



EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL CLYST ST MARY AND SOWTON (BISHOPS CLYST) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (FIRST REVIEW - 2023 to 2042) FINAL DECISION STATEMENT

Summary

1. Following a positive referendum result East Devon District Council has made the Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Development Plan (2023 to 2042) ('the Plan') part of the Development Plan for East Devon, (superseding the previous Plan for this neighbourhood area for 2014 to 2031, made in March 2017). The decision is effective as of 06 November 2025.

Background

2. Bishops Clyst Parish Council, as the qualifying body, successfully applied for the whole of their administrative area (the civil parishes of Clyst St Mary and Sowton, known jointly as Bishops Clyst) to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area in October 2013 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended). The designated Neighbourhood Area for Bishops Clyst came into force on 5 March 2014.
3. A first neighbourhood plan for this neighbourhood area (for the period 2014 to 2031) was made on 8 March 2017. Following a review, an updated and revised neighbourhood plan (the Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Plan (2023 to 2042) was submitted to the Council in December 2024. The Plan was publicised and comments were invited from the public and stakeholders. The consultation period closed on 17 March 2025.
4. East Devon District Council appointed an independent Examiner, Deborah McCann, to review the Plan submission (the 'modification proposal') and advise whether the Plan met the Basic Conditions required by legislation and whether the Plan should proceed on to referendum.
5. The Examiner's Final Report concluded that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions, and that subject to the modifications proposed in the report, the Plan should proceed to a referendum. East Devon District Council considered the Examiner's findings and concurred with them. A formal Decision Statement agreeing the necessary modifications and that the Plan would go forward to referendum was published, effective from 7 August 2025.

6. A referendum was held on 2 October 2025; 80.5% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan. Paragraph 38A (4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that the Council must make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the Plan. The Council are not subject to this duty if the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation (as retained and/or incorporated into UK law) or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

Decision and Reasons

7. With the Examiner's recommended modifications, the Plan:
 - meets the Basic Conditions (set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990);
 - is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights (as retained and/or incorporated into UK law), and;
 - complies with relevant provisions made by or under Section 38A and B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
8. The referendum, held on 2 October 2025, met the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. The referendum was held in the parished area of Bishops Clyst and posed the question: 'Do you want East Devon District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Bishops Clyst to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
9. Greater than 50% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the Plan area.
10. The results of the referendum were as follows:
 - Number of votes cast in favour of a 'YES' – 235 (80.5%)
 - Number of votes cast in favour of a 'NO' – 57 (19.5%)
 - Voter turnout: 24%
11. The Council has assessed that the Plan, including its preparation, does not breach, and would not otherwise be incompatible, with any EU obligation (as retained and/or incorporated into UK law) or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).
12. The Council decided at the Cabinet meeting on 29 October 2025 to make the Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Plan (First Review - 2023 to 2042) part of the Development Plan for East Devon.
13. The decision is effective as of 06 November 2025.

This Decision Statement and the Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Plan (First Review) can be viewed online on the [Neighbourhood Planning Webpages](#) of the East Devon District Council Website. Hard copies can be viewed by appointment at the District Council Offices at Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton. Tel: 01395 571740 Email: Planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk.