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Community Council Planning Training

Development Plans

October / November 2026

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Overview

- What is a Development Plan?
- Planning Reform (the 2019 Act)
- NPF4 (national) and LDP (local)
- LDP preparation process
- Strategic Development Frameworks (SDF's) (Helensburgh and Oban only)
- Local Place Plans (LPP's)
- Opportunities for community participation

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What is a Development Plan?

- Development Plans set out how places will change into the future, including where development should and shouldn't happen.
- Development Plans show where new homes and workplaces will be built, how services and facilities such as schools and travel will be provided, and identify the places and buildings we value and want to protect.
- Plans bring together many different sectors and interests to achieve the desired change for places and communities.

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What is a Development Plan?

- The Development Plan forms the policy basis for decisions on planning applications.
- The allocation of land for development in a Local Development Plan is effectively committing the council to the principle of future development on particular sites.
- The Development Plan is a STATUTORY document.

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What is a Development Plan?

- NON-STATUTORY technical guidance provides further detailed guidance on particular areas e.g. Sustainability, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA), Design Guidance, Conservation Area Appraisals, and Windows.
- Further technical guidance to support LDP2 is expected to be written during the plan period.
- When a new LDP is adopted, the technical guidance continues forward to the next LDP.

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The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 reformed the planning system, introducing the National Planning Framework (NPF4) and changing the process of producing a Local Development Plan (LDP).
- Our current LDP (LDP2) was started prior to the passing of this Act, and therefore followed the previous process.
- We have now started working on LDP3, which will be Argyll and Bute's first LDP under the new system.

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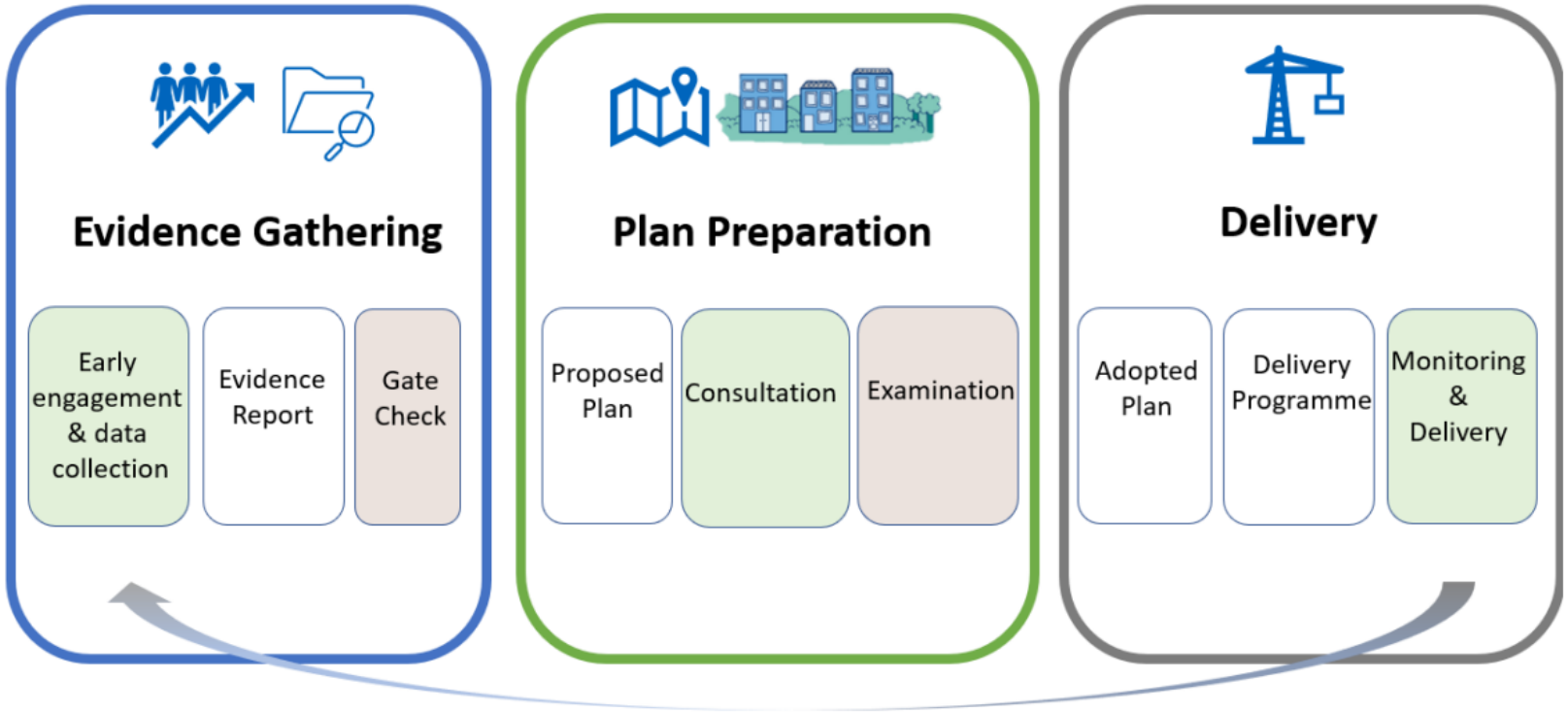
NPF4 and LDP's

- NPF4 is a spatial strategy and planning policy framework for the whole of Scotland, and which sets out 33 national policies.
- As LDP2 was written prior to the adoption of NPF4, there is some duplication or overlap within policies.
- However, LDP3 is expected to have fewer thematic policies and written text than previously.
- Instead, it should focus on showing the spatial implications of national policy for different places, and may include local polices that reflect local issues and context.

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LDP Preparation



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Early Preparation – Development Plan Scheme (DPS)

- Every year each planning authority will prepare a Development Plan Scheme (DPS) which sets out the timetable for LDP preparation and for how and when people can get involved in the process.
- Argyll and Bute Council's DPS is generally prepared around March.
- Includes a Participation Statement, on which we remain open for views (by email) year round.

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Evidence Report – current stage

- The purpose of the Evidence Report is to support the quality and effectiveness of the LDP
- The aim is to front-load the work and use the evidence to clearly inform what to plan for before the Proposed Plan looks at where development should take place. The Evidence Report is not expected to contain all the detail of evidence, it should provide a summary of what the evidence means for the plan.
- **Engagement is ongoing on the accuracy and sufficiency of evidence across a range of topics.**
- It will be subject to independent assessment at the 'Gate Check' before we are allowed to start preparing the LDP.

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Gate Check

- The assessment of the Evidence Report, known as the Gate Check, will provide an independent assessment of whether the planning authority has sufficient information to prepare an LDP.
- It will be carried out by a person appointed by the Scottish Ministers, usually a reporter from the DPEA.

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Proposed Plan Preparation and Consultation

- The Proposed Plan should identify where new development should take place and where it should not.
- It can articulate the ambitions and priorities for the future development of the plan area.
- It should support coordination of development and service provision.
- **There will be early engagement for ideas to help shape the Plan**
- **Later there will be a formal public consultation period of 12 weeks (minimum).**

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Examination / Adoption

- The Examination is the opportunity for independent consideration of any issues raised during the formal consultation on the Proposed Plan that have not been resolved through modifications.
- This is carried out by a person appointed by the Scottish Ministers, usually a reporter from the DPEA.
- We expect to adopt LDP3 in 2029.

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Delivery Plan / Monitoring and Delivery

- The Delivery Programme sets out how an authority proposes to implement its LDP.
- It should support delivery of the LDP and achievement of its intended outcomes.
- The Delivery Programme must be kept under review, and updated at least every two years

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Strategic Development Frameworks (SDF's)

- Helensburgh and Oban areas only
- Within LDP2, Proposals A and B set out a commitment to undertake Strategic Development Frameworks in both Oban and Helensburgh, which have been identified as the most suitable areas with Argyll and Bute for strategic expansion.
- These frameworks will cover up to a 40 year period (i.e. up to four LDP periods).
- The Frameworks are expected to be completed later in 2026, in time to inform the Proposed Plan preparation stage of LDP3.

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Local Place Plans (LPP's)

- LPPs are community-led plans setting out proposals for the development and use of land.
- In preparing LPPs, community bodies must have regard to the NPF, any LDP which covers the same area, and also any locality plan which covers the same area.
- LPPs are not part of the statutory development plan, but must be taken into account by the planning authority during the preparation of the LDP.

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Opportunities for community participation

- Through LPP's
- Development Plan Scheme – we are "open for views" year round.
- Evidence Report – Topic Papers have been published online for views on the accuracy and sufficiency of the evidence (further papers going online in November, then early 2027)
- Evidence Report – online engagement opportunities on various work to support the Evidence Report: play sufficiency (March 2026); Place Standard Tool (March 2026)

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Opportunities for community participation

- Evidence Report – early engagement opportunities (by email to Community Councils only) on various work to support the Evidence Report: Food Growing Strategy (October 2026); Open Space Audit (December 2026)
- Proposed Plan – Early Engagement allows people to put forward ideas (expected to be later in 2027)
- Proposed Plan – Formal Consultation allows people to make formal representations on the content of the proposed plan, including SDF inclusions (expected to be in 2028)

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Any Questions?

email: ldp@argyll-bute.gov.uk