



Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan

Northumberland County Council

**Referendum Information Statement including
Information for Voters**

Statement Published: 16 February 2015
Referendum Date: 26 March 2015

About this booklet

On Thursday 26 March 2015, there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood development plan for your area. This booklet explains more about the referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. In this booklet you can find out about:

- The referendum and how you can take part;
- The planning system in England and the development plan
- Neighbourhood development plans;
- The neighbourhood area;
- The Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan

Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' to a question.

For this referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

"Do you want Northumberland County Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Allendale to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

How do I vote in the referendum?

You vote by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper.

Put a cross in only **one** box or your vote will not be counted.

If more people vote 'Yes' than 'No' in this referendum, then Northumberland County Council will use the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan to help it decide planning applications in Allendale Parish.

If more people vote 'No' than 'Yes', then planning applications will continue to be decided without using the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan. Instead planning applications would be decided using policies in the Tynedale District Local Plan (2000) and the Tynedale Core Strategy (2007) which would remain as part of the development plan for the local area.

What is the Development Plan?

In England, decisions on planning applications are made by local planning authorities. Those decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan is a set of documents that set out policies for the development and use of land in a local planning authority area.

Northumberland County Council is the local planning authority for Northumberland with the exception of areas covered by the Northumberland National Park.

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood planning powers were introduced in the Localism Act in 2011. Their aim is to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. Local communities prepare neighbourhood plans which are created to show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area. When a neighbourhood plan passes a local referendum it will become part of the development plan for that neighbourhood area and must be used to help in making decisions on planning applications in that area.

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Where town or parish councils exist they are the only organisations that can start the work of preparing a neighbourhood plan. Where there is no town or parish council a neighbourhood forum can be created to prepare a neighbourhood plan. Civil parishes exist across the whole of Northumberland so neighbourhood forums could not be created for the purposes of neighbourhood planning.

In this case, the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan was prepared by Allendale Parish Council.

What is a neighbourhood area?

Neighbourhood areas are areas defined for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans can only be created in formally designated neighbourhood areas. A neighbourhood area can cover single streets or large urban or rural areas.

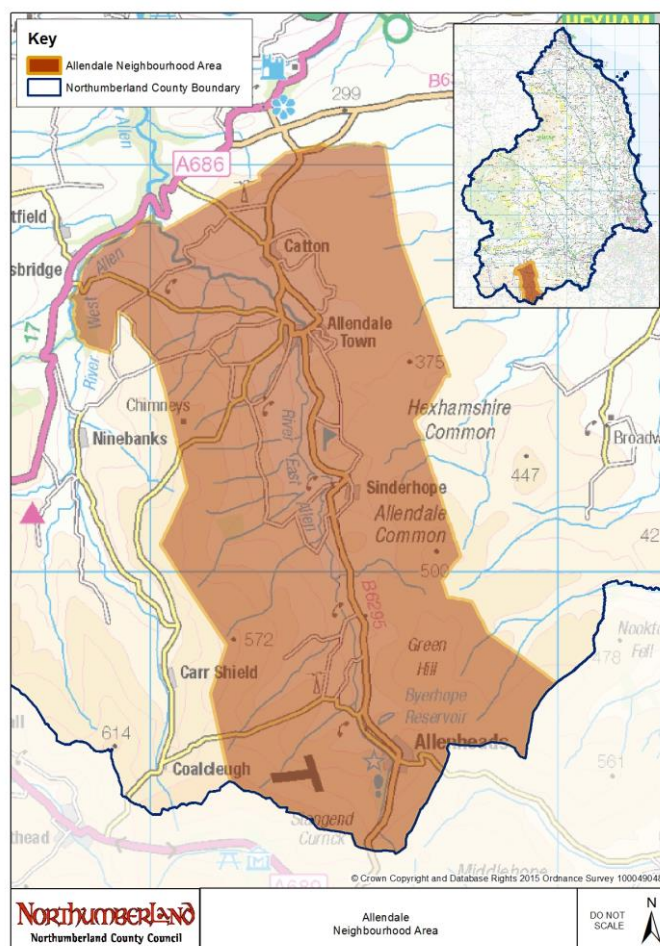
The boundaries of a neighbourhood area are put forward by town or parish councils where they exist. This is done by formal application to the County Council who will make the decision about designating a neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood areas will normally follow parish boundaries or groups of parishes.

In Allendale the boundary of the neighbourhood area was approved by Northumberland County Council in January 2013 and is identical to the civil parish area of Allendale.

Neighbourhood Planning in Allendale

The Referendum area is identified on the map in this Information Statement below. The area comprises the whole of the civil parish of Allendale and is identical to the area that has been designated as the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan area.



Referendum expenses

Expenses can be incurred by an individual or body during the period of the referendum for referendum purposes. There is a limit to the amount that campaigners can spend on their advertising for the referendum.

The Referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the Allendale Referendum is £2463.19. The number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum by reference to which the limit has been calculated is 1715.

Specified documents to be published before Referendum

The County Council is required to make available a number of documents relevant to holding the Referendum. These are called the **Specified**

Documents. A copy of the specified documents, all of which are identified below, may be inspected at:

- Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Loansdean, Morpeth, Northumberland between the hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday; and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday;
- Northumberland County Council, Hadrian House, Hexham, Northumberland Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am to 5pm;
- Allendale Library, Dawson Place, Allendale, Hexham, Northumberland between the hours of 2pm to 4.30pm and 5pm to 7.30pm Tuesday and Thursday, and 10am to 12 noon on Saturday.

The specified documents are the:

- Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan: Referendum Plan;
- Report of the independent examiner (8 December 2014);
- Summary of the representations submitted to the independent examiner;
- Statement by the local planning authority that the draft plan meets the basic conditions (*The Basic Conditions Decision Statement*); and a
- Statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the referendum (*Information Statement including Information for Voters*)

All the above documents can also be viewed on Northumberland County Council's website at:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10909>

Can I vote?

You can vote in the referendum if you live in the Allendale Parish Council area and:

- you are registered to vote in local council elections; and
- you are 18 years of age or over on 26 March 2015

You have to be registered to vote by 10 March 2015 to vote in the referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling our Helpline on 01670 624811.

The referendum will be conducted based on procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

Ways of voting?

There are three ways of voting:

In person on Thursday 26 March 2015:

- At your local polling station. It is easy and a member of staff will always help if you are not sure what to do;

- the polling stations are at:
 - Allendale Village Hall, Leadgate, Allendale, Hexham, NE47 9PR
 - Allenheads Heritage Centre, Allenheads, Hexham, NE47 9HN
 - Sparty Lea Methodist Church, Sparty Lea, Hexham, Northumberland
- You will receive a poll card confirming your polling station for this referendum. If you do not receive your poll card, you can contact our Helpline on 01670 624811, or email us on elections@northumberland.gov.uk to find out where your polling station is.
- Polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm

By post:

- If you have a postal vote already, you will receive a poll card confirming this
- To vote by post, you will need to complete an application form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by 5pm on 10 March 2015 at this address:

Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Loansdean
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF
- Postal votes can be sent overseas but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your completed postal vote by 10 March 2015
- You should receive your postal vote about a week before polling day. If it doesn't arrive in time, you can ask for a replacement up to 5pm on 26 March 2015 by contacting our Helpline on 01670 624811

By proxy:

- If you have a proxy vote already you will receive a poll card confirming this
- If you can't get to the polling station and don't wish to vote by post you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf
- To vote by proxy, you will need to complete an application form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by 5pm on 18 March at this address:

Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Loansdean
Morpeth
Northumberland

NE61 2EF

- When you apply for a proxy vote, you must say why you cannot vote in person
- 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.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available from our Helpline on 01670 624811 or by emailing elections@northumberland.gov.uk. You can also register online by visiting Northumberland County Council's website at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=16198>

Am I registered to vote?

If you're not registered, you won't be able to vote. You can check if you are registered by calling our Helpline on 01670 624811

If you are not registered to vote, you will need to complete a voter registration form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by 11 March 2015 at this address:

Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Loansdean
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Registration forms can also be provided by contacting our Helpline on 01670 624811 or by emailing elections@northumberland.gov.uk. You can also register online by visiting Northumberland County Council's website at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=16198>

How to find out more:

Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available on the County Council's website <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10909>. You can find specific documents on the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10909>

For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact Northumberland County Council's Communities and Infrastructure Planning Team on 01670 623619/ 620378.

For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please contact our Helpline on 01670 624811 or elections@northumberland.gov.uk