



Walsall Council

Local Development Scheme

12th Revision

(Effective January 2025)

SUMMARY

This document comprises of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Walsall Council. The LDS serves as a public statement that outlines the existing Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The council has to take them into account when it determines planning applications and for various other purposes. The LDS outlines the timetable for the preparation of forthcoming DPDs and supporting documentation.

The WBLP will be prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Local Planning Regulations 2012. We expect these to be replaced by a new local plans system under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 that will also remove the requirement to prepare a LDS. The new system will not be in place for some time however and it is important that we proceed with our local plan as a matter of urgency.

Walsall's LDS was first produced in 2005 and has been revised several times as the council has kept its plans under review. The latest previous version was in November 2022.

This LDS will cover the 2025 – 2028 period.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

The latest version of the LDS is available on the Walsall Council webpage:

[LDS 2025-28.](#)

For more information about any of the issues raised in this LDS please contact:

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Local Development Scheme

- 1.1. This is the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Walsall Council, produced in compliance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulation 2012 (as amended).
- 1.2. Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 (as amended) requires the council to prepare and maintain an LDS. This must specify:
 - The existing Development Plan Documents (DPDs);
 - The subject matter and geographical area to which each DPD relates to;
 - The timetable for the preparation of and revision of the DPDs that will come forward in the 2025-2028 period.
- 1.3. The LDS is publicly available on the council's website. It acts as the first point of contact for the community, stakeholders and other interested parties to monitor and keep track of progress on the DPDs.
- 1.4. DPDs form part of a portfolio of documents that together comprise the Local Plan.
- 1.5. This LDS sets out the council's intentions to prepare the following documents and their timetable for production:
 - The Walsall Borough Local Plan
 - A suite of three Supplementary Planning Documents.

2. Existing Planning Framework in Walsall Borough

2.1. The existing local development plan structure for the borough is set out in Figure 1:

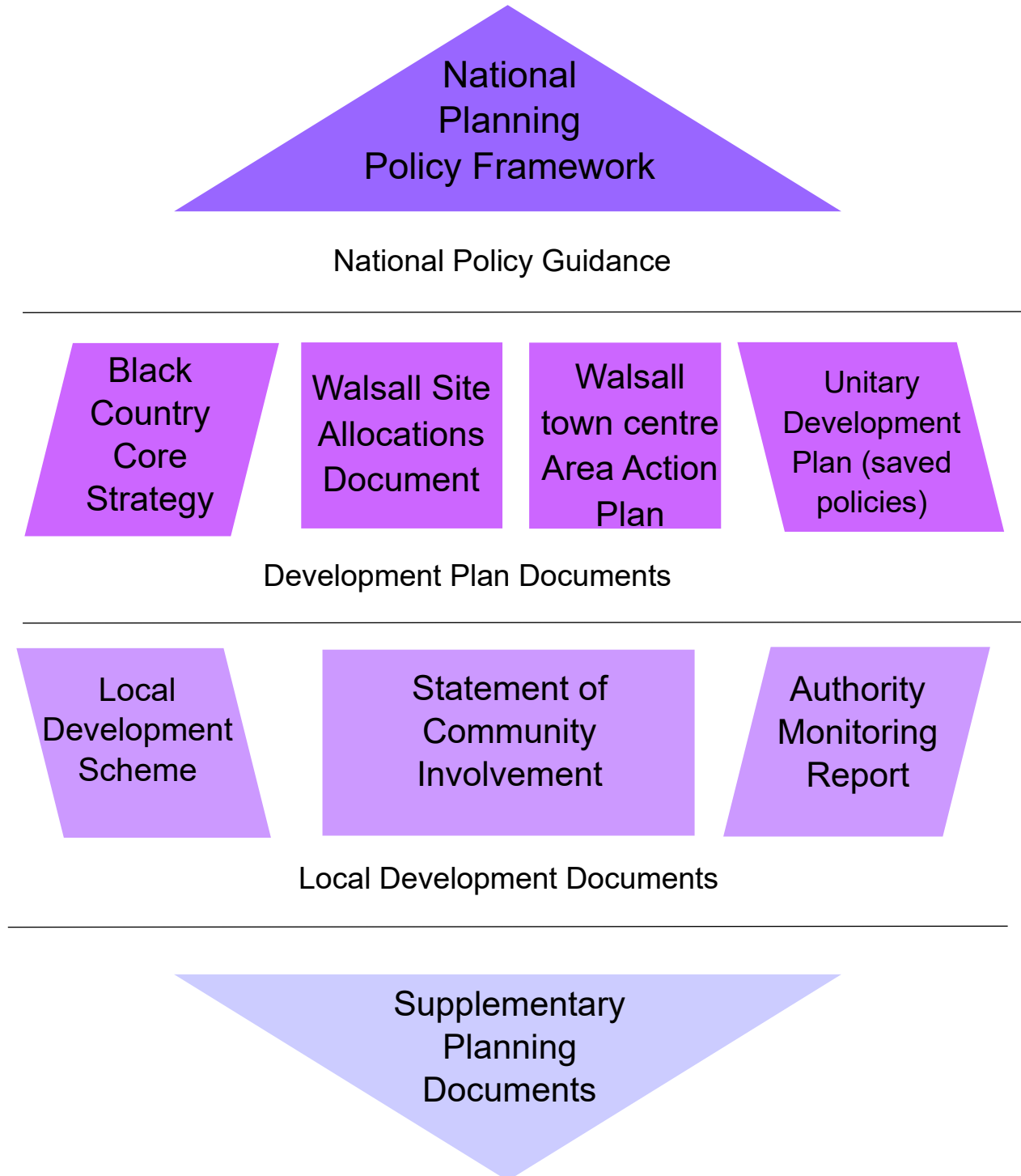


Figure 1: A diagram illustrating the hierarchy of the existing planning development plan structure.

The Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS)

- 2.1. The BCCS was jointly prepared by Walsall, Dudley, Sandwell and the City of Wolverhampton Councils – the four Black Country authorities (BCAs). The BCCS was adopted on 3 February 2011. This is the overarching DPD for the Black Country. It seeks to apply a regeneration spatial strategy across the sub-region (within the BCAs' boundaries) to promote sustainable development. The BCCS sets out the core objectives, spatial strategy, core policies, and how they will be implemented and monitored. The BCCS replaced a large portion of the Walsall UDP policies, whilst others were subsequently replaced by the Walsall Site Allocation Document (SAD)

Walsall Site Allocation Document (SAD)

- 2.2. Within the framework of the BCCS, the Site Allocation Document (SAD) allocates sites for homes, jobs, shops, and other uses; protects land to meet the current and future needs of Walsall; protects important assets and seeks to improve the environment. The SAD implements and realises the strategic objectives, policies and proposals of the BCCS at a local plan level, covering the borough of Walsall. The SAD was adopted on 7 January 2019. The SAD is accompanied by the Policies Map which shows how the policies in the SAD relate to specific sites. The Policies Map replaced the proposals map that accompanied the Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) with the exception of the district centre insets.

Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP)

- 2.3. Also within the framework of the BCCS, the AAP allocates sites and opportunities within Walsall Strategic Centre, as well as setting out policies and proposals for other aspects of the town centre, including transportation and the environment. The plan contains a strategy for the regeneration of the town centre that helps to promote sites for development and identifies council priorities. The AAP was adopted on 7 January 2019.

Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (saved policies)

- 2.4. The UDP was originally adopted on 7 March 2005. A number of the policies within it have been superseded by related policies set out within the BCCS in 2011, SAD and AAP in 2019. when those plans were adopted. The remaining policies, including those which are applicable to the regeneration of the borough's district centres, remain extant as saved policies.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 2.5. To articulate and provide guidance on DPD policies, Walsall Council has a number of SPDs to provide further detail on a wide range of core topics, such

as open space, design, shop fronts etc. They are material considerations when determining planning applications. These SPDs are set out below:

- Affordable Housing SPD – adopted July 2005 (review adopted April 2008)
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD – adopted April 2006
- Designing Walsall Design Guide SPD – adopted February 2008 (revision July 2013)
- Natural Environment SPD – adopted 2008 (revision July 2013)
- Shop Front SPD – adopted April 2015
- Black Country Air Quality SPD – Adopted February 2017

Other Documents

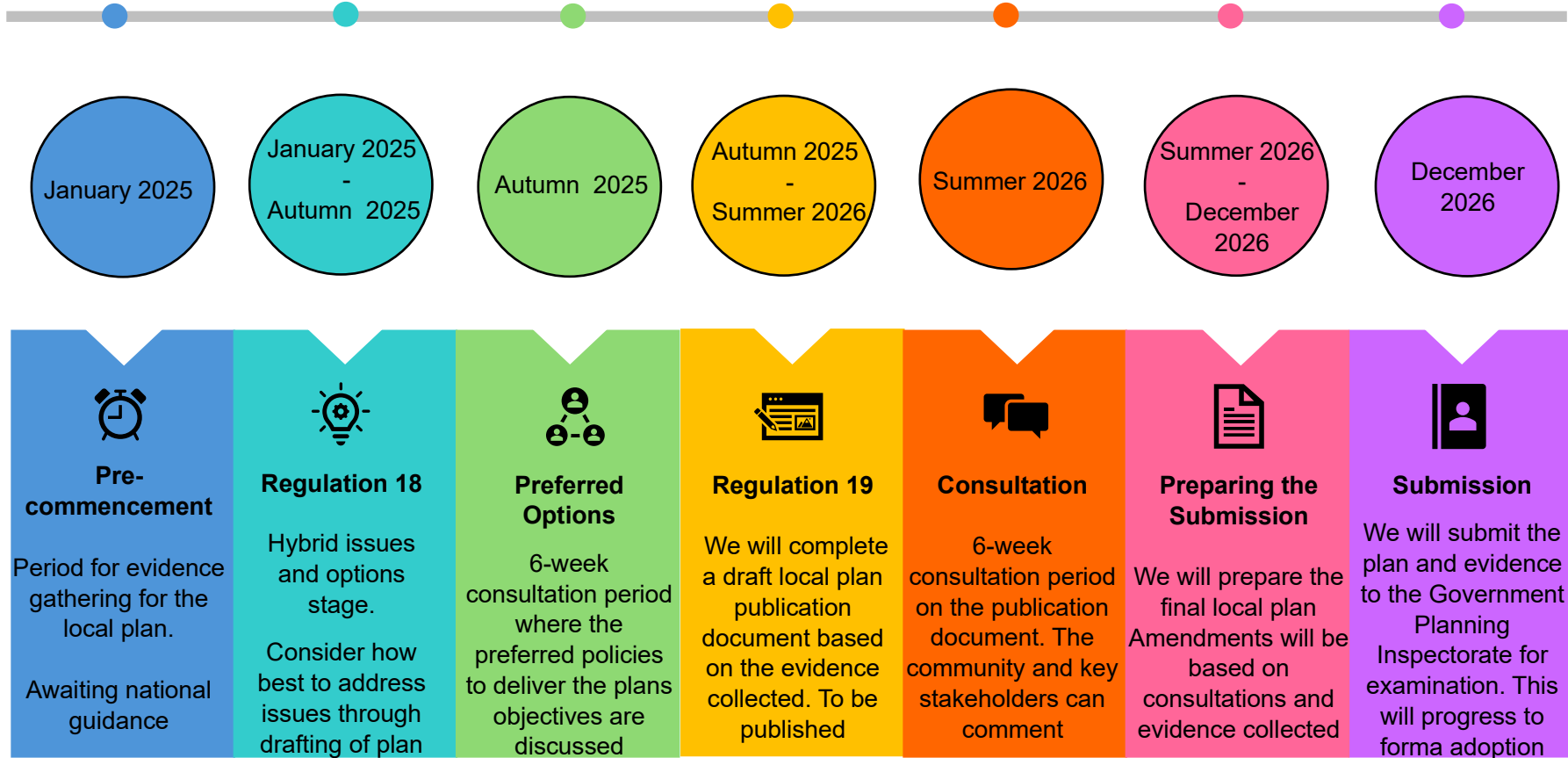
- 2.6. The Statement of Community Involvement is a local development document that explains how the council will engage with the public and stakeholders in the preparation of plans and in the decision-making processes.
- 2.7. The Authority Monitoring Report annually monitors the progress and effectiveness of the existing local plan policies against their indicators. A RAG rating is given to assess the effectiveness of individual policies.
- 2.8. The LDS (this document) sets out the existing development plan documents and the timetable for producing development plan documents over the period of the document.

3. Planning Policy Documents Being Prepared

Development Plan Document – the Walsall Borough Local Plan

- 3.1. The Walsall Borough Local Plan ('WBLP') is being prepared after the Black Country Plan ('BCP') was demised in October 2022. The BCP was being progressed jointly by the four Black Country authorities: Dudley Council, Sandwell Council, Walsall Council, and City of Wolverhampton Council. Following work ceasing on the BCP, each of the individual BCAs confirmed that they would be progressing individual local plans, while cooperating with each other on cross boundary and strategic planning matters. Walsall Council agreed to start work on the WBLP in November 2022. .
- 3.2. The WBLP is being prepared under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 and National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') (December 2024), and associated secondary legislation and national guidance.
- 3.3. Once formally adopted, the WBLP will form one single plan that contains the policies and site allocations for the whole of the borough and will supersede the existing development plan documents: . This will simplify the existing structure of four adopted development plans (BCCS, SAD, AAP, and UDP) by having all of the policies and site allocations under one development plan.
- 3.4. The local plan timetable for preparation of the WBLP is set out in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The timetable for preparation of the Walsall Borough Local Plan



Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 3.5. The LDS is not required to include the SPDs to be prepared during the monitored period. However, where this programme of works is known they are included in the LDS for additional information on the council's undertakings.
- 3.6. There is a suite of three SPDs that the council are going to prepare and revise in order to promote and help enact planning at the right time and in the right places to delivery strong, inclusive growth of high standards.
- 3.7. The council is seeking to adopt the three following SPDs within the timescales of this LDS (2025 – 2028):
 - Householder Design Guide SPD (new SPD)
 - Natural Environment SPD (revision of an existing SPD)
 - Developer Contributions SPD incorporating an update of the existing Affordable Housing SPD (new SPD).
- 3.8. This list may be added to, particularly as new government legislation, policies and guidance is issued.

4. Monitoring and Resources

- 4.1. The Localism Act 2011 includes a requirement for local authorities to prepare a report containing the following:
 - Information on the implementation of the LDS; and
 - The extent to which the policies set out in the DPDs are being achieved.
- 4.2. This LDS sets out Walsall Council's timetable for progressing and producing DPDs. The council will review and republish this LDS as necessary. In addition, the key milestones, statutory documents, and supporting evidence for the WBLP will also be regularly updated on the council's planning and building control webpage.
- 4.3. In addition, we will update the AMR on an annual basis to report on the effectiveness of existing local plan policies against policy indicators.
- 4.4. The work to be undertaken on the WBLP and suite of SPDs will continue to be undertaken by the council's planning policy team and supported by other internal teams such as regeneration, transportation, healthy spaces. External organisations and neighbouring authorities will also be involved in the evidence gathering, including through the duty to co-operate process.
- 4.5. Evidence gathering for the local plan, SPDs and other relevant documents will be undertaken in house or with consultancy support, where deemed necessary. The evidence will be based on research reports, technical papers, existing evidence used for the BCP, site visits, and on-going studies.
- 4.6. If the timescale of the preparation of the WBLP are deemed necessary to be changed, we will seek the relevant authorisation and make this clear in revising the LDS.