

Framework



Welcome to Issue 60 of *Framework*, the newsletter that keeps you up to date with the Local Plan and other planning policy matters in Pendle.

This issue tells you about the new plan-making system that was recently introduced by the Government.

Pendle Council is one of 39 local planning authorities in the country that must announce its intention to commence the preparation of a new Local Plan, under the new system, by 30 June 2026.

A [new area of the website](#) dedicated to the preparation of the Pendle Local Plan 5th Edition 2025-2045 has been set up.

Why do we need a new Local Plan?

On 25 March 2026 [The Town and Country Planning \(England\) Regulations 2026](#) came into effect setting out how the new plan making system introduced by the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#) (LURA) will operate.

[Regulation 91](#) and the [accompanying Schedule](#) requires Pendle Council to announce its intention to start work on a new local plan by 30 June 2026.

The new approach seeks to streamline and simplify the plan-making process. But the government has yet to publish the updated [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF), which will underpin this aspiration.

After an initial 4-month lead in period, the new system requires local plans to be prepared and be adopted within 30-months (2½ years).

The reforms sit alongside proposed revisions to the NPPF, following on from the recent public consultation.

Notice of intention

Under the new system the Council must publish a 'notice of intention to commence local plan preparation'. This sets out how and when the local community and key stakeholders can get involved in the plan-making process.

The [notice of intention](#) was published by the Council on Tuesday 30 June 2026. This signals the start of an initial 4-month period, where the preparations for plan-making are made. These

include a plan scoping consultation and call for sites (see below).

Local plan timetable

To provide clarity on how the local plan will be prepared the Council must also publish and maintain an up-to-date timetable setting out the key stages of the plan-making process.

The first version of the [local plan timetable](#), which replaces the Council's Local Development Scheme, was also published on Tuesday 30 June 2026.

Plan Scoping and Call for Sites

A 4-week public consultation on the proposed scope of the plan and a "Call for Sites", to identify areas of land where new development could take place, will start on Friday 14 August 2026 and end on Monday 14 September 2026.

Gateway 1

The Council is required to undertake a 'self-assessment' of its readiness to commence plan-making.

The outcome of the Gateway 1 self-assessment must be published by 31 October 2026.

If it concludes that the Council is ready to commence plan-making, Gateway 1 is 'passed' and the 30-month plan making period starts.

What's next?

The local plan timetable sets out what will happen beyond Gateway 1.

What is the SDS?

When adopted, our new local plan must be in general conformity with the Lancashire Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), which is currently being prepared by the [Lancashire Combined County Authority](#) (LCCA).

The LCCA provides a single body for the whole of the county to champion its interests, deliver on local priorities and provide greater local accountability.

The SDS will focus on strategic priorities such as improving public transport, boosting economic prosperity, and enhancing employment and skills. It establishes the framework within which local plans will be prepared, seeking to build on Lancashire's strengths and address its long-standing challenges by:

- Coordinating housing, infrastructure, and economic growth to enhance the quality of place.
- Promoting inclusive economic growth by focusing on key sectors that drive productivity, while also investing in transport, skills, housing, health, and innovation.
- Ensuring strategic integration across local authority boundaries, providing a unified voice for Lancashire in strategic dialogue with central government.
- Facilitating large-scale strategic developments by identifying priority areas for growth and infrastructure delivery.

Local Government Reorganisation

All these planning changes are taking place against the backdrop of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Under the [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026](#) the current two-tier system of local government, where district and county councils share responsibilities, is to be replaced by a single tier 'unitary' model, where one council runs all the public services in an area.

The government's aim is to:

- simplify how councils are structured;
- make councils more efficient and financially stable;
- improve service quality and accountability; and
- return more power to local communities

In Lancashire five options are being considered by the Government.

An announcement on the chosen option is expected before parliament goes into its summer recess in July.

The new unitary authority is expected to take over the responsibilities and operations of Pendle Council on 1 April 2028.

Visit the [Local Government Reorganisation in Lancashire website](#) for more information about LGR and the proposals under consideration.



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Biodiversity Duty

The [Environment Act 2021](#) requires all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Councils must report on how they have met the 'biodiversity duty' at least once every 5-years.



The first [Biodiversity Duty report for Pendle](#) was published in March 2026. It sets out how Pendle Council has considered biodiversity in its policies, strategies, and operations, and outlines the progress that has been made during the reporting period from January 2024 to January 2026.

The report also outlines the Council's future plans and actions for continued improvement and delivery of biodiversity objectives across the district.

Five-year Supply

Paragraph 78 of the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) (2024) states that "Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement."

In March 2026, the Council published its [Five-year Housing Land Supply Statement 2025-2026](#). This shows whether the Council can identify sufficient sites to deliver 5 years' worth of housing land, plus an additional 20% buffer to reflect the transitional arrangements in the NPPF.

In Pendle, the basis for the calculation is the annual housing requirement of 148 dwellings per annum (dpa) set out in Policy SP04 of the [Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition](#).

For the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030, together with the 20% buffer, the Council was required to identify land capable of delivering 888 dwellings.

The identified supply of sites can deliver 947 dwellings. This confirms that the Council can demonstrate a 5.32-year supply of housing land.

Document Status

Development Plan Documents	
Pendle Local Plan: Fourth Edition (2025)	4
Pendle Local Plan: Fifth Edition	1
Neighbourhood Plans	
Trawden Forest (2018)	4
Barrowford (2019)	4
Kelbrook and Sough (2022)	4
Colne (2023)	4
Supplementary Planning Documents	
Conservation Area Design Guidance	4
Design Principles	4
Open Countryside & National Landscape	-
Brierfield Railway Street Neighbourhood	4
Brierfield Canal Corridor	4
Other Planning Guidance	
Pendle Weaving Mills Design Code (Final Draft)	

- 1 Plan preparation and evidence gathering. Includes informal discussion with key stakeholders and other interested parties.
- 2 Formal public consultation to consider the first draft of the Plan, which is then amended to reflect the comments received.
- 3 Formal public consultation to consider the final draft of the Plan. After the consultation, the unaltered Plan and any comments received are subject to independent examination.

This stage does not apply to Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4 Document formally adopted by Pendle Council.