

# Welford-on-Avon

## Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan

Welford-on-Avon Parish Council



Pre-Submission Consultation  
10 December 2014 – 31 January 2015

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## Foreword

Recent changes to planning laws in England have given parishes like Welford-on-Avon a greater say in how planning decisions which affect our communities are made. At the same time, there is a presumption in favour of ‘sustainable development’ in order that the national shortage of housing can be remedied. Once approved, the specific policies in The Welford Plan will ensure that any future development in the village and wider parish is undertaken in a way that meets the expressed wishes of the residents.

Under Stratford’s emerging Core Strategy there is a requirement to build a significant number of new dwellings, 10800 as at December 2014, across the District by 2031. Welford is identified as a category 2 Local Service Village and has a requirement for a number of new dwellings, given as a range, that need to be built by then. As at December 2014 this range is approximately 51 – 75 homes but because these numbers could change during the public examination of SDC’s Core Strategy, we have referred to the top of this range as the **“Upper Level”** throughout the Welford Plan.

**The urgent need for a Neighbourhood Plan for Welford-on-Avon is underlined by comparing the current Upper Level of approximately 75 homes with the actual number of 88 granted since the start of the Plan Period and, as at December 2014, applications for a further 158 homes submitted and either waiting determination or at appeal.**

This document is the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan for Welford-on-Avon Parish. Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC), statutory bodies and those with business interests in the Parish are now being invited to comment on this version of The Welford Plan - as are you, the residents.

All comments from the consultation will be considered and a final version of the Welford Plan will be drawn up. The policies only becomes binding on local authorities once they have been supported by the majority of residents in a referendum. The continuing support for The Welford Plan by residents is therefore vital.

The Welford Plan has been developed on behalf of Welford-on-Avon Parish Council by Welford residents who volunteered to participate in the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee. The Parish Council is extremely grateful for all the work that they have done to develop the Welford Plan. Without them, the Plan would not exist and the essential protections for our historic village would not have been developed.

After extensive consultation with residents and using evidence from previous planning activities and surveys, the Committee has developed a Vision and set of Strategic Objectives for Welford-on-Avon up to 2031. This timescale was chosen to ensure that The Welford Plan was consistent with SDC’s emerging Core Strategy.

The Vision and Strategic Objectives in The Welford Plan are supported in many instances by specific planning policies. These are either complementary to SDC’s emerging Core Strategy or address matters special to Welford. None of Welford’s policies can or do conflict with national or district planning policies.

A Neighbourhood Plan might contain Site Allocations which precisely define potential development sites. After extensive discussion, the Steering Committee took the decision not to include Site Allocations in the Welford Plan. A full explanation of this decision can be found at page 25 of this Plan.

The Welford Plan will be an important and influential document for Stratford-on-Avon District Council, developers and Welford residents alike, and will ensure that the village continues to develop in a manner which best meets the wishes and aspirations of all interested parties.

Simon Carter  
Chairman, Welford-on-Avon Parish Council

## **Welford-on-Avon. A Pen Picture**

Welford-on-Avon is a picturesque village set in the heart of Warwickshire. It lies within a loop of the Warwickshire Avon about four miles west of Stratford-upon-Avon. The village is four miles south of Alcester and four miles east of Bidford-on-Avon.

Formerly part of Gloucestershire, but now a Warwickshire village since 1931, Welford like most rural parishes, has its historical roots firmly based in agriculture and is still bordered by predominantly arable farmland, with commercial horticulture also very much in evidence. The population will have grown quite slowly until it reached 516 at the time of the first census in 1801. By 2011 it had grown by a further 275% to over 1,400 and a little over 600 houses with the fastest growth rate occurring since the 1960s.

The Village has three public houses, two shops, a garage, a primary school, a children's play area, a private marina, allotments and two Churches. The churches are the Parish Church of St Peter's and a Methodist Chapel. There are a number of Societies and Clubs run by local volunteers which include sports, gardening, history, scouts, brownies, painting and yoga.

Welford-on-Avon has been a desirable place to live for millennia, with a plentiful supply of water and fertile alluvial soils. The first settlements in Welford-on-Avon are believed to date from the Neolithic and Bronze Age, possibly as outposts from the fortified encampments lower down the Avon valley such as at Bredon Hill. The oxbow curve of the river would also have been seen as offering an easily defended site.

Following on, the Romans had a presence here, evidenced by many Romano-British artefacts; other archaeological finds demonstrate continued settlement through to the present day. Parts of our church, St Peter's date back to the early eleventh century with evidence of earlier foundation. After 1066 and the Domesday Book, the benefice of Welford was gifted to the Priory of St Denis near Paris. In addition to St Peter's church, other well-known historic landmarks include the southern portion of Binton Bridges (C13th), and the Maypole site (C14th). The 17th century saw the introduction of the many timber-framed cottages and the Wesleyan Chapel was constructed late in the 18th century.

The road system as we know it today was also largely in place by 1800. The original village school was built in Victorian times and housed the first Parish Council meeting in 1894. More recently the Memorial Hall building was erected in 1924 and the Allotment Trust was established in 1940. The Conservation Area containing 65 listed and 80 non-listed buildings was designated in 1969.

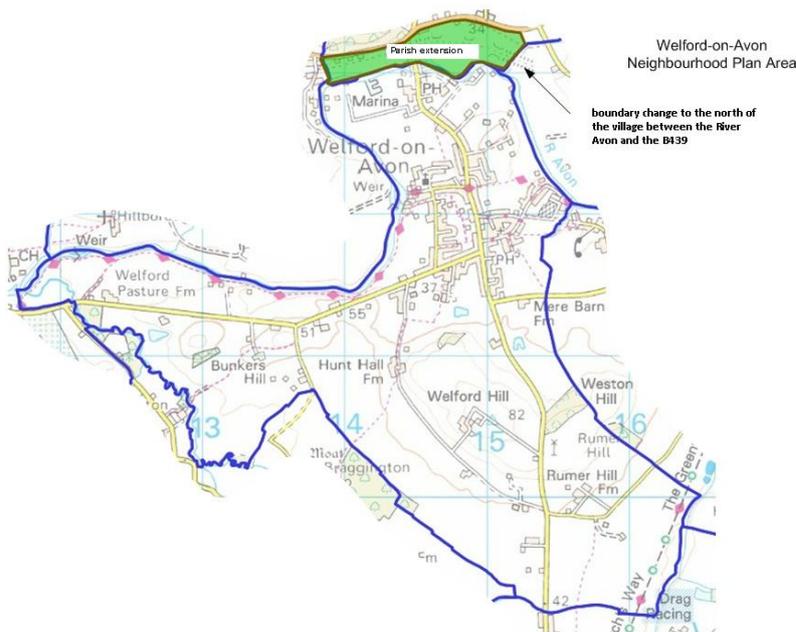
The River Avon represents a major environmental dynamic in our Parish, with a significant area of its land within the flood zone. Shakespeare's Avon Valley Way, a national hiking route, crosses the parish and is to be protected along with the views of the village and the surrounding countryside from the route. Similarly the Greenway cycle path provides a route into Stratford-upon-Avon.

## Introduction

This Welford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan (Welford Plan) has been prepared by Welford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee on behalf of Welford-on-Avon Parish Council.

The Welford Plan is a new type of planning document that will set out the direction for development in the Parish of Welford-on-Avon from 2011 to 2031. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act 2011 which came into force in April 2012.

The whole Parish of Welford-on-Avon including the recent extension to the north (highlighted in green) has been formally designated as the Neighbourhood Area through an application to Stratford District Council (SDC) on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013 under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6). This was approved by Stratford District Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The parish boundary was extended to include the north bank of the River Avon up to the B439 which was formerly in Binton Parish.



**Figure 1: The Civil Parish Boundary and designated Welford on Avon Neighbourhood Area**

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The Welford Plan sets the acceptable framework for development within the Neighbourhood Area in terms of housing type and design including protection of heritage and environment.

The Welford Plan provides an opportunity for local people to influence and take more control over the use of land within the Parish and to decide how they want the village to be in 2031.

This change took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 under the Stratford-on-Avon (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2013.

The Welford Plan sets out a Vision for the Parish up to 2031, defines the Objectives to achieve that Vision and sets out clear Policies to support those Objectives. The Welford Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with local people, businesses and community groups, Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) and other regulatory and statutory bodies.

## **How the Neighbourhood Development Plan fits into the Planning system**

### **National Policy**

In the past local parishes and villages have only been able to influence planning decisions which have been taken at the district level (for us Stratford District Council or SDC) through individual representation, statutory consultation with the Parish Council and input to our other elected representatives.

Changes to the planning system set out in the 2011 Localism Act gave people new rights to shape the future of their local area through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. At the same time, many hundreds of pages of planning guidance were consolidated into a single document, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). SDC is required to develop a Local Plan for the District which is consistent with the NPPF.

### **What is a Local Plan?**

A Local Plan is a set of documents used by Stratford on Avon District Council as the Local Planning Authority to control the use and development of land. A key document within the set is the Core Strategy which sets out a vision and key policies to achieve that vision.

The current Development Plan for the District includes the saved policies in the Local Plan Review 1996 – 2011.

SDC are in the process of producing its Local Plan for the period 2011 – 2031 of which the Core Strategy is a key component.

After a 6 week public consultation in the summer of 2014, SDC approved the submission Core Strategy in September 2014. It has now been submitted for public examination and so will begin to carry weight in the decision making process for individual planning applications determined either by SDC itself as the Local Planning Authority or by a Planning Inspector if a planning application goes to appeal.



**Figure 2 – Aerial picture of the centre of Welford from the south west**

### **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

‘Neighbourhood Plan’ is shorthand for a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. A Neighbourhood Plan is about the use and development of land and may contain planning policies and proposals for improving the area. These policies may cover issues such as housing, employment, heritage and environment. The policies should support the overall objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and these objectives should in turn support a vision that describes how the community should be at the end of the plan period.

Neighbourhood Plans are subject to independent examination and to a local referendum where a simple majority will determine the outcome. A Neighbourhood Plan carries equal weight to its Local Plan in making planning decisions and will be taken into account for all planning applications that are submitted within the Neighbourhood Area.

## **Basic Conditions**

All Neighbourhood Plans must meet certain basic conditions:

- Have appropriate regard to national policy
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area
- Contribute to sustainable development
- Be compatible with EU obligations

The national policy is that defined in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance.

The basic conditions stipulate that the Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the current Development Plan for the area whilst having regard to the emerging Local Plan and particularly its Core Strategy. Particular regard has been taken of SDC's Core Strategy for the period 2011 – 2031 which has now been submitted for examination.

The third basic condition of all Neighbourhood Plans is that they contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three dimensions of sustainability as defined in the NPPF:

- **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 our natural, built and historic environment

All Neighbourhood Plans are required to comply with EU directives covering Strategic Environmental Assessments and Habitats.

## **The Welford Plan; Sustainability, the Local Plan and EU Directives**

In order to demonstrate the consistency of the objectives of the Welford Plan with the objectives of Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Proposed Submission Core Strategy, Appendix E shows a table which cross references the two.

The Welford Plan is in full conformity with the SDC's Local Plan. As the Welford Plan does not include Site Allocation an independent sustainability appraisal is not required.

In order to conform to EU Directives, SDC has been requested to determine formally whether a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment and/or a Habitats Directive Assessment are required.

## **How was the development of the Welford Plan managed?**

In October 2012, Welford-on-Avon Parish Council resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. The Parish Council drew up the constitution for a steering committee which would manage the production of the Welford Plan. Volunteers with a passionate interest in the future well-being of Welford-on-Avon were sought to form the committee which first formally met on 20th November 2012. The committee membership and contributors can be found on the project website (<http://www.welforward.org.uk>) where a large amount of project support material can also be found.

In broad terms, the tasks that the Steering Committee have undertaken have been to:

- Produce and review a substantial evidence base from the village, district and national policy (See Appendix H for details of this evidence base)
- Conduct surveys and consultations with local residents, businesses, land-owners and statutory consultees.
- Obtain grants, both financial and in direct support, from Locality, a government funded body
- Interface with the officers at SDC responsible for Neighbourhood Planning
- Keep informed of the many changes to the planning process through the duration of the project
- Write, edit and format the Welford Plan document
- Project manage all activities

## **Evidence from previous village surveys**

Welford-on-Avon is fortunate to have had a number of previous village surveys which have informed us on the issues, concerns and aspirations of residents. These included the 1998 Village Design Statement, the 2007 Parish Plan, the 2008 Housing Needs Survey and Warwickshire Observatory analysis of the 2011 census. These surveys have enabled the Steering Committee to make a fast start on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan by not having to set off with a blank sheet of paper. Together they enabled the survey work to build on results without having to undertake more comprehensive research.

The adopted **Village Design Statement**, produced with support from the Countryside Commission, conducted an audit to determine what was good and what was less successful in the built environment. The survey also highlighted the importance to the residents of:

- Connecting spaces through internal and external footpaths
- Open community spaces
- Other important open spaces
- The rich array of trees
- High quality design of both new build and extensions

The Village Design Statement defined design principles covering landscape setting, buildings, and design and the community.

The adopted **Parish Plan** addressed the topics of:

- Traffic
- Transport
- Housing
- Access to health services
- Local business
- Recreation and leisure
- Public utilities and services
- Crime and disorder
- Local environment

Special questionnaires were developed for children and for young people.

The Parish Plan contributed significantly to the Vision and Objectives sections of the Welford Plan. Although several of the areas covered by the Parish Plan are outside the scope of the Welford Plan, its data on housing and land use, sports, leisure and recreation, and environment were particularly valuable in informing and setting a baseline for the initial Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey.

The adopted **Housing Needs Survey**, initially conducted by Warwickshire Rural Community Council in 2008, was updated by an addendum in April 2012. Together, they showed a need for 17 affordable and 4 local market

houses of specified sizes and tenures. As of December 2014 planning permission had been granted for 13 affordable houses with a further 12 affordable houses granted subject to completion of a section 106 agreement.

The **Warwickshire Observatory** analysis of the 2011 census provided invaluable demographic data including the age profile of the parish, modes of travel, and type and tenure of housing and enabling comparison of these data with the District as a whole (see **Appendix J** for this data).

## **How was the community involved in developing the Welford Plan?**

In order to determine the main issues, aspirations and priorities of the community a comprehensive Community Survey was developed. As noted above, this survey was informed by previous village surveys, particularly the Parish Plan. The Community Survey was carried out in April 2013, having been promoted both by an event in the Memorial Hall on 14 April 2013 and also as part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 25 April 2013. In addition to the householder survey form, a specific business questionnaire was developed for local business and landowners, farmers and shopkeepers.

After being analysed by an external and independent contractor, the survey results were published in late May.

In December 2013 an event was held in the Memorial Hall to consult on the emerging Vision and Objectives of the draft Welford Plan. All but one resident approved the draft Vision. Average ratings of between 7.8 and 9.9 (10 = totally support) were given to the draft objectives and these, together with free-form comments, were used to refine the draft plan.

In April 2014, a consultation on an early draft of the Welford Plan was held in the Memorial Hall with particular focus on obtaining feedback on all the emerging policies.

Ratings of between 6.4 and 10 were given to draft policies and, as a result of these and free-form comments, some draft policies were discarded and others merged and revised.

Further information on the Community Survey (Apr 2013) and the two consultations (Dec 2013 and Apr 2014), including publicity material, questionnaires, summarised analysis and results can be found in the Evidence Base (see Appendix H for more details).

Throughout the development of the Welford Plan, all material has been posted on the 'Welforward' website for public access and feedback. All events have been publicised by a combination of mail drop to all homes in the parish, emails to addressees on the parish mailing list, articles in the parish magazine and posters located strategically around the village.

A detailed timeline of all communications to residents and other consultees is given at Appendix F, the Statement of Community Involvement whilst Appendix G gives the list of consultees.



**Figure 3 – The Maypole and Maypole Green**

## **Welford Plan policy or Parish Council project?**

As community input was received, particularly from the April 2013 Community Survey, it became clear that the Vision and Objectives of the Welford Plan will be achieved in two distinct ways:

- 1) Through planning policies defined in the Welford Plan which, together with the Local Plan, will control land use throughout the parish. These policies are grouped into related areas addressing:

- Heritage and environment
- Infrastructure
- Economic development
- Housing and land use



**Figure 4 - Church Street (in the Conservation Area)**

- 2) Through projects that are not easily achieved through the planning process but may be taken forward at the discretion of the Parish Council (see Appendix D). These projects address:

- A multi-purpose community meeting place with sports and recreation facilities
- Traffic management
- Public transport, footpaths and cycle ways
- Green initiatives
- Flooding

## **Future governance of the Welford Plan**

Throughout the process of developing the Welford Plan responsibility for it has remained with the Parish Council. Once the Welford Plan has been submitted to SDC for examination, responsibility for the Plan will pass to SDC and the role of the steering committee will cease. SDC will be responsible for commissioning an independent examination, incorporating any changes recommended by the examiner into the Welford Plan and for conducting the referendum to determine its acceptance by the community. Once the referendum has shown acceptance and the Welford Plan is formally 'made', it becomes part of the Local Plan.

There is no process for making minor amendments or updates to the Welford Plan – any changes would require the whole process to be repeated. It will be the responsibility of the Parish Council to keep the effectiveness of the Welford Plan under review.

The Parish Council will report on the operation of the Welford Plan to the Annual Parish Meeting. Every 5<sup>th</sup> year the Parish Council will appoint a broadly based group of parishioners to advise the Parish Council on whether changes to the Welford Plan are required of sufficient magnitude to justify developing a new Neighbourhood Plan.

Two years before the Plan's expiry in 2031, the Parish Council will appoint a broadly based group to produce the next Welford Plan for the parish.

## The Vision for Welford-on-Avon in 2031

In 2031, Welford on Avon will be

- a thriving, inclusive community, which
- conserves and enhances the village and surrounding parish, and
- meets the aspirations of those who live, work and visit here.

## The Welford Plan Objectives for the period 2011 – 2031

1. The Heritage Assets of the village, its character and street scene will have been conserved. These assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, cherished views, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), river amenities and other specified sites.
2. The rural nature of the parish with open spaces, mature woodland with pleasant vistas set in a green environment will have been preserved.
3. The separate identity of Welford-on-Avon and adjacent settlements will have been maintained.
4. Excellent infrastructure will support an expanded range of community and business activities including a flourishing home working economy.
5. Infrastructure to meet the needs of all new developments which impact on the parish will have been secured in advance of their construction. This includes the provision of primary school places at Welford School and the provision of adequate waste water systems.
6. A mix of market and affordable housing developments that achieve the ambition of the Local Plan in the period to 2031 will have been provided in a sustainable, phased manner and sympathetically integrated into the village environment.
7. Excellent design of all new development reflecting the character of the village will be championed.
8. *A multi-purpose community meeting place and sports facilities will support recreational and sporting activities for all age groups..*
9. *Traffic will have been managed and through traffic will have been controlled thus ensuring the village roads are safe for all residents. Any development will minimise commuting and traffic movements.*
10. *Public transport will have been improved, and the extensive network of footpaths and cycle ways further developed and maintained.*
11. *Sustainable green and low energy consumption using existing and emerging technologies will have been championed.*
12. *River and surface water flooding will have been controlled.*

**Note:** Objectives 1-7 will be delivered primarily through the Welford Plan whilst the italicised objectives 8-12 will be delivered primarily under the auspices of Welford-on-Avon Parish Council.

## Welford Plan: Planning Policies

### A. Heritage & Environment

Welford-on-Avon understands that it has a major responsibility to protect, preserve and enhance the village's distinctive character and the built and natural environment under our stewardship. The consultation on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 on the proposed Welford Plan policies demonstrated over 95% support for all Heritage and Environment policies.

#### The Welford Plan Objectives supported by Heritage & Environment Policies

- Objective 1      The Heritage Assets of the village, its character and street scene will have been conserved. These assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, cherished views, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), river amenities and other specified sites.
- Objective 2      The rural nature of the parish with open spaces, mature woodland with pleasant vistas set in a green environment will have been preserved.
- Objective 3      The separate identity of Welford-on-Avon and adjacent settlements will have been maintained.
- Objective 6      A mix of market and affordable housing developments that achieve the ambition of the Local Plan in the period to 2031 will have been provided in a sustainable, phased manner and sympathetically integrated into the village environment.
- Objective 7      Excellent design of all new development reflecting the character of the village will be championed.

***HE1. The key views across the village of Welford from significant vantage points around the parish will be protected by resisting development that will be excessively obtrusive by virtue of its shape, size or material. The key views are:-***

- ***View over St Peter's Church and the village from Cress Hill***
- ***View over the village from Welford Hill***
- ***View over the village from the Old Station on the Evesham Road***
- ***View downriver from Binton Bridges***
- ***Views over the Glebe Lands towards St Peter's Church***

Distant vistas from key viewpoints are a major asset to the parish. Glimpses of the tower of St Peter's Church rising above the village scene are a key asset to the parish and underscore our history and heritage. New developments should enhance or maintain the green and rural nature of these views across Welford-on-Avon village and should not draw the eye to any development as, for instance, the poor choice of roofing material on Welford Bowls Club currently does.

### **Justification**

- NPPF section 11 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment), paragraph 109 requires the “*planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.5 (Landscape) Section B, “*Proposals for development should include, dependent on their scale, use and location, an assessment of the likely visual impacts on the local landscape or townscape, and the site’s immediate and wider setting. Applications for major developments must be accompanied by a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.*”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.8 (Historic Environment) Section A, “*Priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the wide range of historic and cultural assets that contribute to the character and identity of the District, including: ... (4) the distinctive character of the market towns, villages and hamlets, including their settings, townscapes, streets, spaces and built form;*”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.9 (Design and Distinctiveness) Section B (2), “*Proposals will reflect the context of the locality, ... making best use of on-site assets including landscaping features as well as public views and vistas and not harming existing ones.*”
- Village Design Statement 1998 Design Principles “*New development must recognise and be sympathetic to established variants of design, silhouette, scale, density, materials and colour.*”
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 98% of those responding approved of this policy (HER2 when surveyed).
- The Stratford on Avon District Design Guide.
- The April 2013 Community Survey supports the general protection of all our green assets.

***HE2. Green areas (including their flora and fauna) of particular importance to the local community will be protected by designating the following as Local Green Space (see Figure 5 on page 14):***

***LGS1 - Cress Hill & Avon Valley Way***

***LGS2 - The Glebe Lands & local green space***

***LGS3 - Millennium Project***

***LGS4 - Village Greens***

***LGS5 - Verges in the Conservation Area***

***LGS6 - Islands in the River Avon***

***LGS7 – Avon Valley Way from Bell Green to the parish boundary with Weston-on-Avon***

These areas have been demonstrated to be of significance to the local community and by designating them as Local Green Space sites they will be afforded the same level of protection as Green Belt. This protection shall extend to the flora and fauna of each area.

**LGS1** From the field to the west of Cress Hill and including all of Cress Hill and land to the head of the Weir at the bottom of Boat Lane. Cress Hill is owned by Welford-on-Avon Parish Council. It was dedicated to the public in perpetuity for recreational purposes under the Queen Elizabeth II “Fields in Trust” scheme to commemorate the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

- LGS2 From the head of the Weir, as above, following the river to and including the wetlands and SSSI to the bend of the river downstream of Binton Bridges. This includes all of St. Peter’s Glebe Lands and the permissive footpath from Boat Lane to Binton Road.
- LGS3 The Millennium Project to the north of the river.
- LGS4 Registered Village Greens which are already protected.

The village greens within the settlement form part of the character and aesthetic of the street scene throughout the village. They are extensively used as the centrepiece for many village communal activities including the traditional Maypole dance performed by village children at the beginning of summer, the summer fete, street parties and remembrance events.

The grade II listed Maypole (WE64 Ref. No 1382856) and Maypole Green (a registered Village Green Ref No. 239/U/80) are at the heart of the village. This area is seen by residents to be a valuable asset and an important feature of our village, and the centre of many communal village activities. The conservation and protection of this valuable asset and the immediate surroundings form part of this Plan.

Other registered village greens include the grassed areas adjacent to the cottages in Boat Lane and Church Street “The Greens” (Ref239/U/63) and “The Pound” (Ref239/U/79) to the south of the Churchyard at the junction of Boat Lane and Church Street.

The village greens at the junction of Church Street and High Street known as “Bell Green” and the grassed area in Long Marston Road known as “Bird Green” are maintained by Welford on Avon Parish Council as village greens.

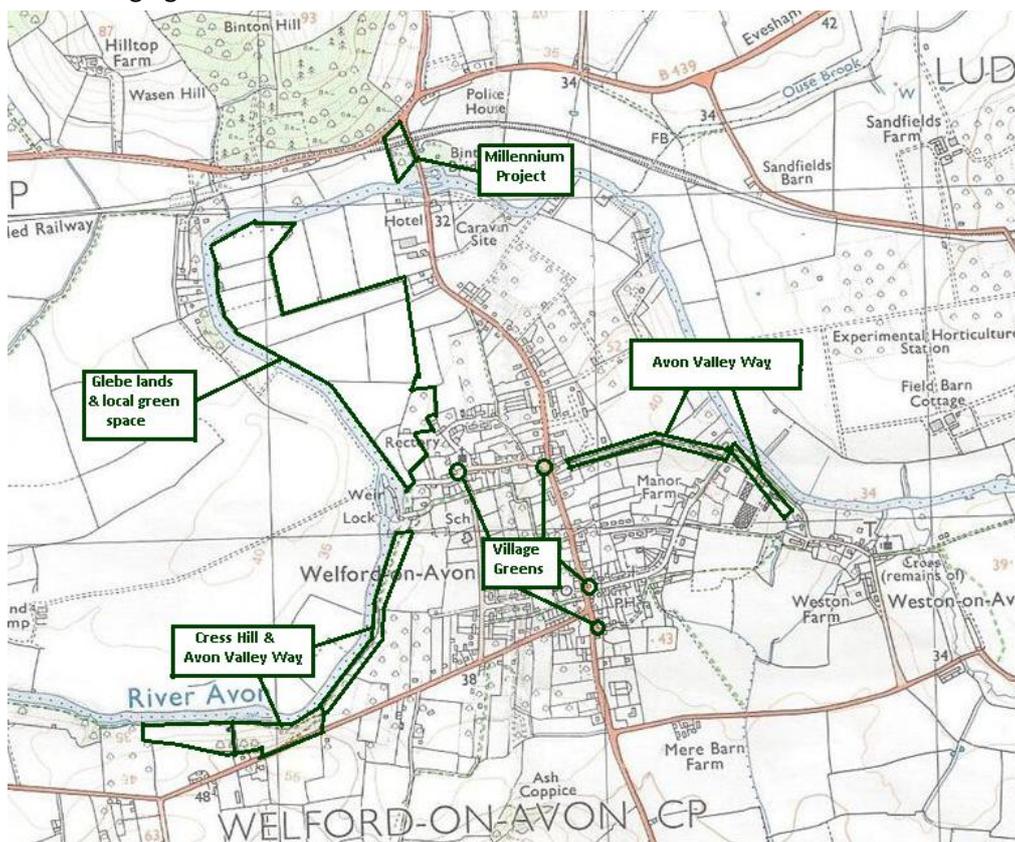


Figure 5 – Welford-on-Avon Local Green Spaces and Designated Village Greens

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LGS5 Verges in the Conservation Area.

They also form an integral part of the character and aesthetic of the street scene

LGS6 Islands abutting Binton Bridges.

LGS7 The public bridleway and footpath known as the Avon Valley Way from Bell Green to the parish boundary with Weston-on-Avon.

#### **Justification**

- NPPF Section 8 (Promoting healthy communities), Paragraph 76 states *“By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.”*
- NPPF Section 8 (Promoting healthy communities), Paragraph 78 states *“Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.”*
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.5 (Landscape) Section A (2), *“Development should protect landscape character and avoid detrimental effects on features which make a significant contribution to the character, history and setting of a settlement or area.”*
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.10 (Green Belt) *“The purposes of the Green Belt will be upheld by resisting inappropriate development within it, except in cases where very special circumstances are justified in accordance with the provisions of national planning policy.”*
- Village Design Statement 1998 Design Principles *“Protect existing grass verges and encourage all new development to incorporate this village feature.”* and *“Ensure open spaces are maintained to reflect the character and evolution of the settlement pattern”*
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 96% of those responding approved of this now aggregate policy (ENV1, ENV3 & ENV5 when surveyed).

***HE3. Development adjacent to any Local Green Space will only be permitted if it does not encroach or in any way detract from these spaces.***

#### **Justification**

- NPPF Section 8 (Promoting healthy communities), Paragraph 73 states *“Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.”*
- SDC Core Strategy Policy AS.10 (Countryside and Villages) *“All proposals will be subject to a thorough assessment to make sure their scale, nature and location are appropriate, including the need to: minimise impact on the character of the local landscape, communities and environmental features;”*
- English Heritage guidance

***HE4. Developments in the Conservation Area will only be supported if they***

- ***conserve or enhance the Conservation Area, and***
- ***have no negative impact on the views, vistas and street scene, and***
- ***are in conformity with the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide.***

The criteria for developments within the Conservation Area are:

- a) NPPF Para 126-135 requires that development proposals must conserve and enhance the character of a Conservation Area.
- b) In order to be supported, development proposals must be to the highest design standards as laid out in Welford Plan policy **HLU3** and SDC's Core Strategy policy **CS.9**.
- c) Mature trees over 100mm diameter in a Conservation Area are considered to have the same protection as afforded by a Tree Preservation Order. Permission for their removal will only be granted in exceptional cases.

Any developments in the Conservation Area must fully conform with the design principles included in the Welford Plan Housing and Land Use (HLU) policies which incorporate the Stratford on Avon District Design Guide.

### **Justification**

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- NPPF Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment), Paragraph 131 states “... local planning authorities should take account of ... the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality...”
- NPPF Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment), Paragraph 137 highlights “Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.”
- NPPF Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment), Paragraph 138 emphasises “... Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, ....”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.8 (Historic Environment) Section A “Priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the wide range of historic and cultural assets that contribute to the character and identity of the District, including: ... , Conservation Areas, .... and their settings;”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.9 (Design and Distinctiveness) Section B(2) “... Proposals will reflect the context of the locality, ensuring a continuity of key design features that establishes the identity of the place, making best use of on-site assets including landscaping features as well as public views and vistas and not harming existing ones.”
- Village Design Statement 1998 Design Principles “Allow sufficient space between properties to reflect this village characteristic.”
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 93% of those responding approved of this policy (HER1 when surveyed).
- The Community Survey from April 2013 demonstrated overwhelming support for the Conservation Area.

***HE5. Any development outside physical confines of the settlement (or built up area boundary when defined) which results in the reduction of the gap between Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon will be refused.***

Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon are settlements that are proud of their separate identities which have been maintained since before the time of the Domesday Book. From medieval times the two villages have centred on their Grade 1 listed churches, St Peters and All Saints respectively. Currently, a significant green buffer is provided between the two settlements mostly by actively and productively managed farmland or, at the northern boundary toward the river, by a horticultural business.

The land between the villages will be considered sacrosanct and development will not be permitted within them so as to preserve the identity and integrity of the settlements and the immediate natural environment.

The built up area boundary will be defined by the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Site Allocation Plan

### **Justification**

- The NPPF Section 11 () Paragraph 112. *“Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.”*
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.15 (Distribution of Development) Section 7(e) states *“ the location and extent of the development would not result in the identity and/or integrity of the settlement being undermined as a result of the reduction in the gap with an adjacent settlement”*
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 96% of those responding approved of this policy (ENV2 when surveyed).

### ***HE6. Open countryside will be protected.***

***Any development outside the physical confines of the settlement (or built up area boundary when defined) will be refused unless***

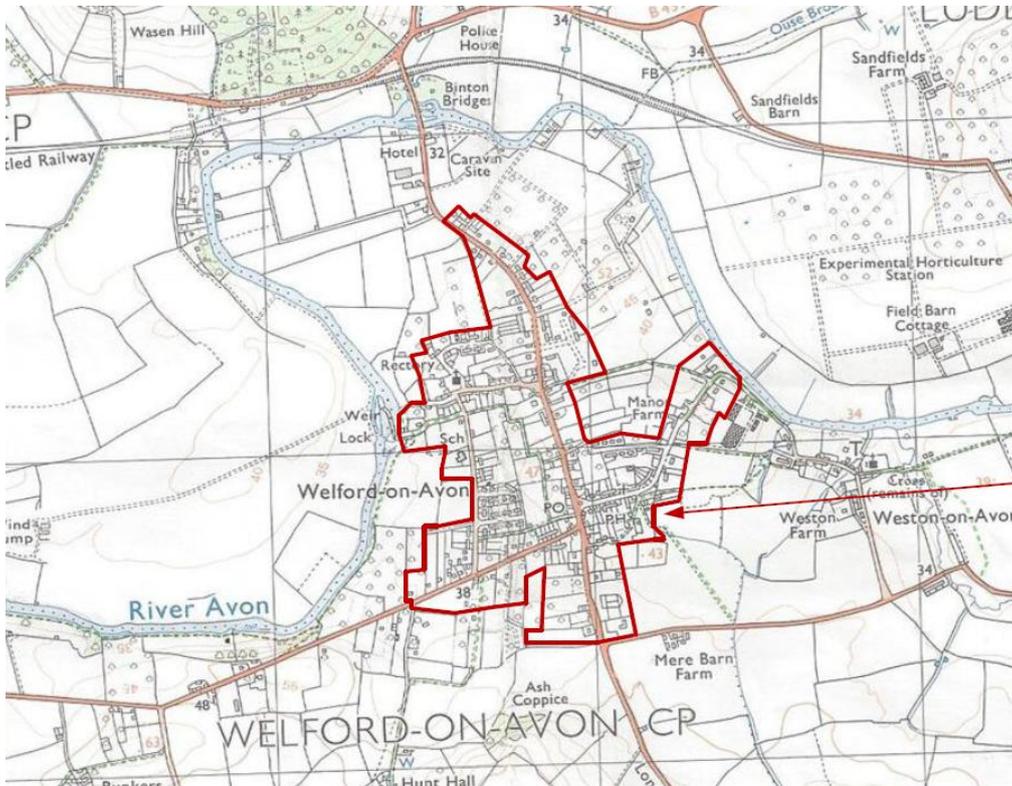
- 1. it is on a brownfield site where the benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh the harm to the countryside, or***
- 2. the development meets one of the categories defined in SDC’s Core Strategy Policy AS.10 sub-sections d to v which relate to allowable development in the countryside***

The specific area between Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon is covered by policy HE5.

There is a presumption against all inappropriate development in open countryside. Brownfield locations should be redeveloped for residential or small business use.

### **Justification**

- NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment), Paragraph 109 *“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;”*
- NPPF Core Planning principles, Paragraph 17 includes *“contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value”*
- NPPF Core Planning principles, Paragraph 17 lists them and includes *“encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”*
- SDC Core Strategy Policy AS.10 (Countryside and Villages) sub-section b onwards highlights the limited conditions under which development may be acceptable in principle.



**Figure 6 – Welford-on-Avon Village Settlement – Physical Confines (shown in red)**

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***HE7. All development must demonstrate excellent landscape design, encourage preservation of the existing mature tree population and the planting of new trees as defined in the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide***

Welford is blessed by a rich diversity of mature trees which provide a rich backdrop to the village and its street scene. The advice of the SDC Tree Officer must always be sought as part of the planning application process where such trees may be affected.

### **Tree Planting**

Tree planting schemes should be an essential pre-requisite for all new building developments as part of sustainable development. These tree planting schemes should incorporate species approved by SDC. Sufficient land to provide appropriate space for these trees is to be provided by the developer. The trees are to be maintained for a period of 5 years at the expense of the developer, landowner or resident as appropriate.

### **Tree Preservation**

Where development is agreed great care is to be taken to ensure that existing mature trees are retained. Should it be agreed that a mature tree is to be removed the developer is to plant semi-mature trees (minimum girth 20cm measured 1m above ground BS3936-1). The species must be approved by SDC and be planted on sites to be provided by the developer or at the Parish Council's discretion.

This policy is also supportive of HLU9 where the built environment blends with the agricultural/rural surroundings of the village.

**Justification**

- NPPF Core Planning principles, Paragraph 17 includes the principle to “*always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*”
- NPPF Section 7 (Requiring good design), Paragraph 58 requires “*Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:*
  - *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
  - *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*”
- NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment), Paragraph 118 states “*local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles ... planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland,*”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.5 (Landscape) Section C “*Proposals that will have an impact on woodlands, hedges and trees should incorporate measures to protect their contribution to landscape character, public amenity and biodiversity. The loss of those trees which are of high public amenity value will be resisted and such trees will be protected by the use of Tree Preservation Orders.*”
- Village Design Statement 1998 Design Principles “*Protect existing trees and encourage planting of appropriate species.*” and “*Review and update tree preservation orders*”
- 2014 Welford Plan Policy Consultation: 95% of respondents approved of this policy (ENV4 when surveyed).
- Q19 and Q20 of the Community Survey showed a significant number of respondents who wanted both more trees to be planted and existing trees to be preserved.

***HE8. The allotments off Headland Road will be maintained and preserved in their current form. Any development of the site will be refused unless***

- ***replacement provision be made of at least equivalent land quality, located at reasonable convenience for the existing plot holders; and***
- ***clear and significant social, economic and environmental community benefits could be derived from the proposal; and***
- ***agreement is given by the Trustees of the Shorthouse Bidston Allotment Trust.***

**Justification**

- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.7 (Green Infrastructure) is supported by section 3.6.6 “*Allotments are an important community facility and demand for them is growing steadily. They make a valuable contribution to biodiversity and healthy lifestyles, represent years of public and individual investment, and are worthy of protection.*”
- SDC Core Strategy Policy CS.24 (Healthy Communities) Section B” *Development proposals that would result in the loss of public or private open space, including allotments, without suitable replacement being made, will be resisted unless:*
  - *(a) it can be demonstrated that there is an absence of need or it is surplus to requirements; and*
  - *(b) it does not make a valuable contribution to the amenity and character of the area.*”
- Considerable amenity is provided by the allotments in Headland Road that are owned and managed by the Shorthouse Bidston Allotment Trust (Charity 216334) . Because of the contribution made by the allotments to economic and social sustainability it is important that this resource is strongly protected.
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 92% of those responding approved of this policy (SLR3 when surveyed).

- The April 2013 Community Survey responses included substantial support for preserving the current environment and maintaining the green areas of the parish in addition to the Conservation Area.

***HE9. All new development within the flood plain will be opposed. The relevant flood plain is designated by the 1 in 100 year flood map.***

***Replacement development (residential or commercial) will be considered on an individual basis. Any such development must be demonstrably neutral or beneficial to the capacity of the flood plain.***

Welford is defined by the River Avon and it remains a major influence on our environment. History has shown that the river and its needs must be accommodated. Past development and policies have diminished the Avon's flood plain natural ability to cope with flood conditions. In particular Binton Bridges form a barrier to flood water when the arches are blocked by debris.

Under the Technical Guidance for the NPPF less vulnerable commercial development is allowed in all flood risk zones except the functional flood plain. Any replacement development in the flood plain is required to at least be flood plain neutral and will require as a minimum a site-specific flood risk assessment.

Local Plans must undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, NPPF Section 101 –“steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding”.

#### **Justification**

- NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change), Paragraph 104 states “*Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.*”
- NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change), Paragraph 104 also states “*For individual developments on sites allocated in development plans through the Sequential Test, applicants need not apply the Sequential Test. Applications for minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the Sequential or Exception Tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments.*”
- NPPF Technical Guidance details the Sequential and Exception Test for flood risk assessment and Paragraph 5 states “*The overall aim should be to steer new development to Flood Zone 1. Where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 1, local planning authorities allocating land in local plans or determining planning applications for development at any particular location should take into account the flood risk vulnerability of land uses ... and consider reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 2, applying the Exception Test if required .... Only where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zones 1 or 2 should the suitability of sites in Flood Zone 3 be considered, taking into account the flood risk vulnerability of land uses and applying the Exception Test if required.*”
- SDC Core Strategy Strategic Objectives include “*The flood plain will have been maintained and, where opportunities arise, restored. The risk from flooding will not have increased. Water bodies will have reached a good status or potential in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.*”
- SDC Core Strategy CS.4 (Water Environment and Flood Risk) Section A “*The flood plain will be maintained and, where opportunities arise, restored in order to maximise natural storage of flood water, reduce flooding problems and increase landscape and conservation value.*”
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 96% of those responding approved of this policy (ENV6 when surveyed).
- 185 respondents (over 60%) to the April 2013 Community Survey specifically supported protection of the flood plain and the walks and wildlife around it.

## **B. Infrastructure**

A number of services are critical to the successful development of a thriving village in 2031. Some services are already under strain whereas others are woefully inadequate and must be addressed. The key areas are:

- super fast broadband (wired and wireless)
- mains water pressure
- flood defence/protection from the River Avon
- surface water / waste water flooding
- electricity supply reliability & alternative energy supply options.

### **The objectives supported by Infrastructure policies**

Objective 4      Excellent infrastructure will support an expanded range of community and business activities including a flourishing home working economy.

Objective 5      Infrastructure to meet the needs of all new developments which impact on the parish will have been secured in advance of their construction. This includes the provision of primary school places at Welford School and the provision of adequate waste water systems.

*INF1. Any development within the parish must minimise light pollution avoiding all obtrusive external and all street lighting. Security lighting should operate on a timed PIR system of not more than 5 minutes illumination per activation.*

Welford is currently devoid of street lighting and has very few areas which are permanently lit overnight. It is not an easy village to negotiate for non-locals after dusk hence reducing the likelihood of burglaries.

All developments will adopt an environmentally sustainable approach, supporting a dark skies environment with no street lighting and responsible PIR based external property lighting. Existing property owners are strongly encouraged to adopt this approach.

Any use of flood lighting for recreational facilities should be onto non-reflective surfaces using directional lighting.

### **Justification**

- The Dark Skies policy was supported by over 90% of residents consulted in December 2013 and April 2014.
- NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) Paragraph 125 states “*By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*”
- SDC Core Strategy makes no reference to Dark Skies and as such this policy is the definitive policy for the Neighbourhood Area of Welford-on-Avon.
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 95% of those responding approved of this policy.

***INF2. Development will only be supported if it does not adversely impact the core infrastructure services delivered to existing, neighbouring properties at any time.***

Four core infrastructure services have been designated as essential to the quality of life in Welford-on-Avon Parish in the second and third decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These are

- Mains Water Supply,
- Comprehensive Water Management including flood defences and surface and foul water drainage,
- Mains Electricity
- High Speed Broadband.

It would be desirable for a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan for the Parish to be drawn up but it is recognised that this will require significant effort, skill and resources.

Where infrastructure problems already exist we will require developers and statutory providers to provide a solution to alleviate the existing problem or a mitigation prior to building work commencing.

Capacity or performance mitigation must be provided where the development could in the opinion of the Parish Council disrupt core service delivery to existing properties during the period the development takes place. Failure to deliver an adequate mitigation plan when one has been requested could automatically cause the planning application to fail. This may require phased development as a mitigation.

#### **Justification**

- NPPF Core planning principles, Paragraph 17 indicates planning should “*proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs.*”
- NPPF Core planning principles, Paragraph 21 states “*local planning authorities should: ... identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement;*”
- NPPF Section 5 (Supporting high quality communications infrastructure) fundamentally supports high speed broadband and its importance is emphasised in Paragraph 42 which states “*Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth.*”
- NPPF Plan-making section Paragraph 162 requires local planning authorities to work with other authorities and providers to “*assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure ..... and its ability to meet forecast demands;*”
- NPPF Plan making section Paragraph 177 highlights “*It is equally important to ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion.*”
- SDC Core Strategy CS.4 (Water Environment and Flood Risk) Section B states “*Applicants should ensure foul and surface water from new development and redevelopment are kept separate. Where sites which currently connect to combined sewers are redeveloped, the opportunity to disconnect surface water and highway drainage from combined sewers must be taken.*”
- SDC Core Strategy CS.24 (Healthy Communities) Section A states “*With the release of land for development, suitable arrangements will be put in place to improve infrastructure ..... to mitigate the impact of development....*”
- SDC Core Strategy Appendix 1: Infrastructure Development Plan
  - 7.1 states “*STW (Severn Trent) are currently developing a plan to cover the period 2015-2040 which is due to be finalised in 2014.*”

- 7.2 states “Support will be given to flood alleviation measures under consideration by the Environment Agency”
- 7.4 states “The Core Strategy looks beyond the aims of the sub-regional broadband project and seeks all new development to have connections enabling download speeds of 30Mbps in accordance with the Government’s commitment to the EU2020 Digital Agenda.”
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 90% of those responding approved of this policy (INF2 and INF4 when surveyed).
- Flooding from River Avon, Surface Water Flooding and inadequate capacity of the foul water drainage were all highlighted through village feedback in the April 2013 Community Survey and the April 2014 consultation on the first draft of the Welford Plan.

***INF3. Development will only be supported if there are adequate primary school places at schools accessible within 6 miles or readily accessed by scheduled public transport.***

Provision of primary school education is an essential resource for the community of Welford-on-Avon for the second and third decades of the 21st century. All children of primary school age should have the option of being educated in the local school to maximise sustainability through minimised travel, social cohesion, and a strengthened community.

The 6 mile upper limit to a choice of schools, (extended to a 15 mile upper limit to a school preferred on grounds of religion or belief) are not walking routes, and should therefore be measured along road routes.

Developers and statutory providers are required to ensure adequate provision is available at all times.

#### **Justification**

- NPPF Section 8 (Promoting healthy communities), Paragraph 72 “The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:
  - give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and
  - work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”
- SDC Core Strategy Appendix 1: Infrastructure Development Plan states in Section 3 (Education) “At primary age, WCC needs to consider how best to meet additional pressure in Stratford, Wellesbourne, Welford on Avon, Fenny Compton, Lighthorne Heath, Tanworth in Arden, Studley, Alcester, Napton, Southam, Ilmington, Shipston, Quinton, Henley in Arden, Harbury, Great Alne, Bidford on Avon, Ettington and Long Compton. This will not see expansions of all of the named schools but will require discussions with all local providers to ensure a sustainable solution.”
- 2014 Neighbourhood Plan Draft Policy Consultation: 93% of those responding approved of this policy (HLU8 when surveyed).
- Home to school travel and transport guidance (Statutory guidance for local authorities) DfE, July 2014.

## **C. Economic Development**

The proportion of economically active residents who commute out of the village is high. Over recent years, the number engaged in traditional rural activities has significantly reduced. Local businesses typically employ small numbers of people, for example Reids Storage, Kerr and Noble, Findons Nurseries, Welford Marina and the local public houses.

Encouraging local employment opportunities that enable Welford residents to work locally full or part time will enhance sustainability of the village:

- Economically: by increasing the use of local shops, pubs and other businesses
- Socially: by encouraging a more vibrant village during working hours
- Environmentally: by reducing the use of cars for commuting.

Local employment can be encouraged by a mix including:

- Home and remote working
- Live/work units
- Small business units
- Increasing employment at existing employees within the village
- Resisting the closure of existing shops and pubs
- Conversion of existing buildings to business use.

Home and remote working is supported by high speed broadband.

### **How the Local Plan supports the objectives:**

In general the SDC Local Plan amply provides policies to support economic development in a village such as Welford.

In principle the following are supported

- a. Maintenance of commercial property in the village even as a change of business category (SDC Core Strategy CS.24)
- b. New shops opening in Welford (SDC Core Strategy CS.22)
- c. New farm shops selling local produce (SDC Core Strategy AS.10 Category P)
- d. Conversion of non-residential buildings to other business use (SDC Core Strategy AS.10)

**NO SPECIFIC WELFORD PLAN POLICIES WERE REQUIRED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

## **D. Housing & Land Use**

As a general principle, housing developments will be supported which:

- meet established local housing needs
- comply with the Local Plan
- comply with policies (such as size and dispersal) identified in the Welford Plan
- are delivered in a sustainable way consistent with our village environment.

### **Site Allocations**

SDC proposes to develop a Site Allocations Plan document by the first half of 2016. This will allocate precise sites where housing and business development will occur. Should such sites be identified in Welford, the Parish Council will work closely with SDC to ensure that their decisions are informed by both the evidence from the Community Survey, preceding village surveys and the other criteria identified in the Welford Plan.

A Neighbourhood Plan may contain Site Allocations which precisely define sites for either a specified number of houses or for employment purposes, and which would be the outcome of an objective assessment of possible sites within the Parish. The Steering Committee, after detailed discussion, took the decision not to include Site Allocations in the Welford Plan. The reasons for this decision include:

- To avoid a potential challenge to the Welford Plan, all possible sites would need to be fully evaluated against exacting criteria. Sites could not be arbitrarily excluded from assessment which is necessarily impartial and fully transparent. In the Steering Committee's judgement SDC are better resourced and skilled to perform this considerable task.
- The Community Survey showed a high degree of divergence as to the most and least preferred sites for development.
- A Site Allocation exercise may well trigger the need for a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment and possibly an assessment under the EU Habitats Directive, neither of which the Steering Committee has the skills or resource to undertake.
- SDC's announcement in August 2014 that, as part of its development of the Local Plan, it will be producing a Site Allocations Plan, including for Welford-on-Avon, provided the best available option for the village in the view of the Welford Plan steering committee.

### **The Upper Level**

As stated in the Foreword to this Plan, under Stratford's emerging Core Strategy there is a requirement to build a significant number of new dwellings, 10800 as at December 2014, across the District by 2031. Welford is identified as a category 2 Local Service Village and has a requirement for a number of new dwellings, given as a range, that need to be built by then. As at December 2014 this range is approximately 51 – 75 homes but because these numbers could change during the public examination of SDC's Core Strategy, we have referred to the top of this range as the "**Upper Level**" throughout the Welford Plan. For the purposes of the Welford Plan "approximately" is defined as +/- 10%.

### **The Welford Plan Objectives supported by Housing & Land Use policies**

1. The Heritage Assets of the village, its character and street scene will have been conserved. These assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, cherished views, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), river amenities and other specified sites.

2. The rural nature of the parish with open spaces, mature woodland with pleasant vistas set in a green environment will have been preserved.
4. Excellent infrastructure will support an expanded range of community and business activities including a flourishing home working economy.
5. Infrastructure to meet the needs of all new developments which impact on the parish will have been secured in advance of their construction. This includes the provision of primary school places at Welford School, primary health care services and the provision of adequate waste water systems.
6. A mix of market and affordable housing developments that achieve the ambition of the Local Plan in the period to 2031 will have been provided in a sustainable, phased manner and sympathetically integrated into the village environment.
7. Excellent design of all new development reflecting the character of the village will be championed.
9. Traffic will have been managed and through traffic will have been controlled thus ensuring the village roads are safe for all residents. Any development will minimise commuting and traffic movements.
10. Public transport will have been improved, and the extensive network of footpaths and cycle ways further developed.
11. Sustainable green and low energy consumption using existing and emerging technologies will have been championed.

*HLU1. A development proposal that would result in the construction within Welford-on-Avon of more than the Upper Level of new homes in the plan period will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.*

*The Upper Level is defined in the Foreword to this document.*

Welford looks forward to playing its full part in supporting SDC in achieving its goals for sustainable housing within the District. Paragraph 184 of the NPPF which is echoed by policy CS.16.C states that Neighbourhood Plans should not support less development than required by the Local Plan, but it is clear that they need not provide more.

Because of particular constraints of the village and weaknesses of its infrastructure, Welford would not be an appropriate location to sustainably deliver housing numbers in excess of the Local Plan. These constraints include the traffic pinch points at both the Bell Inn and at the grade 2 listed Binton Bridges. The lack of places at the village school for local children would make significant development environmentally unsustainable because of the additional out-of-village journeys by car that would result. In addition the village sewerage system has known capacity issues.

### **Justification**

- Significant numbers of respondees to the 2013 Community Survey wanted to see little or no development within the parish. Where development did occur there was a desire for the impact to be minimised.
- SDC Site Allocation Plan consultation dated August 2014 states that the Site Allocation process needs only to identify allocations for housing development to meet the “To Find” figure, that is the difference between the number of homes already built since 2011 and the Upper Level for the Plan Period to 2031.

***HLU2. Development will be supported if it is phased in line with the SDC Local Plan.***

The Local Plan phases developments over the Plan Period (2011-2031) for reasons of sustainability. CS.16 states that *“the provision of new homes will be monitored to ensure continuous delivery across the plan period, to avoid either over- or under-provision of housing against the overall District requirement. Allocated sites will only come forward ahead of their phasing timescale if monitoring shows a significant shortfall in housing delivery across the previous phases and there appears to be no reasonable prospect of earlier phased sites being developed within the plan period.”*

All new development should be phased across the Plan Period as described in the SDC Core Strategy section CS.16. The Welford Plan assumes Welford is a category 2 Local Service Village (LSV) as defined in CS.17.

The following table shows the proposed allocation of new development in Local Service Villages across the District based on the Housing Trajectory Table in policy CS.16. This defines the Upper Level requirement split across the phases of the Plan Period.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Total
Plan Period	2011-2016	2017-2021	2022-2026	2027-2031	
Local Service Village Total	204	546	600	600	1950
Welford (pro-rata)	8	21	23	23	75

Permissions already granted as of December 2014 for homes to be built during the Plan Period in advance of the publication of the SDC Local Plan provide for 88 homes, which exceeds the maximum allocation for phase 1 and phase 2 in Welford village based on the current figure of 10800 homes for the District during the Plan Period (1950 for Local Service Villages).

**Justification**

- Over 80% of parishioners responding to the 2013 Community Survey supported phasing of all development across the 15 year period of the Welford Plan.
- SDC Core Strategy CS.16 and the SDC Site Allocation Plan consultation call for a phasing policy to ensure sites are built throughout the Plan Period.

***HLU3. Only developments which demonstrate high levels of design excellence will be supported.***

***New development should be of a similar density, footprint, separation, scale and bulk to neighbouring properties, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would not harm local character.***

***All new development must:***

- (a) Respect established building lines and arrangements of front gardens, walls, railings or hedges, where such features are important to the character and appearance of the area***
- (b) Respect established plot widths within streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm to the architecture in a street***
- (c) Respect the separation between buildings, and between buildings and the site boundaries, in relation to likely impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties.***
- (d) Observe the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide, and***
- (e) Embrace design which reflects the vernacular and unique characteristics of Welford-on-Avon or demonstrate clear innovation (as contrasted with pastiche or off-the-shelf designs).***

#### **Justification**

- Policy CS.9 requires developments to improve the quality of the public realm and enhance the sense of place, reflecting the character and distinctiveness of the locality. It further requires design to be attractive, sensitive, distinctive, connected, environmentally sustainable, accessible, safe and healthy.
- Stratford District Design Guide addresses the challenge of managing change in order to foster and protect the identity of place.
- Village Design Statement contains many design principles which support the elements of this policy.

***HLU4. Any new development abutting Welford's extensive network of footpaths, pavements and cycle ways shall ensure that all boundary treatments enhance the intrinsic environmental quality and public amenity of these paths by the predominant use of natural planting.***

***Any new development in the near vicinity of this network shall, where possible, include proposals to connect to, extend and develop it for access and improved safety for all. Any new footpath will be a minimum of 2 metres wide and conform to the same requirements as described above.***

A much valued characteristic of Welford is its network of footpaths and rights of way, many of which are at the heart of the village. Views can be partially or totally hidden by close board fencing and the effect of such fencing on both sides of narrow footpaths can result in a claustrophobic tunnel effect cut off from the surrounding landscape.

The aim is to grow the network of footpaths and cycle ways as a significant amenity to the parish and visitors.

The network has significant amenity value for residents and visitors alike. The aim of extending it is to maximize road safety for pedestrians of all ages and abilities as well as cyclists by ensuring safe access to the centre of the village. This could be achieved in many ways, for example by providing pavements where required, improving existing pavements and road crossing points or including the provision of dropped kerbs.

Developers should ensure that boundaries next or adjacent to footpaths should predominantly comprise natural planting and that there are provisions to ensure that this is maintained.

A safe pedestrian network will enhance the environmental sustainability by minimizing the need for local car journeys.

The Parish Council will continue to exercise their voluntary role in maintaining the entire network of footpaths and cycle ways and encourage landowners to discharge their statutory duty to adequately maintain boundaries abutting them.

### **Justification**

- Policies CS.9 requires development to enhance the network of footpaths and retain existing rights of way.
- Stratford on Avon District Design Guide (section 7.4.1 to 7.4.6) addresses boundary features
- Community Survey: respondees to Q16 prioritised the improvement and maintenance of footways, cycle ways and bridleways as an area for focus.
- Village Design Statement noted that *‘Welford is very fortunate in having many pathways through and round the village and it is to be hoped that these are not reduced in any way. Hedges must also be retained’*

***HLU5. The Market Housing component of all new developments must include a mix of housing types broadly consistent with the evidence from the Community Survey which requires:***

- ***5% - one bedroom***
- ***40% - two bedroom***
- ***40% - three bedroom***
- ***15% - four bedroom or larger.***

***Development of accommodation (including the building of bungalows) which meets the needs of the elderly and disabled will be strongly supported***

### **Justification**

The April 2013 Community Survey identified key issues in respect of housing mix and type:

- The mix of new market homes should support a change in the village housing stock towards smaller, family homes thus encouraging a re-balancing of village demographics towards one more in line with the district as a whole.
- The mix of housing should allow the elderly to move more easily into appropriate housing within the village both through ‘down sizing’ and by moving into sheltered accommodation, and so not be obliged to move out of the village.
- The building of bungalows should be encouraged, not least because many bungalows have been taken out of the village housing stock in recent years by their re-development as 2 storey houses.

Policy CS.18 (Housing mix and type) points to a yet to be published Development Requirements Supplementary Planning Document, but currently expects the following size mix to apply to market housing:

- 5% - one bedroom homes
- 40% - two bedroom homes
- 40% - three bedroom homes
- 15% - four bedroom homes or larger.

One and two bedroom homes may typically be bungalows, maisonettes and houses. Although maisonettes may be described as flats, they would have the outward appearance of two storey houses but with a separate front door for each home. Several such properties already exist or are being proposed to be built within Welford.

Question 9 of Community Survey has been analysed to show that the appropriate mix of market homes to be delivered by future development is:

- 12% - 1 & 2 bedroom flats
- 21% - 2 bedroom house
- 29% - 3 bedroom house
- 12% - 4 bedroom house
- 5% - 5+ bedroom house
- 21% - bungalows

The following table compares Local Plan guidance with the Community Survey and shows that, to a first approximation, the two are closely aligned in terms of housing mix: (for the purposes of this analysis the Community Survey category '1 & 2 bedroom flats' is divided equally between 1 bedroom and 2 bedrooms, and that 'bungalows' is divided equally between 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom).

Mix of market housing	Local Plan	Community Survey
1 bedroom homes (including maisonettes and bungalows)	5%	6%
2 bedroom homes (including maisonettes and bungalows)	40%	37.5%
3 bedroom houses	40%	39.5%
4 bedroom and larger	15%	17%

Question 10 of the Community Survey also identified the requirement for accommodation within the village for elderly people. Of the responses to this question, 12.6% identified the need for sheltered accommodation and 18.4% for accommodation for the elderly, excluding sheltered, a total of 31%. A goal is to allow more elderly Welford residents to continue to live within the village close to their roots, friends and relatives. Appropriate warden assisted bungalows will therefore be strongly supported.

The Community Survey showed that, in addition, 30% wanted to see housing being provided for people with Welford roots. The provision of a higher proportion of 1 and 2 bedroom homes should help existing residents who no longer wish to live in a large house but want to remain in the village to 'down size' to a smaller home.

***HLU6. Developments will only be supported which are of a small scale. For the purpose of the Welford Plan, 'small scale' is defined as less than 3% of the existing housing stock of the settlement. Developments larger than this will not be supported.***

***Where an application site is in close proximity to another site(s) where, during the Plan Period, permission has been granted or for which an application has been made, the aggregate number of houses on all sites must not exceed the definition of 'small scale'.***

This policy is designed to maintain the character of Welford-on-Avon and to prevent larger scale developments through any aggregation of sites.

#### **Justification**

- Policy CS.15 (Distribution of Development) states that, in Local Service Villages such as Welford, development will take place on sites identified in the Site Allocation DPD or Neighbourhood Development Plan or *'through small scale schemes on unidentified but suitable sites ... within their physical confines'*.
- Policy AS.10.b re-iterates that acceptable development will be through small-scale housing schemes and that 'small scale' will depend on the village and site involved.
- Policy CS.16 of the draft Core Strategy dated February 2012 proposed that, in order *'to preserve the character of Local Service Villages, estate sizes should be no more than 2% of the existing housing stock.'* This is believed to be too restrictive and so, in the context of Welford, small scale is defined as 3% of the existing housing stock, which is currently 550 dwellings. This gives a maximum number of dwellings per development of approximately 18.
- 90% of respondees to the April 2014 consultation supported small scale developments.
- Parish Plan: Three quarters of respondents indicated their support for single homes or groups of up to 5 homes, 17% would support groups of up to 10 homes. Support for larger groupings of up to and over 20 homes was 5% and 3% respectively.

***HLU7. 1 for 1 Replacement Dwellings will only be supported where the character and street scene of the neighbourhood is enhanced and maintained without any detrimental loss of amenity to existing residents.***

***'Detrimental' for this purpose refers to any of the following:***

- ***Loss of amenity of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy and/or loss of daylight***
- ***Visual intrusion by a building or structure***
- ***Loss of car parking***
- ***Loss of mature vegetation or landscape screening***
- ***Additional traffic resulting from the development***
- ***Not being of a scale and size suitable for the plot***

Each application for such development will be assessed on its impact on the distinctive character of the village, impact on neighbouring properties and alignment with the Village Design Statement and the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide.

**Justification**

- CS.19 requires that *‘Replacement dwellings will be well sited in relation to the existing site and buildings, not visually intrusive, and not significantly larger than the dwelling it replaces.’*
- Aligns with the Village Design Statement
- Aligns with Stratford District Design Guide
- A majority of respondees to the Community Survey were against the replacement of a property with a larger one. This policy minimises any detrimental impact on neighbouring properties whilst allowing perfectly proper and well considered replacement buildings which may on occasion be larger.

***HLU8. Development of Residential Gardens, Backland Development and Tandem Development will be resisted except for small, well designed residential sites which:***

- *do not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding area and neighbouring properties, and*
- *do not have the potential for loss of amenity of neighbouring properties; through loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion by a building or structure, loss of car parking, loss of mature vegetation or landscape screening, additional traffic resulting from the development, and*
- *are of a scale and size suitable for the plot, and*
- *have direct highway access.*

Each application for such development will be assessed on its impact on the distinctive character of the village, impact on neighbouring properties and alignment with the Village Design Statement and the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide.

**Justification**

- NPPF paragraph 53 resists inappropriate development of residential gardens where, for example, development would cause harm to the local area.
- Stratford District Design Guide addresses the challenge of managing change in order to foster and protect the identity of place.
- Community Survey question 11 showed a strong bias against building in domestic gardens, with 177 respondees being totally against whilst 25 were fully supportive.

**HLU9. *Developments on the periphery of the village will be refused unless they provide a sensitive transition from agricultural to residential land use in terms of property density, height and boundary treatment.***

*Such development proposals will be designed to complement and enhance the relevant landscape characteristics of the locality through:*

- *Locating structures where they will be viewed against existing built form*
- *Retaining the proportion and scale of built structures and the space between them*
- *Referring to the built vernacular of the neighbourhood area*
- *Conserving and restoring traditional boundary treatments*
- *Using appropriate plant species in a comprehensive landscape scheme with appropriate boundary treatments to integrate with the rural character*

A sensitive transition will allow a gradual visual transition between open countryside and the built up area. This will be achieved by sensitive use of the natural topography, the design, layout, density and height of building, and the shielding impact of existing and proposed tree and hedge planting.

Peripheral fencing should be shielded using traditional Warwickshire hedging to the same height bordering the development.

#### **Justification**

- Village Design Statement highlights '*Soft edges to the village are desirable – no large blocks of buildings on the periphery*'.
- Stratford District Design Guide section 7.4 addresses the general treatment of boundaries facing open countryside and is particularly against the use of close board fencing.

**HLU10. *Development of any building of more than two and half storeys will be refused.***

A two and half storey house is defined as one in which the loft space between the ceiling of the first floor and the roof above is provided with natural light or ventilation either by dormers, 'velux' type windows or by windows in gable ends. Any habitable space therein must conform to the relevant Building Regulations.

Although there are currently a handful of two and a half storey and three storey older properties in the village, the vast majority of properties are currently one and two storey and any development should maintain the ambience of the street scene.

For the avoidance of doubt this policy applies equally to new builds and conversions.

This policy permits conversion of roof space to accommodation provided the ridge height of the property is not increased and the sloping roof is maintained.

#### **Justification**

- The Community Survey showed strong support for smaller properties including bungalows versus large new housing developments. It is inappropriate to develop purpose built flats and maisonettes within the settlement and therefore the two and a half storey limit has been distilled from the Community Survey and then confirmed in consultation with parishioners in April 2014.

*HLU11. Proposals to amend permission for holiday caravan sites to allow permanent residency will be refused.*

*New caravan sites for either holiday or permanent residence will be refused.*

Currently there are 148 holiday caravans on four sites within the Village. Current planning permissions for the 4 holiday caravan sites in Welford have some combination of these conditions:

- To close for a number of months each year
- To be used only for holiday use
- Not to be used as a main residence

Removing these conditions and allowing permanent residence (commonly known as park homes) would be akin to building a development of new houses in terms of impact on the sustainability and resources of the village.

#### **Justification**

- In reply to Q21 of the Community Survey, 99% of respondents thought that the quantity of caravan accommodation was either about right or too many.

## Glossary

Affordable Housing	is provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market and involves some measure of public funding. They can offer a variety of tenure, for example rental or shared equity.
Backland Development	Backland development is the development of land that lies to the rear of an existing property which normally fronts a road. Access is via a separate drive which can be from the road serving the original property, or a road to the side or rear of it.
Brownfield ( previously developed land )	Land that has previously contained a permanent structure. Domestic gardens, allotments and land that has been occupied by agricultural buildings are now explicitly excluded.
Built-Up Area Boundary	A boundary drawn around a settlement such as Welford-on-Avon as part of SDC’s Site Allocations Plan. The boundary will include within it adequate land allocated to development to meet the housing target defined for the settlement.
Emerging Core Strategy	<p>is the first and most important of Stratford District Council planning policy documents, because it will set the course for everything to follow. It will present a vision of how they want the District to look and function in future years.</p> <p>There are some big challenges facing the District, which the Emerging Core Strategy needs to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where should new homes be built and new jobs located?</li> <li>• How can we meet the housing needs of local people?</li> <li>• How can we reduce the impacts of climate change?</li> <li>• How can we make sure everyone can reach the services they need?</li> <li>• How do we protect our rich heritage and landscape?</li> </ul>
Development Plan Documents	<p>DPDs build on the foundations of the Emerging Core Strategy and provide more detailed planning guidance in specific areas. SPDs that are of particular relevance to Welford-on-Avon include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Site Allocations</i> DPD which will define specific sites for housing and employment.</li> <li>• <i>Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations</i> DPD which will define the location of sites for gypsies</li> </ul>
Flood Risk Zones	<p>These are defined in the Technical Guidance to the NPPF. Welford has all four flood zone types:-</p> <p>Zone 1 – low probability – less than 1 in 1000 year flood risk</p> <p>Zone 2 – medium probability – between 1in 100 and 1 in 1000 year flood risk</p> <p>Zone 3a – high probabilitry – less than 1 in 100 year flood risk</p> <p>Zone 3b – functional flood plain – typically flooding more than once in 20 years</p>
Greenfield	Land that has not been previously developed. It is general planning policy that brownfield land should be used for development in preference to greenfield land.
Local Development Framework	is a ‘folder’ of local development documents which collectively will set out the spatial planning strategy, policies and proposals for the local planning authority’s area. In the case of Welford the planning authority is Stratford District Council.
Local Development Scheme	is a three-year project plan which sets out the current planning policy documents for the District and how these will be reviewed and developed.
Local Green Space.	<p>A green area that is special to the community and designated by a Neighbourhood Plan. It is given the same protection in planning terms as Green Belt.</p> <p>The designation should only be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;</li> <li>• where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and</li> <li>• where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.</li> </ul> <p>Paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF define Local Green Space in more detail.</p>

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Local Market Housing	is built for sale on the open market, but with the restriction that it must first be offered to local people each time it is sold.
Market Housing	Market housing is built for sale, without restriction, on the open market.
Physical Confines	A boundary drawn pragmatically to show the current extent of development within a settlement such as Welford-on-Avon with the purpose of distinguishing the existing built-up area inside the boundary from countryside outside.
Plan Period	The emerging Core Strategy will cover the period 2011 - 2031 superceding the previous Local Plan which covered 1996 - 2011
Planning Practice Guidance	PPG is an online resource which supports the NPPF and allows important information previously only published in separate documents to be accessed quickly and simply by any user of the planning system.
Residential Gardens	Land within the curtilage of a residential building(s) and/or where the previous lawful use was for private residential gardens.
Site of Specific Scientific Interest	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated by Natural England as one of the country's very best wildlife and/or geological sites. SSSIs include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats. Welford Field SSSI is an unimproved field which lies in the flood plain of the River Avon on its south bank in a large river bend. Natural England's citation states that 'it is a herb-rich neutral grassland overlying alluvial clays which exhibit a distinct calcareous influence from the close proximity of the Lias limestone to the north. The field has a characteristic flood meadow community of meadow foxtail <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> and great burnet <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> , Welford Field is now one of the seven last remaining flood meadow sites known in Warwickshire.'
Sustainable Development	<p>Defined in the NPPF as:-</p> <p>There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●● <b>an economic role</b> – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;</li> <li>●● <b>a social role</b> – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and</li> <li>●● <b>an environmental role</b> – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.</li> </ul>
Tandem Development	Tandem development is a particular case of backland development comprising one home behind another served by the same driveway
Village Green	An area of mown grass with or without trees which forms an essential part of the character of the village which may or may not be protected.

## Appendix A - SDC Core Strategy Objectives

The strategic objectives represent the key delivery outcomes that the Core Strategy should achieve by 2031. It is critical to the success of the Core Strategy that an appropriate balance is secured between providing development that meets the needs of the District and protecting the character and qualities of Stratford-on-Avon via the realisation of these objectives.

Each of the objectives will be achieved through the determination of planning applications in accordance with the provisions of policies in the Core Strategy and the implementation of specific initiatives and projects.

By 2031...

- (1) The rural character of the District will have been maintained and enhanced. The Green Belt and countryside of the District will have been protected from inappropriate development.
- (2) The historic character of the District will have been maintained and enhanced. Sites of historic importance will have been protected from harmful development.
- (3) The character and local distinctiveness of the District will have been reinforced by ensuring new development is of high quality design, taking into account the intrinsic and special value of its landscapes and townscapes.
- (4) To help mitigate and adapt to climate change, all residential development will have achieved as a minimum water and energy efficiency Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. From 2019, all non-residential development will have achieved water and energy efficiency BREEAM 'Good' standard.
- (5) The District will have reduced its greenhouse gas emissions, so as to contribute to the national target for reduction, through a range of measures such as the location and design of development, provision of renewable and low carbon energy schemes, and promoting opportunities for low carbon travel.
- (6) The flood plain will have been maintained and, where opportunities arise, restored. The risk from flooding will not have increased. Water bodies will have reached a good status or potential in accordance with the Water Framework Directive.
- (7) Working with Natural England and Warwickshire County Council, biodiversity will have increased across the District. Sites of environmental, nature conservation and geological importance will have been protected from harmful development.
- (8) Community facilities and open space will have been improved across the District. Through collaborative working between District, Town and Parish Councils and key partners in education, public health and other services, opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of the District's communities will have been realised as a result of the development process.
- (9) All eligible development will make contributions to infrastructure and community facilities through CIL, planning obligations or a combination of the two. All critical projects listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be delivered in order to ensure that new development is supported and accompanied by the necessary infrastructure. Stratford-on-Avon District Council 17 Proposed Submission Core Strategy - June 2014
- (10) The value of tourism to the District will have increased substantially, initially by 25% during the period 2011-2015, through the District Council working with its private sector partners, including Shakespeare's England. Stratford-upon-Avon will have re-established its position in the top 20 UK towns and cities for international visitors.
- (11) To support the role and function of the District's town and main rural centres, retail and commercial uses in them will have been retained and strengthened. Specifically, additional comparison goods retail floorspace will have been provided in Stratford-upon-Avon town centre on appropriate sites.
- (12) There will have been a reduction in the level of net commuting through an improved balance between the number of homes and jobs in the District. To contribute to this, an additional 35 hectares of land for business uses will have been delivered in the District.
- (13) Transport services will have been improved and congestion reduced across the District. Working with Warwickshire County Council, the District Council will seek to ensure that new development contributes towards achieving the aims and goals set out in the Local Transport Plan for an inclusive and accessible transport system.
- (14) An additional 10,800 dwellings (an average of 540 per annum) will have been provided across the District. These dwellings will be built by a range of developers, housing associations and other providers. In addition, the needs of gypsies and travellers will have been met through the provision of 52 additional pitches by 2016 and an average of 2 pitches per annum thereafter.
- (15) To improve the affordability of housing across the District, 35% of dwellings on eligible sites will have been provided as affordable homes.

## Appendix B - The Welford Plan Objectives for the Period 2011 – 2031

1. The Heritage Assets of the village, its character and street scene will have been conserved. These assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, cherished views, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), river amenities and other specified sites.
2. The rural nature of the parish with open spaces, mature woodland with pleasant vistas set in a green environment will have been preserved.
3. The separate identity of Welford-on-Avon and adjacent settlements will have been maintained.
4. Excellent infrastructure will support an expanded range of community and business activities including a flourishing home working economy.
5. Infrastructure to meet the needs of all new developments which impact on the parish will have been secured in advance of their construction. This includes the provision of primary school places at Welford School, primary health care services and the provision of adequate waste water systems.
6. A mix of market and affordable housing developments that achieve the ambition of the Local Plan in the period to 2031 will have been provided in a sustainable, phased manner and sympathetically integrated into the village environment.
7. Excellent design of all new development reflecting the character of the village will be championed.
8. *A multi-purpose community meeting place and sports facilities will support recreational and sporting activities for all age groups.*
9. *Traffic will have been managed and through traffic will have been controlled thus ensuring the village roads are safe for all residents. Any development will minimise commuting and traffic movements.*
10. *Public transport will have been improved, and the extensive network of footpaths and cycle ways further developed.*
11. *Sustainable green and low energy consumption using existing and emerging technologies will have been championed.*
12. *River and surface water flooding will have been controlled.*

**Note:** Objectives 1-7 will be delivered primarily through the Welford Plan whilst the italicised objectives 8-12 will be delivered primarily by work undertaken under the auspices of Welford-on-Avon Parish Council.

## **Appendix C - The Welford Plan Policies**

### **Heritage and Environment Policies**

- HE1. The key views across the village of Welford from significant vantage points around the parish will be protected by resisting development that will be excessively obtrusive by virtue of its shape, size or material. The key views are:-
- View over St Peter’s Church and the village from Cress Hill
  - View over the village from Welford Hill
  - View over the village from the Old Station on the Evesham Road
  - View downriver from Binton Bridges
  - Views over the Glebe Lands towards St Peter’s Church
- HE2. Green areas (including their flora and fauna) of particular importance to the local community will be protected by designating the following as Local Green Space (see Figure 5 on page 14):
- LGS1 - Cress Hill & Avon Valley Way  
LGS2 -The Glebe Lands & local green space  
LGS3 - Millennium Project  
LGS4 - Village Greens  
LGS5 - Verges in the Conservation Area  
LGS6 - Islands in the River Avon  
LGS7 – Avon Valley Way from Bell Green to the parish boundary with Weston-on-Avon
- HE3. Development adjacent to any Local Green Space will only be permitted if it does not encroach or in any way detract from these spaces.
- HE4. Developments in the Conservation Area will only be supported if they
- conserve or enhance the Conservation Area, and
  - have no negative impact on the views, vistas and street scene, and
  - are in conformity with the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide.
- HE5. Any development outside physical confines of the settlement (or built up area boundary when defined) which results in the reduction of the gap between Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon will be refused.
- HE6. Open countryside will be protected.
- Any development outside the physical confines of the settlement (or built up area boundary when defined) will be refused unless
1. it is on a brownfield site where the benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh the harm to the countryside, or
  2. the development meets one of the categories defined in SDC’s Core Strategy Policy AS.10 sub-sections d to v which relate to allowable development in the countryside
- HE7. All development must demonstrate excellent landscape design, encourage preservation of the existing mature tree population and the planting of new trees as defined in the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide

- HE8. The allotments off Headland Road will be maintained and preserved in their current form. Any development of the site will be refused unless
- replacement provision be made of at least equivalent land quality, located at reasonable convenience for the existing plot holders; and
  - clear and significant social, economic and environmental community benefits could be derived from the proposal; and
  - agreement is given by the Trustees of the Shorthouse Bidston Allotment Trust.
- HE9. All new development within the flood plain will be opposed. The relevant flood plain is designated by the 1 in 100 year flood map.

Replacement development (residential or commercial) will be considered on an individual basis. Any such development must be demonstrably neutral or beneficial to the capacity of the flood plain.

### **Infrastructure Policies**

- INF1. Any development within the parish must minimise light pollution avoiding all obtrusive external and all street lighting. Security lighting should operate on a timed PIR system of not more than 5 minutes illumination per activation.
- INF2. Development will only be supported if it does not adversely impact the core infrastructure services delivered to existing, neighbouring properties at any time.
- INF3. Development will only be supported if there are adequate primary school places at schools accessible within 6 miles or readily accessed by scheduled public transport.

## **Housing and Land Use Policies**

HLU1. A development proposal that would result in the construction within Welford-on-Avon of more than the Upper Level of new homes in the plan period will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.

The Upper Level is defined in the Foreword to this document.

HLU2. Development will be supported if it is phased in line with the SDC Local Plan.

HLU3. Only developments which demonstrate high levels of design excellence will be supported.

New development should be of a similar density, footprint, separation, scale and bulk to neighbouring properties, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would not harm local character.

All new development must:

- a) Respect established building lines and arrangements of front gardens, walls, railings or hedges, where such features are important to the character and appearance of the area
- b) Respect established plot widths within streets where development is proposed, particularly where they establish a rhythm to the architecture in a street
- c) Respect the separation between buildings, and between buildings and the site boundaries, in relation to likely impact on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties.
- d) Observe the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide, and
- e) Embrace design which reflects the vernacular and unique characteristics of Welford-on-Avon or demonstrate clear innovation (as contrasted with pastiche or off-the-shelf designs).

HLU4. Any new development abutting Welford's extensive network of footpaths, pavements and cycle ways shall ensure that all boundary treatments enhance the intrinsic environmental quality and public amenity of these paths by the predominant use of natural planting.

Any new development in the near vicinity of this network shall, where possible, include proposals to connect to, extend and develop it for access and improved safety for all. Any new footpath will be a minimum of 2 metres wide and conform to the same requirements as described above.

HLU5. The Market Housing component of all new developments must include a mix of housing types broadly consistent with the evidence from the Community Survey which requires:

- 5% - one bedroom
- 40% - two bedroom
- 40% - three bedroom
- 15% - four bedroom or larger.

Development of accommodation (including the building of bungalows) which meets the needs of the elderly and disabled will be strongly supported

HLU6. Developments will only be supported which are of a small scale. For the purpose of the Welford Plan, 'small scale' is defined as less than 3% of the existing housing stock of the settlement. Developments larger than this will not be supported.

Where an application site is in close proximity to another site(s) where, during the Plan Period, permission has been granted or for which an application has been made, the aggregate number of

houses on all sites must not exceed the definition of ‘small scale’.

HLU7. 1 for 1 Replacement Dwellings will only be supported where the character and street scene of the neighbourhood is enhanced and maintained without any detrimental loss of amenity to existing residents.

‘Detrimental’ for this purpose refers to any of the following:

- Loss of amenity of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy and/or loss of daylight
- Visual intrusion by a building or structure
- Loss of car parking
- Loss of mature vegetation or landscape screening
- Additional traffic resulting from the development
- Not being of a scale and size suitable for the plot

HLU8. Development of Residential Gardens, Backland Development and Tandem Development will be resisted except for small, well designed residential sites which:

- do not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding area and neighbouring properties, and
- do not have the potential for loss of amenity of neighbouring properties; through loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion by a building or structure, loss of car parking, loss of mature vegetation or landscape screening, additional traffic resulting from the development, and
- are of a scale and size suitable for the plot, and
- have direct highway access.

HLU9. Developments on the periphery of the village will be refused unless they provide a sensitive transition from agricultural to residential land use in terms of property density, height and boundary treatment.

Such development proposals will be designed to complement and enhance the relevant landscape characteristics of the locality through:

- Locating structures where they will be viewed against existing built form
- Retaining the proportion and scale of built structures and the space between them
- Referring to the built vernacular of the neighbourhood area
- Conserving and restoring traditional boundary treatments
- Using appropriate plant species in a comprehensive landscape scheme with appropriate boundary treatments to integrate with the rural character

HLU10. Development of any building of more than two and half storeys will be refused.

HLU11. Proposals to amend permission for holiday caravan sites to allow permanent residency will be refused.

New caravan sites for either holiday or permanent residence will be refused.

## **Appendix D - Parish Council Projects**

The survey conducted as part of evidence gathering for the Welford Plan identified a number of projects that are not appropriate to be achieved through the planning process but which might be taken forward at the discretion of the Parish Council.

*Objective 8 A multi-purpose community meeting place and sports facilities will support recreational and sporting activities for all age groups.*

Current sporting and recreational facilities are considered to be inadequate to serve a village of Welford's size through to 2031. The outdoor facilities at Synder Meadow have seen better days being located within the flood plain of the River Avon resulting in deteriorating provision for changing rooms and equipment storage. In addition there are no tennis courts. Apart from the bowling club there are no public indoor sports facilities. There was considerable support in the Community Survey for improved outdoor and indoor sports and recreational facilities though diverging views on how and where these might be delivered. Many proposed improved sporting facilities and a new community centre or hall. The facilities should address the needs of all age groups and interests in the parish especially those for whom transport is difficult and for whom limited facilities currently exist.

Once CIL is introduced by SDC, developer contributions might be sought to help fund a new sporting and recreational complex. The project to deliver this must involve all interested parties in the parish. The resulting plan should demonstrate financial and environmental sustainability, including the provision of adequate parking. Such a project would be supported by CS.26 Infrastructure, Healthy Communities: 'the provision of new and enhanced community, cultural, sports and leisure facilities will be encouraged as a way of promoting healthy communities'.

*Objective 9 Traffic will have been managed and through traffic will have been controlled thus ensuring the village roads are safe for all residents. Any development will minimise commuting and traffic movements.*

The Welford Plan survey identified a number of issues that may be addressed by appropriate traffic management solutions whose implementation could be led by the Parish Council. These issues arise particularly from the increase in traffic flow from developments at Long Marston, congestion at the pinch points at Binton Bridges and The Bell and the constant abuse of the weight restriction on Binton Bridges by farmers and commercial vehicles.

Additional issues of concern include:

1. The area around the Maypole, including the village stores and butchers has inadequate parking which further creating traffic hazards particularly around the shop entrance and the junction of Barton Road with Long Marston Road.
2. The speed of vehicles entering the village from Long Marston, Barton and Milcote.
3. The single track part of Headland Road between Mill Lane and Church Street, with particular impact on school traffic.
4. The lack of a cycle way joining Welford-on-Avon to the Greenway via Weston-on-Avon.
5. The sheer size of vehicles passing through the village to pass over Binton Bridges (whilst also ignoring the weight restriction)

*Objective 10 Public transport will have been improved, and the extensive network of footpaths and cycle ways further developed.*

The low frequency of public transport from the parish to the neighbouring towns of Stratford-upon-Avon, Bidford-on-Avon and Evesham is seen as an issue. A project to improve connectivity by public transport could be driven by the Parish Council. This would enhance environmental sustainability and improve a key facility particularly for those who do not have access to a motor vehicle.

*Objective 11 Sustainable green and low energy consumption using existing and emerging technologies will have been championed.*

Many respondees to the Welford Plan survey called for ‘green initiatives’, which could be led by the Parish Council and could make the parish more environmentally sustainable whilst reducing its carbon footprint. Examples that could be encouraged include solar power, heat pumps, anaerobic digesters and other sources of alternative energy.

### **Dark Skies**

The Parish Council may seek to have designated several Dark Skies Discovery Sites within the Parish by the UK Dark Sky Discovery Partnership including Cress Hill and land around Synder Meadow, although a broad dark skies policy will be adopted to minimise light pollution across the entire parish. Formal designation will provide an additional small level of protection from light pollution and demonstrate the commitment of the parish to environmentally sustainable use of energy.

*Objective 12 River and surface water flooding will have been controlled.*

The Welford Flood Action Group (Welford FLAG) has now been established which pulls together all the key agencies including the Environment Agency and Warwickshire County Council alongside the Parish Council and residents to address issues of flooding. Maintenance of Binton Bridges and the continued monitoring of the flow of water to ensure any potential blockages are removed are included in the remit of the Forum.

The Parish Council and Welford FLAG are currently working on a project to ameliorate the impact of flooding. When SDC have introduced CIL, the Parish Council might seek to obtain developer contributions to restore and enhance the flood plain, or provide flood defences.

It is clear from recent events the blocking of arches at Binton Bridges is a major contributory factor to residential property flooding. The modern part of the bridge is seriously flawed in its design with no attempt to increase the height of arches or the spans to prevent blockage. This is further exacerbated by the lack of river dredging by the Environment Agency.

**Appendix E - Matrix which shows how the Welford Plan Policies, Objectives, and WPC Projects support and complement SDC’s Emerging Core Strategies.**

SDC Strategic Objectives	Welford NP Objectives	Welford NP Policies			WPC Projects
		HE	INF	HLU	
1	2,3	1,2,3,6			
2	1	1,2,3,6,			
3	5,7	3,7	1	3,6,7,8,9,10,11,12	
4	7,11			12	11
5	10,11		1		11
6	12				12
7	1	1,2,6			
8	5				8
9	5,8,9,10		2,3,4		
10	1,2,10	1,2		3,4,6,9,11,12	
(11- Commercial)					
12	4,9,10			4	9
13	10			4	10
14	6	3		1,2	
15	6			5	

## Appendix F - Community and Interest Group Involvement Record

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Consultee(s)</b>	<b>Communication Route</b>	<b>Details</b>
Ongoing from January 2013	Welford Parishioners	Welforward Website (www.welforward.org.uk)	Updated regularly. Survey results and raw survey response data posted to the website for parishioner review.
Ongoing from January 2013	Welford Parishioners	Welforward Email Address (info@welforward.org.uk)	Emails
Ongoing from January 2013	Welford Parishioners	Welforward Dedicated Mobile Phone	Phone calls
23 <sup>rd</sup> March – 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	All individuals entitled to vote in the NPO referendum (parishioners aged 18 or over)	Paper Survey	Two surveys delivered to every household in the Parish. Response by prepaid envelope through Stratford upon Avon FREEPOST or if residents concerned over independence direct to Warwick Networks. 206 Responses received. Response rate with the online survey not directly calculated
23 <sup>rd</sup> March – 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	All individuals entitled to vote in the NPO referendum (parishioners aged 18 or over)	Online Survey	124 Responses received through the online survey using the SurveyMonkey website built and run by Warwick Networks. De-duplicated where possible with paper versions.
23 <sup>rd</sup> March – 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	Any business operating in the Parish	Online Survey	12 Responses received out of the 58 businesses surveyed within the Parish giving a 20% response rate. Surveys hand delivered or posted to the head office where appropriate.
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	Welford Parishioners	Face to Face Meeting 1	Specific event to provide forum for issues and questions on the survey to be addressed encouraging a high response level. 12 Parishioners attended
25 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	Welford Parishioners	Face to Face Meeting 2	Annual Parish Meeting was turned into an event for parishioners to come and talk about the NP and other activities in the village. Attendance was 65
April 2013	Welford Memorial Hall	Letters Exchanged	Memorial Hall Committee was concerned by the survey suggesting the option of “replacing” the Memorial Hall and formally wrote to the NP complaining. Letters were exchanged and have been published and the matter is now closed.
30 <sup>th</sup> May – 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2013	Welford and Weston Local History Society	Email exchange with Chair of the Society	Feedback on the Historic Environment Assessment commissioned by SDC with respect to Welford.
August 2013	Parishioners	Laminate document in local pubs and the Memorial Hall	Laminated copies of the Survey Statistical Results for parishioners who do not have internet capability.

Welford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan – Pre-Submission Consultation

Quarterly (Feb 2013, Jul 2013)	Parish Council	Quarterly update from Chair of NP to the Parish Council	Verbal update to the Parish Council backed up by written summary sent to the Clerk to the Parish Council.
Regular updates  2013: Feb, Apr, May, Aug, Sep  2014: Apr, Dec	All Parishioners who purchase the magazine	Parish Magazine update	Briefing on current status and call to action when appropriate. Circulation for the Parish magazine within Welford is 482, representing 88% of the households in the parish.
Monthly	SDC Planning Team (Fiona Blundell, Simon Purfield)	One page progress update emailed to Fiona	Summary of previous months progress on the NP including requests for assistance.
17 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	SDC Planning Team (Fiona Blundell, Paul Harris)	Meeting at Elizabeth House	First Liaison meeting SDC: Fiona Blundell, Paul Harris WNP: VL, JR, BC, PW  Established a willingness from both parties to support each other's programmes
1 <sup>st</sup> December 2013	Welford Parishioners	Face to Face Meeting 3	Specific event to provide a briefing to members of the parish on the current status of the Neighbourhood Plan and to gauge feedback on the Vision, Objectives and Policy Areas.
6 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	Welford Parishioners	Face to Face Meeting 4	Specific event to provide a briefing to members of the parish on the current status of the Neighbourhood Plan and to specifically ask for their endorsement or otherwise of the 43 draft policies which have been distilled through NP team workshops in Q1. A total of 59 response forms were received back from parishioners.
1 <sup>st</sup> May 2014	Welford Parishioners		Annual Parish Meeting was turned into an event for parishioners to come and talk about the NP and other activities in the village. Attendance was 60.
3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014	Matthew Neal, Neighbourhood Planning Officer, SDC	Meeting to build working relationship with Matthew as he now leads for the District Council	
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	Welford Parish Council, Matthew Neal (Neighbourhood Planning Officer, SDC), Robert Keith (consultant), Diocese of Gloucester Environment Agency (informally only)	Draft 10 circulated for selective feedback	

Welford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan – Pre-Submission Consultation

22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2014	Welford Parish Council	Meeting	Ran through draft 10 of the NP with the Parish Council and recorded their comments, suggested updates and concerns.
Sep – Nov 2014	Parish Council	Meeting	Update briefings
October 2014	Matthew Neal (Neighbourhood Planning Officer, SDC)	Draft 11 and Draft 12 versions circulated for comment.	Draft 11 final version on the 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2014 was submitted as part of the evidence base sent to the Planning Inspector for the “Gladman” Public Enquiry.
10 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2014 to 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2015	See Appendix G	<i>Full draft document or 8 page concise summary.</i>	Formal 6 week consultation with residents of the Neighbourhood Area and all interested parties.

## Appendix G – Abbreviated List of Consultees

Local	Business	Statutory & Representative Bodies
All residents of the neighbourhood area. These include members of  Sports Club Memorial Hall Parochial Church Councils Gloucester Diocese Coventry Diocese Methodist Church Garden Club Bidston Shorthouse Allotment Trustees Local Clubs & Societies	Bowls Club Businesses in Parish Relevant Property Developers Farmers & Landowners	SDC Severn Trent Environment Agency Western Power BT WCC Weston on Avon Parish Long Marston Parish Binton Parish Temple Grafton Parish Luddington Parish Bidford-on-Avon Parish Dorsington Parish Upper Avon Navigation Trust Natural England English Heritage

The full list of consultees for the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan can be found at <http://www.welford.org.uk>

## Appendix H – Evidence Base

All evidence can be accessed online through a hyperlink from an evidence base page or pages on the public Welford website (<http://www.welford.org.uk>). Documentary evidence will be one of the following:-

1. a copy of the relevant electronic document stored on the Welford website with the owner defined.
2. a link to the document stored on the owners own website.
3. a scan of the paper document stored on the Welford website with the owner defined.

## Appendix J - Demographics

The 2011 census shows that Welford Parish has a population of 1420 living in 605 households. The age profile of the village is:

0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49
10.1%	10.3%	9.9%	10.6%	15.4%
50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90 +
14.0%	14.5%	9.2%	5.0%	1.1%

The average age is higher than Stratford District as a whole with a median age of 51 compared with 46 for the District. The percentage of residents over 65 is 29.0% compared with 22.0% for the District, and the proportion of households comprising a single person households over 65 is 16.7% compared with 14.4%.

The proportion of children and young people age 19 and under, however, is similar to the District with 21.7% compared with 21.4%.



Figure 7 - Children's Play Area next to Welford Primary School

**Table 1: Tenure**

Housing tenure (Table 1) is based on 605 homes across the Parish with at least one resident whilst housing type is based on 661 'home spaces', 56 of which have 'no usual resident'. This difference, and the high proportion of caravan/mobile homes, may be explained by caravans used for holiday purposes but reporting in the census.

Housing	Welford	Stratford District
Owned outright	55.2%	39.1%
Owned with mortgage	26.1%	32.7%
Share ownership	2.1%	1.1%
Rented - social	8.8%	12.9%
Rented - private	5.6%	12.7%
Rented - free	2.1%	1.5%

The profile of dwellings within Welford is highlighted in Table 2 with a far higher proportion of detached residences and caravans/mobile homes as might be expected in a rurally based settlement with far lower Terraced properties and Flats.

**Table 2: Type**

Housing	Welford	SDC
Detached	55.1%	36.8%
Semi-detached	23.6%	30.3%
Terraced	8.9%	19.4%
Flat	1.4%	11.7%
Caravan/mobile home	11.0%	1.9%

In addition to the 26 park homes licensed at Long Cast, Hunt Hall Lane which are permanently occupied, 148 holiday caravans are licensed in Welford. Table 3 below outlines the sites

**Table 3: Caravan / Park homes**

Site Name	Location	Number of Pitches
Avonside	Binton Bridges (S of river)	30
Millfield	Mill Lane	12
Welford Park (formerly West View Park)	Barton Road	67
Binton Bridges (formerly Welford Riverside)	Binton Bridges (N of river)	39
<b>Total</b>		<b>148</b>

Table 4 shows the modes of travel to work. Welford has a significantly higher proportion of retired people than the district as a whole. It can also be seen that both in Welford and the wider district, there is a high reliance on private transport to travel to work compared with the environmentally more sustainable modes of public transport, cycling or walking.

**Table 4: Modes of travel to work**

Mode of transport	Welford-on-Avon	Stratford District
Work mainly at home	9.1%	6.9%
Public transport	2.4%	2.6%
Private car, van or motorcycle	48.1%	50.5%
Cycle	0.6%	1.5%
On foot	3.4%	7.2%
Other mode of transport	0.3%	0.6%
Not in employment	36.1%	30.7%

References:

- Warwickshire Observatory produced by Warwickshire County Council
- Matthew Stead, SDC Caravan Licensing