

## Spring 2020 update on the Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan

The Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan has been written by a group of local residents, with consultation input from hundreds of other residents. It's been produced with the support of a planning consultant, Hertford Town Council, and several residents' organisations. Later this year, there will be a public referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan and, if we vote in favour of it, it will have the same legal status as the East Herts District Plan. This will give us real influence, over the next 13 years, on planning applications that could impact on our local green spaces, community and business facilities, air quality, roads, natural habitats and important buildings.

The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are designed to support sustainable development in the Plan Area. The housing policies in the Plan set out the importance of development proposals optimising energy and water conservation, mitigating flood risk, providing sufficient cycle parking, and protecting local aquifers. In other policies, valued local green spaces are identified for protection from development, including a section of Bengoe Field, the former railway line in Lower Bengoe, St. Leonard's Garden and the woodland adjacent to the Sacombe Road Play Area. Important views are also identified for protection from the impact of development, including views across Beane Marshes, Hartham Common and Bengoe Field.

Several community facilities are proposed for registration as Assets of Community Value, including the Folly Island and Bengoe Allotments, Courtyard Arts and the Company of Players Theatre. A number of buildings are identified as worthy of protection from unsympathetic development, and a Nature Conservation policy highlights the importance of development proposals achieving net biodiversity gains. Another policy supports the landscaping of the empty plot on the corner of Tower Street and Duncombe Road into a community wildlife garden.

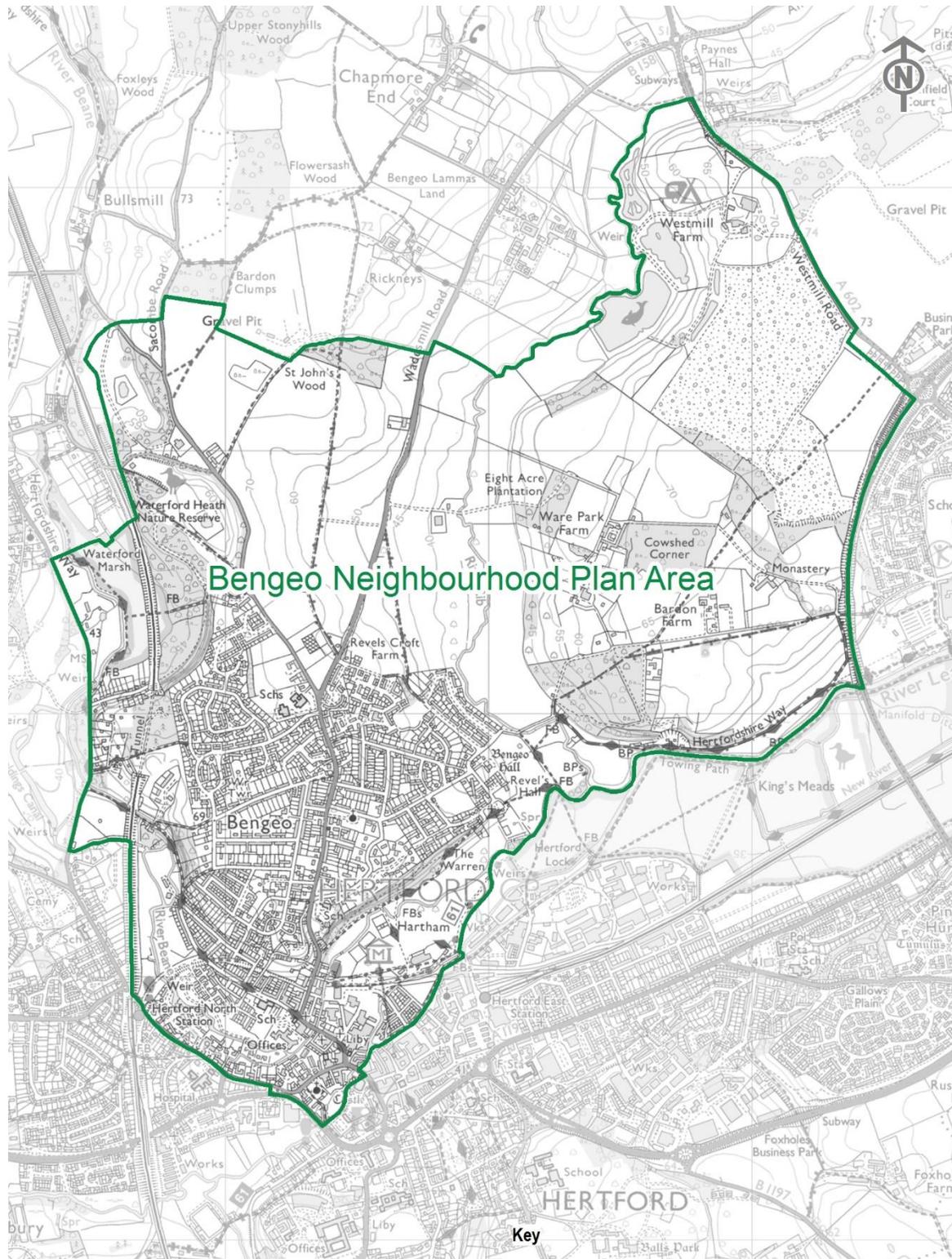
Throughout consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, residents raised concerns about traffic speeds, particularly on Bengoe Street and Sacombe Road, as well as traffic volumes on the Lower Bengoe roads. Sustainable travel is a consistent theme throughout the Neighbourhood Plan. Its transport policies promote walking and cycling and are designed to mitigate the impact of development on our roads and air quality. Separately, several Hertford organisations, including the Neighbourhood Plan, are submitting a proposal to Hertfordshire County Council's Sustainable Travel Town Programme. The proposal aims to reduce traffic congestion on Hertford's roads and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

In the last few months, several locally significant planning applications have been submitted to East Herts District Council, including the proposed development of 52 dwellings on the former Bengoe Nursery site, the Hartham Leisure Centre extension, the refurbishment of the Hartham Common children's play area and an application to demolish 1a Tower Street (Castle Joinery). The Neighbourhood Plan submitted responses to these planning applications, referencing policy criteria in the Plan. They can be viewed on [www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog/](http://www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog/). If residents vote to adopt the Neighbourhood Plan, its planning policies, developed by residents who live in Hertford Bengoe Ward, will help determine the outcome of planning applications like these.

Having gone through a full public consultation last summer, the Plan will now be reviewed by East Herts District Council and assessed by an independent examiner. The draft Plan is on [www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog/](http://www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog/). The Love Bengoe Facebook page has regular updates on the Neighbourhood Plan, as does the Love Bengoe Twitter account.

We'll update you on the Plan's progress in a future edition of the Bengoe Magazine. If you have any queries on the Plan, please email [info@lovebengeo.org.uk](mailto:info@lovebengeo.org.uk).

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Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan



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