

# **Joint Local Plan 2045 (JLP2)**

## **Scoping Consultation Document**

**8 – 29 September 2026**



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# Introduction

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have come together to prepare a new Joint Local Plan which will cover the period up to 2045.

Our new local plan (which we'll refer to as JLP2) will set out how development will be planned and delivered over time to meet the current and future needs of people living in, working in and visiting our districts. It will identify where development should take place or be restricted because of the area's value for nature or heritage, its flood risk, the sustainability of the location and so on. It will also help identify the infrastructure (like transport, schools and leisure facilities) required to support development and meet the needs of our local communities.

The plan will include a vision, objectives, policies and allocations dealing with a range of topics, including housing, employment, infrastructure, the environment, and local communities.

Once adopted, our Plan will be key to the decision-making on future planning applications. It will provide a clear guide on what kind of developments are likely to be acceptable and should be approved without delay, and which proposals are unacceptable as they are contrary to policy.

## Purpose of this Scoping Consultation

We're currently at the beginning of our plan preparation for JLP2 and are thinking about the broad scope of the plan and what it should contain. It's very important to us that you are part of the process from the beginning. Whilst we must follow Government legislation and policy guidance in our plan-making, we would very much welcome your views on what you see as the main priorities that need to be addressed through JLP2.

Your responses to this Scoping Consultation will help shape our plan and how we engage with you throughout the process.

At this early scoping stage, we aren't yet seeking views on any proposed plan strategies, policies or site allocations. This will happen once we have had time to consider all the scoping consultation responses, alongside our emerging evidence base and other important considerations such as the councils' corporate priorities and requirements outlined in Government planning policy.

## The new plan-making system

In March 2026, [new local planning regulations](#) came into force that introduced a different framework for preparing local plans and set out a sequence of stages and key tasks that must be completed. Under the new arrangements, the Government requires councils to adopt a new local plan within 30 months of publishing what is known as a 'Gateway 1 self-assessment', which confirms that the local authority is ready to formally begin the plan-making process.



*Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - 30-month local plan process: an overview - GOV.UK*

On 19 June 2026 (as required under the 2026 Regulations), the councils published a [notice of intention to commence local plan preparation](#) and our [JLP2 timetable](#). This timetable sets out our plan-making milestones, including when we plan to carry out public consultation on emerging plan content and when we will reach the key stages of plan preparation. The councils expect to start the statutory 30-month plan preparation process on Friday 30 October 2026.

Government has also published a new [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). Our Plan needs to be consistent with the NPPF and must not include policies which duplicate, substantively restate or are inconsistent with the content of national policies for decision-making. The NPPF contains various policies (including PM2, PM6-13 and PM15), which provide clarity on how a local plan should be prepared, examined and what it should contain.

## Relationship between JLP2 and other plans and strategies

Our first Joint Local Plan (JLP1) remains at examination, and we are awaiting to hear on next steps and possible stage three hearing session dates from the Inspectors. At present, we expect JLP1 to be adopted in May 2027. However, to comply with current Government legislation, the councils have now also begun 'twin-tracking', which means that we have begun preparation of JLP2, whilst also continuing to progress with the preparation of JLP1.

As work begins on JLP2, we will draw from the vision and objectives set out in the published Council Plans for South ([The Way Ahead: Council Plan 2025 – 2029](#)) and Vale ([At the Heart of the Vale: Council Plan 2025-2029](#)). These plans share common priorities (relating to climate action and nature recovery, healthy and inclusive communities, housing and infrastructure provision, and long-term sustainability), which will help inform the early stages of our plan-making and ensure that emerging plan content reflects the issues that matter most to our communities. This follows the approach taken for JLP1, which established an aspirational Joint Vision and set of local plan objectives both councils remain proud to endorse.

Local plans should be informed by a proportionate, focused and sufficiently up-to-date evidence base. We will use our existing evidence where possible and prepare new evidence where needed.

## Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – what does this mean for JLP2?

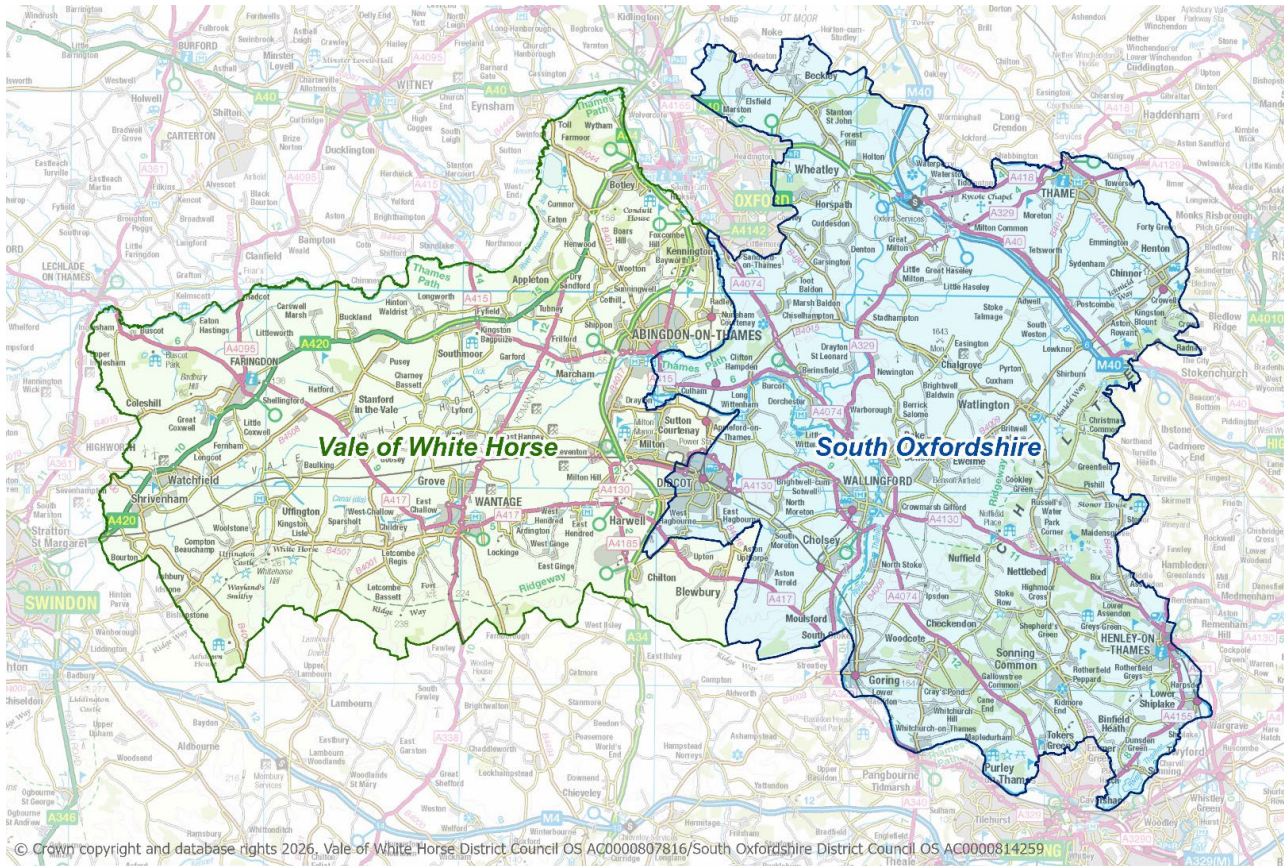
Local government is potentially changing in our area. In July 2026 the Government announced that they were minded to replace the four districts, city council and county council in Oxfordshire along with West Berkshire Council with three brand-new unitary authorities. On 7 September 2026 the Government paused the LGR process for a review. The decision and timetable for LGR is therefore uncertain at the time of publication of this Scoping Consultation.

Regardless of the future geography, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils must begin the plan-making process now, with responsibility for its later stages potentially transferring to new authorities.

Following adoption of JLP2 (currently anticipated in 2029), if local government geographies change, its planning policies will apply in the areas that fall within the current South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district boundaries.

# The Plan Area

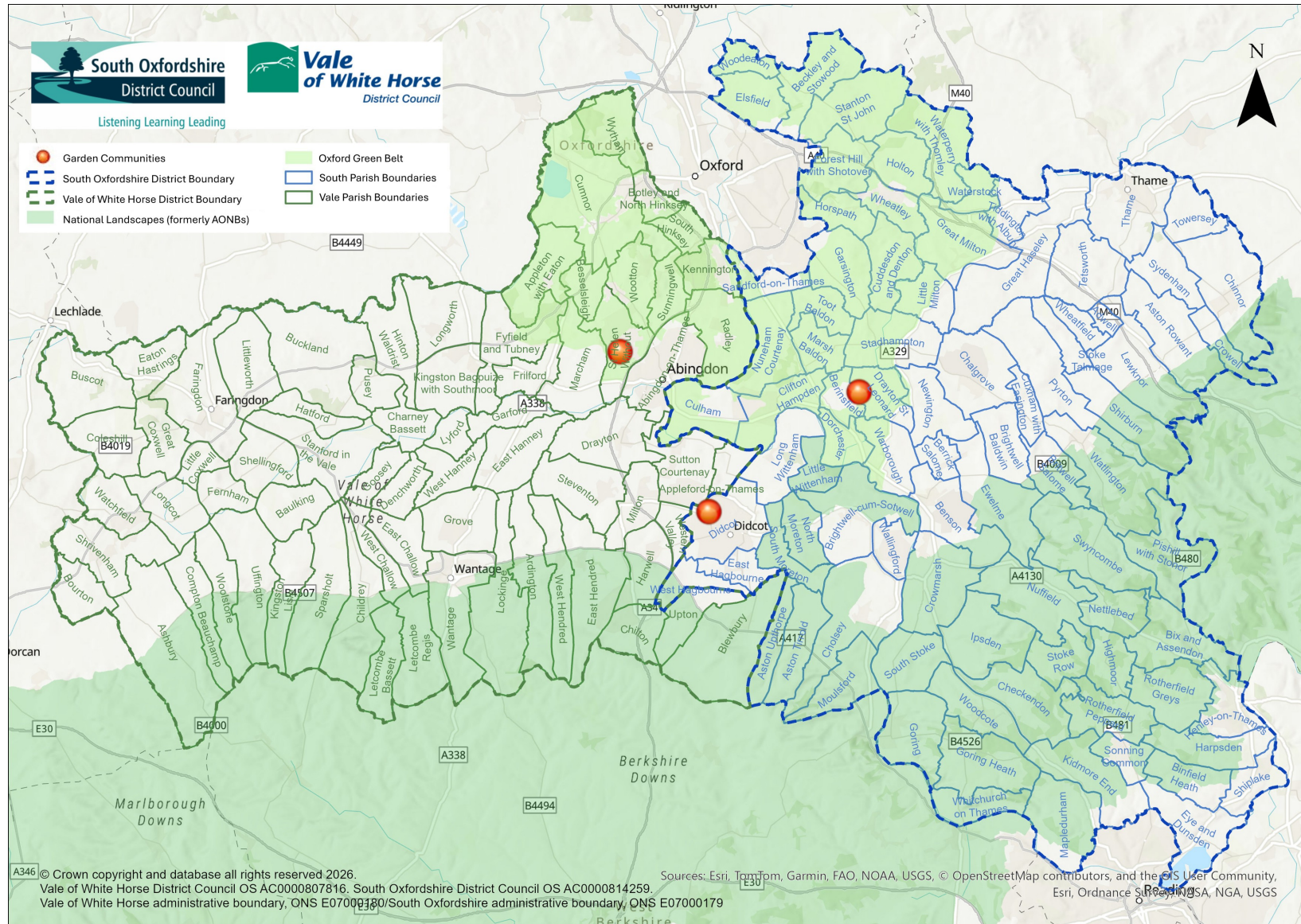
The plan area for the Joint Local Plan 2045 will be the whole of the current districts of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.



Vale of White Horse administrative boundary, ONS E07000180/South Oxfordshire administrative boundary, ONS E07000179

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse are home to a mix of market towns, villages, countryside and growing communities, including three Garden Communities. Together, the districts cover more than 125,000 hectares and include extensive areas of Green Belt and National Landscapes. Their distinctive character is shaped by a combination of attractive landscapes, rich heritage and strong communities.

## Map of the districts



To explore this map in greater detail please visit our Scoping Consultation webpage: [southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping](https://southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping)

The infographic below provides a snapshot of the districts, highlighting some key facts and figures.

## Our estimated population (mid-year estimate, 2025)

**152,217**

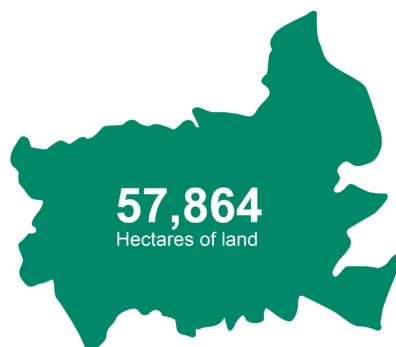


Vale of White Horse

**158,084**



South Oxfordshire



of which:

**14%** is within the Green Belt

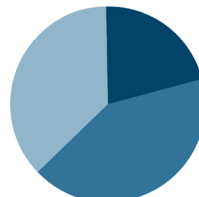
**23%** is within a National Landscape



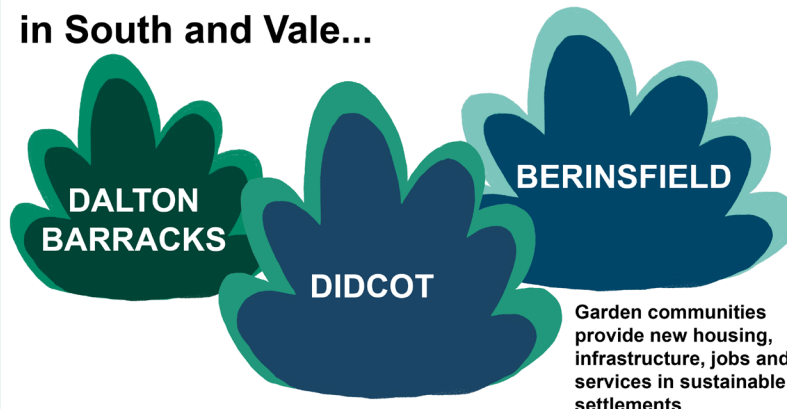
of which:

**21%** is within the Green Belt

**42%** is within a National Landscape



## There are 3 Garden Communities in South and Vale...



## Overall totals for both districts...

Total Land  
**125,712**  
hectares

Land within Green Belt  
**22,577**  
hectares

Land within a National Landscape  
**42,046**  
hectares



# How to respond to the scoping consultation

The scoping consultation is open from **Tuesday 8 September until 11.59pm on Tuesday 29 September**.

The consultation questions are set out for ease of reference below, but we strongly encourage respondents to submit your comments using our online consultation platform. This is the most efficient way for us to receive and process your feedback, helping to save public money. You can access it via our scoping consultation webpage below or by scanning the QR code.

[southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping](https://southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping)



Alternatively, representations can be emailed to [planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk) or written to: Planning Policy, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils and posted to 'Freepost SOUTH AND VALE CONSULTATIONS' (no other address information or stamp is needed).

If you have any questions about the scoping consultation or require it in an alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, Easy Read or alternative languages) please email [planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk) or call **01235 422 422**.

## What happens next

After this consultation closes, we will review and consider all comments received. We will then publish a 'summary of scoping consultation' document, which provides a summary of the main issues raised by respondents and how we will address them.

# Scoping Consultation Questions

We would like to know:

- What you think our plan should contain; and
- How you would like us to engage with you throughout our plan preparation process

## Questions about our new local plan

The following questions are provided for reference purposes only. Please do not complete them here - responses should be submitted through the survey link:

[southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping-consultation](https://southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping-consultation)

- ❖ What are your top 3 priorities for the new Joint Local Plan 2045?
- ❖ Are there any particular topics you would like the Joint Local Plan 2045 to contain?
- ❖ Do you have any other comments on what the Joint Local Plan 2045 should contain?

# Future Consultation and Engagement

We have started to draft our Community Engagement Strategy which will inform how we will engage with you, other stakeholders and the local community through our plan making process for JLP2.

Here's a quick summary of the key elements of our emerging engagement strategy:

## Consultation and Engagement Objectives

We want community engagement on our Plan to be meaningful, inclusive and effective, so we will:

- Deliver a comprehensive engagement programme to support our plan-making
- Meet all the legal local plan consultation requirements
- Ensure that we engage early, openly and accessibly
- Gather local evidence and provide genuine opportunities for stakeholders to influence development of our Plan
- Conduct engagement at each key stage of the local plan preparation process
- Engage proactively and regularly with infrastructure providers, neighbouring and other relevant plan-making authorities
- Show how feedback has influenced the Plan, by publishing consultation findings and responses
- Monitor participation and adapt our approach to reach under-represented groups

## How We Will Engage

Depending on the consultation stage, we may use all, or some, of these methods:

- Dedicated webpages and online information
- Online consultation platforms, surveys and questionnaires
- Interactive maps, infographics and other digital tools
- Public exhibitions, workshops, webinars and drop-in events
- Briefings for town and parish councils and targeted stakeholder groups
- The development of Statements of Common Ground with other local planning authorities and infrastructure providers
- Accessible consultation materials (including large print, Easy Read and alternative languages) on request
- We will also provide updates on consultation findings and how feedback has shaped the plan

## Who We Will Engage With

As we prepare our plan we want to engage with a range of stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

- Local residents, businesses and community groups
- Town and parish councils and neighbourhood planning groups
- Environmental, heritage, transport and infrastructure organisations
- Neighbouring local authorities
- NHS bodies, utility companies and other service providers
- Voluntary, community and equalities organisations, including seldom-heard groups
- Landowners and developers with an interest in land use and development
- Existing consultees and stakeholders on council consultation databases

We will also engage with other plan-making authorities through the preparation of their plans to identify and address cross-boundary matters that need to be addressed.

## Questions on Consultation and Engagement:

We want our Community Engagement Strategy to be informed by the responses we receive to this scoping consultation.

Once you have read the summary, we would welcome your thoughts on the following questions.

The following questions are provided for reference purposes only. Please do not complete them here - responses should be submitted through the survey link below:

[southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping-consultation](https://southandvale.gov.uk/JLP2-scoping-consultation)

- ❖ To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to engagement on the Joint Local Plan 2045, as outlined in the summary of the key elements of our emerging engagement strategy?
- ❖ Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to engagement on the Joint Local Plan 2045?
- ❖ Have there been barriers that previously prevented or restricted you from responding to local plan consultations?
- ❖ If 'yes', please let us know what barriers previously prevented or restricted you from taking part.
- ❖ What can we do to reduce or remove the barriers that you have previously experienced when trying to take part in our local plan consultations?

## Next Steps

Thank you for your interest in this Scoping Consultation.

Your views are important to us and will help inform the development of our emerging Plan and how we engage with you.

We will carry out two further consultations, dates for these consultations can be found in our [Joint Local Plan 2045 Timetable](#).

We look forward to hearing from you again during these future consultations.

If you have any questions in relation to this consultation, please email us at [planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk) or call us on 01235 422 422.

# Joint Local Plan 2045 (JLP2)



**Alternative formats of this publication, a summary of its contents or specific sections, are available on request.**

**These include large print, Braille, audio, email, easy read and alternative languages.**

**Please contact customer services to discuss your requirements on 01235 422422.**

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