

Information Statement

This information statement is about the referendum to be held on the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan

About town and country planning

In England, planning applications are determined by local planning authorities such as North Dorset District Council. Planning decisions are made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan sets out the planning policies for the development and use of land.

The [adopted Local Plan for North Dorset](#) [1] is therefore the starting point for considering planning applications at the current time. The [national planning policy framework](#) [2] must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Our [Local Development Scheme](#) [3] contains information on development plan documents that are being prepared.

About neighbourhood planning and the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. In parished areas such as Gillingham, the parish or town council is responsible for preparing a neighbourhood plan. The plan can show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area. If a plan is made following a successful referendum, it becomes part of the development plan for that area.

Gillingham Town Council started preparing their neighbourhood plan in 2012. After much research, and having listened to the various issues and suggestions made through various consultation events, a draft plan was produced for consultation in May 2016. The plan was then revised in response to the consultation and submitted to North Dorset District Council (NDDC) in July 2017. NDDC conducted a six-week public consultation on the submitted plan between January and February 2018. David Kaiserman (BA, DipTP, MRTPI) was appointed as an Independent Examiner for the Plan, and in April 2018 he produced his [report](#) [4] confirming that he was satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions and recommended that it should, subject to some modifications, proceed to referendum.

North Dorset District Council considered the report on 29 May 2018 and issued its decision which was in agreement with the examiner's findings, and that the [plan as modified](#) [5] should proceed to referendum.

[1] dorsetforyou.gov.uk/localplan/north

[2] www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

[3] dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/396643/Local-Development-Scheme

[4] www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/225266/Gillingham-NP-Examiners-Report-final-version-4-April-2018/pdf/Gillingham_NP_Examiners_report_final_version_4_apr_18.pdf

[5] www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/Proposed-Gillingham-Plan

What the referendum is deciding

The question which will be asked in the referendum is:

“Do you want North Dorset District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for the parish of Gillingham to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

The referendum asks you to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to this question.

When and where the referendum will be held

The referendum will be held on **Thursday 12 July 2018**.

What is the area covered by the referendum?

The referendum area and the area covered by the neighbourhood plan is the civil parish of Gillingham, Dorset.

Who is entitled to vote?

You are entitled to vote in the referendum if you live in the referendum area, you are on the electoral register to vote in local council elections and you are 18 years of age or over on 12 July 2018.

You have to be registered to vote by Tuesday, 26 June 2018 to vote in the referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by telephoning 01305 838299 during normal office hours.

How can people vote?

The referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

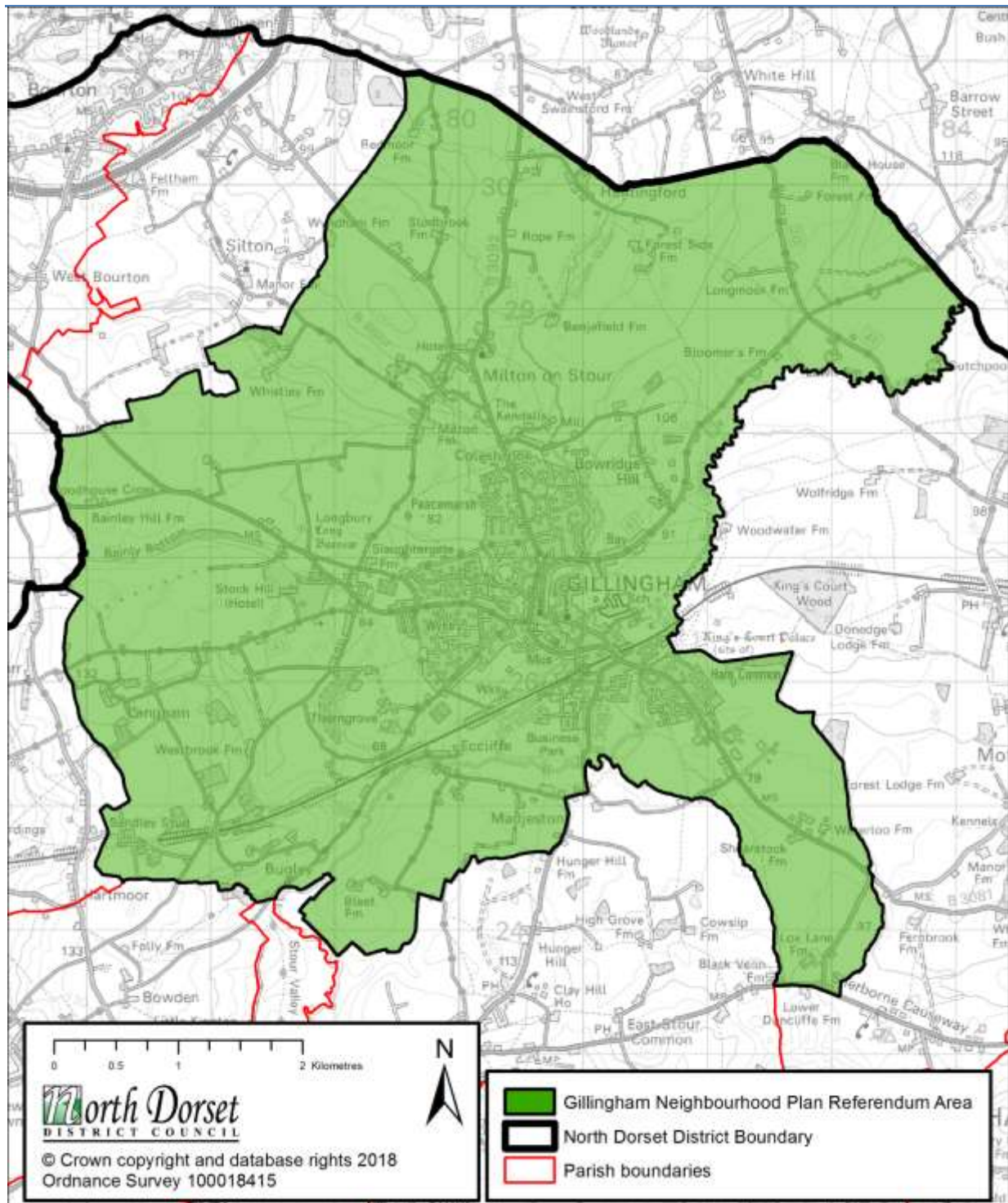
You can vote in person at the polling station – which will be indicated on the poll cards. We will issue poll cards to voters around the beginning of June. The polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm on 12 July 2018.

To vote by post or proxy in this referendum, you will need to have filled in an application form and sent it to the Electoral Registration Officer. Postal and proxy vote application forms are available online from the elections website dorsetforyou.gov.uk/how-to-vote or by contacting the district council.

Applications to vote by post must be received by 5pm on Wednesday, 27 June 2018. To vote by proxy, application forms should be received by 5pm on Wednesday, 4 July 2018. However in certain circumstances emergency proxy vote applications can be received up until 5pm on the 12 July 2018. Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Ballot papers for people who vote by post will be posted from 19 June 2018, and will need to be returned by 10pm on the day of the poll, 12 July 2018.

Map of the referendum area



Referendum expenses

The referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the referendum is £2,362 plus £0.059 per registered elector (in the area covered by the plan there are 9,136 electors).

What information is there available about the neighbourhood plan?

A copy of the specified documents, that is the documents listed below, may be inspected at the following council offices:

- **South Walks House**, South Walks Road, Dorchester DT1 1UZ (open Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm; and Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm)
- **Gillingham Town Council**, The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, SP8 4QR (open Monday to Friday 9am to 3.30pm)
- **Gillingham Library**, Chantry Fields, Gillingham, SP8 4UA (open Monday 10am to 1pm; Tuesday 9.30am to 6.30pm; Thursday 9.30am to 5pm; Friday 9.30am to 6.30pm; and Saturday 9.30am to 4pm)

The specified documents are:

- A **summary of representations** submitted to the examiner
- The **examiner's report**
- The **Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031** (as proposed)
- The **decision statement**, which includes a statement by the local planning authority that the plan as proposed meets the basic conditions
- This **information statement**, which includes general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the referendum

All of the above documents can be accessed from the Council's website:

dorsetforyou.gov.uk/Proposed-Gillingham-Plan