed to respond to the specific character of the site and its local surroundings and to create a sense of place;
- Linear developments, regular house layout and regimented design should be avoided. The existing variety of house sizes, shapes, plot sizes and rooflines should be maintained;
- New development should blend in with existing buildings through appropriate use of materials;
- Proposals should include garden and/or amenity space and should be commensurate with the size and type of dwelling and in conformity with the character of The Area;
- Proposals should preserve existing grass verges and encourage the incorporation of new grass verges into the design.

**BE 3** Development proposals that enhance the appearance of the District Centre will be supported.

Development within the District Centre should reflect local character and proposals should demonstrate how they will conserve and, where possible, enhance, local heritage assets, with particular regard to Conservation Areas and their settings.

**BE 4** The redevelopment of the Sheer House Complex (“SHC”) will be supported in principle. Redevelopment proposals should demonstrate how any redevelopment will respond to the scale and character of buildings in the surrounding area and will conserve and, where possible, enhance the Conservation Areas. The height and scale of the proposed redevelopment and how it reflects on the character of the village and the Conservation Areas should be a major consideration in approving any redevelopment application. New proposals should comply with the Woking SPD design guidance on building heights for West Byfleet which states: “New

<sup>21</sup> [www.wbnf.org](http://www.wbnf.org)



proposals should accommodate medium scale buildings (c.5-6 storeys) in a clear block structure with good public space”.<sup>22</sup>

**BE 5** The development of residential accommodation for retired and elderly people will be supported, subject to such development being in close proximity to, and easily accessible to/from, the West Byfleet village centre.

**BE 6** Proposals for residential development must provide for a safe environment through the provision of off-road parking. Residential development in The Area should seek to meet the following parking standards:

- 1 bedroom property: 1 car space
- 2-3 bedroom property: 2 car spaces
- 4+ bedroom property: 3 car spaces

## 4.2 Policies – Commercial Environment

**CO 1** Development within the District Centre which supports its vitality and viability will be supported.

**CO 2** Proposed development within the District Centre that causes the loss of retail space through the change of use of ground floor shop units (Class A1) will not be supported. Developers will be encouraged to provide a range of different unit sizes of retail premises in order to encourage a diversity of retail and business uses.

The SHC comprises a seven storey office building (Sheer House), the adjoining 'Londis' block, the 'Thomas Cook' block, library, public toilets and car parking, both decked and surface.

**CO 3** Any proposed redevelopment of SHC should continue to provide retail and office accommodation as part of the wider development, in addition to residential units.

**CO 4** A developer of SHC will be encouraged to work with the Forum and the local Business Association during consultation and development periods to provide continuity of business activities.

**CO 5** Any proposed redevelopment of SHC should:

- Provide for the continuing provision of the public library;
- Provide for the continuing provision of a Post Office;
- Provide for the continuing provision of other essential services such as dispensing chemists;
- Provide for the continuing provision of public toilets;
- Offer opportunities for the provision of new public pedestrian space ('public realm');
- Not reduce the current number (66) of off-road public parking spaces in the District Centre. In addition, it should provide for residential parking in accordance with BE6 above.

## 4.3 Policies – Infrastructure

**I 1** New developments in The Area that require primary access to the A245 will be subject to a Transport Assessment to determine the impact of the additional vehicle movements on highway safety, on further traffic congestion and on air quality. Where the assessment shows that a development proposal is likely to breach NPPF guidelines, the proposal will be resisted.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid 7, p61

**I 2** Any developments affecting the use of roads and pavements (directly or indirectly) should be designed to minimise conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, using safe and efficient traffic management techniques.

**I 3** Proposals for developments within the District Centre incorporating retail and service units should allow for parking spaces for shoppers and visitors to the offices at a level to be set by WBC but not less than the current ratio.

**I 4** Proposals for housing development in The Area are required to carry out an assessment of their likely impact on the capacity of local health services, utilities and schools.

**1 5** In new development, pylons should be removed and replaced with underground cabling where practical.

#### **4.4 Policies – Open Spaces**

##### **OS 1 Green Belt (see Figure 17)**

To ensure the Green Belt continues to serve its fundamental purpose and maintains its essential characteristics, The Plan will seek to robustly protect the integrity and purpose of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF and WBC Core Strategy.

##### **OS 2 Local Green Space**

The Plan designates:

- The area of land east of Sheerwater Bridge as a Local Green Space (see Figure 16)
- Birch Walk (known to residents as Birch Green), located north of West Byfleet Station, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 16)
- The Allotments, Leisure Lane, off Camphill Road, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 15)
- West Byfleet Bowls Club, Camphill Road, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 15)
- West Byfleet Recreation Ground, Camphill Road, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 15)
- West Byfleet Junior and Infants School playing fields, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 15)
- St John the Baptist Church churchyard, as a Local Green Space (see Figure 16)

Development on Local Green Space will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

##### **OS 3 Wildlife and Plant Habitats**

The Plan area includes three locations of special interest for wildlife and plant habitats:

- Basingstoke Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located to the north of Sheerwater Bridge (see Figure 19).
- Old Wood Ancient Woodland located south of Parvis Road and west of the Wey Navigations Canal (see Figure 18).
- Wildlife Corridors (The River Wey and Godalming Navigations, Basingstoke Canal, railway embankment and Dodd's Lane (Figure 20).

The protection and/or enhancement of these assets will be supported. Development should not harm the SSSI or Ancient Woodland and should maintain and, where possible, improve the connectivity provided by wildlife corridors.

##### **OS 4 Trees and Hedges.**

Development proposals should retain mature trees wherever possible and the proposed removal of any trees or hedges should be justified. Where a development proposal seeks to justify the removal of a tree or a hedge, it should demonstrate appropriate replacement with a similar variety elsewhere. This is a particularly important requirement where trees are removed and replacements need to be located to maintain the integrity of wildlife corridors.

**OS 5 Access.**

The protection and improvement of existing and provision of new footpaths and cycle routes will be supported, especially where these form part of a wider network.

**4.5 Policies – Social and Community**

**S&C 1** Proposals for the development of a new village hall will be supported.

**S&C 2** Proposals for the improvement of built facilities for Scouts, Guides and associated groups will be supported.

**S&C 3** Proposals for the enhancement of existing public recreation facilities will be supported.

**S&C 4** Proposals for the provision of new sporting and recreational facilities for public use will be supported.

**S&C 5** Proposals for the enhancement of library facilities and the provision of additional community facilities will be supported.

**S&C 6** New social and community facilities should demonstrate suitable and reasonable access to car parking provision.

**S&C 7** Where a planning application is made that would alter the current use of land within the area defined as Area A (see Figure 21) the developer should consider the creation of a Concept Plan in consultation with the land owners and The Forum, to ensure optimum gain for the community in terms of educational, recreational, sporting and community benefit, provided the proposals are in accordance with the other policies of The Plan.

**S&C 8** Funds collected under the provisions of the CIL will be targeted at the following schemes, which are listed in no order of priority:

- Contributions towards a village hall
- Improvement of built facilities for Scouts and Guides and other associated groups
- Enhancement of existing public recreation facilities
- Contributions towards new sporting and recreational facilities
- Improvements to the pedestrian subway at West Byfleet railway station



## 5 Community Projects

During the development of The Plan, a number of initiatives were proposed by residents to enhance the neighbourhood and be of benefit to residents. These are generally community actions that are not covered by land-use planning policies or which cannot be delivered through The Plan. We nonetheless consider it important to address these matters and to include reference to them in The Plan, as they form part of the overall picture of what the community wishes to see delivered for The Area.

The Forum wishes to drive such projects forward, working as needed in partnership with WBC and/or other appropriate partners. It is the intention of The Forum that community projects in West Byfleet should be financed by the CIL or Section 106 monies as a result of development within The Area. Some smaller projects have already been addressed – for example the erection of a bench on Birch Green.

An example of a significant project not yet addressed is the pedestrian subway at West Byfleet Station, running under the tracks and linking the north and south sides of the station. The subway looks in very poor condition despite community efforts to paint it for the 2012 Olympics and clean it regularly. In Survey 4, 79% agreed that the subway needs to be improved.



It is not a welcoming introduction to West Byfleet for visitors arriving by train. A refurbishment and/or enlargement of the subway would improve the pedestrian link between the residential areas north of the railway line and the District Centre to the south. The subway needs to be improved to match the quality of the surrounding streetscape and to give better pedestrian space. There needs to be better connection between green spaces in the Forum area. A more inviting subway would promote pedestrian walkways from the banks of the Basingstoke Canal, through the green open space at Birch Walk, through the commercial centre and out to the recreation area or to walks through West Byfleet to the banks of the Wey Navigations.

The Forum will continue to invite suggestions for additional projects in the future and monitor progress on these.

## 6 Plan delivery and implementation

The estimated timeline for the finalisation and implementation of The Plan is as follows:

Timing	Action
11 June – 23 July 2016	WBNF Committee publishes The Plan and presents to residents for a six week consultation period
August 2016	Analysis of feedback and redraft as required
August/September 2016	WBC carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) check on The Plan
October 2016	WBNF Planning Consultant reviews The Plan
October – December 2016	WBC review The Plan and supporting documentation WBC publish The Plan for a six week consultation period Independent Examiner/WBC study the results
2017	Redraft as required
2017	Referendum Plan 'Made' if more than 50% of people voting support The Plan

Once The Plan is 'made' it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area and will help control all local planning applications and development proposals.

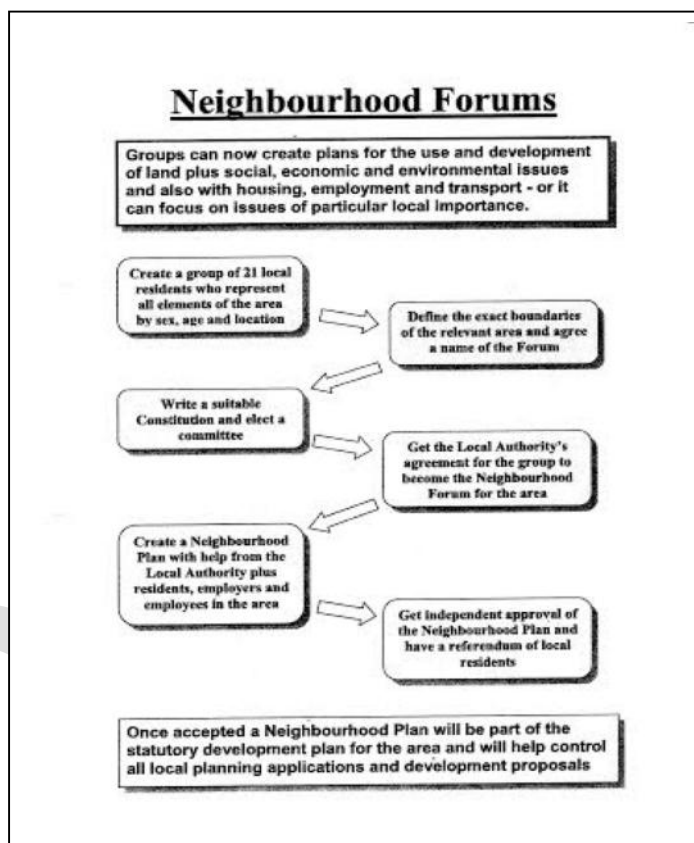
The Forum will monitor the implementation of the policies of The Plan. It is intended to review The Plan after five years.

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## 7 Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Neighbourhood Plan Process

Figure 22: The Neighbourhood Plan Process<sup>23</sup>



### Appendix 2: Consultation Statement

Details about the process of consultation with the community leading to the writing of The Plan are set out under separate cover in the Consultation Statement (see [www.wbnf.org](http://www.wbnf.org)).

### Appendix 3: West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum (WBNF) – organisation, membership and formation

The WBNF is a neighbourhood forum as defined in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (**'The Act'**). The purpose of the WBNF is to further the social, economic and environmental well-being of the West Byfleet Area (**"The Area"**) by acting for The Area under the provisions of The Act.

WBNF membership is open to residents living in The Area, individuals working or carrying on business in The Area, local representative groups and County Council and Borough Councillors representing all or part of The Area. The Forum aims for as wide a representation of communities in The Area as possible. The Forum was set up to monitor development management policy and its application in The Area and is responsible for developing, in partnership with the Local Planning Authority, the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Plan (**'The Plan'**).

<sup>23</sup> Locality [www.locality.org.uk](http://www.locality.org.uk)



Appendix 4 – Map and Overlay Sources

The base maps contained within this plan were supplied by WBC and as such the following statement applies:  
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The map overlay sources are as follows:

Map ID	Title	Source	Date
1	Neighbourhood Area	WBC	Mar-14
8	Housing Character Zones	WBNF	May-16
9	Byfleet Corner / Rosemount Parade CA	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas</a>	Apr-92
10	Station Approach CA	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas</a>	Apr-92
11	Birchwood Road CA	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas</a>	Apr-92 / Nov-97
12	Old Avenue CA	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas</a>	Apr-92
13	Basingstoke Canal CA	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/listedbuildings/conservationareas</a>	Oct-85 / Apr-92
14	West Byfleet District Centre	<a href="http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/policy/localplan1999/westbyfleet">http://www.woking.gov.uk/planning/policy/localplan1999/westbyfleet</a>	undated
15	Allotments, Play Areas & Outside Sports	WBNF	May-16
16	Natural & Semi-natural Open Spaces	WBNF	May-16
17	Green Belt	<a href="https://data.gov.uk/dataset/green-belt13">https://data.gov.uk/dataset/green-belt13</a> - Published by WBC	Mar-15
18	Dodd's Lane, Ancient Wood, R. Wey & Godalming Navs	WBNF	May-16
19	SSSI	Natural England	May-15
20	Wildlife Corridors	WBNF	May-16
21	Area A	WBNF	May-16

Appendix 5 – Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
MoD	Ministry of Defence
ha	Hectares
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PCC	Parochial Church Council
SCC	Surrey County Council
SHC	Sheer House Complex
SPD	Woking Design Supplementary Planning Document
sq m	Square metres
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WBC	Woking Borough Council
WBNF	West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum

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Appendix 6 – Authors and Contributors

This Plan is proposed on behalf of the West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum Committee:

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- The original committee members, Ian Yates, Fui Ling Bolton, Keith Cresswell, Noel Richardson and Mark Fletcher
- The sub-committee members Rebecca Bradshaw, Carole March, Sushmita Kakati, Sharon Aprile, Eileen Perryer, Sandy Hurle, Gary Deadman and Graham March
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We are grateful for the inspiration offered by the many Neighbourhood Forums nationally who have made use of the Localism Act to establish Neighbourhood Plans for their localities.