



Barton-Le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee Terms of Reference

1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

1.1 Neighbourhood planning is a right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011, whereby communities can shape development in their areas through the production of Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans become part of the Local Plan and the policies contained within them are then used in the determination of planning applications. However, policies produced cannot block development that is already part of the Local Plan. What they can do is shape where that development will go and what it will look like.

2 Definition of a Neighbourhood Plan

"Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to have a say in the future of the places where they live and work. It gives the [Parish] power to produce a plan with real legal weight that directs development in the [Parish] local area. It helps the [Parish]:

- *choose where new homes, shops and offices built,*
- *have influence on what those new buildings should look like,*
- *grant planning permission for the new buildings you want to see go ahead.*

2.1 Neighbourhood Planning therefore provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they protect the character of the village and get the right types of development for their community.

3 Purpose of the Committee

3.1 Barton-le-Clay Parish Council is the qualifying body responsible for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for its Parish area. It has established a Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (known hereafter as BLCNPSC) to work within these Terms of Reference (ToR) to make recommendations to produce the NP, with the assistance of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and in compliance with CBC's Core Strategy, National legislation.

4 Constituency

4.1 The Steering Committee will consist of a maximum of 10 members comprising:

4.1.1 A minimum of 3 Parish Councillors.

4.1.2 Up to a maximum of 7 residents from the Parish.

5 Terms

5.1 The BLCNPSC will appoint its own Chairman from one of the Parish Councillors, annually, or as circumstance dictates.

5.2 The BLCNPSC has no delegated authority from the Parish Council. Its purpose is to make recommendations to the Parish Council, to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

5.3 All Committee members have voting rights within the BLCNPSC.

5.4 The quorum for the BLCNPSC is 3.

5.5 The BLCNPSC will aim to meet monthly on a Tuesday at 7.30pm, either online, or in the Village Hall.

5.6 All Meetings are open to the general public.

5.7 Agendas must be published 3 clear days ahead of the meeting (a clear day does not include the date of publishing, date of the meeting or Sundays), and be made available on the Parish Council website and noticeboards.

5.8 Minutes are to be taken at the meeting and published on the Parish Council website and noticeboards once ratified at the following meeting.

5.9 All monies received, and payments made will occur through the Parish Council accounts and be monitored by the Clerk. All transactions will comply with the existing Financial Regulations of the Parish Council.

5.10 The BLCNPSC will report to the Parish Council monthly, through a standing item on the Parish Council agenda.

5.11 The BLCNPSC must keep CBC informed of progress at significant Milestones (see Timeline).

5.12 The BLCNPSC will remain active until the NP has been approved by an independent examiner.

6 Funding

6.1 Funding is available to support the production of Neighbourhood Plans by applying online through the relevant bodies.

7 Timeline

7.1 Submit BLCNP to CBC for Regulation 15 approval early 2025.

7.2 Referendum held in the village to agree the plan, late 2025.

8 Members of the BLCNPSC

8.1 Must be aware of their obligation to declare any direct personal interests that may be perceived as relevant to any decisions or recommendations made by the BLCNPSC.

8.2 Must ensure that there is no discrimination in the NP making process and that it is inclusive, open and transparent.

8.3 Must ensure that in all activities, they uphold the Seven Principles of Standards in Public Life (Nolan Principles below):

8.3.1 Selflessness Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

8.3.2 Integrity Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

8.3.3 Objectivity Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

8.3.4 Accountability Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

8.3.5 Openness Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

8.3.6 Honesty Holders of public office should be truthful.

8.3.7 Leadership Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

8.4 Should liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils, where applicable.

9 Main Responsibilities

9.1 Produce the NP with the assistance of CBC and the community, and approval by the Parish Council.

9.2 Engage as many members of the community and key stakeholders as possible in the process, by encouraging participation and the submission of views and ideas. Public participation will be primarily via a programme of events and consultation exercises.

9.3 Utilise the Parish Council website to share information on the NP.

9.4 Respond to questions raised about the plan process. Questions relating to the plan raised by members of the community will need to be put in writing if seeking a formal response and will be responded to in person if required, and/or answers posted on the Parish Council website and in the Parish Council Newsletter.