

East Peckham Neighbourhood Development Plan

Statement and Fact-Checker

From the Parish Council's Local Development Committee

A statement from the Local Development Committee

We recognise that social media is an important way of communicating with our community, and we are committed to using it openly and respectfully throughout the Neighbourhood Development Plan process.

The Local Development Committee (LDC) is a sub-committee of the Parish Council's Planning Committee. It is made up of volunteers — a mix of parish councillors and resident members. The current membership is listed on the Neighbourhood Development Plan page of the parish council website.

We will continue to engage online to help answer questions, as part of a Communication Engagement Strategy that is being finalised. We do ask for your patience: as volunteers we also have work and families, and response times will sometimes be longer. Some questions need input from the Parish Office or our Planning Consultant before we can answer.

Posts that are not respectful or criticise individual committee members personally will not be engaged with. Questions about the Neighbourhood Plan, the planning process, or how decisions are being made are always welcome.

An apology. We understand that the use of the word “NIMBY” in one of our earlier posts caused upset and offence. That was not the intention, but it was the effect, and we wholeheartedly apologise. It was an inappropriate term to include. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is about working together to shape the future of East Peckham, and that means listening to all voices.

The fact-checker below addresses some of the specific issues that have been raised over recent days. It will be updated from time to time as new questions come in.

The full Neighbourhood Development Plan page is here: eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan/.

Fact-checker

The questions below are the ones we've been asked most often, grouped into the topics that matter most. Each one has a short answer first, then the detail and sources underneath if you want to verify anything yourself.

Part 1 — What a Neighbourhood Development Plan actually does

1. Does adopting a Neighbourhood Development Plan mean accepting whatever housing the Borough decides to give us?

Short answer: No. A Neighbourhood Development Plan does not “accept” or “agree to” any housing numbers. The Local Plan sets housing numbers. The Neighbourhood Development Plan sits alongside it and shapes how any development happens — where, what it looks like, the infrastructure that has to come with it, and what areas are protected.

The detail

On examination, a Neighbourhood Development Plan must satisfy the “basic conditions” set out in Schedule 4B paragraph 8(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990¹. The condition that matters here is paragraph 8(2)(e): the plan must be **in general conformity** with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

Three things follow from that. First, the test is *general* conformity, not identical conformity. The Planning Practice Guidance is explicit that examiners can allow a degree of flexibility where a Neighbourhood Development Plan takes a different but defensible approach².

Second, the test applies only to the strategic policies of the **adopted** development plan. TMBC's adopted plan is the 2007 Core Strategy and various saved policies. The 586-home figure for East Peckham is in TMBC's *draft* Local Plan (Regulation 18), published in December 2025. That draft is not adopted strategic policy. It does not bind the Neighbourhood Plan.

Third, NPPF paragraph 69³ says that *once* an adopted Local Plan contains a parish-level housing requirement, the Neighbourhood Development Plan plans for at least that figure. That requirement is set by the Borough through the Local Plan process — not through the NDP. The parish has the right to object to and challenge the borough's figure at every stage of the Local Plan: Regulation 18, Regulation 19, and the independent examination. None of that is changed by having a Neighbourhood Plan.

¹Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Schedule 4B, paragraph 8(2) sets the “basic conditions” that a Neighbourhood Development Plan must meet on examination. Available at legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/schedule/4B.

²Planning Practice Guidance, Neighbourhood Planning, paragraph 044 (Reference ID 41-044). “General conformity” is a matter of judgement for the independent examiner. See gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning.

³National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, amended February 2025), paragraph 69. The current NPPF is at gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

In plain English: the Local Plan sets the numbers; the Neighbourhood Development Plan sets the terms. They are separate documents with separate roles.

2. Does having a Neighbourhood Development Plan stop the parish council from opposing development?

Short answer: No — it does the opposite. A made Neighbourhood Development Plan gives the parish stronger legal grounds to oppose inappropriate development, not weaker.

The detail

The parish council remains a statutory consultee on every planning application in the parish. That doesn't change. What does change, once a Neighbourhood Development Plan is made, is that its policies have legal weight: applications that conflict with NDP policies can be (and frequently are) refused on that basis. NPPF paragraph 29⁴ confirms that Neighbourhood Plans "can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development."

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can do all of the following: set design and heritage policies; designate Local Green Space (which carries the same protection as Green Belt for the policies the plan sets⁵); set flood risk policies; set infrastructure-first phasing requirements; define settlement boundaries; and identify preferred and rejected site locations.

Under section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁶, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan — which, once a Neighbourhood Development Plan is Made, includes the NDP. A Made NDP is created once 'The Planning Authority' (TMBC) adopt it as part of the overall Development Plan. The plan then carries Statutory weight.

The work the parish council does to object to TMBC's Local Plan allocations is a separate workstream. Submitting any objection at Regulation 19, and the Local Plan examination continues exactly as it did before, in parallel with the Neighbourhood Plan, (subject to Parish Council decision making.)

3. Has the parish council changed its policy on development?

Short answer: No. The parish council's position is what it has always been: yes to homes that are needed, but in the right place, the right type, and with the infrastructure that has to come with them. "Yes to everything" and "no to everything" were never the only options.

The detail

This position was set out clearly in the Regulation 18 consultation meetings and in our response to TMBC, (in which we objected to the 586-home allocation in the strongest possible terms.) This was reaffirmed by the chair of the parish council at the Neighbourhood Development Plan launch on 9

⁴NPPF paragraph 29 — Neighbourhood Plans "can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development."

⁵NPPF paragraphs 105–107 cover Local Green Space designations through Neighbourhood Plans.

⁶Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, section 38(3) and 38(6). Available at legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/38.

May 2026. The Local Development Committee will publish a meeting summary of the Neighbourhood Development Plan launch in the next few days.

The reason an explicit Neighbourhood Development Plan is needed now — even though our underlying position hasn't changed — is that the wider planning environment around us has changed substantially. That's covered in the next section.

Part 2 — Why a Neighbourhood Plan, and why now?

4. What's happening in the wider planning system that makes this urgent?

Short answer: Three things at once: TMBC cannot currently demonstrate the legally-required five years of housing land supply, the borough's Local Plan is still in draft, and local government reorganisation will dissolve TMBC by April 2028. Together, these put East Peckham at heightened risk of speculative development unless the parish has its own plan in place.

The detail

Under NPPF paragraph 11(d)⁷ — the "tilted balance" — where a local planning authority cannot show a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, planning permission *must be granted* for development that accords with an up-to-date plan unless the adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

TMBC's current housing land supply sits at approximately 2.89 years against a required 5⁸. That triggers the tilted balance now, today, regardless of whether East Peckham has a Neighbourhood Plan. Speculative applications across the Borough are landing in this environment.

NPPF paragraph 14⁹ provides a specific protection from the tilted balance for parishes with qualifying Neighbourhood Plans — provided the plan is less than five years old, contains both policies AND allocations meeting the identified housing requirement, and meets the other tests. This protection was reconfirmed in the 2025 High Court case *Edith Weston Parish Council v SSHCLG*. The draft revised NPPF published in December 2025 retains the equivalent of this protection¹⁰.

In short: without a Neighbourhood Plan, East Peckham is exposed to the tilted balance and has no paragraph 14 protection against speculative applications. With one, the parish has the strongest legal protection currently available to it. Wateringbury's experience with a current 66-home speculative application — which it is fighting without a Neighbourhood Development Plan to fall back on — is the live example of how this environment plays out for parishes that have not yet engaged with neighbourhood planning.

There is also a second factor: The interplay with local government reorganisation. TMBC will be dissolved by April 2028 as part of the wider restructuring of Kent local government. A new unitary authority will inherit planning responsibility for the area. There is a real risk that TMBC will not have adopted a Local Plan in time, significantly weakening protections for the Borough and potentially

⁷NPPF paragraph 11(d) sets out the "tilted balance." Footnote 7 confirms it applies where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

⁸KentOnline, 17 March 2026, reporting Cllr Matt Boughton (TMBC Leader) confirming the borough's 2.89-year housing land supply position. [kentonline.co.uk](https://www.kentonline.co.uk).

⁹NPPF paragraph 14 provides protection from the tilted balance for qualifying Neighbourhood Plans. *Edith Weston Parish Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2025] EWHC 2908 (Admin) confirmed that both policies AND allocations are required for paragraph 14 to apply.

¹⁰Draft revised NPPF published 16 December 2025; consultation closed 10 March 2026; final expected Summer 2026. See [gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system).

leaving all planning appeals open to 'Tilted Balance' rules. A completed Neighbourhood Development Plan would remain in force through that transition and continue to influence planning decisions made by the new authority. It would hold protections under the section 14 rules that would support any appeals against new planning applications. Without one, the new authority will inherit a parish that has no local planning policies or protection of its own.

5. Does having a Neighbourhood Development Plan make East Peckham a “soft touch” for development?

Short answer: The published evidence shows the opposite. Across England, only 4.5% of Neighbourhood Plans have allocated more housing than the Local Plan required. 60% allocate no housing at all.

The detail

The most comprehensive study of housing delivery through Neighbourhood Plans is Lichfields' 2018 review of 330 made plans across England¹¹. The headline findings:

- 60% of made Neighbourhood Plans contain no housing target or allocations at all
- Of the 40% that do allocate sites, only half are new allocations — the rest just confirm what the Local Plan already proposed
- Only 15 plans out of 330 (4.5%) allocated more housing than the corresponding Local Plan

Claims in circulation that Neighbourhood Plans cause a 23% increase in housing above government targets are not supported by any published research. We have verified this with the parish council's planning consultant. The figure does not appear in the Lichfields study or anywhere else in the literature.

¹¹Lichfields (2018), Local Choices? Housing Delivery Through Neighbourhood Plans. Sample of 330 made NPs. Available at lichfields.uk.

Part 3 — The numbers

6. How many homes are we actually facing?

Short answer: TMBC's draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) proposed 586 homes across three sites in our parish. We objected formally. The revised figures that will form the next stage of Regulation 19 consultation have not yet been published. Separately we have formally asked TMBC for the Housing Requirement figure that could form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, together with the evidence base and methodology used. We will share what we receive.

The detail

TMBC's December 2025 Regulation 18 draft Local Plan allocates the following in East Peckham parish¹²:

- EP1 — Land west of Addlestead Road: 50 dwellings
- EP2 — Land south of Church Lane, Hale Street: 396 dwellings
- HS1 — Land west of Hale Street: 140 dwellings

Total: 586.

The parish council objected in the strongest possible terms to the Regulation 18 allocations. That objection is on the public record and was prepared by the Local Development Committee with the assistance of the parish's planning consultant.

TMBC has not yet published the revised allocations, which will form part of the next stage of consultation (Regulation 19).

Separately we have formally asked TMBC for the Housing Requirement figure that could form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, together with the evidence base and methodology. There has not yet been a response and there are no numbers confirmed; Once available they will be robustly scrutinised and shared with the community for comment.

7. What about the Church Lane development? Is that on top of the 586?

Short answer: There is no Church Lane planning application. A developer has expressed informal interest in a site north of the church and mentioned a figure in conversation. There is no application, no pre-application submission, no validated scheme. The 586 figure from the draft Local Plan is what is currently before the planning system.

The detail

To be clear about the distinction:

- Site EP2 in TMBC's draft Local Plan ("Land south of Church Lane, Hale Street") proposes 396 dwellings. This is part of the 586 total. It has gone through TMBC's Regulation 18 process.

¹²TMBC Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan, Chapter 16 Annex 1 (Allocations). Site EP1: 50 dwellings (Land west of Addlestead Road); Site EP2: 396 dwellings (Land south of Church Lane, Hale Street); Site HS1: 140 dwellings (Land west of Hale Street). Document at democracy.tmbc.gov.uk.

- Separately, a developer has expressed informal interest in a different site (land north of the church). The Local Development Committee was informed of this through the developer's submission to TMBC's Regulation 18 consultation. There is no application, no pre-application submission, no validated scheme that residents or the parish council can formally respond to.

Suggestions that East Peckham faces “586 plus many hundreds more” combine an unconfirmed informal approach with a published draft allocation as if they were equivalent. They are not. The Local Development Committee continues to monitor any developer interest — and committee agendas and minutes will reflect this — but speculation about specific figures from informal conversations is not the same as facts about what is before the planning system.

Part 4 — What has happened in other Kent villages?

8. What about Lenham, Faversham, Marden, Hildenborough, and Watringbury?

Short answer: These examples are often cited in social media, sometimes inaccurately. In every case where a Neighbourhood Development Plan has been made (Lenham, Faversham, Marden), the plan delivered what the borough's existing Local Plan already required — and is now being used by the parish to fight subsequent Local Plan proposals. In every case without a plan (Hildenborough, Watringbury, East Peckham), the Borough has allocated housing anyway.

The detail

Lenham. The Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan was made in 2021 with 92% support at referendum¹³. It allocates around 1,000 homes — the figure already required by Maidstone Borough Council's adopted Local Plan as a "broad location for growth." The additional 5,000-home proposal Lenham now faces (the Heathlands Garden Settlement) is in Maidstone's *subsequent* Local Plan Review. The Lenham NDP does not provide for Heathlands. Lenham Parish Council is currently fighting Heathlands through legal challenge. Having the NDP did not prevent Lenham from fighting; it is the legal foundation of the fight.

Faversham. The Faversham Neighbourhood Development Plan was made in December 2024¹⁴. It allocates 219 new homes (not 291), all on brownfield land — delivering Swale Borough Council's existing Local Plan requirement. The further development Faversham now faces (Perry Court, SE Faversham) comes from Swale's *next* Local Plan Review, required to deliver 9,880 additional homes across the borough. Their additional housing is driven by the Local Plan, not their NDP.

Marden. The Marden Neighbourhood Development Plan was made in July 2020¹⁵. Marden Parish Council is currently using it to *oppose* a 2,000-home "garden community" proposal in Maidstone's Local Plan Review. The parish council's published position describes the proposal as "the complete opposite of the clear intention of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan." Far from accepting development, the NDP is the legal basis for resisting it.

Hildenborough. Hildenborough has not adopted a Neighbourhood Plan. The parish designated a Neighbourhood Area in January 2021 — the first administrative step in the process — but as of May 2025 was only just beginning to consider whether to prepare one¹⁶. Hildenborough's allocation of

¹³Lenham Neighbourhood Development Plan made July 2021 following a May 2021 referendum (92% in favour). See lenhamparish.org.uk. The Heathlands Garden Settlement (5,000 homes) is a separate proposal in Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan Review.

¹⁴Faversham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2023–2038 (made December 2024) allocates 219 new homes on brownfield land. Document at favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk. Further development pressure arises from Swale Borough Council's next Local Plan Review requiring 9,880 additional homes.

¹⁵Marden Neighbourhood Development Plan made July 2020. Marden Parish Council's published Local Plan FAQ describes the proposed site 309 garden community as "the complete opposite of the clear intention of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan." See mardenkent-pc.gov.uk.

¹⁶Hildenborough Parish Council, draft minutes May 2025: parish voted to "consider creating a Hildenborough neighbourhood plan" and approved an initial budget of up to £500 to engage a planning consultant. No NDP has been made. See hildenboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk.

around 1,000 homes in TMBC's draft Local Plan was made *without* a Neighbourhood Development Plan in place. Suggestions that Hildenborough's situation shows what happens *after* adopting an NDP are factually incorrect.

Wateringbury. Wateringbury, like East Peckham, has no Neighbourhood Plan. Its 30-home allocation in TMBC's draft Local Plan reflects the borough's spatial strategy and site assessment methodology — not the absence of an NDP. Wateringbury is currently also facing a separate speculative 66-home application from Croudace Homes north of Drayhorse Meadow¹⁷, where the chief planning argument supporting the application is TMBC's lack of a five-year housing land supply. This is exactly the scenario NPPF paragraph 14 protection — available only with a made Neighbourhood Development Plan — is designed to address.

The pattern is consistent. Neighbourhood Plans deliver what existing Local Plans require. Additional development pressure comes from subsequent Local Plans, driven by centrally-set housing targets. Parishes with made NPs are using them to defend themselves; parishes without are more exposed to speculative applications, not less.

¹⁷KentOnline, November 2025: Croudace Homes 66-home application north of Drayhorse Meadow, Wateringbury. "The chief argument in favour of the development is likely to be TMBC's lack of an adopted Local Plan and its current housing shortage." [kentonline.co.uk](https://www.kentonline.co.uk).

Part 5 — Who runs the process, and how transparent is it?

9. Who is on the Local Development Committee?

Short answer: The committee has 4 parish councillors and 7 resident members. Resident members are volunteers who came forward when the committee was formed and subsequently, based on their relevant experience and interest. The current membership is recorded in committee minutes and on the parish council website.

The detail

The Local Development Committee is a sub-committee of the Parish Council's Planning Committee. It was created by the parish council to do the detailed work of responding to planning applications and strategic consultations. It is also responsible for drafting the Neighbourhood Plan. Including resident members alongside councillors is used elsewhere in other parish council committees, and brings local expertise and additional capacity.

The committee originally included 3 parish councillors and a number of resident members. An additional parish councillor has since joined. Two resident members have left and others have joined. There are currently 7 resident members. All of the members were part of the work to robustly challenge the 586 homes proposed, in the TMBC Regulation 18 consultation response.

Terms of Reference for the committee are available from the Parish Clerk. Key recent work includes responding to TMBC's Local Plan Regulation 18 consultations in 2022 and 2025, responding to planning applications on Church Lane, and providing the detailed analysis behind the parish council's position on other sites including land to the rear of 52 Westwood Road.

10. How are members' interests in local land being managed?

Short answer: Two members of the Local Development Committee have declared interests in land that has been put forward for development — one parish councillor and one resident member. Both interests are on the public record. Both members will recuse themselves from any decision touching those interests. A parish councillor, independent of the committee has been asked to assist with work to develop a 'Conflict of Interest' policy to ensure it is independent.

The detail

Under the Localism Act 2011¹⁸, parish councillors must register any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a public Register of Interests held by TMBC, declare any relevant interest at meetings, and recuse themselves from discussion or voting on matters in which they have a pecuniary interest.

¹⁸Localism Act 2011, sections 27–34 (Standards). Disclosable Pecuniary Interests are defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. See legislation.gov.uk.

The TMBC Register of Interests for parish councillors is publicly available at democracy.tmbc.gov.uk/Members.aspx¹⁹. The interest of the parish councillor on the committee is recorded there.

There is no equivalent statutory framework for resident members of parish committees. However, the resident member with a land interest has filed a declaration with the parish council. This is available on request from the Parish Clerk and will shortly be made accessible through the parish council website.

Both members with declared interests will recuse themselves from any committee discussions or decisions that touch those interests. A parish councillor who is not a member of the Local Development Committee has been asked to assist on related work, developing a Conflict of Interest policy so that this is visibly independent from the membership of the committee.

Declared interests on the public record are the system functioning as Parliament intended — local representatives often have land, business, or family interests in their parish, and the law expressly provides for those interests to be declared, recorded, and managed through recusal. The test is not whether interests exist but whether they are openly declared and properly managed. They are.

A Conflict of Interest Policy for the committee is recorded in committee minutes as a matter for further discussion.

11. What does the Neighbourhood Development Plan cost, and who's paying for it?

Short answer: The parish council has budgeted £40,000 across two years. This will cover the cost of the planning consultant and the expert reports likely needed for the evidence base. It comes from the parish precept. There is no “CIL money” coming to the parish council — TMBC does not charge CIL, so the 25% neighbourhood share that applies elsewhere does not apply in East Peckham.

The detail

The budget covers the Planning Consultant (Triformis) and two expert reports likely to be needed as part of the evidence base. Detailed breakdowns are available from the Parish Clerk and will be reported through the normal parish council financial reporting.

The Locality grant programme, which previously provided direct financial support to parish councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans, was *withdrawn* by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 12 June 2025 as part of the Spending Review²⁰. The government's published position is that parish councils now fund Neighbourhood Development Plan preparation from their own resources.

On the Community Infrastructure Levy: the 25% neighbourhood share of CIL referenced in some online posts is a real provision of national law, but it only applies in boroughs that charge CIL. TMBC

¹⁹TMBC Register of Members' Interests is the public document for parish councillors. Available at democracy.tmbc.gov.uk.

²⁰Locality grant programme withdrawal announced 12 June 2025. See nalc.gov.uk.

is **not** a CIL charging authority — a decision confirmed most recently in TMBC's Infrastructure Funding Statement published in December 2025²¹. TMBC uses Section 106 agreements with developers instead. There is no CIL revenue stream in East Peckham, with or without a Neighbourhood Plan.

To be clear: the parish council is investing in the Neighbourhood Development Plan because it believes it gives the parish a stronger legal position. The plan is a cost, not a source of income.

²¹TMBC Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024–2025, published December 2025: "Tonbridge and Malling is not a CIL charging authority. It was decided at the meeting of the Community Infrastructure Levy Panel on 19 December 2011 to not move forward with production of a CIL Schedule, although this position is continually kept under review." See [tmbc.gov.uk](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk).

Part 6 — How residents shape the plan, and how you decide

12. Who decides whether the Neighbourhood Development Plan goes ahead?

Short answer: You do. The plan can only be “made” if a majority of voting residents support it at the binding referendum at the end of the process. Every resident on the electoral roll gets a vote. Parliament built this in.

The detail

Under the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012²², a Neighbourhood Development Plan must be put to a binding referendum of all parish electors after independent examination by an independent examiner. The question put to voters is whether they want the local planning authority to use the Neighbourhood Development Plan when making planning decisions.

If a majority of those voting are against, the plan is not made. If a majority support it (50%), TMBC (and any successor authority) is legally required to bring it into force as part of the development plan.

This is the most direct democratic mechanism in the English planning system. The Local Development Committee leads the work to draft the Neighbourhood Plan, in full consultation with the community including the input of ‘Task Groups’; the residents decide whether it becomes law.

13. What if I don't want a Neighbourhood Development Plan at all?

Short answer: You can vote against it at the referendum. You're also encouraged to engage with the process and provide consultation feedback throughout — that does not in any way commit you to voting yes at the end.

The detail

There are different views in the village about whether a Neighbourhood Development Plan is the right approach — proactive versus reactive. The Local Development Committee wants to have that debate openly and constructively. We recognise some of the discussions ahead will be difficult, but we'd like to have them together as a community.

Engaging with the consultation, completing the surveys, attending meetings, and asking questions are all valuable even if you intend to vote against the plan at the end. Your concerns and views shape what the draft plan looks like, and the more views the committee hears, the better the plan reflects the village.

14. What about housing for local people?

Short answer: This is one of the strongest opportunities the Neighbourhood Development Plan offers. National research shows NPs are particularly effective at securing more of the type of housing local communities actually need — affordable homes, smaller homes for older residents, almshouses, and homes for younger families with local connections.

²²Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012. A made Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a majority "yes" vote at referendum of all parish electors. See [legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk).

The detail

The initial survey is now live on the parish council website. This will be followed by a dedicated Housing Needs Survey looking at the type, size, and tenure of housing that matters to East Peckham residents. Matters raised at the Launch event include:

- Almshouse provision for older residents who want to downsize within the village
- Local connection priority for affordable and social housing allocations
- First Homes thresholds for young people with local ties
- Self-build and custom-build provision
- Housing mix policies that reflect identified local needs rather than the highest-margin developer product

A detailed meeting summary including the Q&A from the 9 May launch event will be published on the parish council website in the next few days, covering the discussion around these themes in full.

15. What about water supply, sewerage, schools, and surgery capacity?

Short answer: Infrastructure first remains the parish council's position. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is the vehicle for writing that requirement into local policy with teeth, including evidence from South East Water, Southern Water, KCC Highways, the NHS, and the Environment Agency.

The detail

Water supply (South East Water) and wastewater capacity (Southern Water) are real and pressing constraints, referenced in detail in the parish council's Regulation 18 response. These remain on the Local Development Committee's agenda as live work. Members have been pressing to ensure we are fully up to date for the consultations ahead.

At Borough level, water capacity is currently being used by TMBC as one of the main grounds for pushing back on the central government housing target of 20,000 homes across the borough. The TMBC Leader, Cllr Matt Boughton, confirmed at the 9 May launch event that he has raised this directly at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Infrastructure realism applies to surgery capacity too. Developers can be required through Section 106 to fund GP surgery facilities — but the NHS still has to provide the doctors, and that is not within local planning powers. The Neighbourhood Development Plan can require infrastructure phasing, set design requirements, and identify constraints; it cannot solve NHS workforce policy. We want to be honest about what an NDP can and cannot deliver.

In closing

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is at the very start of a process that we are aiming to conclude in 18 months, in advance of the Local Government reorganisation. Nothing has been decided. No sites have been identified. There will be repeated rounds of public consultation, an independent examination, and ultimately a binding referendum where every resident has a vote.

The Local Development Committee is open to questions, constructive criticism, and dialogue. It is intended that there will be a process of continuous feedback and consultation with the parish as the evidence comes in and as the plan develops. The survey on the parish council website is the immediate way to engage; meetings, emails to the Parish Clerk, and direct conversation with committee members are all welcome too.

We will update this fact-checker as new questions come up. If something here is unclear, please let us know.

With our thanks for your continued engagement,

The Local Development Committee

East Peckham Parish Council

eastpeckham-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplan/

This fact-checker may be updated. Version 1.0, May 2026.