

Ash Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

Information Statement

About this statement

A referendum on whether to adopt the Ash Neighbourhood Plan will be held for residents of the Ash Neighbourhood Area (Ash Parish) on Thursday 29 October 2026. This statement provides more information about the referendum, for example who can take part and how¹.

The neighbourhood plan referendum

The question that will be asked at the referendum is:

Do you want Guildford Borough Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Ash to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

Voters can answer 'yes' or 'no' to this question on their ballot papers.

If most people vote in favour, the Ash Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan (see below). This means the Council and other planning decision makers will use it when considering planning applications within the Ash Neighbourhood Area.

The planning system

The UK has a plan-led system of town and country planning. Local Authorities (borough, district, and unitary councils) and other decision makers, like planning inspectors, make planning decisions based on policies in the local Development Plan, national policy, and other material considerations.

The Development Plan is the starting point for deciding planning applications. Its policies help decide how much and what type of development takes place, what it looks like and where it goes. Guildford borough's Development Plan includes:

- the Guildford Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034
- the Guildford Local Plan: Development Management Policies
- waste and minerals plans produced by Surrey County Council
- Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan, and
- neighbourhood plans that have passed a referendum.

¹ This statement is required by regulations 4(3)(a) and 4(3)(b)(v) of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Neighbourhood plans

Neighbourhood plans are produced by parish or town councils in consultation with local communities. In areas without a parish, a plan can be produced by a forum of residents and businesses.

A neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory Development Plan when it passes a referendum. Its policies must then be used when deciding planning applications within the neighbourhood area.

Neighbourhood plans therefore give local communities influence over development in their areas.

Ash Neighbourhood Plan

Ash Neighbourhood Plan was produced by Ash Parish Council in consultation with residents and other stakeholders. It sets planning policies for the Ash Neighbourhood Area, which is the same boundary as Ash Parish.

The Parish Council held a consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan before submitting it to Guildford Borough Council. Guildford Borough Council held a further consultation, before sending the plan and the consultation representations to an independent examiner.

The examiner recommended changes to the plan to make sure it met the basic conditions² and other legislative requirements before it could go to a referendum. The Council agreed with the recommendations. The Referendum Version is the final version of the plan, and includes all of the agreed changes.

How to view the Neighbourhood Plan and other documents

You can view the plan and other specified documents³ listed below at

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/27109/Neighbourhood-planning-in-Ash>.

Paper copies of these documents are available to view at:

- Main reception, Guildford Borough Council, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4BB (open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday).
- Ash Library, Ash Street, Ash, Surrey, GU12 6LF (opening times available at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries/your-library/find-your-nearest/ash>).

The specified documents are:

- the Ash Neighbourhood Plan (Referendum Version)
- the Ash Neighbourhood Plan examiner's report
- representations received during Guildford Borough Council's consultation, which were submitted to the examiner
- Guildford Borough Council's Basic Conditions and Compliance statement, and
- a statement setting out general information about town and country planning and the referendum (this information is contained within this Information Statement).

² Contained in Schedule 4B paragraph 8(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

³ Specified in regulation 4(3)(b) of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The referendum area and eligibility to vote

A person is entitled to vote in the referendum if on Thursday 29 October 2026:

- they are entitled to vote in a local government election in the referendum area, and
- their qualifying address for the election is in the referendum area.

A person's qualifying address is the address where they are registered to vote. This must be the address where they live and are entitled to be registered, which is usually their main home.

Applications to be included on the register of electors for this referendum must be received no later than Tuesday **13 October 2026**. Those already confirmed as registered to vote, do not need to reapply.

You can check whether you are registered to vote by calling 01483 444115.

Individuals, organisations and groups may campaign for a 'yes' or 'no' vote. There is a legal limit to the amount of money that can be spent campaigning. The referendum expenses limit is £3,260.33. This limit was calculated based on the number of persons entitled to vote in the referendum as of Tuesday 1 September 2026, which was 15,226.

The referendum will follow procedures that are similar to those used at local government elections.

How and where can I vote?

There are three ways to vote: in person, by post or by proxy.

In person

Vote at the polling station shown on the official poll card that is sent to you. Polling day is on Thursday 29 October 2026 between 7am and 10pm.

By post

If you are NOT already a postal voter, complete an online application at: [Apply for a postal vote - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) by **5pm** on **Wednesday 14 October 2026**.

You should receive your postal vote about a fortnight before polling day. If it doesn't arrive in time, you can get a replacement up to 5pm on Thursday 29 October 2026. Replacement of any undelivered postal ballot papers can be obtained from Friday 23 October 2026. For more information, please call 01483 444115.

Ballot papers can be sent overseas, but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your postal vote by Thursday 29 October 2026. In these cases, a proxy vote is recommended.

By proxy

You may be able to vote by proxy. This means applying to appoint somebody you trust to vote at your polling station on your behalf.

To apply for a proxy vote, complete an online application at: [Apply for a proxy vote - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) by **5pm** on **Wednesday 21 October 2026**.

Ash Neighbourhood Area

See a more detailed map of the Ash Neighbourhood Area at:

<https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/27109/Neighbourhood-planning-in-Ash>.

