SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Our vision for Kingston

2023–2041

Community services and facilities



Further Engagement on the Local Plan (Regulation 18)

Summer 2021

www.kingston.gov.uk/localplan

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES

Contents

Building for our future 3

Introduction 4

What is a Local Plan? 4

The big picture 5

Changes since we last heard from communities in 2019 6
What is this engagement about? 7
How is a Local Plan developed? 8
How can your views be shared with us? 9
Timeline for preparing our new Local Plan 9

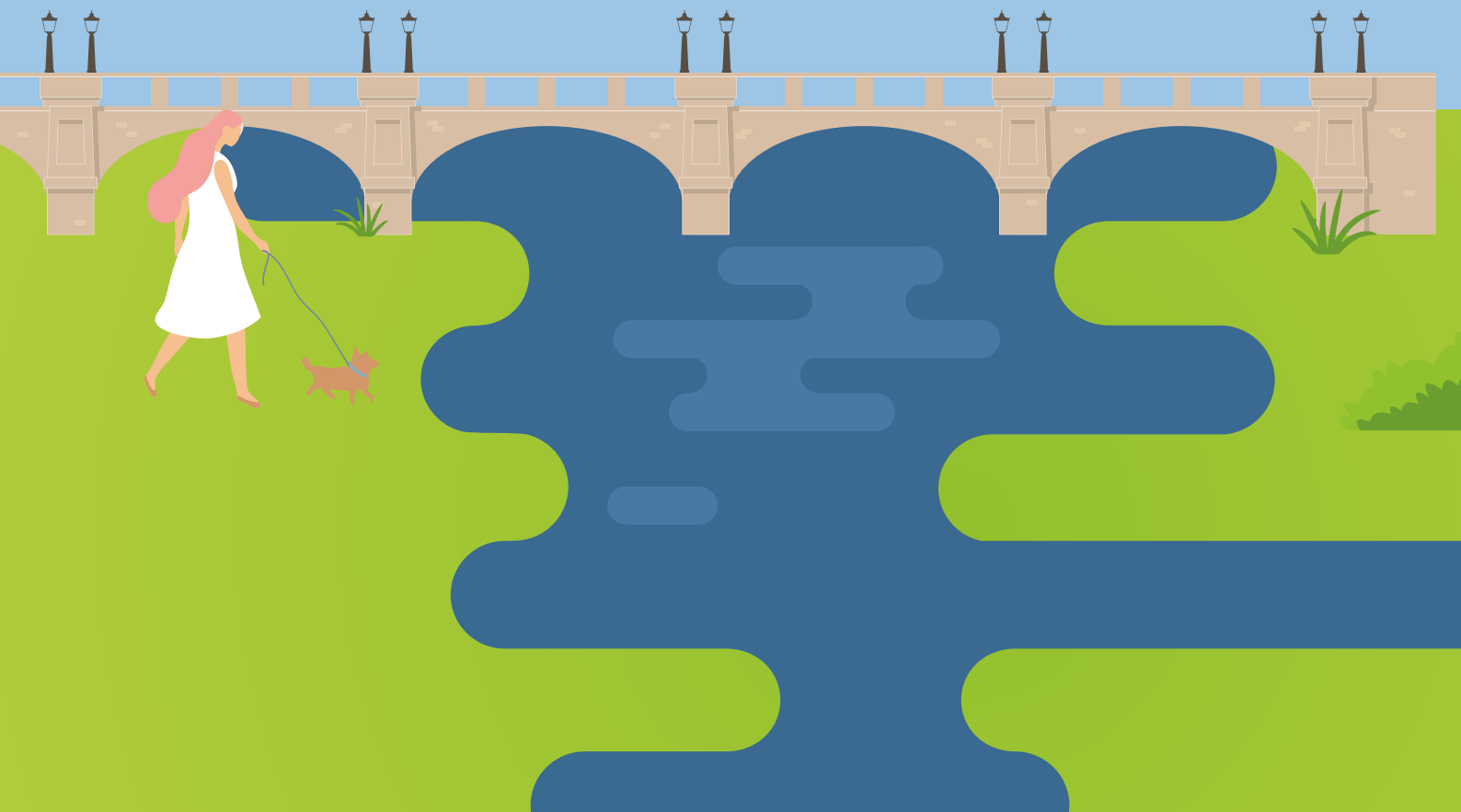
Community services and facilities 10

What should the new Local Plan do? 10
What is the current situation? 11
What you said in the 2019 Early Engagement 12
How could the new Local Plan Help? 12

How to respond 13

The other key Local Plan themes are as follows:

- How we plan for good growth
- Greener transport and how we move around
- Natural environment
- Design, heritage and culture
- Your neighbourhood and local community
- Housing
- Local economy



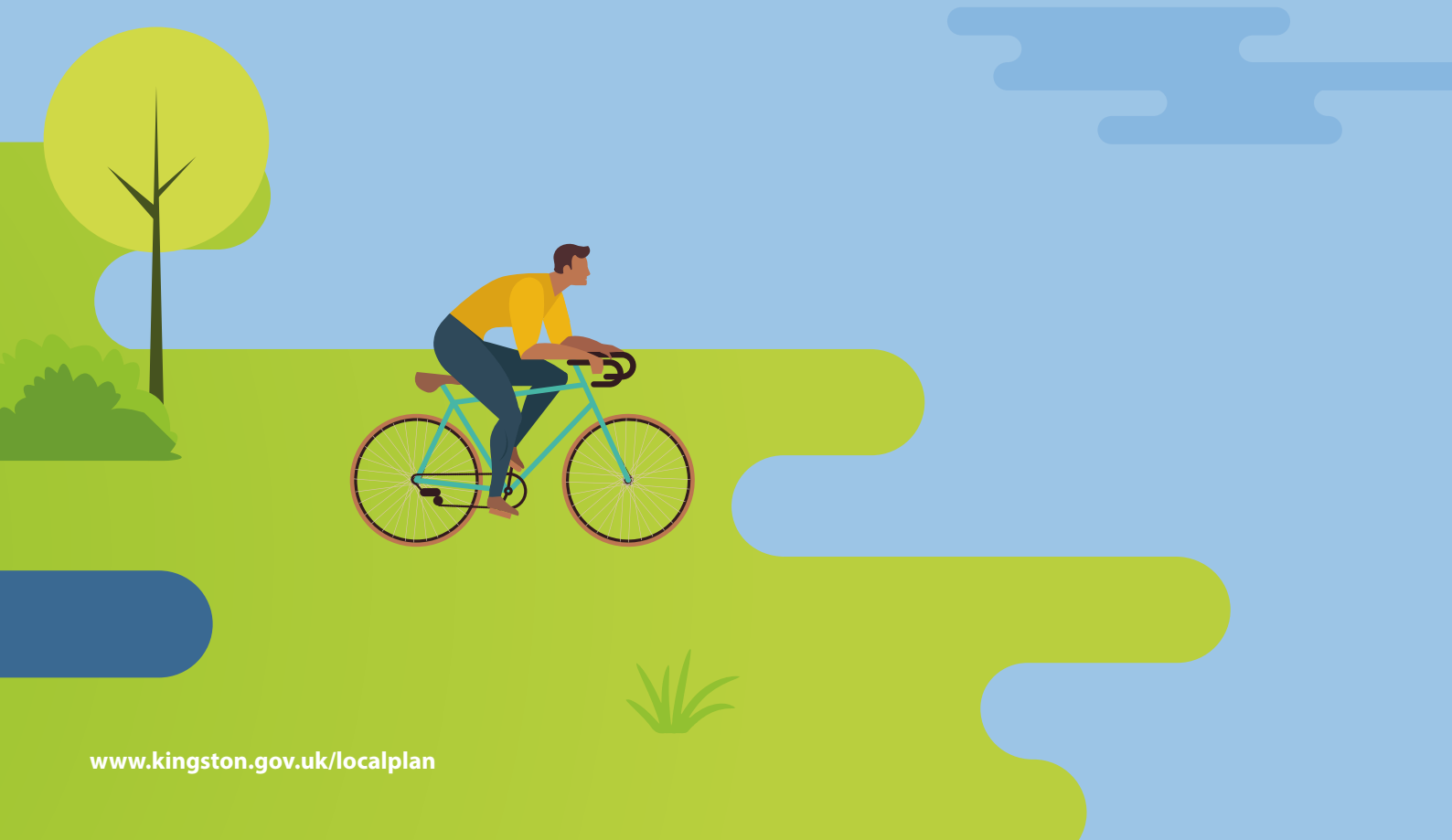
Building for our future

The Mayor of London's London Plan sets us a target of 964 homes a year — that's 50% more homes than were in the previous London Plan. This is a challenging target but if we fail to meet it we risk losing local control of planning decisions.

The Government's intention is for new proposals for planning which could see the target double again to 2,000. That's why it's really important that you have your say now. We need to show that we are tackling the housing crisis while also protecting our borough's character. A new Local Plan will set the Mayor of London's target figure of 964 homes per year for a five year period and should protect us from an even higher target. Our Local Plan will help guide where this growth may happen while respecting and celebrating our heritage.

You told us in 2019 that our areas of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) are some of our biggest assets. We are committed to not building on Green Belt or MOL, which makes up a third of the land in our borough. This means that housing will need to be built within the rest of the borough. We want your thoughts to shape where new homes might be. It is important we take control and manage this through our Local Plan rather than risk having developments imposed on us by authorities outside Kingston.

Please do share your views.



Introduction

What is a Local Plan?

The Local Plan sets out our vision for the future of the borough. It will set out how we seek to manage the London Plan's housing targets, set by the Mayor of London, as well as central Government policy, and concerns everything from shops, offices and medical centres, to our natural environment and cultural spaces.

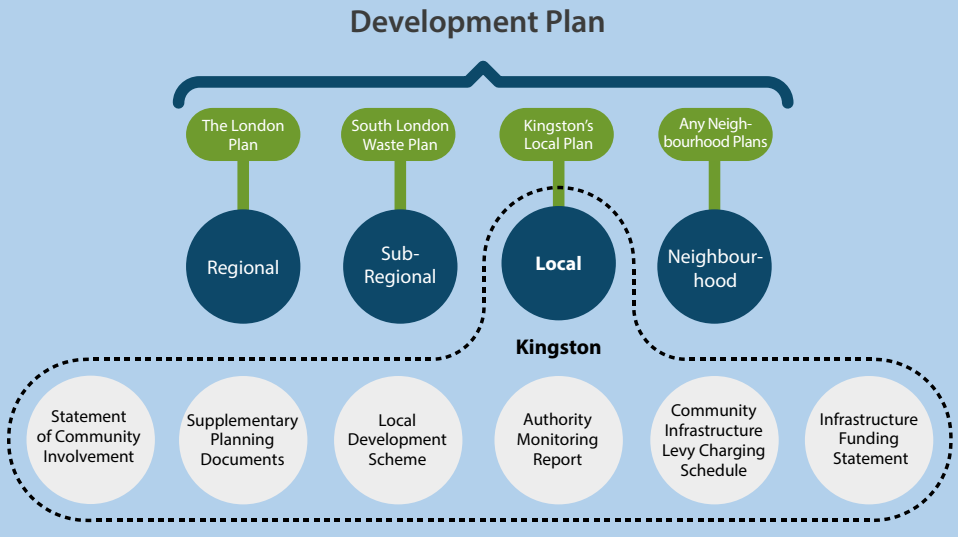
It will outline where we build, what we prioritise locally and what we need to do to help shape growth and manage change. The new Local Plan will be used to guide development and help decide planning applications. It is therefore important we work together to develop it and get it right.

We do not have complete freedom about what we can or cannot put in our Local Plan. Our Local Plan must also align with the Mayor of London's London Plan.

At the moment, Kingston's adopted Development Plan is made up of four documents. The:

- **London Plan**, adopted in 2021, which sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20–25 years and the Mayor's vision for 'good growth'.
- **Core Strategy**, adopted in 2012, which sets out the long-term vision for the borough and policies to deliver that vision. We apply the policies when we consider planning applications.
- **Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan**, adopted in 2008.
- **South London Waste Plan**, adopted in 2012 and shared with the boroughs of Sutton, Merton and Croydon. The Draft South London Waste Plan 2021–2036 was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 19 January 2021.

A lot has changed since these plans were prepared. The new Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy and Kingston Town Centre Area Action Plan, as many of the objectives and policies contained within them are now out of date.





The big picture

The Local Plan will allow us to set out how we plan to respond to the biggest challenges and opportunities facing Kingston over the next 20 years, including how we support the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and deal with the housing targets which our borough has been set.

The Local Plan will set the vision for the borough until 2041. In 2019, the council carried out early engagement on the content of a new Local Plan. Your previous feedback is valued and is helping to develop the draft plan. But a lot has changed in the last two years. That is why we are going out to ask people if their views have changed and hear from others, to help shape the future.

A new Local Plan should reflect the aspirations and concerns of residents and communities now, in a post-COVID-19 world, and be flexible enough to respond to future changes.

There are also several other important reasons why we need further early engagement on the Local Plan now:

- To respond to new housing delivery targets set by the Government and the Mayor of London
- To conform with the Mayor of London's new London Plan which was adopted in March 2021
- To support our town centres, neighbourhoods and the borough recover from COVID-19
- To respond to the climate emergency which has been declared by the council
- To take into account changes to national planning policy and guidance, set by the Government

We need to capture your latest thoughts to ensure we grow and change in the best way possible, over the next 20 years.



Changes since we last heard from communities in 2019

The last year has had a big impact on everyone including how we feel about where we live and work.

For some, there have been shifts in attitudes when it comes to how we travel and about access to green spaces, public services and facilities.

We also know that the economic circumstances of many people in the borough have been affected, with higher levels of unemployment and a need for new skills and employment opportunities. We need to consider the needs and aspirations people have now and make sure these are reflected in the new plan.

Impact of the increased housing target set by the new London Plan

In March 2021, the Mayor of London's new London Plan, which covers the period to 2041, was formally adopted. The new London Plan sets out a 10-year housing target for the period from 2019–2029. This now forms part of the borough's overarching Development Plan and includes strategic policies that our new Local Plan will need to align with.

In particular, the London Plan sets housing targets for each London borough. Kingston is required to deliver 964 homes a year. If we fail to do this the borough risks losing local control of its planning decisions. We have already protested strongly that this target is too high, and it has been reduced to the current level from 1,364, which was in an earlier draft of the new London Plan.

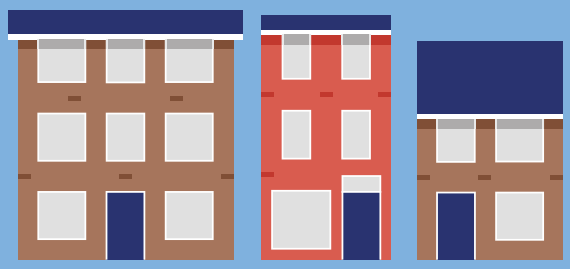
We want to hear where you think these homes can best be built. What should the borough of Kingston look like in 20 years' time? We can then use your feedback to develop a new Local Plan which reflects what you want to see.

The London Plan also identifies areas where it thinks there is an opportunity (Opportunity Areas) for more intensive development in the borough. But the specific boundaries and number of new homes and jobs that could be delivered in these Opportunity Areas will be discussed further and agreed upon with the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Impact of COVID-19 on how we live our lives

COVID-19 has changed how we all live our lives, including where we work, shop and spend our free time. We are now more acutely aware of the importance of our existing green and public spaces and the need for more in our local areas. Many people's working habits have changed beyond recognition, with more people who were previously commuting to work, five days a week, now working more flexibly and from home. This is changing the way local areas are being used with more people likely to be spending time in the borough's public spaces, popping out to use local shops and cafes or looking for alternative areas where they can work and connect to the internet.

We want to understand how COVID-19 has changed the way you view and use your local area so we can develop a plan which will help us to adapt to a changing economic and social environment.



How the Government's Planning White Paper could affect how we plan in future

As well as the impact of COVID-19 and the London Plan, the Government's proposed changes to planning policy would likely result in a significant further increase in the number of homes required to be built in Kingston. We need to capture the latest thoughts in the new Local Plan.

Council's declaration of a climate emergency

Climate change brings risks to the environment and the health, well-being and economy of communities and is already affecting our borough.

In June 2019, the council declared a climate emergency in the borough with an ambition to take the lead at a local level and for the borough to be zero-carbon by 2038. This sits alongside the Mayor of London's commitment to London becoming a zero-carbon city. This will require the reduction of all greenhouse gases, of which carbon dioxide is the most prominent.

Initiatives already in motion include our continued investment in cycle lanes, installing more electric vehicle charging points, and the commitment to plant 2,000 extra trees in the borough by 2022.

Kingston has higher carbon emissions per person compared to our neighbouring boroughs, and we need planning policies that support carbon reduction. Our policies can help achieve energy-efficient design in new buildings, require sustainable construction methods are used and help to encourage active and greener forms of travel such as walking and cycling to be the first choice for new users.

What is this engagement about?

Your previous feedback is valued and is helping to shape the draft plan. This further engagement will help us to take into account recent changes and develop a new Local Plan which is right for the borough.

The places we create affect all of our lives. That's why we need your help to make sure Kingston develops in the right way for future generations.

- What's important in your neighbourhood?
- What homes and workplaces do we want?
- How do we want to travel around the borough?
- How do we want to make sure people of all ages feel safe in Kingston?

As part of this further engagement, we have also included the ideas people suggested in the 2019 early engagement exercise.

We will use your views to help inform policies and any development site allocations the new Local Plan contains.

You don't need to answer every question, but we encourage you to answer as many as possible.

Please do share your views and ideas.



How is a Local Plan developed?

1. The first stage of developing a Local Plan is public engagement to gather ideas to shape the plan. This is a statutory stage, referred to as 'Regulation 18' because it is a requirement of Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Plans) Regulations 2012.
2. We will use the feedback and evidence we gather to draft a new Local Plan.
3. We will then consult on the draft Local Plan so communities can give their views.
4. The final draft version is then published for consideration. This is a statutory stage, referred to as Regulation 19. At this stage, the community should only comment on the 'soundness' of the document.
5. After this stage, the council will submit the plan to the Secretary of State. Only minor changes can be made at this stage. If more significant changes are needed, the Regulation 19 consultation must be run again.
6. The Secretary of State will appoint an independent inspector to consider whether the new Local Plan is 'sound' and the necessary legal tests have been met. The inspector will hold public hearings to hear from people who do not believe the plan is sound.
7. The inspector will then advise whether the plan is sound. If any significant changes are needed, another consultation must be carried out before the plan can be adopted.

More detailed information about plan-making can be found on the government's website at www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making. The way we consult and engage with you is set out in our Statement of Community Involvement.

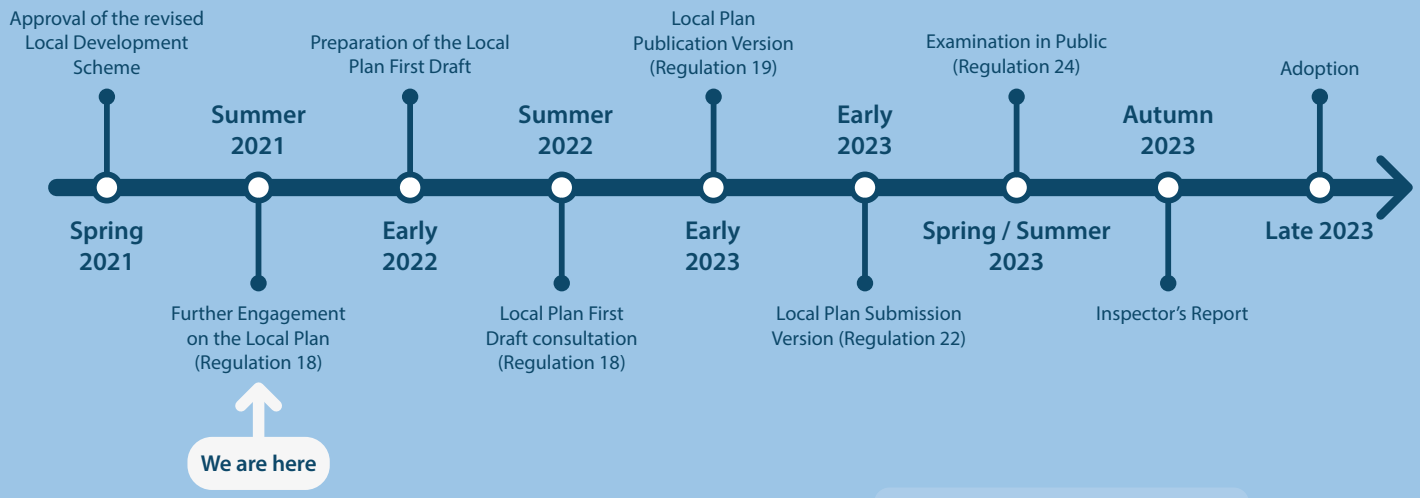
Journey to adoption of the new Local Plan



How can your views be shared with us?

This document, about how we plan for good growth, is one of several documents we are encouraging you to provide feedback on.

Timeline for preparing our new Local Plan





Community services and facilities

Securing the schools, medical centres and other community facilities to meet the future needs of our local communities

Community services and facilities, often referred to as social infrastructure, have an important role in developing and supporting strong and inclusive communities. It makes an important contribution to residents' quality of life and positively impacts a wide range of health, social, and economic outcomes.

Supporting access to high-quality community facilities is also important for improving the local population's health and well-being, improving social mobility and reducing inequalities in the borough. Sufficient social infrastructure must be in place to support sustainable developments. Community services and facilities should not be unnecessarily lost, especially where there is a demand from a growing and changing population.

Social infrastructure can include a wide range of services and facilities, including:

- Education
- Health and social care
- Sports and recreation, and other community uses
- Green Infrastructure in all its forms, including parks, community gardens, allotments, playing pitches and sports fields, and nature reserves.

What should the new Local Plan do?

Under the London Plan, when planning for development growth, boroughs should assess the capacity of infrastructure to support the planned developments in their area and identify the infrastructure requirements in the local infrastructure delivery plan or programmes.

Boroughs should engage with partners and stakeholders to identify current and projected future requirements for infrastructure and help support their delivery through the Local Plan. The London Plan also encourages boroughs to plan for the infrastructure necessary for the London Plan's Growth Corridors and Opportunity Areas.

The loss of community services and facilities can have a detrimental effect on the community it serves. Where possible, boroughs should protect such facilities and uses. Where development proposals lead to the loss of a community facility, planning policy should require a replacement that continues to meet the needs of the neighbourhood it serves.

To further protect against the loss of valued social infrastructure, boroughs can also consider approving the designation of a facility as an 'Asset of Community Value' if put forward by the local community.



Growing population



What is the current situation?

Projected population change

Based on the GLA's 2018-based housing-led population projections, the borough's population will grow by around 20,000 people over the 10-year housing target period. By 2029, the borough's population will reach over 194,900 people, representing a 10% increase over the 2019 population of around 174,900 people. The greatest population change is in the 65 or over age group (where the population will increase by around 6,000 people over the 2019 population). Children and young people of secondary school ages and sixth form ages will also increase over that period.

Work on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

To inform the Local Plan, the council has begun discussions with infrastructure partners and providers to identify the borough's social infrastructure needs and prepare a local Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

Our partners include:

- Achieving for Children (the Lead Education Authority for Kingston)
- NHS South West London Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit
- RBK Corporate & Communities (on public parks and open spaces, sports facilities, recreational grounds, children's play areas, and nature conservation)

The IDP evidence aims to support a collaborative approach with relevant partners and providers to infrastructure planning as part of the Local Plan process.

Infrastructure planning is complex involving a wide range of organisations and bodies, working to different timescales and delivery objectives. The council will continue to refine and amend the IDP evidence as it develops the Local Plan.



What you said in the 2019 Early Engagement?

- Concerns with the capacity of existing infrastructure to accommodate the additional development growth; and that recent housing developments have already placed pressure on existing services and infrastructure in the borough.
- The Local Plan should protect open spaces from inappropriate developments; Concerns with the loss of open spaces, including public parks, recreational grounds, sports playing pitches and community gardens and allotments.
- The council should undertake infrastructure assessments to identify the capacity and the areas where the demand for infrastructure will be greatest over the Local Plan period.
- The council should require developments to consider the opportunities for delivering and enhancing infrastructure at the earliest stage of the planning process.
- The council should work with local communities as part of the infrastructure planning process to help identify relevant issues and local priorities for infrastructure delivery.
- The timing of infrastructure upgrades and improvements should correspond to demand and that the council should not approve significant housing developments until the infrastructure necessary to support its growth is in place.

How could the new Local Plan help?

As part of the Local Plan process, the council will work with infrastructure partners and service providers to identify the current and future social infrastructure requirements in the borough and support their delivery by:

- working with infrastructure partners and providers to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to coordinate the future delivery and funding of social infrastructure in the borough.
- safeguarding the land and sites required for infrastructure provisions.
- requiring major housing developments to identify any resulting infrastructure needs, and to contribute towards the funding and delivery of social infrastructure in their area, including improvements to surrounding community facilities and walking and cycling connections to nearby facilities.
- working with landowners and infrastructure providers to support the co-location of different social infrastructure facilities and the sharing of facilities.

The council will work collaboratively with infrastructure partners and service providers to understand current and future social infrastructure needs and plan appropriately for them through the development of the local Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

The IDP evidence will inform other related infrastructure planning work by the council and help us decide where to prioritise Community Infrastructure Levy spend.

For areas of significant change and major developments, planning policy will clarify that social infrastructure must be planned for at the early stages of the development to ensure new homes would not create any deficiencies in the local area.

Planning policy will resist developments that involve the loss of social infrastructure or buildings. Unless there are suitable re-provisions or replacement facilities of an equivalent or improved quality that serve the wider community's needs or the proposal is part of a wider public service transformation plan to provide modern and fit for purpose facilities.



How to respond

You can also have your say online by visiting **www.kingston.gov.uk/localplan** or sending your feedback to us by email: **localplan@kingston.gov.uk**. You can post your comments to us at: **Strategic Planning Team, The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, Guildhall 2, High Street, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1EU**.

If you need the Local Plan document in a more accessible format or you have questions or comments, we can help you. Please email **localplan@kingston.gov.uk** or call FREEPHONE **0800 008 6309**.

Printed copies of these engagement documents are available in libraries across the borough.

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