

KNIGHTSFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2022 - 2033

Information Statement

This information statement is about the referendum to be held
on the Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan

About town and country planning

In England, planning applications are determined by local planning authorities such as Dorset Council. Planning decisions are made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan sets out the planning policies for the development and use of land.

At the current time, the [adopted Local Plan for West Dorset](#), which forms part of the development plan, is the starting point for considering planning applications in the area covered by the Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan. The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The Council's [Local Development Scheme](#) contains information on development plan documents that are being prepared.

About neighbourhood planning and the Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. Knightsford Parish Council has produced the plan which shows how the community wants land to be used and developed in the neighbourhood plan area. If a plan is made following a successful referendum, it becomes part of the development plan for that area.

Knightsford Parish Council started preparing a neighbourhood plan in 2021. After much research and having listened to the various issues and suggestions made through various consultation events, a draft of version of the plan was produced for consultation between 18 March 2024 until 3 May 2024. The plan was then revised in response to the consultation and submitted to Dorset Council in October 2024. Dorset Council consulted on the submitted plan from 2 December 2024 until 27 January 2025.

Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ was appointed to examine the plan as independent examiner. In March 2025 the examiner produced his [report](#) confirming that he was satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions and recommended that it should, subject to some changes, proceed to referendum.

Dorset Council considered the report and issued its decision, which was in agreement with the examiner's findings, that the plan as modified should proceed to referendum.

What the referendum is deciding

The question which will be asked in the referendum is:

'Do you want Dorset Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Knightsford to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

The referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' to this question.

When the referendum will be held

The referendum will be held on **Thursday 24 July 2025**.

What is the area covered by the referendum?

The referendum area and the area covered by the neighbourhood plan area are the parishes of Tincleton, West Knighton, West Stafford and Woodsford.

The Knightsford Neighbourhood area was originally designated on 15 June 2021 however due to changes to the parish boundary at West Knighton in April 2024, the Parish Council requested to have the area re-designated based on the new boundary. The Knightsford Neighbourhood area was re-designated on the 24 July 2024 now including Oakwood but excluding 17a, 19 and 19a West Knighton and land to the west of the A352.

Who is entitled to vote?

You are entitled to vote in the referendum if you live in the referendum area, you are on the electoral register to vote in local council elections and you are 18 years of age or over on 24 July 2025.

You have to be registered to vote by Tuesday 8 July 2025 to vote in the referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by telephoning **01305 838299** during normal office hours.

How can people vote?

The referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

You can vote in person at your relevant polling station which will be detailed on your poll card. We will issue poll cards to voters around 4 July 2025. The polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm on 24 July 2025.

You now need photo ID to vote at a polling station. If you don't have accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate. Applications for Voter Authority Certificates must be received by 5:00 pm Wednesday 16 July 2025. www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

To vote by post or proxy in this referendum, you will need to have filled in an application form and sent it to the Electoral Registration Officer. Postal and proxy vote application forms are available from the elections website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/how-to-vote or by contacting Dorset Council.

Applications to vote by post must be received by 5:00 pm Wednesday 9 July 2025.

To vote by proxy, application forms should be received by 5:00 pm Wednesday 16 July 2025.

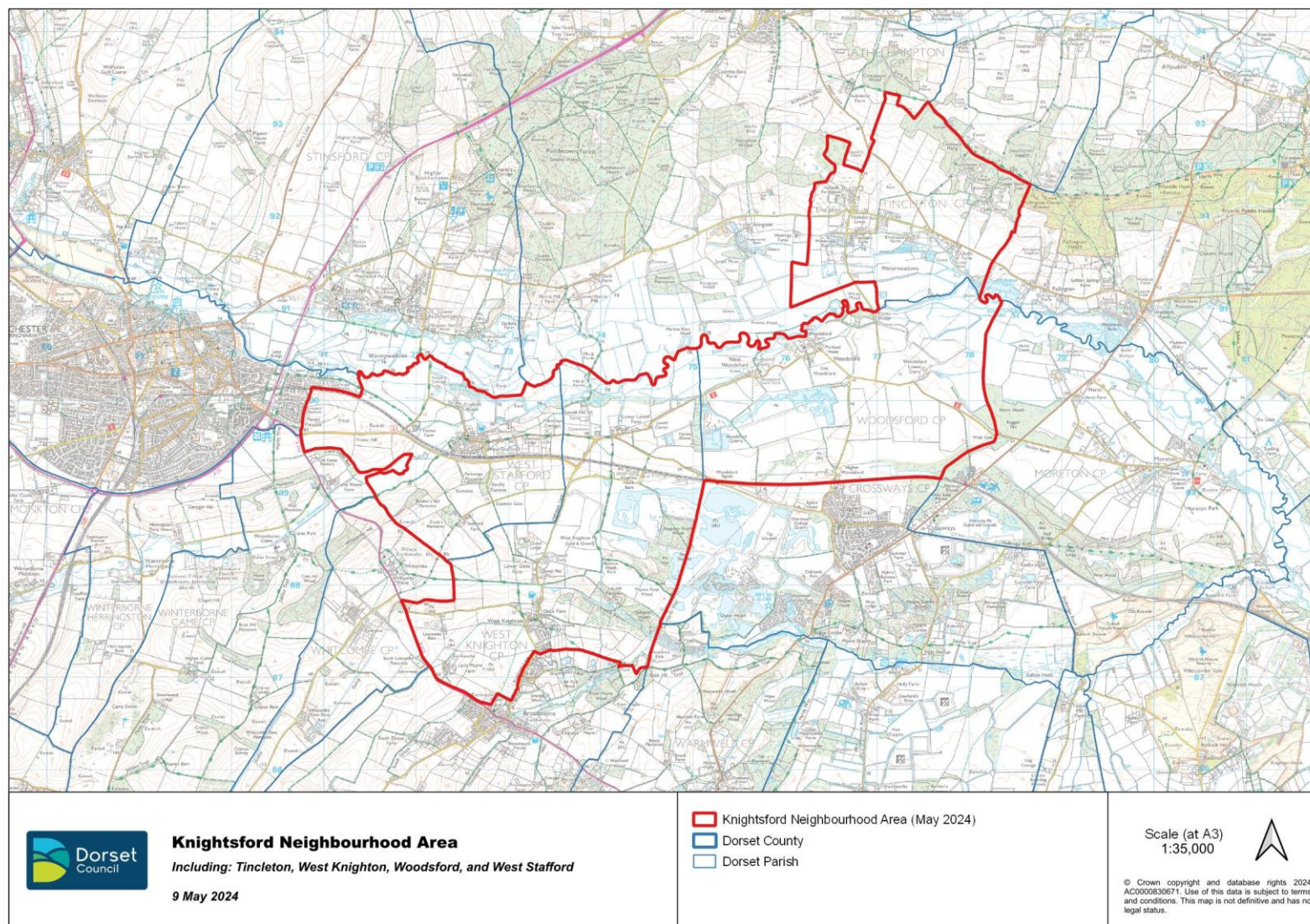
However, in certain circumstances emergency proxy vote applications can be received up until 5pm on the day of the poll. Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Ballot papers for people who vote by post will be posted from 11 July 2025, and will need to be returned by 10pm on the day of the poll.

Referendum expenses

The referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the referendum is £2,362 plus £0.059 per registered elector (the electorate in June 2025 was around 812).

Map of the referendum area



What information is there available about the neighbourhood plan?

A copy of the specified documents, that is the documents listed below, may be inspected at the following locations:

- Online at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/knightsford-neighbourhood-plan>
- At the following locations:
 - Dorset Council Offices, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ
 - Crossways Library, Old Farm Way, Crossways, Dorset DT2 8TU
Crossways Library is open at the following times: Monday 2:30pm-5pm, Tuesday 10am-Midday and 2pm to 5pm, Wednesday 10am to 1pm and 2.30pm to 5pm, Thursday 10am-1pm, Friday Midday-6pm, Saturday 10am-1pm, Sunday Closed.

The specified documents are:

- A **Summary of Representations** submitted to the examiner
- The **Examiner's Report**
- The **Knightsford Neighbourhood Plan 2022 - 2033 (referendum version)**
- The **Decision Statement**, which includes a statement by the local planning authority that the plan as proposed meets the basic conditions
- This **Information Statement**, which includes general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the referendum