Frequently Asked Questions About the Hoe Neighbourhood Plan

What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

It's a way for the people who live and work in the Hoe Neighbourhood Area to have some influence over the way the Hoe will develop in the future. The plan looks at important issues, mainly to do with planning, which concern us all in our neighbourhood.

How did the plan come about?

The Hoe Neighbourhood Forum was set up in 2017. The Forum is a non-political community organisation. Local people and others who have an interest in the area were asked for their views as part of a survey. From this, various topics were identified as being important and these form the basis of the plan. The plan goes through stages of approval and the final stage is when the plan is voted upon by the residents of the Hoe Neighbourhood Area.

If it's non-political why are there councillors involved in the meetings?

Our three ward councillors have played a useful role in bringing the Forum together, offering advice and expertise. They are also aware of local issues that people take to them. They do not have a leading role within the Forum, but they do take part in our monthly meetings. The plan itself has been developed by residents who are members of the Forum and who have worked incredibly hard on a voluntary basis to bring the plan to its current position.

What happens if the plan is agreed by residents?

It means that when issues concerning the Hoe are being considered by the planning authority and the council, they must take into account the wishes of the local community, as laid out in the various policies in the neighbourhood plan. The reason the Forum was set up in the first place and for all the work done on the plan by residents and locals is to empower our neighbourhood and to give it a louder voice in planning and other local matters. It hasn't always felt like we have been listened to and this is an extra tool for us to put forward our views within a recognised framework, backed up by the Localism Act 2011.

I live on the Hoe – what's in it for me and my family?

The plan is designed to support and provide balance to our community. Its aim is to ensure that local issues are addressed when any new developments are planned. It seeks to highlight the value we as a neighbourhood place on our local built and natural heritage. The things that make the Hoe a great place to live and which make it unique.

I don't live on the Hoe – what's in it for me and my family?

The Hoe is considered by many to be the jewel in Plymouth's crown. It is a special place for residents and local businesses but also for the many local, national and international visitors. The plan seeks to provide a sense of long-term vision and stewardship for all of us as well as to protect and respect its unique natural characteristics, heritage, and biodiversity for the benefit of all and within the context of a neighbourhood that is inclusive and accepting of sustainable growth.

What stage are we at now?

The plan is in the consultation stage required by law. This is a period where people can study the plan and make their views known. They can say whether they agree or disagree with the contents of the plan. The plan is then reviewed and revised as necessary to take account of written comments. The consultation period runs from 18 November 2024 to 6 January 2025 (eight weeks, which is two weeks longer than required by Regulation 14, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 because the period extends through the Christmas holidays).

How can I make my views known?

The Forum is holding a series of events locally, where you can chat to members of the working group and regular participants. You can then complete a simple form to express your views, either in paper format or by going online to view the plan at www.hoeforum.org.uk/online. You can follow the link to review the Plan and send in your comments.

Then what happens?

1. After the 8-week consultation period, the plan is reviewed and revised to take account of written responses people have made during the consultation period.
2. The revised plan then goes to the local authority, Plymouth City Council, to ensure it is accurate and that it meets certain legal requirements.
3. It is then sent to an independent inspector, who will study the plan in detail to make sure it conforms to certain basic conditions set out by parliament.
4. After this, the plan will be formally voted on by Hoe Neighbourhood Area residents to adopt or reject it.

What happens if the Plan is agreed by the residents?

It will mean that the residents have a greater say in planning decisions that affect the Hoe. It will also allow the Forum to work with stakeholders to influence other Community Aspirations that are important to local people but not part of the formal planning process. It is still of value for Community Aspirations to be recorded in the neighbourhood plan, even though they themselves are not voted upon. The hope is that the plan will embody a proactive, long-term vision for our community by our community and that it will give neighbours a greater sense of agency and empowerment in their own neighbourhood.

How is the vote carried out?

It is a legal referendum, which is carried out and overseen by the local authority under specific rules and regulations for neighbourhood planning and neighbourhood forums.

What things will the plan deal with?

The plan's policies fall into different themes:

- Heritage and design
- Blue and green environment
- Pedestrians and transport
- Housing
- Infrastructure

There are 16 policies embodied in the plan.

What things won't the plan deal with?

Culture, Tourism and Economy was also a theme explored during the Plan's development, but none of the desired outcomes could be framed as planning policies. They have instead been set out as Community Aspirations. (Community Aspirations are not formally voted on as part of the referendum and do not become part of local planning law.)

The Plan does not cover day-to-day matters like bin collections, litter or antisocial behaviour, although it does make some suggestions for improvements in the neighbourhood. These can be raised directly with the council or your ward councillors. If you live or work in the Hoe Neighbourhood Area, you are welcome to attend the Forum's general meetings, which provide an additional opportunity to raise awareness of such issues with other neighbours and ward councillors.

How can I review and comment on the Hoe Neighbourhood Plan?

During the consultation period from 18 November 2024 to 6 January 2025, the Plan will be available for review and comment in several ways. The official documentation for the Hoe Neighbourhood Plan runs to hundreds of pages, but you don't have to read all of them!

- To review the sections or policies you're interested in online, go here: https://www.hoeforum.org.uk/online

- To view or download a PDF of the Plan documents, go to https://www.hoeforum.org.uk/plandocs.
  (You can enter any comments you have online from the link above, or email us at hello@hoeforum.org.uk)

- To read a paper copy of the Plan, enquire at **Plymouth's Central Library**, the **Gipsy Moth Pub** or the **West Hoe Pub**. (They won't be able to answer your questions, but they will let you look through the Plan.)

- To speak to someone about the Plan in person, come to one of the consultation events below. We'll be happy to talk you through the Plan and answer your questions. The sessions are:

  Wednesday, **20 Nov**, 10am-4pm at the **Hoe Bowling Club**

  Monday, **25 Nov**, 6-7pm at the **Hoe Bowling Club**

  Monday, **2 Dec**, 2-4pm at the **West Hoe Pub**

  Tuesday, **3 Dec**, 4-6pm at the **Gipsy Moth Pub**

  Wednesday, **11 Dec**, 4-6pm on **Zoom** (email hello@hoeforum.org.uk to request link)

  Friday, 13 **Dec**, 12-2pm at the **Hoe Bowling Club**

  Monday, **16 Dec**, 4-6pm at the **West Hoe Pub**

  Friday, **3 Jan**, 3-5pm on **Zoom** (email hello@hoeforum.org.uk to request link)

How can I keep informed of the Hoe Neighbourhood Plan's progress?

- We will provide updates on our website on www.hoeforum.org.uk.
- There is also a Facebook page visible to anyone at Hoe Neighbourhood Forum.
- Anyone who lives or works in the Hoe Neighbourhood Area may join our members-only Facebook group at Hoe Neighbourhood Forum (members' group)
- Anyone who lives or works in the Hoe Neighbourhood Area is welcome to attend our general meetings, normally held monthly on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm, at the Hoe Bowling Club (Osborne Place, PL1 2PU). The Forum website provides updated meeting dates on the Meetings page.