

Foreword

Thank you for joining us on the next stage of our local plan-making journey.

Last summer we came out into our communities over a four month period to listen to you and gather your views on potential development sites and the infrastructure that needs to come hand-in-hand with development. We received thousands of useful comments from you, and I would like you to rest assured that these were invaluable and will continue to inform the local plan as it evolves over the next couple of years. We have listened and we will continue to listen - please read through this document to see how the views we have received are shaping the way your Local Plan is developing.

You may recall that we said that at some point we would need to align ourselves with the Government's new plan-making process. We've now reached that point, and we have to ask specific questions of you in order to proceed through the new system. That's what this document is focussed on.

It may feel like this document doesn't delve as deeply as last summer's consultation did, it doesn't, but this is so it aligns with the new system. It is a scoping document which gives us an important opportunity to take stock and consider where we go next. The comments you took time to send us last year are still extremely pertinent and we will of course continue to take into account the comments you have already sent us, and if you have nothing further to say at this time there's no need to spend precious time resubmitting your comments to us again now. The way these new scoping reports are prepared means that there isn't any site specific element to this consultation, but rest assured there will be further chances to let us know what you think about whatever sites are identified in the next draft of the local plan.

We invite you to read on further and welcome your input on the questions within this document, which will help us to move at pace into the new plan making system, and ensure we have a plan that we can all be proud of.

More details on how to respond can be seen in section 2 . It's a simple process, the online survey, email address, and postal addresses are below, we'd love to hear from you.

Online – [Smart Survey link from our website](#)

By email – bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By post – Strategic Planning, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA

Cllr Sue Baxter
Deputy Leader
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Strategic Housing

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Section 1 – what you have told us, and what we are doing about it? The key challenges and priorities.

In the summer of 2025 we consulted on a Draft Development Strategy (the **DDS**). Whilst that consultation is now closed you can still see the content of what we consulted on [here](#). We are very grateful to have received over 8000 responses to the consultation. We have heard what the people of Bromsgrove have told us, we have heard what the development sector have told us and we have heard what a wide range of other public and private sector stakeholders have told us. We are listening, and whilst we won't be able to satisfy all the wishes of a very diverse set of respondents our job is to as best as possible balance all of those competing wishes to produce a plan for Bromsgrove which provides certainty on how the district will develop in the years up to 2044. We have produced consultation summaries which can be view [here](#).

In summary this is what you told us

Infrastructure Capacity and Delivery

- Schools are already at or near full capacity
- GP surgeries are oversubscribed with long waiting times
- Public utilities such as drainage, wastewater, electricity are under pressure
- Our open spaces, sports and community facilities are under pressure.

Transport and Highway Constraints

- There is severe congestion on key corridors such as the A38, A456, A491, A435
- Narrow rural roads and unsafe junctions cannot cope with new development
- There is peak-time gridlock in various locations across the district
- There are parking shortages and walking and cycling accessibility issues

Scale and Distribution of Growth

- Some sites are disproportionately large relative to settlement size, particularly in villages
- Development is likely to change settlement character and identity
- Cumulative impact of growth is a big risk to development, especially development in other local authority areas
- More development and living opportunities are needed in the Town Centre
- There needs to be more job opportunities to go with all the housing
- Local residents need more affordable housing

Green Belt and Settlement Identity

- There are concerns about:
 - Loss of Green Belt openness
 - Coalescence between settlements
 - Urban sprawl into rural areas
 - Erosion of village identity

Environmental and Flood Risk Constraints

- There are concerns about:
 - Surface water flooding and known flood hotspots
 - Loss of habitats and wildlife corridors
 - Unmodelled watercourses increasing uncertainty

Deliverability and Evidence Gaps

- The evidence base needs to be updated / completed (housing need, Green Belt, transport etc.)
- There is uncertainty around infrastructure delivery and funding
- There are multiple technical constraints affecting sites

So what are we going to do about this?

The Council wants to prepare a plan which successfully deals with the issues you have told us about. We want to make sure that new development will only happen where it can be supported by necessary new infrastructure: new or improved schools and local healthcare facilities will be provided, roads and junctions are improved and new public transport is provided.

How are we going to do this?

We will do this by progressing your local plan to adoption so we can use it to shape development. The next stage in that process is this scoping report and making sure we take this opportunity to get the scope of the plan correct.

Bringing all of this together we have identified a new list of priorities and challenges which is in response to the issues that you have asked to address

Question 1:

1a. have we got this right, are these the issues that matter to you,

Yes/ No / Unsure

1b. are there any key challenges and priorities that you would add to this list?

1. Community Infrastructure Provision and Capacity

- Ensure sufficient infrastructure to support growth, including:
 - GP surgeries and healthcare provision
 - Additional School places and facilities
 - Utilities and community facilities
- Coordinate development with infrastructure delivery to ensure sustainable communities.

2. Transport and Accessibility infrastructure

- Promote sustainable travel by improving infrastructure for:
 - Walking and cycling
 - Public transport use
- Ensure the transport network can accommodate growth, including:
 - Addressing congestion, particularly on the A roads and key local routes

- Mitigating cumulative traffic impacts from development, including in smaller settlements and edge-of-conurbation locations
- Improved access to and facilities at railway stations, including parking provision

3. Housing Growth

- Meet the District's housing requirements to 2044, ensuring a deliverable supply of land.
- Provide a mix of housing types, including dedicated affordable housing, homes for older people, and smaller, more attainable dwellings.
- Maintain balanced and sustainable communities, addressing affordability and reducing the outward migration of young people.
- Ensure new development delivers meaningful local benefits, including effective use of Section 106 contributions.

4. Economy and Employment

- Provide sufficient land and opportunities for employment growth.
- Support existing businesses, including agriculture and rural enterprises.
- Encourage economic diversification (e.g. high-tech, green industries, farm diversification).
- Attract inward investment and reduce outward commuting.
- Recognise and support homeworking, including addressing rural broadband limitations.

5. Town Centres, Local Centres and Settlements

- Support the regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre.
- Support district wide local centres.
- Maintain the vitality and viability of smaller villages and rural settlements.

6. Environment, Climate and Landscape

- Protect and enhance the natural environment, including:
 - Key landscapes
 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Address climate change by:
 - Reducing carbon emissions
 - Supporting renewable energy
- Manage water resources and address flood risk, ensuring development:
 - Avoid high-risk areas where possible
 - Mitigate impacts on-site and wider areas
- Recognise the District's role as custodian of the environment for future generations.

7. Design, Heritage and Place Quality

- Preserve and celebrate the District's historic environment and local distinctiveness.
- Ensure development respects landscape character and settlement identity.
- Deliver high-quality, safe, and secure built environments supported by appropriate infrastructure.

8. Green Infrastructure, Health and Wellbeing

- Promote healthy communities through:
 - Protection and enhancement of Green and Blue Infrastructure
 - Provision of open space and leisure facilities
 - Where possible avoiding the loss of leisure facilities.
- Manage impacts on health and wellbeing, including issues such as the concentration of hot food outlets.

9. Community Engagement and Local Involvement

- Ensure local communities are actively involved in shaping the future of their areas.
- Strengthen community influence in planning decisions and development outcomes.

Section 2 - Introduction, overview of plan-making to date and how to respond

Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council is in the process of reviewing and replacing the adopted Bromsgrove District Plan (2011–2030, adopted January 2017). To date the Council has held three consultations relating to the new Bromsgrove District Local Plan:

- Issues and Options consultation (24th September – 19th November 2018)
- Further Strategic Issues consultation (30th September – 11th November 2019), and
- Draft Development Strategy consultation (30th June – 20th October 2025).

The emerging Bromsgrove District Local Plan will be produced as a new style local plan under the Levelling-up Regeneration Act 2023. The Plan will be prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25th March 2026, and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In addition, the Plan will respond to the changes to the planning system through the proposed updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published for consultation in December 2025. In light of preparing the Local Plan under the new plan-making system, the Plan will be prepared and adopted within 30 months once it passes through what is known as ‘Gateway 1’.

The scoping consultation is the first consultation in the preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. In summary, the Council is required to invite representations about such matters relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan, including what the Plan should contain, and how the Council should engage with stakeholders in the preparation of it. The consultation is open for comments from **24th July to 4th September** (consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered, but please note there will be a number of further consultations as the plan progresses towards adoption).

The scoping consultation follows the publication of the Local Plan timetable and the notice of intention to commence local plan preparation on 29th June 2026, both of which can be viewed on our website – [INSERT WEBLINK](#).

Although the Council is preparing a new Local Plan under a new plan-making system, the work to date on the emerging Local Plan, including the three previous consultations under the old plan-making system, will help and feed into the preparation of the Local Plan under the new plan-making system. Under the new plan-making system the Council is legally required to follow the process set by the new regulations from start to finish. This does not mean that we cannot use the work already undertaken on the legacy plan-making system.

In particular, your previous comments will continue to shape the Local Plan. We will of course continue to take into account the comments you sent us last summer, so please don't

feel that you have to repeat anything you have said already. Responses to this consultation should be limited to the purposes of this scoping consultation and the question set out in this document. This consultation does not address site-specific matters.

Purpose of a local plan and why we need a new local plan

The purpose of a Local Plan is to provide a clear, place-based framework for how land is used and developed in Bromsgrove District over a typically 15–20 year period. Its key purposes are as follows:

- Setting the vision and strategy for development
- Allocating land for development
- Helping guide decision-making
- Promoting sustainable development and setting the approach to protecting and enhancing the environment
- Providing certainty for communities and developers
- Enabling infrastructure delivery and coordination

The Bromsgrove District Local Plan will only cover local plan matters. It will not address minerals and waste planning. Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the preparation of planning policy for minerals and waste development in Worcestershire.

The currently adopted Bromsgrove District Plan runs until 2030 but was adopted subject to the caveat that we needed to carry out an early review in order to sufficiently meet the district's housing needs for the whole of the Plan period. This is because when we adopted the plan we were only able to find a portion of our housing requirement on land not classified as Green Belt. As Bromsgrove District is predominantly rural with approximately 89% of the land designated as Green Belt, it meant we needed to undertake a lengthy and rigorous review of our Green Belt, which wasn't something that could be dealt with during the last plan-making period. Furthermore, since we adopted the Plan, it has become a requirement of the NPPF that Councils review their Plans at least once every five years. This is to ensure that they are relevant and based on up-to-date information, and to update them if this is not the case. It is also a requirement that Plans look ahead for a minimum of 15 years from adoption, therefore we need to consider development requirements beyond the 2030 Plan period. At this point in time a Plan review is no longer adequate, and as such, we will need to consider development requirements to 2044. Therefore, we are preparing a new Plan rather than just reviewing the adopted Plan.

Overview of new plan-making system

One of the Government's ambitions is to drive local plans to adoption as quickly as possible in order to achieve universal plan coverage across the Country and to ensure that plans contribute positively to the Government's Plan for Change milestone of building 1.5 million new homes in England by the end of this Parliament.

In March 2026, the Government introduced the new plan-making regulations – the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 - implementing the planning reforms introduced by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The new regulations target a faster, streamlined and more digitised plan-making system. Local planning authorities have 30 months to adopt a local plan once they have passed through what is known as ‘Gateway 1’, which is where the Council publishes its ‘self-assessment summary’).

An overview of the new-plan making process is provided in Figures 1 and 2 below.



Figure 1: Illustration of the main stages and timings in the 30-month process (Source: GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/30-month-local-plan-process-an-overview>)



Figure 2: Overview of the new local plan-making process (Source: GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-making-regulations-explainer/plan-making-regulations-explainer>)

Prior to the commencement of the formal 30-month period is the 'getting ready' phase. This is a minimum 4-month period where local planning authorities must publish a notice of intention to commence local plan preparation, publish their local plan timetable and undertake a scoping consultation (details of what this consultation is about is included at section 1.7). Local planning authorities then prepare and publish their Gateway 1 self-assessment summary.

Publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment summary commences the formal 30-month period whereby the local plan is prepared, independently examined and adopted. The new local plan-making system allows for two more consultations after the initial scoping consultation (i.e. this document); the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation; and finally, the proposed local plan consultation (prior to submission of the proposed local plan for independent examination).

There are also two more Gateways whereby the draft local plan is assessed by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. These are: Gateway 2, which occurs (after the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation, when an Inspector will provide observations and advice designed to ensure progress on the local plan is heading in the right direction; and Gateway 3, where further observations and advice is sought the proposed local plan consultation and prior to independent examination. This is to ensure the local plan is ready to be submitted for independent examination. If the local plan is found 'sound' at examination and it is recommended that the plan is adopted, the local planning authority may then decide to adopt it.

Overview of plan-making to date

As part of our early review of the adopted Bromsgrove District Plan, we undertook an Issues and Options consultation in late 2018 which was an opportunity to check that we were thinking about the right issues to address through an updated Plan. This was followed up 12 months later with a Further Strategic Issues Consultation, which outlined the next steps towards developing a potential strategy and accompanying policies. At the same time, we put out a Call for Sites request in order for developers and landowners to submit development sites to us for our consideration for allocation.

Between 30th June and 20th October 2025, the Council consulted on our Draft Development Strategy (the **DDS**). In the absence of the new plan-making system legislation and guidance, the Council decided to consult on the work undertaken at that time on the new Local Plan to stand us in good stead going into the new system. The consultation was carried out under Regulation 18 of the old plan-making system. We wanted to gather valuable information, including local knowledge and specific guidance from stakeholders, to inform the plan-making process. The consultation allowed comments to be submitted on the potential vision for the Local Plan; the draft development strategy; infrastructure provision; potential housing sites to meet the District's calculated local housing need; other sites not included for potential allocation; employment scenarios; and the Council's evidence base prepared at

that time. As set out above, the responses you submitted to the consultation are vital and will help shape the Local Plan at later stages.

Purpose of the scoping consultation and how to respond

The purpose of the scoping consultation is to allow consultation bodies, the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to have their say as to what the Local Plan should contain and what the consultation and engagement strategy should be as we progress the Local Plan through future consultations to adoption, in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.

At this scoping stage, we are seeking views on

- the key priorities/challenges facing the District;
- the Local Plan's vision;
- the potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies;
- the evidence base required to support the Local Plan; and
- the proposed consultation and engagement strategy.

The following sections will explore these areas further. **At the bottom of some of the sections there are questions in green boxes to help shape your response and provide meaningful feedback for the Council to use as we progress the Local Plan.**

The scoping consultation is focusing on the scope/parameters of the Local Plan, not proposals such as identifying development sites or drafting planning policies. The opportunity to comment on such matters will be the focus of future consultations.

Responses, including the request to be notified at a specified time*, must be submitted in writing by 4th September 2026 in one of the following ways:

- Online – **Smart Survey link from our website**
- By email – bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
- By post – Strategic Planning, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA

Consultation responses received after the deadline will not be considered.

*Responses may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address when one or more of the following steps occur:

Table 1: Stages where stakeholders can be notified if requested

i.	Consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence (Regulation 23).
ii.	Publication of observations or advice received on the Local Plan from a person appointed by the Secretary of State (Section 15CA of the Act).
iii.	Consultation on the proposed Local Plan submission documents (Regulation 27).
iv.	Submission of the proposed Local Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination (Section 15D of the Act).
v.	Publication of the date, time, and place of the examination hearing and the name of the examiner (Regulation 35).
vi.	Decision of the examiner that the examination is to be paused for further work to be carried out (Sections 15D and 15DA of the Act).
vii.	Publication of the document and any evidence which is sent to the examiner (Section 15DA of the Act).
viii.	Publication of the recommendations and reasons of the examiner received (Section 15D or Section 15DA of the Act).
ix.	Adoption or approval of the Local Plan (Part 2 of the Act).

If you have requested to be notified when one or more of the above steps occur, or you previously signed up to be included on our consultation database and no longer wish to be notified, please contact the Strategic Planning team by email at bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

Section 3 Spatial portrait of Bromsgrove District

District overview

Bromsgrove District is situated within the north of Worcestershire County, directly south of the West Midlands Conurbation. Bromsgrove Town is approximately 14 miles from Birmingham city centre. The District has a land area of approximately 21,714 hectares, 89% of which is designated as Green Belt.

The District comprises a single large town of Bromsgrove with other larger population centres including Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Catshill, Hagley, Rubery, and Wythall. The remainder of the district is predominantly rural in character with several small villages and hamlets. The District is spanned by multiple motorways with the M5 running north/south and the M42 east/west. The M5 and M42 connect with the M6 to the north of Birmingham and the M40 to the east. The District also benefits from train and bus connections into Birmingham City Centre and the wider region from many of the larger settlements.

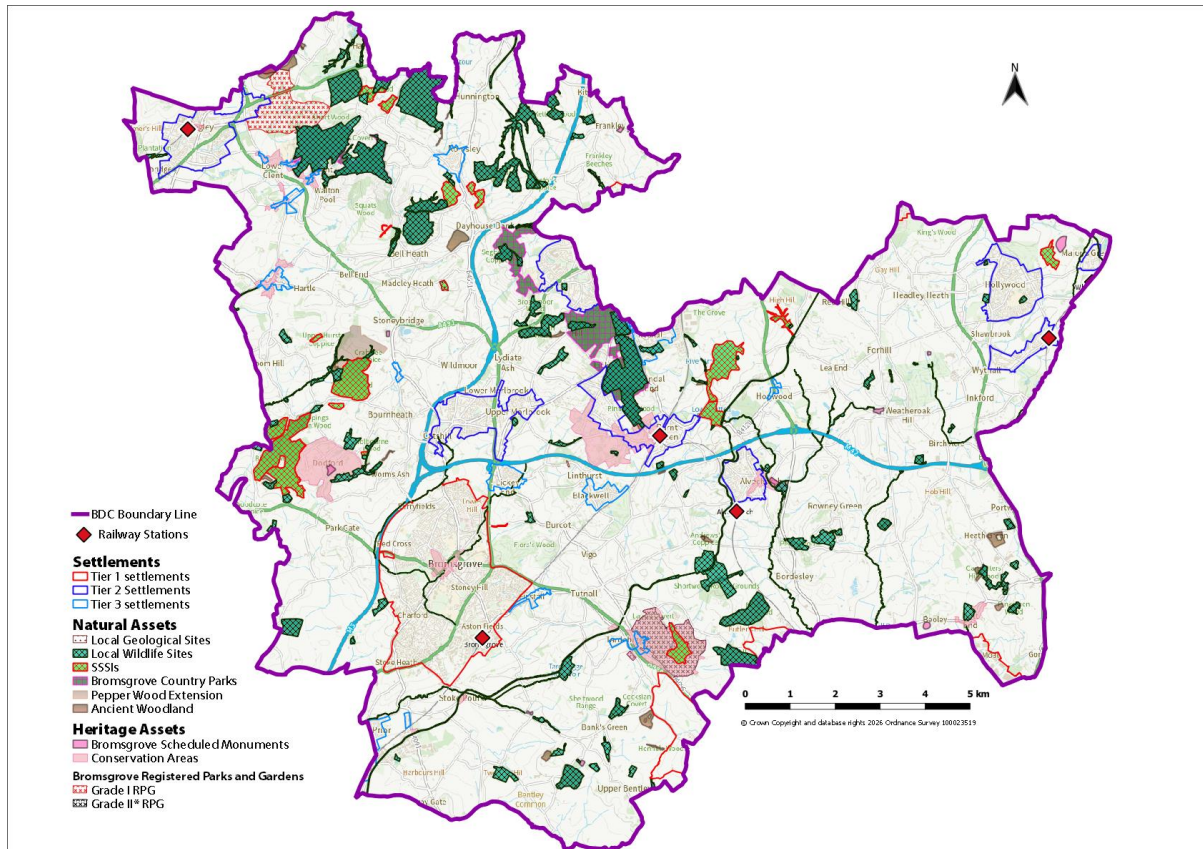


Figure 3: Bromsgrove District overview map showing settlements and a selection of planning constraints

Social characteristics

The total population of Bromsgrove District is 101,685 ([ONS mid-year estimates 2024](#)). This comprises 49,769 males and 51,916 females. As of the 2021 census¹, 58.7% of people are aged between 16 and 64, compared to 61.8% for the West Midlands and 62.8% nationally. 22.9% of residents are aged 65 and over, a higher proportion than nationally (18.6%) and the West Midlands (18.8%).

Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) ranks census Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) by their relative deprivation across several domains². A higher rank / score indicates lower levels of deprivation for each domain. When the scores of LSOAs within Bromsgrove are

¹ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Bromsgrove Local Authority](#)

² [English indices of deprivation 2025: statistical release - GOV.UK](#)

combined, the District is shown to be less deprived overall than 90% of the 296 Local Authority Districts in England.

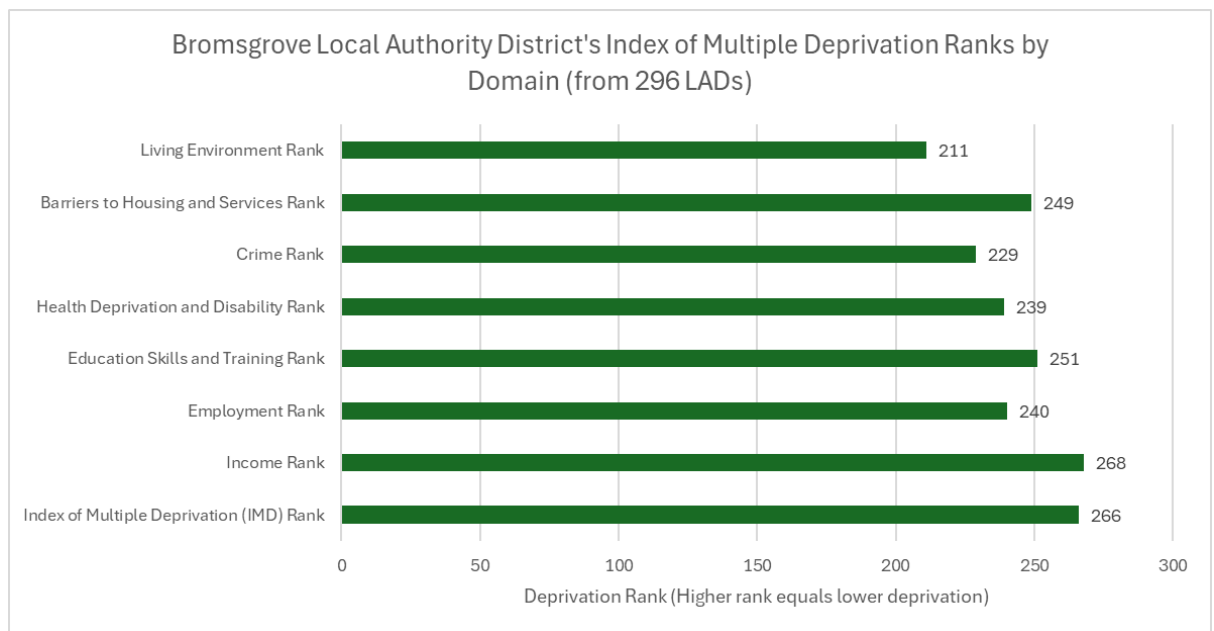


Figure 4: Bromsgrove District's Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks

Whilst the overall rank shown in figure 4 is useful for showing how Bromsgrove District compares to other Local Authorities, the decile individual LSOAs fall in to can show the relative affluence of areas across the District. As shown in figure 5, Bromsgrove contains no LSOAs within the most deprived decile (1), and 18 within the least deprived.

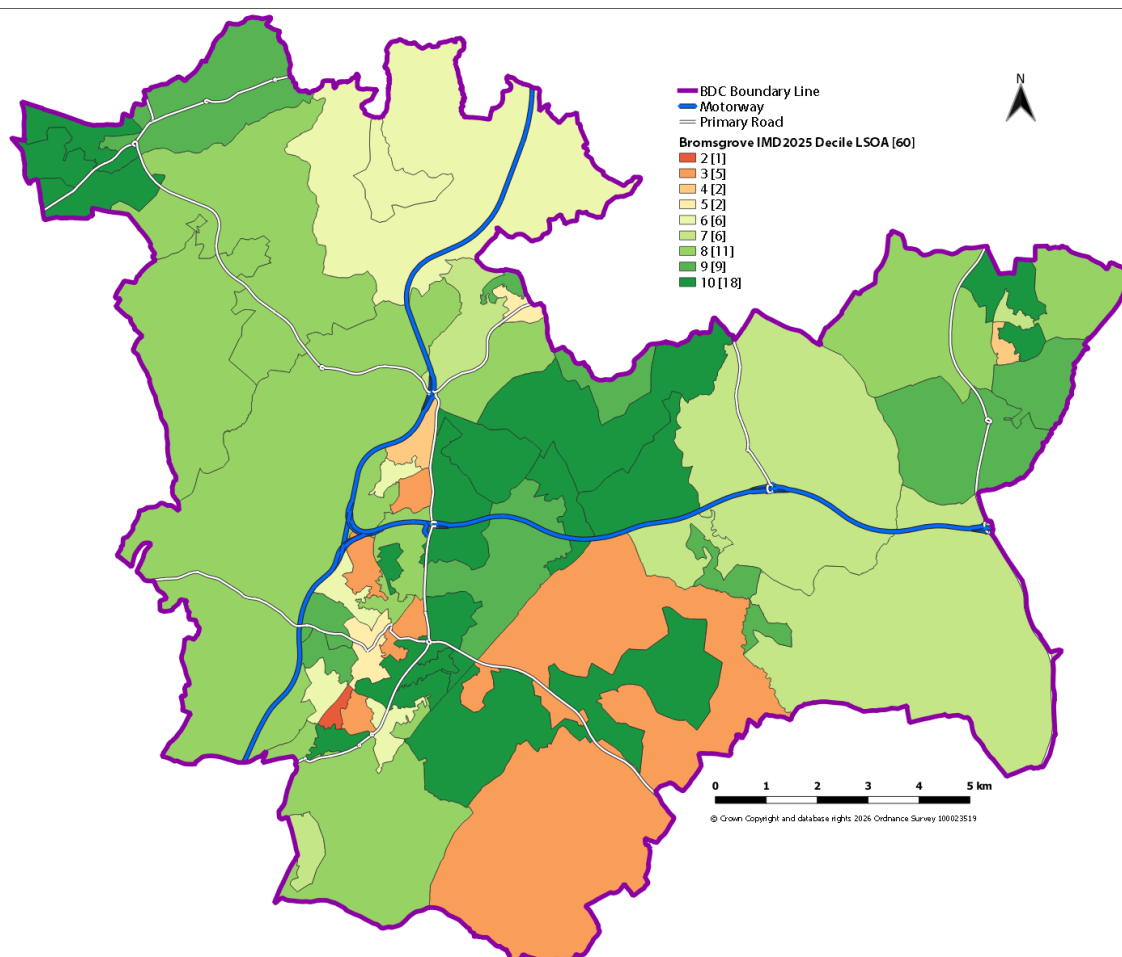


Figure 5: Spatial overview of Bromsgrove District's Index of Multiple Deprivation Ranks

Economic characteristics

As of the latest census, 58.3% of people aged 16 and over living in the District are in employment (including full-time students), 21.1% are retired 2.7% long-term sick or disabled, 3.2% looking after home or family and 2.3% are economically inactive. Of those in employment 70.4% work full-time (31 or more hours)³.

Median annual earnings of people who work within the District is £27,494 compared with the median annual earnings for residents of Bromsgrove District, which is £36,409, a difference of 27.9%⁴. This would suggest that the District's working population earn higher salaries than the national median (£32,890), and the West Midlands (£31,345) but they earn them in employment locations outside the District. Due to Bromsgrove's proximity to the West Midlands Conurbation, many residents commute to jobs in and around Birmingham.

Travel

Of those 16 and over in employment, 34.8% work mainly from home, 25.7% travel less than 10km, 22.7% travel between 10km and 30km and 3.3% travel greater than 30km⁵. The most

³ [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

⁴ [Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - Bromsgrove Local Authority - Economic Activity](#)

⁵ [Distance travelled to work - Census Maps, ONS](#)

common method of travel to work is by car with 53.3% driving and 3.2% as a passenger, 1.4% travel by train and 0.8% by bus. 4.6% walk to work and 0.6% cycle⁶.

Housing

The latest census (2021) records 41,264 households within Bromsgrove District, of which 42.4% are owned outright, 36.3% mortgaged, loan or shared ownership, 10.7% social rent and 10.7% private rent. The average house price in Bromsgrove District was £328,000 as of March 2026, significantly higher than the average for the West Midlands (246,000). First-time buyers in the District paid £254,000 on average in March 2026. The average monthly rent stood at £979, in line with the West Midlands average of £964⁷.

The dwelling type mix is predominantly family homes, with 38.1% of existing stock detached, 36.1% semi-detached, 14.2% of stock is terraced, 8.8% are flats or tenements with 2.8% as other⁸.

Environmental characteristics

Natural Environment and Landscape

Bromsgrove District is predominantly rural in character, away from the more built-up areas around Bromsgrove Town, it is characterised by a settlement pattern of farmsteads and wayside dwellings with the occasional village.

The District contains 4 Country Parks including the Clent Hills and Lickey Hills, 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 90 local sites (85 ecological and 5 geological) as well as 538 hectares of Ancient Woodland.

Historic Environment

The historic landscape in terms of field boundaries, including some post medieval enclosure, has survived in many areas. There are 493 Listed Buildings and 13 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The Listed Buildings range from the Grade I listed Hagley Hall and St John's Church in Bromsgrove, through a variety of rural buildings including two windmills, to a 1950s house in Hopwood. There are also 12 Conservation Areas that are designated as being of special architectural or historic interest and 2 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens. The Conservation Areas vary greatly in their character. The majority are centred around villages such as Alvechurch and Belbroughton, which date back to at least medieval times, as well as Bromsgrove Town Centre. The more unusual Conservation Areas include a stretch of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal and the Chartist settlement at Dodford. The Canal Conservation Area includes the Tardebigge Flight (as mentioned above) of 30 locks, which are all listed. The Dodford Conservation Area is centred on the planned Chartist settlement developed in the 1840s and originally comprised 39 cottages on 4-acre plots.

⁶ [Method of travel to workplace - Census Maps, ONS](#)

⁷ https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/housingpriceslocal/E07000234/#house_price

⁸ [Accommodation type - Census Maps, ONS](#)

Section 4 - Vision and objectives

What is a Local Plan vision?

The vision for Bromsgrove District will underpin the Local Plan and will describe how Bromsgrove District should grow, change and what it will look like by 2044. Additionally, it has a role to address the challenges above and will be central to the delivery of the Council's wider Strategic Purposes.

Local Plan period

Based on the current Local Plan timetable, the Plan will set out the vision for growth and development of the District to 2044. New national legislation requires that Local Plans are reviewed regularly within this period to ensure that the policies set out in the Plan remain relevant and up to date.

Feedback on the comments received from the DDS consultation relating to the Local Plan vision

The DDS consultation of Summer 2025 posed questions on the vision for the future of Bromsgrove District contained within the Local Plan.

Residents and other stakeholders were first asked whether the plan should be based on the Council vision, which is set out in the Council Plan 2024-2027, and which says that

'We aspire to create a welcoming environment that prioritises quality of life, where residents and businesses feel a deep sense of belonging and connection'

or whether the Local Plan should contain a separate Local Plan vision. 58% of responses were in favour of developing a separate vision for the Local Plan. 25% of responses supported adopting the Council's vision, with the remaining respondents unsure.

It is therefore our understanding that the majority of respondents would like the Local Plan to contain a distinct, Local Plan-specific vision rather than simply adopting the Council vision set out above.

Residents and stakeholders were then asked to provide comments on changes they would like to see made to the Council vision. Key themes from the responses are presented below:

Clear and Actionable

There was a strong perception that the Council vision may be too vague for the purposes of a Local Plan. Additionally, that the Council vision may be outdated by the time the Plan could be adopted.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure provision, such as healthcare capacity, school capacity, public utilities and public transport are seen as the key issues for Bromsgrove District and should therefore underpin the Local Plan vision and objectives.

Environment

The Local Plan vision must prioritise environmental protection much more explicitly than the Council vision, with clear objectives and measurable outcomes.

Strong preference for:

- Brownfield-first development
- On site biodiversity net gain
- Stronger environmental commitments

Housing

The Local Plan vision should better justify and balance growth. There was concern around the scale of growth and the potential overdevelopment of villages. Another major concern appeared to be lack of affordability of housing within Bromsgrove District.

Therefore, it was suggested that the Local Plan vision should include some smaller, distributed developments and ensure the inclusion of greater amounts of elderly housing and affordable housing.

Developing a vision for Bromsgrove District

The aim of developing a specific vision for the Bromsgrove District Local Plan aligns with the [latest National guidance for Local Plan vision statements](#). Specifically:

- a. A Local Plan vision should 'set out key aims and objectives for your area over the next 15 years or longer'.
- b. 'be ambitious but also reflect what the local plan can realistically achieve through its policies'.
- c. The vision must identify no more than 10 measurable outcomes to help monitor progress towards the stated objectives.

Potential aims & objectives

The following suggestions for the Local Plan vision's aims and objectives are based upon the feedback received from the DDS consultation and the identification of the key challenges in section 1 above. We are interested in your views on these and any additional aims and objectives you think the vision should contain. We are also interested in your views on measurable outcomes for the Plan.

Provide the infrastructure required to support Bromsgrove District and its future growth

Ensure new development is supported by the timely delivery of transport, schools, healthcare, utilities and community infrastructure, secured through clear funding and delivery mechanisms.

Prioritise brownfield and town-centre capacity, reducing Green Belt release

Prioritise brownfield regeneration and town centre living, including reuse of underused buildings and space above shops. (It must be noted that brownfield capacity in Bromsgrove district is very limited and significant Green Belt release will still be required).

Protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape and green/blue infrastructure

Protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife corridors, deliver measurable nature recovery (including Biodiversity Net Gain), and expand accessible green/blue infrastructure to support health and wellbeing.

Safeguard settlement identity

Require masterplanning for larger sites to embed walkable neighbourhoods, local facilities, and coherent integration with existing communities.

Improve sustainable transport choices to reduce congestion

Reduce congestion and improve safety by focusing growth in the most accessible locations, strengthening public transport and delivering coherent walking and cycling networks to key services and destinations.

Provide a balanced, genuinely affordable housing mix that meets local needs

Deliver the right mix of homes (size, type and tenure), with a strong focus on affordability and provision for different life stages, including older persons and accessible/lifetime homes.

Support a thriving town centre and resilient local economy

Support a resilient local economy by regenerating Bromsgrove town centre, reducing vacancies, supporting local businesses and enabling employment opportunities alongside housing growth. In addition, support existing district wide local centres.

Deliver healthy, safe, inclusive places with adequate services and facilities

Secure sufficient school places, healthcare capacity and community facilities, and protect/replace sports and leisure assets to support physical and mental wellbeing.

Question 2:

2a. Do you agree that Local Plan should contain a distinct, Local Plan-specific vision rather than utilising the Council Plan vision?

Yes/No/Unsure

2b. We would be interested to hear additional themes that you think the vision should contain.

Question 3:

3a. Do you agree with the proposed aims and objectives? Yes / No / Unsure

3b. Are there any aims and objectives that you would change, add or delete? Please explain your answer.

Section 5: Local Plan topic-based content

Potential scope of locally specific topic-based policies

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. It is also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The current NPPF (December 2024, amended February 2025) has 17 chapters covering the following topic areas:

- Sustainable development
- Plan-making
- Decision-making
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres
- Healthy and safe communities
- Transport
- Communications
- Effective use of land
- Design
- Green Belt
- Climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment
- Minerals

In December 2025, the Government consulted on a revised NPPF⁹. It is expected that the Government will publish the final revised version this summer (2026). One of the major changes proposed is the introduction of new national decision-making policies (**NDMPs**). The more 'rules-based' NPPF approach is to support more timely and consistent planning across local planning authorities in England. The draft version includes policies within the following policy areas:

- Sustainable development
- Climate change
- Housing
- Economy
- Town centres

⁹ [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)

- Communications
- Energy and water
- Minerals
- Effective use of land
- Green Belt
- Design
- Transport
- Healthy communities
- Pollution, public protection and security
- Flood risk and coastal change
- Natural environment
- Historic environment

The draft version of the NPPF stipulates that local plans should not duplicate, substantively restate or modify the content of NDMPs unless directed by other policies in the Framework.

This means that the role and content of local plans may change. However, the final version of the NPPF is yet to be published so the final form and policies are not known. The Council will consider the final version of the NPPF once published and it will be reflected in the next local plan content and evidence consultation.

New-style local plans will be shorter and more streamlined than local plans under the old plan-making system. Supported by an appropriate evidence base and feedback from consultations, the new Bromsgrove District Local Plan will likely include the following:

- Vision and measurable outcomes.
- Spatial strategy with policies for the amount of development to be provided, land allocations and designations (including land to be protected or enhanced for specific purposes).
- Infrastructure provision and contributions to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- Other local topic-based policies.

Notwithstanding any proposed changes to the NPPF, the Local Plan could contain policies in the following topic areas (not exhaustive):

- Housing – e.g. housing requirement, housing allocations, housing size, type and tenure, gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.
- Economy – e.g. employment land requirement, employment allocations, protection of existing employment areas, rural economy, town centre, local centres.
- Environment and climate change – e.g. natural environment, historic environment, Green Belt, climate change, energy, water, flood risk, air quality.

- Transport – e.g. sustainable development, active travel, highway impact/safety and mitigation, parking standards.
- Health and wellbeing – e.g. open space, sport and recreational facilities, green infrastructure, services and facilities, health, hot food takeaways.
- Design.
- Site allocation policies.

Following the conclusion of the scoping consultation, consideration of feedback received and publication of the forthcoming revised NPPF, the Council will consider the policies that should be contained in the Local Plan. There will be opportunities to comment on the policies at the next local plan content and evidence consultation and also the proposed local plan consultation.

Question 4:

4a. Do you agree with the possible content of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan

Yes/No/Unsure

4b. is there anything you would change, add or delete?

Question 5:

5a. Do you agree with the topic-based policies that the Bromsgrove District Local Plan could contain

5b. is there anything you would change, add or delete?

Section 6: Local Plan evidence base

Likely evidence base to support the Local Plan

The Council has commenced work on the evidence base to support the preparation of the Local Plan. We understand that some of the evidence base documents prepared to support the emerging Local Plan require updating/additional work. Additionally, we will need to assess our evidence base to identify what new evidence is required.

Whilst the Local Plan is being prepared under the new plan-making system, much of the evidence base prepared to date is relevant and can be used to inform the Local Plan.

Table 2 below lists the evidence base prepared to date, the evidence currently being prepared, and evidence that requires updating or new evidence. The evidence prepared to date is available on our website – [INSERT WEBLINK](#). New or updated evidence will not be published until it is complete or at the time of the next consultation. As we continue to prepare the Local Plan, it may be necessary to prepare or commission some additional evidence.

Table 2: Evidence to support the Local Plan

Evidence Documents
Sustainability Appraisals (including SEA) accompanying various Local Plan consultations
Site Assessment and Site Selection Methodology
Green Belt Purposes Assessment (Part 1)
Green Belt Study (Part 2)
Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances Paper
Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
Strategic Transport Assessment
Settlement Hierarchy Review
Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)
Employment Land Provision
Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)
Open Space Study
Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy
Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
Grey Belt Assessment

Viability Assessment
Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Housing Land Supply Evidence
Town Centres, Local Centres and Retail Assessment
Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
Water Cycle Strategy
Climate Change and Energy Assessment
Health Impact Assessment
Habitats Regulations Assessment
Green Infrastructure, Ecology and Biodiversity Assessment
Heritage Impact Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requirements

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations) apply to local plans. In summary, the SEA assesses the likely significant environmental effects of a local plan alongside reasonable alternatives. Its purpose is to guide and shape plan-making, preventing or reducing adverse environmental impacts and enhancing opportunities for positive outcomes. The process takes place during the preparation of the plan.

Through powers contained in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, a new domestic framework for environmental assessment is being developed. The SEA process will be replaced by Environmental Outcomes Reports. The Government is expected to introduce Environmental Outcomes Reports by the end of 2027. Until Environmental Outcomes Reports are introduced the current SEA regulations apply. The transitional approach from SEAs to Environmental Outcomes Reports is not yet known.

A sustainability appraisal considers the local plan's wider economic and social effects (and can also consider potential environmental impacts) to promote sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal should also meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). A SEA is not required if the sustainability appraisal meets all of the requirements of the aforementioned regulations and considers environmental impacts. Guidance released by the Government in relation to the new plan-making system only makes reference to SEAs and therefore it is our understanding that the requirement to carry out a sustainability appraisal has been removed. More detailed SEA guidance is expected in due course.

The Council has prepared a SEA Screening Statement, which can be viewed on our website ([INSERT WEBLINK](#)) and alongside hard-copy versions of this scoping document across the District (see section 8). The SEA Screening Statement concludes that the new Local Plan has the potential to have a significant effect on the natural environment and will require a

SEA to be undertaken. It is anticipated that the scope of the SEA will be consulted on at the proposed local plan content and evidence consultation stage.

For past consultations, the Council has prepared a sustainability appraisal appraising the environmental, social and economic performance of the Local Plan and any reasonable alternatives at that stage. The preparation of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, under the new plan-making system, will be informed by the SEA process.

Question 6

6a. Do you agree with the scope of the proposed evidence base to support the Local Plan (table 2)

Yes/No/Unsure

6b. is there any other evidence you feel we need to inform our Local Plan?

Section 7: Consultation and engagement strategy

Consultation principles

The consultation principles below are to help shape consultation methods:

Helping produce effective consultation responses: To comply with the timescales of the new-style plan-making system, the Council will encourage focused consultee responses. The Council will help guide consultees as to what are and aren't material planning considerations where possible to ensure highly effective responses that benefit both the Council and consultees.

Continue to provide clear, concise professionally produced consultation materials: Ensuring consultee understanding of (a) proposals and (b) the wider plan-making system by using minimal plan-making 'jargon'.

Focused consultation questions to produce a deeper level of consultation. For the DDS consultation, the Council asked consultees to provide responses which identified specific constraints in settlements, such as around education, health and infrastructure. The purpose of this is to (a) help shape the evidence base (b) help rigorously test proposed sites and (c) help shape development where a site progresses.

Ensuring consultation events are accessible to the whole District: Consultation methods must reflect the range of settlement sizes in the District. As with the DDS consultation, future events should encompass Bromsgrove town, larger settlements, rural areas and the edge of the West Midlands conurbation.

Take meaningful steps to engage all sections of the community:

- **Digital first methods:** This is a government requirement to help speed up plan-making. Digital-first approaches also reflect the fact that residents spend more time online and help to reach younger residents. Complementary use of the Council's website, social media and consultation platforms to drive engagement. Continuing to provide support for consultees using digital methods through a dedicated consultation inbox, phone line and events. This enables residents of all ages to become confident with digital methods of engagement. Use data (from the DDS consultation and other sources) to help define key consultation methods.
- **Physical consultation methods:** Providing inclusive consultation methods with physical copies available.

Clear post-consultation approach: Providing a 'you said, we did' approach to tell the story of how a Local Plan has evolved in response to feedback. The Council is required to prepare

and publish a summary received after each consultation (scoping consultation, proposed local plan content and evidence consultation and the proposed local plan consultation). The summary must set out who were invited to make representations, the manner by which they were invited to make representations, a summary of the main issues raised, and how the Council has had regard to those representations to date.

Consultation methods

In order to deliver on the principals identified above we have identified the following Consultation and Engagement Methods that could be utilised for future consultations:

1. Digital and Online Engagement

- Council website
- Emails to those registered on our consultation database and consultation bodies
- Social media platforms
- Specialist online consultation platform (e.g. *Commonplace*, aligned with the Government's "digital first" approach)
- Use of videos to explain proposals
- More detailed and accessible online FAQs
- Online questionnaires and surveys

2. Printed and Physical Materials

- Documents available at the Council's offices at Parkside and libraries across the District
- Printed letters
- Posters and display screens
- Leaflets and local magazines
- Increased availability of paper copies of consultation documents

3. Events and Face-to-Face Engagement

- Public drop-in sessions for future statutory consultation events.
- Focus groups (including targeted stakeholder groups such as Parish Councils, Local businesses and employers, community and physical infrastructure providers)
- School and college engagement sessions
- Events held at varied locations and times to maximise accessibility

4. Media and Promotion

- Local press coverage
- Council press releases
- Targeted publicity in specific areas (e.g. edge-of-conurbation locations)

- Use of Councillors, parish councils, stakeholders, and internal Council networks to promote consultations
- Leveraging existing community and stakeholder networks

5. Improving Accessibility and Participation Quality

- Making consultation documents more concise and user-friendly (e.g. greater use of graphics and visual content)
- Providing more detailed, optional supplementary questions to enable deeper engagement (e.g. on design, density, and layout)
- Ensuring consultation methods reach a wide and diverse audience

Question 7:

7a. Do you agree with the consultation principles identified?

Yes/No/Unsure

7b. What else would you suggest?

Question 8:

8a. Do you agree with the potential consultation methods identified?

Yes/No/Unsure

8b. What else would you suggest?

Question 9: Do you consider there is anything else relevant to consultation that has not been mentioned?

Section 8: Next steps and further information

Next steps

After this consultation ends **on 4th September 2026**, all feedback will be analysed and a report prepared of the outcome which will be published on our website. This feedback, along with the feedback received from previous consultations including the Draft Development Strategy consultation, will help inform the preparation of the Local Plan. It will also ensure we are engaging with you in the most effective ways for future consultations.

There will be two more opportunities to help shape the Local Plan. The next consultation is the local plan content and evidence consultation which is anticipated to be held in June 2027 for a minimum of 6 weeks. The final consultation is expected to be held in March 2028 for a minimum of 8 weeks which is a consultation on the full draft Plan before it is submitted for independent examination.

Further information

The Council's website includes all information on the Local Plan; including the Local Plan timetable, notice of intention to commence local plan preparation, scoping consultation details, evidence base, details of previous consultations held, and the privacy notice – **INSERT WEBLINK**. This will be kept up to date throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, and any updates will be published there.

Please see Section 1.7 of this document about how to respond to the consultation. If you have any queries, please contact the Strategic Planning team:

By email: bromsgroveplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

By telephone: 01527 881288

By post: Strategic Planning, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 8DA.

If you need this information in another language/format please call 01527 548284 or email equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.