

Annex B: Legislative Framework summary for plan-making

Part 1: 30-month Local Plan Process: An Overview (MHCLG)

Part 2: Plan-making Regulations Explainer (MHCLG)

Guidance

30-month local plan process: an overview

Draft process of creating a local plan under the new plan-making system which covers getting ready, preparing the plan, examination, adoption and monitoring.

From: **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**
(/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government)

Published 27 November 2025

Applies to England

Contents

- For plans under the legacy plan-making system
- Principles to apply when preparing your plan
- Process overview
- Before the 30-month process starts
- Months 1 to 23: prepare the plan
- Months 24 to 29: submit your plan for examination
- Month 30 to 31: adopt plan and publish policies map
- Month 31 onwards: monitor your plan
- When to start preparing your new plan

We have published this guidance now so that LPAs can see the direction of travel for the new plan making system. We will review the guidance and make any necessary revisions and updates as the new system is implemented, and related regulations and policy are confirmed.

For plans under the legacy plan-making system

If you are submitting your plan under the legacy system, use the [create or update a local plan legacy system guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-legacy-system) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-legacy-system>).

The legacy system covers plans to be adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, excluding the amendments made by the LURA, and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Local planning authorities (LPAs) must prepare a single local plan and should adopt it within 30 months.

This guidance is aimed at LPAs. Read it to understand:

- the high-level process of preparing a plan in the new system
- where you can find more detailed guidance on each stage of preparing a plan

Principles to apply when preparing your plan

You should design your plan-making process so you can prepare a plan that will be found sound and adopted within 30 months. Following these principles should help:

- use the mandatory consultations to consult in a meaningful yet proportionate way – try to maximise the effectiveness of them and only hold extra formal consultations where it's critical to delivering the plan
- hold proactive ongoing conversations with key stakeholders that are critical to delivering the plan
- start creating the required plan content and supporting information as early as you can, and build on this as you go

- use any templates provided in the GOV.UK guidance published on [Create or update a local plan using the new system](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-new-system) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-new-system>)
- take a digital-first approach, prioritising digital formats and complying with defined data standards
- consider how you will engage councillors and council senior leaders to shape the plan and secure their support, keeping them up to date as much as possible throughout the process
- secure efficient sign offs at key stages of the process - to make this happen, work with senior leaders to plan effective delegation and identify necessary changes (for example, to change the council's constitution or standing orders)

Process overview



This diagram illustrates the main stages and timings in the 30-month process.

Sequencing

In this guidance, we specify where:

- tasks must happen in a certain sequence as required by law
- it's expected that you'll follow a certain sequence but it's not mandated

- you can decide on the best approach for your LPA based on your specific local circumstances

These are the tasks where the sequence is required by law:

Tasks in local plan-making where the sequence is required by law

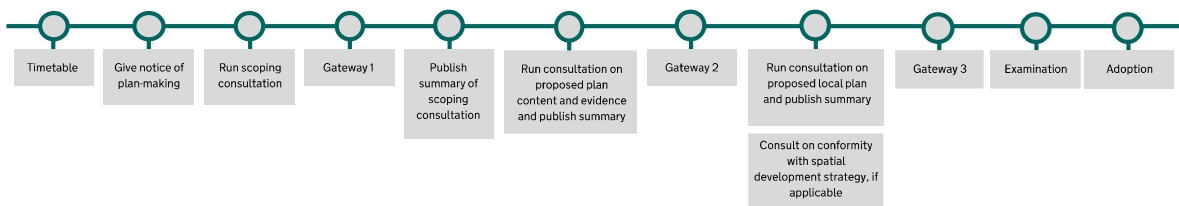


Diagram showing tasks along a timeline in the following order: timetable, give notice of plan-making, run scoping consultation, Gateway 1, publish summary of scoping consultation, run consultation on proposed plan content and evidence and publish summary, Gateway 2, run consultation on proposed local plan and publish summary and consult on conformity with spatial development strategy if applicable, Gateway 3, examination, adoption.

Before the 30-month process starts



This diagram illustrates the main tasks to complete when you are 'getting ready' to prepare a new plan before the 30-month process starts.

There are some tasks you must complete before the 30-month process starts, and which must happen in a certain order. There are other tasks that

we recommend starting early, as doing so will maximise your chance of preparing a sound plan.

While there's no strict time limit on this stage, it's important that you plan to start the 30-month plan-making phase by the point at which you're required to do so. Read more in the [rollout of the new local plan-making system](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system>).

An overview of the tasks in this stage is set out below. You also can read more detail about this in our guidance on [getting ready to prepare a new plan](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-ready-to-prepare-a-new-plan) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/getting-ready-to-prepare-a-new-plan>).

Confirm you need to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

SEA is a process for the environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Your plan will need to carry out SEA if it meets certain criteria set out in [regulation 5 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/regulation/5) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/regulation/5>). We expect that all local plans will need to carry out SEA.

Prepare and publish your local plan timetable

Publish the first version of your local plan timetable. This will help your community know when they can get involved with the plan. You must keep the timetable up to date.

You should not require full council approval each time you update your timetable.

Give at least 4 months' notice of plan-making

You must:

- give a minimum of 4 months' notice before you begin preparing your plan and give this notice publicly (called your 'notice to commence')
- set out where your timetable is published
- publish your timetable on the same day as the notice, if not before.

Read more in the guidance on [giving notice of plan-making](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/giving-notice-of-your-plan-making) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/giving-notice-of-your-plan-making>).

Decide your project management arrangements

To help you manage the plan-making process effectively, we recommend that you consider topics such as governance, resourcing and risk management at this stage. To help, you should complete a project initiation document (PID). We recommend you use the [template provided by the Planning Advisory Service \(https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/plans/new-plan-making-system-what-we-know-so-far/local-plan-project-initiation-document-pid\)](https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/plans/new-plan-making-system-what-we-know-so-far/local-plan-project-initiation-document-pid).

Run a scoping consultation to invite early engagement

You must run a scoping consultation to engage with the public, statutory bodies and other stakeholders. You'll invite feedback on matters including how to engage with them throughout the plan-making process and what plan should contain.

Gather baseline information

Alongside the other tasks in this 'getting ready' stage, you should:

- [gather baseline information, knowledge and understanding about the area \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gathering-baselining-information-to-inform-a-local-plan\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gathering-baselining-information-to-inform-a-local-plan)
- review monitoring information from your previous plan
- gather baseline environmental information to help establish the baseline for the environmental report to support your SEA

Start working on your vision, land availability and evidence

You do not have to start these tasks at this point, but we recommend that you do. This will help you deliver a plan in 30 months.

You could:

- use the information you've obtained, plus your early engagement, to start shaping your draft vision
- start to understand the availability of land in your area, including running a call for sites – this is the first stage in the [site assessment process \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/selecting-identifying-and-assessing-sites-for-local-plans\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/selecting-identifying-and-assessing-sites-for-local-plans)
- start to gather the evidence you'll need to support your plan
- upload your evidence to your draft statement of compliance – this will help you track your progress towards producing a legally compliant plan

and guide discussions at later gateways

Self-assess that you're ready to start to 30-month process and pass through Gateway 1

Once you've done the preparation tasks during the (minimum) 4 months' notice period, you need to pass through Gateway 1.

Gateway 1 helps ensure you are ready to prepare and adopt a plan within 30 months. It's also intended to increase the transparency of the preparation of your plan for your external stakeholders and communities.

To pass through Gateway 1, you must publish a self-assessment summary of what you've done to get ready. You should do this following a set template, which you'll find in the [Gateway 1: what you need to do](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gateway-1-what-you-need-to-do) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gateway-1-what-you-need-to-do>) guidance.

See [guidance on transitional arrangements](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system#plans-submitted-under-the-2024-nppf-transitional-arrangements) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system/rollout-of-the-new-local-plan-making-system#plans-submitted-under-the-2024-nppf-transitional-arrangements>) for when to publish your Gateway 1 summary for your first new-style local plan.

You must publish your Gateway 1 self-assessment summary:

- no later than 5 years after adopting your existing plan
- no sooner than 4 months after you gave notice of your plan-making, or the day after your scoping consultation ends – whichever comes later

Read more in the [guidance on Gateway 1](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gateway-1-what-you-need-to-do) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/gateway-1-what-you-need-to-do>).

Months 1 to 23: prepare the plan

At the point you pass through Gateway 1, the 30-month timeframe begins and you can start preparing your plan.

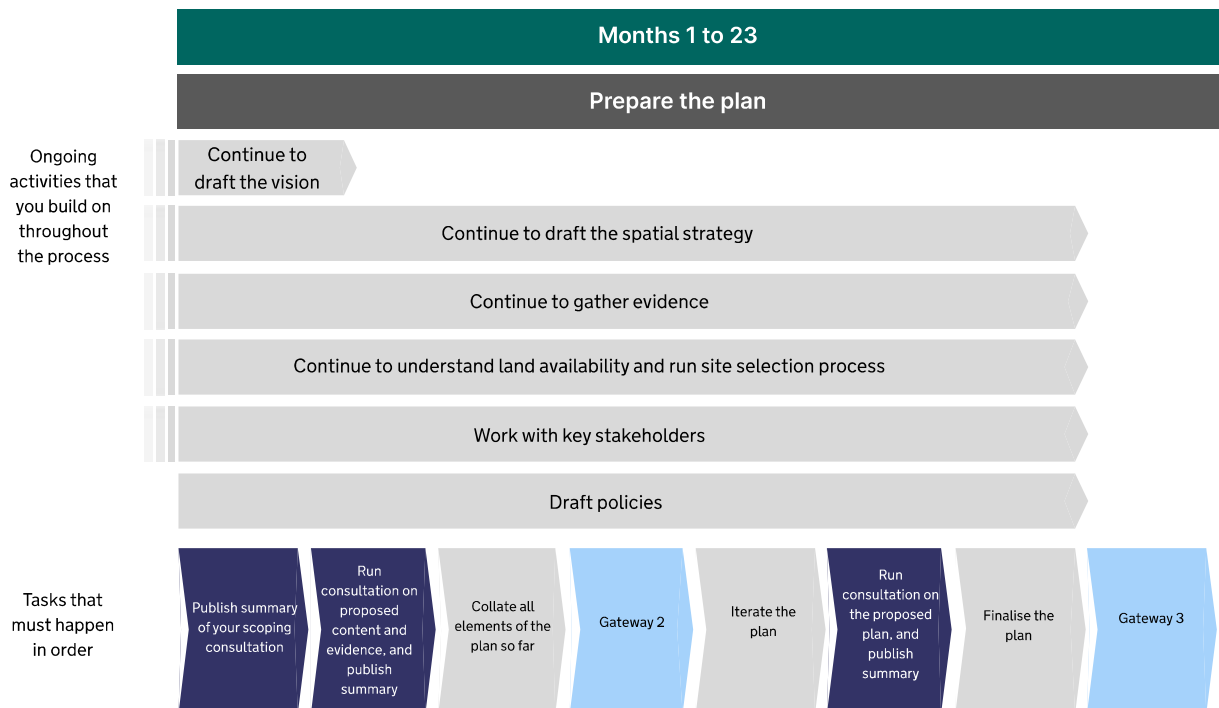


Diagram illustrating the 'prepare the plan' part of plan-making.

Publish a summary of your scoping consultation

After you've passed through Gateway 1, you must publish a summary of your scoping consultation. The summary must set out matters including:

- a summary of the main issues raised in any responses you received
- how you have had regard to any responses you received at the point at which you publish the summary

You must publish this before you start the consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence.

Continue to work on your vision, spatial strategy, sites and evidence

At the start of the 30-month process, you'll need to look ahead and think about the long-term goals and aspirations for your community and local area.

Building on the work done before the 30-month process started, you should:

- finish producing a draft vision for the future of the area
- consider and agree on any aims and objectives
- identify the spatial strategy options

You'll need to continue to gather evidence relating to general aspects of the plan, regardless of which spatial strategy you choose, which will inform the spatial strategy. A key part of this is continuing with your site selection process.

These 'general aspects' could include retail, and employment land reviews, a strategic flood risk assessment, and a strategic housing market assessment. This evidence will inform your strategy on things like employment land need, open space needs, flood risk considerations and infrastructure delivery.

You should develop and refine spatial strategy options, taking account of alternatives and assessing how your choice of sites may result in environmental effects.

Start thinking about your policies

You could start thinking about your policies at this point, taking account of national policy and guidance, including any relevant legislative requirements.

Work with key stakeholders throughout

Throughout the plan-making process, collaborating with key stakeholders will help to address issues across LPA boundaries and challenges that can only be resolved with the support of others. This might include other LPAs, highway authorities or organisations like Natural England.

At the earliest stages of plan-making, we recommend you contact key individuals and stakeholders who are likely to be critical to the successful delivery of the plan. This will help build trust and strengthen the relationship.

You could supplement formal consultations with informal interactions on a more ongoing basis, to maintain progress and resolve challenges more proactively. This might involve regular meetings, video calls or even site visits to develop shared understanding and identify common ground.

To support the engagement work you carry out, you should work with stakeholders to prepare and maintain one or more 'statements of common ground' to record:

- the cross-boundary matters you're addressing
- your progress towards addressing them

If you cannot get the assistance or information you need from other organisations, we intend that you will be able to use the 'requirement to

assist' as a last resort.

Consult on the proposed plan content and evidence

Once you've got a draft vision and spatial strategy, and after you have published the summary of your scoping consultation, carry out a public consultation.

You must make the following information available and invite representations on it:

- your draft vision and any proposed aims and objectives
- your proposed spatial strategy
- a summary of the evidence you intend to gather and details of any evidence you have already gathered
- any other elements you'd like to consult on, which may include initial draft policies

The consultation must last for a minimum period of 6 weeks. Once it's finished, you must publish a summary of the consultation before you can move onto Gateway 2 which sets out matters including:

- a summary of the main issues raised in any responses you received
- how you have had regard to any responses you received at the point at which you publish the summary

For your SEA, we recommend that you consult on the level of detail and scope of your environmental report at the same time as the consultation on the proposed plan content and evidence.

You must have regard to the public consultation feedback as you continue to prepare your plan. We recommend that you use the feedback to inform your plan and to identify and test spatial options and local priorities.

We expect that this is all the consultation you will need to do before you run the next consultation on the proposed plan. While we encourage you to have continuous dialogue with key stakeholders, we do not expect in general that you would need to run additional consultation periods outside of the mandatory ones set out in this guidance.

Collate elements of the plan

Having regard to the feedback received from the consultation, you'll bring together the elements of the plan that you've worked on so far and start setting this out in the draft plan document.

You need to:

- decide on the preferred spatial strategy option using your evidence about site availability and other relevant matters – use this to inform the scope and content of your local policies and site allocations and to write your local policies
- decide the specific sites you propose to allocate
- continue to gather specific evidence to support your proposed policies and site allocations
- record the evidence you've gathered in your statement of compliance to help guide discussions at Gateway 2
- gather evidence to inform, explain, and demonstrate soundness of the plan
- develop your map of proposed local plan policies, which will show people where the policies in your draft plan are to apply in your area.
- further develop the environmental report, using the feedback from the consultation to help predict and evaluate the cumulative effects of the plan

Gateway 2: check your progress with the Planning Inspectorate

Once you have published your summary of the consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence, and have decided you're ready, you must seek observations and advice from the Planning Inspectorate on aspects of your proposed plan.

The Planning Inspectorate will appoint a gateway assessor to look at the documentation you provide and give you their observations and advice.

The purpose of Gateway 2 is to support:

- early resolution of potential soundness issues
- progress towards meeting the 'prescribed requirements' (the things you need to do to pass through Gateway 3)

You must start Gateway 2 after publishing your summary of the consultation on the proposed plan content and evidence, and before the consultation on the proposed local plan. Other than that, you can choose when to start it.

When deciding when to start Gateway 2, consider when you'll be able to get the most out of it. It will be helpful for the assessor to see work in progress. For Gateway 2 to be useful, you should have enough information for the assessor to give you meaningful advice on soundness and progress towards the prescribed requirements. However, leaving it too late may mean you can't incorporate the advice sufficiently and may have to re-do work.

Gateway 2 should normally take between 4 and 6 weeks. You can continue working on your plan during this time.

At Gateway 2 you will:

- provide your documents
- tell the assessor which issues you'd like to discuss with them
- take part in a workshop led by the assessor to discuss the topics you identified

The assessor will give you their observations and advice in the workshop and then in a formal report. They will identify practical steps that you could take to progress the plan, and where you may need further support.

You must publish the observations and advice on your website as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Following Gateway 2, make any necessary changes to your draft plan having regard to the observations and advice you received.

Consult on the proposed local plan

Once you've published the Gateway 2 observations and advice and have updated your plan as needed, you must carry out a public consultation on the proposed local plan. You must make available and invite representations on documents including:

- your proposed local plan
- a map of proposed local plan policies, site allocations and designations
- details of the evidence you have gathered

[Consult with the community, statutory bodies and other relevant stakeholders \(https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/using-automation-to-save-time-processing-consultation-responses\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/using-automation-to-save-time-processing-consultation-responses).

The consultation must last a minimum of 8 weeks.

Other matters to consult on

We recommend that you consult on your SEA environmental report at the same time.

You must also consult the authority of any spatial development strategy (SDS) that covers your area (for example, the London Plan for Greater London) on whether your plan generally conforms with the strategy. You

must carry out the SDS consultation at the same time as the consultation on the proposed plan and they must both end on the same day.

After the consultation

After the consultation, analyse the feedback and have regard to it while making any appropriate changes to finalise your plan and submission material for Gateway 3.

You must [publish a summary of the consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/using-automation-to-save-time-processing-consultation-responses) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/using-automation-to-save-time-processing-consultation-responses>), setting out matters including a summary of the main issues raised in any responses you received and how you have had regard to any responses you received at the point at which you publish the summary.

We anticipate this is all you need to do at this point. Extra consultations will add significant delays to your plan-making process, so we recommend avoiding them if possible. We recommend that you do not plan to run any extra consultations unless you have strong reasons to do so, for example, if after receiving feedback you want to make significant changes to your plan like removing or adding sites.

If changes to the plan require changes to the environmental report, you may also need to consider further consultation where the changes are significant.

Gateway 3: check you're ready to go to examination

You must pass through Gateway 3 after you have:

- published your summary of the consultation on the proposed local plan
- finalised your plan
- decided that you consider you've met the prescribed requirements

You must provide the version of your plan you intend to submit for examination and other supporting documents, including your completed statement of compliance.

The Planning Inspectorate will appoint a gateway assessor to provide observations and advice and decide whether the plan is ready to be submitted for examination. The plan will be ready if it meets the prescribed requirements (to be set out in regulations). These requirements will relate to:

- legal compliance

- whether all submission documents have been prepared
- whether you are ready to proceed to examination

Gateway 3 should take 4 weeks or up to 6 by exception.

At Gateway 3:

- you'll provide documents to show how your plan meets the prescribed requirements
- the assessor will review the documents and produce a report to say if you're ready to proceed to examination

You must submit your plan for examination once you've successfully passed through Gateway 3. If you do not successfully pass through Gateway 3, you cannot proceed to examination at this stage – you'll need to make the necessary changes and re-do the gateway.

You need to make available the observations and advice you receive as soon as is reasonably practicable.

After you have successfully passed Gateway 3 you must also make available:

- the documents you submitted to the gateway assessor
- a Gateway 3 completion statement confirming the date you successfully passed it

Months 24 to 29: submit your plan for examination

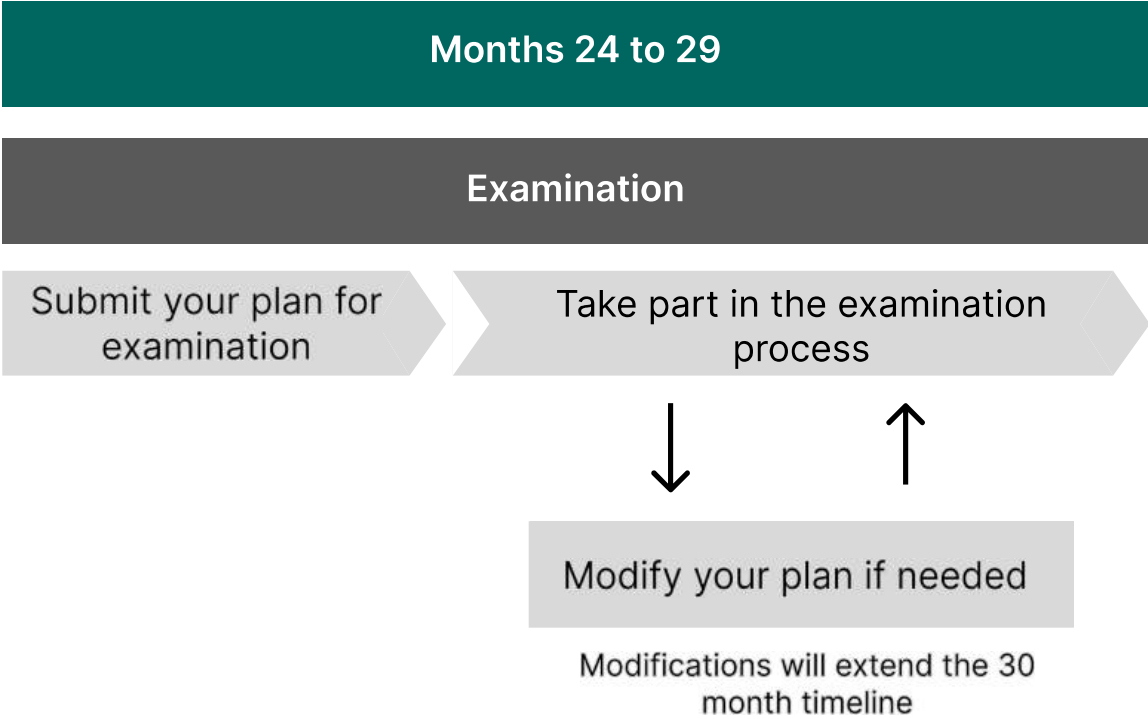


Diagram illustrating the ‘examination’ part of plan-making.

When the assessor advises that you can submit your plan and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate for examination, you have passed through Gateway 3. An inspector will be appointed to carry out an independent examination of the plan.

The examination will assess whether the plan is sound – meaning it meets the test of soundness set out in national planning policy.

Those who have made representations on the plan during its preparation will have the right to present their views to the inspector. If the inspector finds that you need to do more work on the plan, the examination may be paused for up to 6 months for you to carry that work out.

The inspector may also recommend that you need to modify the plan for it to be found sound. If this is the case, you may need to consult interested parties on your proposed modifications. This will also likely extend the 6-month timeframe for the examination.

Month 30 to 31: adopt plan and publish policies map

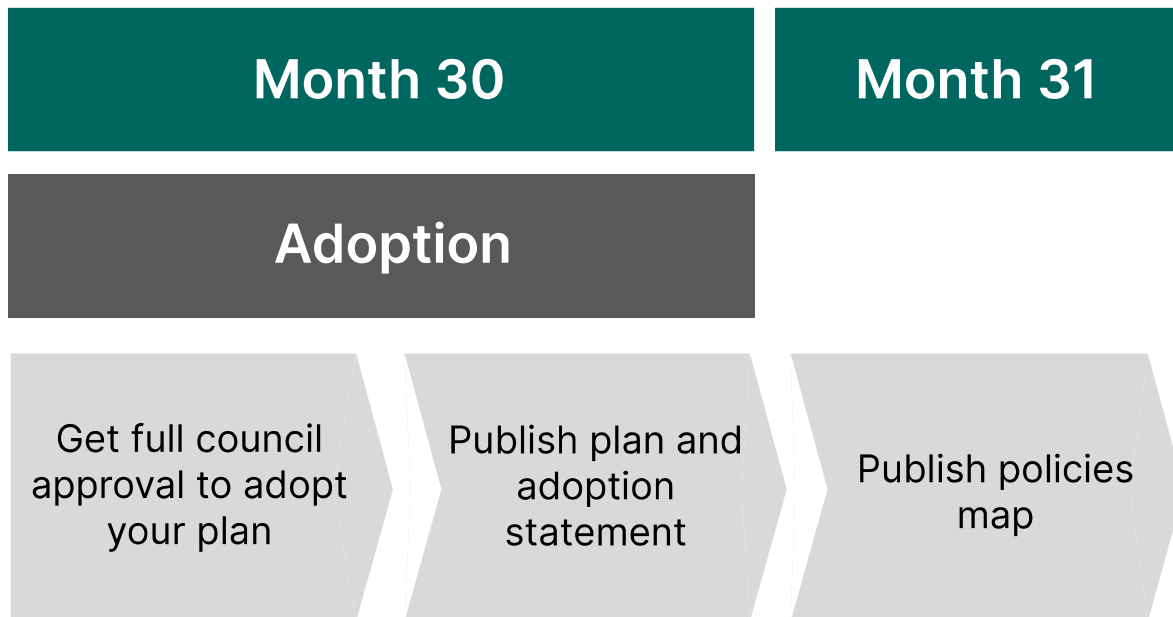


Diagram illustrating the 'adoption' part of plan-making.

After the examination has taken place, the inspector will provide you with their recommendations and reasons. If they find that the plan is sound or could become sound if you make certain modifications, we expect you to adopt the plan (incorporating the modifications where necessary). You must publish the recommendations and reasons of the inspector as soon as is reasonably practicable after you receive them.

You must get full council approval to adopt your plan.

Once you have adopted your plan, you must make it available. You must also publish an adoption statement that includes the date of adoption and the date by which you must start preparing your next local plan. The details you need to include will be set out in regulations.

You must also publish the information about SEA set out in [regulation 16 of the SEA regulations \(https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/regulation/16\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/regulation/16).

Within 1 month of adoption, you must also publish a policies map. This is different to the 'map of proposed local plan policies' you prepared earlier. The earlier map only showed the policies and allocations in your local plan, whereas the policies map must bring together your local plan policies with the rest of the policies in the development plan. You must keep your policies map up to date and revise it at the required times (to be set out in regulations).

Month 31 onwards: monitor your plan

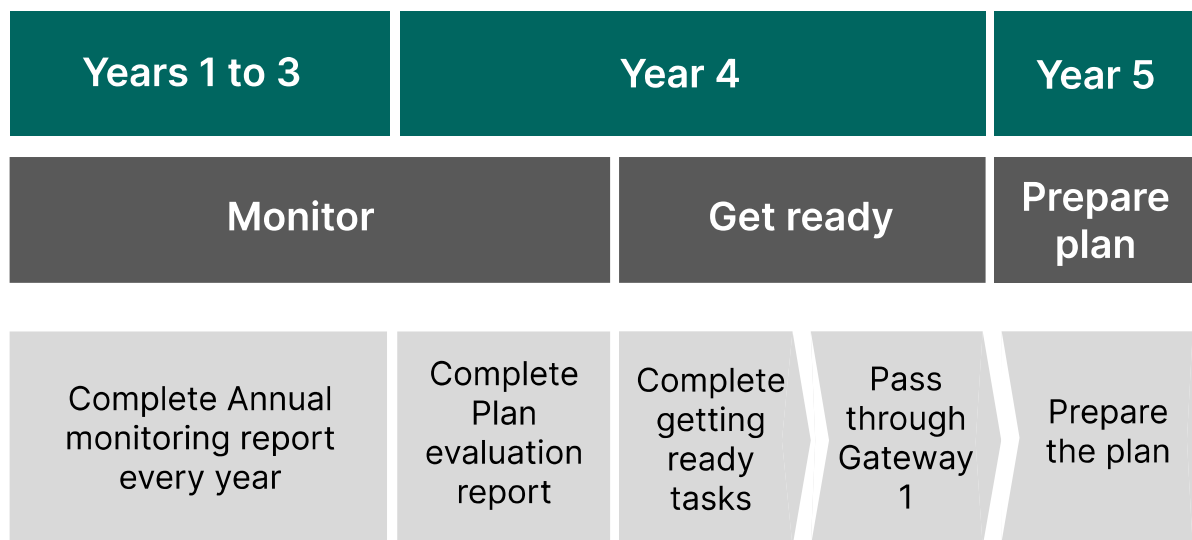


Diagram illustrating the steps involved in plan monitoring.

Once your plan is adopted, you need to monitor it over time. The purpose of monitoring is to review progress against your plan's policy vision and objectives, as well as other key planning matters.

There are 2 types of monitoring.

Annual monitoring:

- happens on the same date every year for all LPAs
- monitors your plan against a list of nationally prescribed metrics to assess how key policies are being implemented
- monitors the implementation of the plan against measurable objectives in the local plan vision

The plan evaluation report:

- must be carried out in year 4 from when you adopted the plan
- informs the next version of the plan and considers which policies and sites you can take forward into the next version

As part of the SEA process, you must also monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of your local plan.

When to start preparing your new plan

You must start preparing a new plan, at the latest, every 5 years following the adoption of the previous plan. However, you should consider starting earlier than this in certain situations. For example, where:

- there has been a significant change in the local or national context which informed your existing plan
- an area's housing requirement has significantly increased following the adoption of a spatial development strategy
- there is no spatial development strategy in place and there is a significant change to the assessed level of housing needed for the area (for example, set through the standard method)
- an inspector examines the current plan and recommends that you prepare a new plan earlier
- planning decisions in your area are being assessed against the presumption in favour of sustainable development
- your annual monitoring indicates that you might not maintain a 5-year housing land supply through to adoption of your next plan

By 'start preparing', we mean you must have passed through Gateway 1 for your new plan.

A 'new plan' does not necessarily mean that you must start the whole plan from scratch every 5 years. For example, where policies and content in your existing plan remain relevant and consistent with national planning policies, you may bring them into the new plan – unless there is evidence suggesting otherwise.

Published 27 November 2025



OGI

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



© Crown copyright



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Guidance

Plan-making regulations explainer

Published 27 November 2025

Applies to England

Contents

Context

Local plan-making process

Preparation, form and content of local plans

Local plan timetable

Notice of intention to commence local plan preparation

Notifications and Consultation Summaries

Scoping Consultation

Gateway 1: self-assessment of readiness for local plan preparation

Consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence

Map of proposed local plan policies

Gateway 2: observations or advice from an appointed person

Consultation on the proposed local plan

Conformity with operative spatial development strategy

Gateway 3: prescribed requirements assessment by an appointed person

Examination

Adoption, withdrawal or revocation of a local plan

Minerals and Waste Plans

Supplementary Plans

Policies map

Commencement, saving and transitional arrangements

Consequential Amendments

Joint Plans (including joint Minerals and Waste Plans and joint supplementary plans)

Requirement to Assist



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-making-regulations-explainer/plan-making-regulations-explainer>

We have published this guidance now so that LPAs can see the direction of travel for the new plan making system. We will review the guidance and make any necessary revisions and updates as the new system is implemented, and related regulations and policy are confirmed.

In February 2025, the government published the response to the consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (“The Act”). In line with our commitment to provide a reasonable familiarisation period ahead of the commencement of the new plan-making system early next year, we have prepared this explainer document which describes what we intend to set out in regulations.

The proposals set out in this explainer may be subject to change prior to the regulations being introduced. When published, the regulations and their associated Explanatory Memorandum will supersede this document. Further guidance about the new plan-making system is also available on [Create or update a local plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-new-system) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan-using-the-new-system>).

Context

The English planning system is plan-led and the government is committed to achieving universal local plan coverage. Reform of the plan-making system is necessary to introduce a faster, clearer and more accessible process for preparing plans.

Regulations to commence the new English plan-making system, as set out in The Act, will be laid in Parliament shortly. Regulations setting out the detailed process for the preparation of new-style plans will also be laid. They will supersede the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, make consequential amendments to other regulations, set out transitional arrangements, and set out saving provisions to enable plan-makers to finalise emerging plans under the existing legal framework.

Local plan-making process

This diagram illustrates the sequence of key local plan-making steps which will be required under Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (“PCPA 2004”) (once amended by Schedule 7 to The Act) and the new regulations:



Preparation, form and content of local plans

Under the current system, it is common for there to be a gap of over ten years between the adoption of local plans. In the new system, regulations will require that local planning authorities begin formal preparation of a new local plan within 5 years of adopting

their previous local plan. Publication of the gateway 1 self-assessment summary is the formal start of the plan-making process.

The regulations will require that, in addition to the requirements of Part 2 of the PCPA 2004 (to be amended by Schedule 7 to The Act), a local plan must contain a vision for the future of the local planning authority's area; no more than ten measurable outcomes to support that vision; and the date on which the plan is adopted. It may also contain aims and objectives of the local planning authority, including how the authority proposes to achieve the vision for the area.

If a local plan contains a policy that the local planning authority consider (in substance) supersedes another policy in the development plan for the authority's area which has effect, then the local plan will be required to state this and identify the superseded policy.

The local plan will be required to be published on the local planning authority's website in a searchable electronic format.

Local plan timetable

In the current system, it can be challenging for communities and other stakeholders to understand when a local plan will come forward and when they can get involved. The Act replaces the existing requirement to adopt a Local Development Scheme with a new requirement to prepare and maintain a local plan timetable. The regulations will require local planning authorities to prepare their local plan timetable consistently, so that they all report against the same, defined plan-making milestones. These milestones will include when plan-making steps are undertaken; when consultation periods begin and end; and when outputs following gateways or examination are published.

Local planning authorities will be required to maintain their timetable. The regulations will also specify when they must revise their timetable, including (but not limited to):

- when the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary is published
- when observations and advice by a gateway assessor, or the examiner's report, is published
- if the local planning authority have to repeat Gateway 3, as soon as is reasonably practicable after seeking further observations and advice (to set out the date on which the authority did this)

Local planning authorities must also revise their timetable to bring it up to date, where necessary, at least every 1 month.

The timetable must be made available before or alongside the publication of the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation. It must be made available in a plain English format and in line with supporting planning data regulations and technical specifications.

Notice of intention to commence local plan preparation

Local planning authorities must publish a document to be known as their notice of intention to commence local plan preparation at least four months before publishing their gateway 1 self-assessment summary. This will give communities and other stakeholders advanced notice of plan-making, so that they can understand when and how they can get involved in the process.

The notice must include:

- details of the local planning authority which has prepared the notice, including the area to which their local plan will apply
- where the local plan timetable is published
- if the local plan is to be a joint plan, which other authorities are participating in its preparation

Notifications and Consultation Summaries

Local planning authorities will be required to notify specific persons of key events in the plan-making process, such as the publication of documents or information in relation to consultations and the publication of observations or advice following Gateway 2 and Gateway 3.

Local planning authorities will also be required to notify bodies and persons that have opted-in to be notified at one of the mandatory consultation stages or subsequent stages in the plan-making process. These stages include :

- mandatory consultations
- the publication of gateway observations and advice
- the submission of the local plan for independent examination

- the publication of the recommendations and reasons of the examiner
- the adoption of the local plan

Consultation summaries must be published following each consultation period which will be required under the regulations. Each summary must include:

- details of the bodies that were invited to make representations
- how they were invited to make representations
- a summary of the main issues raised in the representations received
- how the local planning authority have, to date, had regard to the representations received

A summary of scoping consultation must be published prior to the consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence.

A summary of consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence must be published prior to the seeking of observations and advice at gateway 2.

A summary of consultation on the proposed local plan must be published prior to the seeking of observations and advice at gateway 3.

Scoping Consultation

To provide meaningful early engagement in the plan-making process, local planning authorities must invite representations on matters including what the plan should contain and how future engagement on the plan should be carried out. This must take place after or alongside publishing the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation. Representations must be invited from defined general and specific consultation bodies and can be made by any persons, including local residents.

The regulations will not specify a minimum consultation period for this stage, but it must conclude prior to the publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary.

Gateway 1: self-assessment of readiness for local plan preparation

Local planning authorities will be required to prepare and publish a self-assessment summary which sets out details of their readiness for local plan preparation. This form must provide details of the local planning authority's readiness in relation to:

- project management and governance arrangements
- the timetable for the preparation of the plan
- consultation and engagement
- anticipated local plan content
- environmental assessments

The self-assessment summary must be published no earlier than 4 months after the publication of the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation and, in any event, must be after the conclusion of the scoping consultation. It must be made available on the local planning authority's website in plain English. A template and guidance for the self-assessment form will be available on [Create or Update a Local Plan \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan).

Consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence

Between publication of the scoping consultation summary and beginning Gateway 2, the local planning authority must consult on their proposed local plan content and evidence.

The proposed local plan content and evidence relevant to this consultation will include:

- a proposed vision for the local planning authority's area and proposed measurable outcomes
- any proposed aims and objectives of the local planning authority, including how they propose to achieve the vision
- a summary of the local planning authority's proposed approach in relation to planning policies (which could include proposed site allocation policies)
- a summary of the evidence intended to support the local plan
- any further supporting information the local planning authority considers appropriate

Map of proposed local plan policies

The regulations will require local planning authorities to prepare a map of proposed local plan policies. The map will be required to:

- visually illustrate the geographical application of the policies in their proposed local plan in relation to authority-wide policies, the map must include a description for each proposed policy and, if it has them, their title and reference number

The map of proposed local plan policies must be made available for the consultation on the proposed local plan. It must also be submitted for Gateway 3 and examination of the plan.

Gateway 2: observations or advice from an appointed person

The regulations will require that, between the publication of the summary of consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence and the consultation on the proposed local plan, local planning authorities must seek observations and advice from the Gateway 2 assessor.

They must seek observations and advice in relation to progress towards preparing a sound plan, in line with the tests of soundness set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ; meeting some of the Gateway 3 prescribed requirements; and what further work could be carried out by the local planning authority.

The local planning authority must submit to the Gateway 2 assessor the documents and information that it considers necessary to seek this feedback.

As soon as is reasonably practicable after receiving the observations and advice, the local planning authority must publish them; notify any person who requested to be notified; and send a copy of the observations and advice to any body or person identified or referred to in them.

Consultation on the proposed local plan

Between gateways 2 and 3, local planning authorities must consult on their proposed local plan submission documents, including (but not limited to):

- the proposed local plan
- the map of proposed local plan policies
- details of the evidence gathered to support the proposed local plan
- details relating to the scoping consultation and consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence, including a summary of the main issues raised by respondents and how those main issues have been addressed in the proposed local plan

Conformity with operative spatial development strategy

Where a local plan is being prepared within an area with an operative spatial development strategy (SDS), the local planning authority will be required to consult the relevant spatial development strategy authority to seek their views about whether the proposed local plan is in general conformity with the strategy.

This consultation must be undertaken at the same time as the consultation on the proposed local plan and the same local plan submission documents will be relevant here. The local planning authority must submit copies of any representations received during this consultation at both gateway 3 and examination.

Gateway 3: prescribed requirements assessment by an appointed person

The regulations will require local planning authorities to seek observations and advice from the Gateway 3 assessor on whether the prescribed requirements are met in relation to their proposed local plan.

To pass Gateway 3, the proposed local plan must meet the prescribed requirements which will be set out in the regulations.

To help the assessor carry out the Gateway 3 assessment, the local planning authority must submit a statement of compliance. This statement will require the local planning authority to set out matters including how the proposed local plan complies with prescribed requirements.

A statement of soundness must also be submitted, detailing how the local planning authority considers that its evidence demonstrates that the plan is sound. Soundness will be tested at the examination. The local planning authority must also submit further documents, including:

- a statement setting out a summary of the consultation and engagement activities
- their summary of consultation on the proposed local plan
- an environmental report, where one has been prepared
- a statement setting out their practical arrangements demonstrating readiness for examination.

The Gateway 3 assessor must provide their conclusion on whether each prescribed requirement is met in writing, together with an explanation for each conclusion.

Following confirmation from the Gateway 3 assessor that the prescribed requirements have been met, the local planning authority must make available both a statement confirming that Gateway 3 has been completed and the Gateway 3 submission documents as they were submitted to the Gateway 3 assessor.

Where a Gateway 3 assessor concludes that the proposed local plan does not meet one or more of the prescribed requirements, the local planning authority will be required to repeat gateway 3 as soon as is reasonably practicable after the matters identified by the gateway 3 assessor have been addressed.

Examination

When the Gateway 3 assessor concludes that the proposed local plan meets the prescribed requirements, then the local planning authority must submit it for independent examination.

The regulations will set out the documents that must be submitted to accompany the local plan, including:

- the map of proposed local plan policies
- a Gateway 3 completion statement
- a summary of the consultation and engagement activities carried out
- the local planning authority's summary of consultation on the proposed local plan
- where applicable, copies of any representations from an SDS authority
- a statement of compliance
- a statement of soundness
- an environmental report, where one has been prepared

Prior to the opening of an examination hearing, the local planning authority must make available the date, time and place of where the hearing is to be held and notify any person who requested to be notified of this.

The purpose of the examination, as set out in new section 15D(5) (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to The Act), is to determine whether it is reasonable to conclude that the local plan is sound, in line with the tests of soundness set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Where the appointed examiner identifies that further work is required for the plan to be sound, and decides that the examination is to be paused under new section 15DA (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to The Act), the regulations will set out that the maximum length of the pause is 6 months.

The local planning authority must publish the recommendations and reasons received from the examiner as soon as is reasonably practicable after receipt and notify any person who requested to be notified of this.

Adoption, withdrawal or revocation of a local plan

When adopting a local plan, as soon as reasonably practicable after adoption, the local planning authority must make available:

- the local plan
- an adoption statement

They must also send a copy of the adoption statement to any person who requested to be notified of adoption of the plan.

The regulations will set out the steps that a local planning authority must take on withdrawal or revocation of a local plan. These steps include actions such as making certain information available and ceasing to make certain documents available.

As set out in new section 15E(2) (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to the Act), after a local plan has been submitted for examination, the local planning authority may only withdraw the plan if the examiner recommends that they do so or if the Secretary of State directs that the plan is to be withdrawn.

Minerals and Waste Plans

New section 15CB (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to the Act) requires that each minerals and waste planning authority must prepare one or more documents, to be known collectively as their “minerals and waste plan”.

The regulations will require that the same substantive steps for the preparation of a local plan must be taken when preparing a document which is to be or form part of a minerals and waste plan.

Supplementary Plans

Supplementary plans will form part of the development plan and have the same weight as a local plan for the purposes of decision-making. The regulations will set out the process through which relevant plan-making authorities can prepare supplementary plans, pursuant to new section 15CC (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to the Act).

We do not intend to broaden the scope of multi-site allocation supplementary plans. In February, we committed to consider this and, although this could have allowed more land to be allocated for development through supplementary plans, on balance we have decided that such a broadening would deviate too far from our ambition of bringing together planning policies, as far as possible, in a single local plan.

Regulations will require that details relating to a supplementary plan, including anticipated dates for its preparation, consultation and adoption must be included in the local plan timetable (or minerals and waste plan timetable). The timetable must also be prepared and published if the supplementary plan preparation precedes preparation of a local plan (or minerals and waste plan).

The relevant plan-making authority must publish a notice of intention to commence supplementary plan preparation, specifying information including the subject matter of the supplementary plan and the area, site or sites to which it will apply. If it is a joint supplementary plan, the notice must identify the other authorities who are to prepare the joint supplementary plan.

The preparation of a supplementary plan must include a minimum of one consultation for a period of no less than six weeks. Details relating to the consultation and the process of providing representations must be set out in a notice of proposed supplementary plan consultation.

The relevant plan-making authority must consider the interested parties that should be consulted on the supplementary plan, based on its proposed subject matter and geographical extent.

The relevant plan-making authority must consult on the proposed supplementary plan submission documents, which include:

- the proposed supplementary plan
- a map of proposed supplementary plan policies
- the evidence gathered to support the proposed supplementary plan
- any other supporting documents the relevant plan-making authority considers relevant

In preparing a supplementary plan, a relevant plan-making authority must have regard to the same matters as for local plans, which include national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

The following documents must be submitted to the person appointed to carry out the examination of a supplementary plan:

- the proposed supplementary plan
- the map or proposed supplementary plan policies
- a supplementary plan compliance statement
- a supplementary plan consultation statement
- any other supporting documents that the relevant plan-making authority consider relevant.

The procedure for the examination of supplementary plans is set out in new section 15DB (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to the Act).

As soon as is reasonably practicable after adopting a supplementary plan, the relevant plan-making authority must make the adopted plan and an adoption statement available. The adoption statement must specify matters including the date on which the plan was adopted and details of where it is available for inspection.

The relevant plan-making authority must send a copy of the adoption statement to any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption of the plan.

A supplementary plan must be published on the relevant plan-making authority's website in a searchable electronic format. It must include the date on which it is adopted.

The regulations will set out the process for revocation, as well as circumstances in which supplementary plans can be revoked by a relevant plan-making authority themselves.

Where a supplementary plan contains a policy that the relevant plan-making authority consider (in substance) supersedes another policy in the development plan which has effect for the area or a site to which the supplementary plan relates, it must state that fact and identify the superseded policy.

Policies map

The regulations implement new section 15LD (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Schedule 7 to the Act), requiring each local planning authority to prepare and keep up to date a policies map.

Local planning authorities must ensure that a policies map is prepared by no later than one month after adopting a new style local plan. They must make their policies map available as soon as is reasonably practicable after it has been prepared.

The policies map must visually illustrate the geographical application of any policies which relate to part of the local planning authority's area within the development plan for their area. Where a policy relates to the whole of the local planning authority area, then it must include a description of the policy, and if it has them, its title and reference number.

The regulations will require local planning authorities to bring their policies map up to date as soon as is reasonably practicable after an identified event occurs. These events will include the adoption of a new document within the development plan, which results in a change to the geographical application of the development plan.

When the local planning authority update the policies map, they must publicise this fact on their website.

Commencement, saving and transitional arrangements

Plans being prepared under the existing system must be submitted for examination by 31 December 2026. Saving provisions will be made for much of the existing Part 2 of the PCPA 2004 for those plans to proceed to adoption under the existing system.

All existing adopted Development Plan Documents and saved policies will remain in force until the local planning authority bring into force a corresponding new-style local plan (ie. local or minerals and waste plan).

The new local plan-making system will come into force early 2026.

In terms of rolling out the new system, the regulations will set out dates by which local planning authorities must start plan preparation, although authorities are encouraged to start plan-making in the new system as soon as possible.

In general, the regulations will require that local planning authorities publish their Notice to Commence Plan-Making within 4 years and 8 months of adopting their existing local plan, or by 31 December 2026, whichever is the latest. They must then begin preparation of a new local plan (publish their gateway 1 self-assessment form) within 5 years of adopting their existing local plan, or by 30 April 2027, whichever is the later.

However local planning authorities who submitted a plan for examination on or before 12 March 2025 with an emerging housing requirement that was meeting less than 80% of local housing need will be required by regulations to publish their Notice to Commence Plan-Making by 30 June 2026 and their Gateway 1 self-assessment by 31 October 2026. This will not apply to areas where there is an operative Spatial Development Strategy which provides the housing requirement for the relevant areas.

If an existing system plan is withdrawn from examination prior to adoption, regulations will require local planning authorities to publish their Notice to Commence Plan-Making in the new system at the same time as the plan is withdrawn, and to publish their Gateway 1 self-assessment 4 months later.

Further details on the initial rollout of the new plan-making system will be set out on [Create or Update a Local Plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/create-or-update-a-local-plan>).

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will remain in force until planning authorities adopt a new style local plan or minerals and waste plan. The final adoption date for new SPDs will be 30 June 2026, to ensure any advanced emerging SPD can be adopted.

These Regulations will also have the effect of abolishing the Duty to Co-operate for the existing plan-making system, by not saving this provision for plans progressing to examination in the existing system by 31 December 2026.

Consequential Amendments

Consequential amendments make necessary changes to other legislation when the regulations come into force, to enable the legislation to function as intended. These amendments include a combination of changing definitions set out in various pieces of legislation and amending references to the PCPA 2004 that have been superseded by the amendments made by the Act.

Joint Plans (including joint Minerals and Waste Plans and joint supplementary plans)

Local Planning Authorities will continue to be able to prepare joint plans under the new plan-making system. The regulations will implement various sections of the Act that apply to joint plan-making and address procedural matters relating to the preparation of joint local plans, joint supplementary plans and joint minerals and waste plan documents.

Requirement to Assist

The Requirement to Assist, as set out in Section 100 of the Act (to be inserted into the PCPA 2004 as a new section 39A), is designed to support the timely flow of relevant information during plan-making. It is a new obligation for prescribed bodies of a public nature to assist with plan-making where notified by a plan-making authority that assistance is required.

Requests made under the Requirement to Assist must be reasonable and should only be made as a last resort, where routine requests for relevant information have not been answered.

The prescribed public bodies that can be required to assist with plan-making will be set out in regulations. Guidance will set out government expectations on the procedure for considering and making requests under these provisions.



OGL

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



© Crown copyright