

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE:

A Guide to the Wakefield Local Development Framework

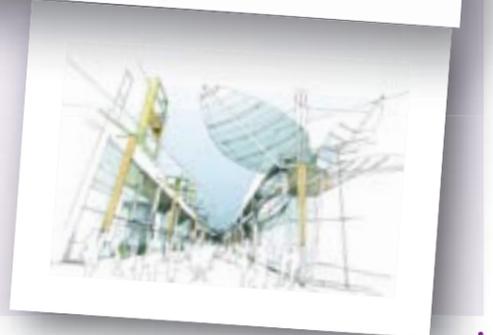
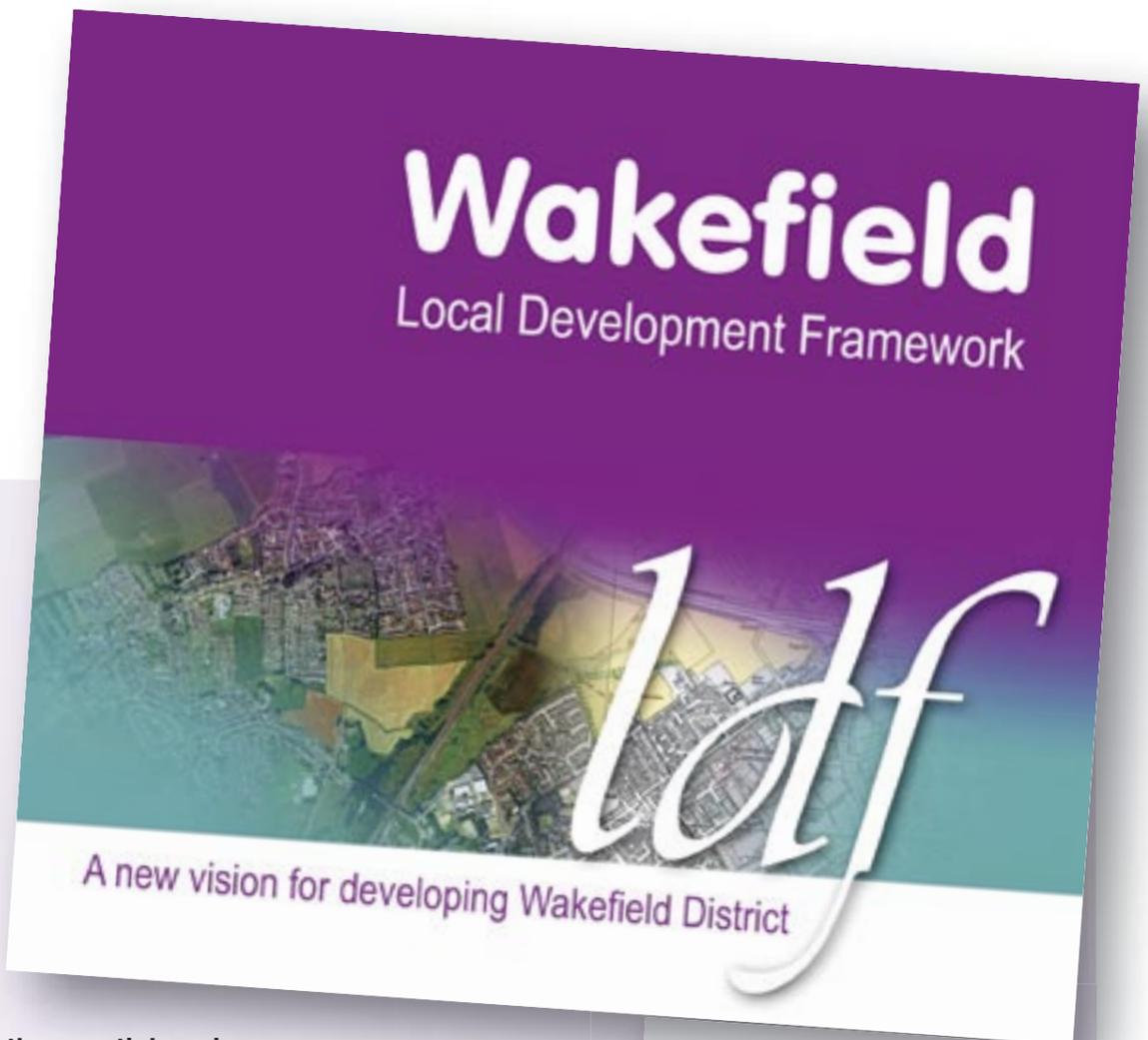
Welcome to this special feature on how you can have your say on the way Wakefield District will be planned in the future.

We want to make Wakefield District a more attractive and prosperous place to live. The overall planning document we put in place now will last for the next 15 years and have a big impact on what the district will look like.

So if you care about how your town, village or city looks and develops, or how different land is used, this special feature will give you information about how you can have your say. If you want to know about issues like protecting green belt land or conservation areas, or just know more about the background to the planning decisions the council makes, these articles give an introduction to the planning documents that guide what we do.

The Government has asked all councils to draw up proposals and ask citizens what they think - and incorporate their ideas if possible. After that a draft will go to an independent planning inspector who will comment on the report and make recommendations to the Council.

This is your opportunity to have your say. Full details on how to get involved are at the end of this feature.



Introduction to the Local Development Framework

At present the development plan for Wakefield District is made up of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber (RSS).

The UDP allocates land in Wakefield District for different kinds of uses, such as housing and employment, protects some land from inappropriate development, such as Green Belt and Conservation Areas, and includes policies to influence the location and impact of development, including design and pollution control. The RSS sets out the strategic policies and proposals for the use of land in the Yorkshire and Humber Region and provides the broad framework for policies and proposals within the UDP.

Wakefield Council is now preparing a new type of development plan, known as the Local Development Framework (LDF), which will guide the use of land and new development throughout the District until 2021 and will be used to determine planning applications. It is being prepared under new Government legislation and will replace the UDP, which was adopted in 2003.

Unlike the UDP, the LDF will be made up of a number of Local Development Documents (LDDs) which will be prepared separately, as shown on the diagram. The UDP will remain in force until the new documents are introduced from 2007 onwards. Together with the RSS the main LDF documents will form the new development plan for the District.

The LDF will link closely to Wakefield District Partnership's Community Strategy, Fast Forward, with the aim of making the District a more attractive and prosperous place to live.



Introduction to LDF Documents

The Council has or is currently preparing the following documents:

- Local Development Scheme
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Core Strategy and Development Policies
- Central Wakefield Area Action Plan
- Site Specific Proposals and Proposals Maps
- Annual Monitoring Report.



Local Development Scheme

The Council has published a Local Development Scheme (LDS) that shows which LDF documents the Council intends to produce over the next three years. The LDS sets out the timetable for preparing each document, explains its purpose, says what parts of the UDP will be replaced, and helps everyone to be aware of the different stages at which they can be involved. The LDS is reviewed every year and updated where appropriate. The current LDS will be replaced by the 2006 version due to be published this autumn.

Statement of Community Involvement

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a document that sets out how people and organisations can be involved in the process of preparing LDF documents and in decisions about planning applications. It sets out how and at what stages the Council will engage and consult on the various types of document and planning applications. Following public consultation and an independent examination by a planning inspector, the Council adopted the SCI on 8 February 2006.





Central Wakefield Area Action Plan

The Central Wakefield Area Action Plan sets out detailed policies for development and land allocations within Wakefield city centre and the area immediately around it. It will also provide the policy framework for ideas and proposals developed as part of the urban renaissance initiative.

The plan sets out a vision of how Wakefield can develop over the next 10 years and includes proposals and policies to guide development to achieve that vision.

It is envisaged that more people will be living and working in the city centre. The plan identifies areas where there is likely to be pressure for change and indicates the types of uses that would be appropriate.

Transport is a major issue and the objectives for Central Wakefield are to:

- reduce the need /desire to travel by car
- encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking
- make the city centre more pedestrian friendly and traffic free
- promote development without compromising the quality and accessibility of public areas
- ensure that people moving around the city centre are safe and feel secure from the threat of crime.

Work is continuing on the Central Wakefield Area Action Plan. The Preferred Options Report is due to be published for public consultation during late September/October 2006. The report will be available on the Council's website and copies will be on deposit at main Council offices and libraries. Your comments on how Central Wakefield should develop in the coming years will be welcome. See below right for details of how you can get more information about this document.

The Annual Monitoring Report

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) assesses how we are doing in preparing LDDs compared with the targets set out in the LDS. It also considers any changes that may be needed to the LDS, and whether policies and related targets in LDDs are achieving their intended purposes. It also looks at where policies may need to be reviewed.

The AMR sets out:

- the Wakefield District Profile, which gives basic information about the District
- how development in the District measures up against the Government's basic indicators
- progress on production of the various documents which make up the LDF
- how we will ensure that the LDF will lead to development which is sustainable.

The report is published in December each year, giving information about the previous financial year and is submitted to the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber. It is available on the Council's website for information but is not subject to consultation.

Keeping you informed about the LDF

We are keen to continue getting comments, particularly from individual citizens and community organisations within the District. At each stage of the LDF process information is published in the local newspapers, The Citizen and other community magazines. We also have a mailing list of people and organisations who have requested to be kept informed. So if you would like to be notified at each stage of the preparation of documents and public consultations write or email to the address below with your details (these will be used for LDF purposes only).

Site Specific Proposals and Proposals Map

The Site Specific Proposals document will give details of land allocations for uses such as housing and employment across the District. It will be accompanied by the Proposals Map, which will show these allocations on an Ordnance Survey map. The document will also identify other land uses such as nature reserves, washland and conservation areas.

A report setting out the Council's preferred options for land allocations in the Site Specific Proposals document and Proposals Map will be published for a six week period of public comment in early spring 2007.



Core Strategy and Development Policies

The Core Strategy and Development Policies were originally proposed as two separate documents. However following consultations between January and March this year the Council has decided to combine these into a single document.

The Core Strategy section contains the LDF's key strategic planning policies. All other LDF documents must conform to these policies.

The Core Strategy:

- defines the vision for the use of land and planning in Wakefield District to 2021
- sets out a series of objectives designed to achieve the vision
- includes a development strategy to meet the objectives and accommodate the anticipated need for new development, including that needed to deliver the Community Strategy
- includes strategic policies to guide and control the overall scale, type and location of new development and transport investment
- includes a statement of the number of additional dwellings to be provided.

The Development section contains policies for the Council to assess planning applications. It provides a detailed set of policies designed to contribute to achieving the aims set out in the Core Strategy and to deal with a wide range of national and regional planning issues.

The Council is now preparing its response to the comments made in the January to March consultations. Policies and supporting text have been amended and we are confident that the document will be improved and easier to use.

The Core Strategy and Development Policies document will be submitted to the Secretary of State in spring 2007. At the same time there will be a six week period of consultations when individuals and organisations can make representations about the policies in the document. Following these public consultations an independent examination by a planning inspector will consider the soundness of the document and any representations made. The inspector will then produce a report with his recommendations, which the Council must act upon.

Further Information on the LDF

Details about the preparation of all the LDF documents and copies of the latest versions can be viewed and downloaded on the Council's website at www.wakefield.gov.uk/ldf

Copies are also available for inspection at main Council offices and libraries throughout the District.

Printed copies can be obtained from:

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