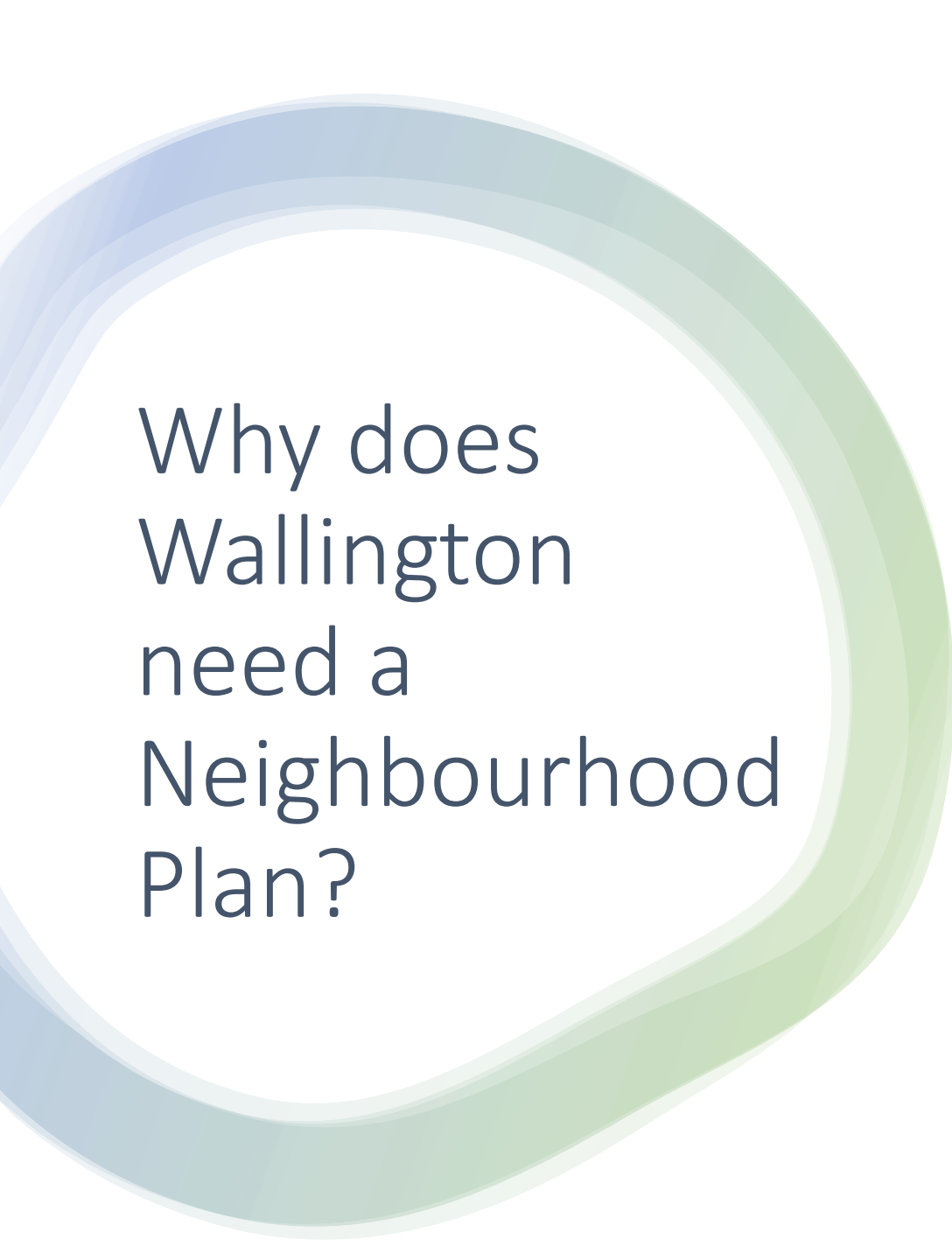# Wallington Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

## 14th March 2024

## Rushden and Wallington Parish Council

# What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – planning policies are used to decide whether to approve planning applications

- Written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, rather than the Local Planning Authority

- A powerful tool to ensure the community gets only the right types of development, in the right place

- Owned and developed by the Parish Council

- Has statutory powers in the planning process

# Why does Wallington need a Neighbourhood Plan?

## To be prepared for changes ahead:

### The North Herts District Council Local Plan

- "Infill development" is now permitted in Wallington by the new Local Plan

- This means that, for example, homeowners are allowed to build new houses in large gardens, within certain rules

### Potential "Permitted Development"

- Developing "brownfield sites" and disused farm buildings is already allowed, within certain rules

### Possible wider planning changes

- Our Conservation Area status may give less protection in future, and its protection is already limited to a small area

- Hertfordshire may become a "Unitary Authority" in future, merging NHDC and Herts County Council. Planning decisions would be made by a central authority that may not know much about Wallington.

- Possible future changes to Government planning policies

The response to our surveys confirmed that residents feel strongly about our village and want to protect the best things about it

- **Wallington is special**
- Some change is inevitable
- Nearby communities are already finding that planning decisions are being made which many residents don't think are appropriate

We decided to make a plan, before someone else makes one for us!
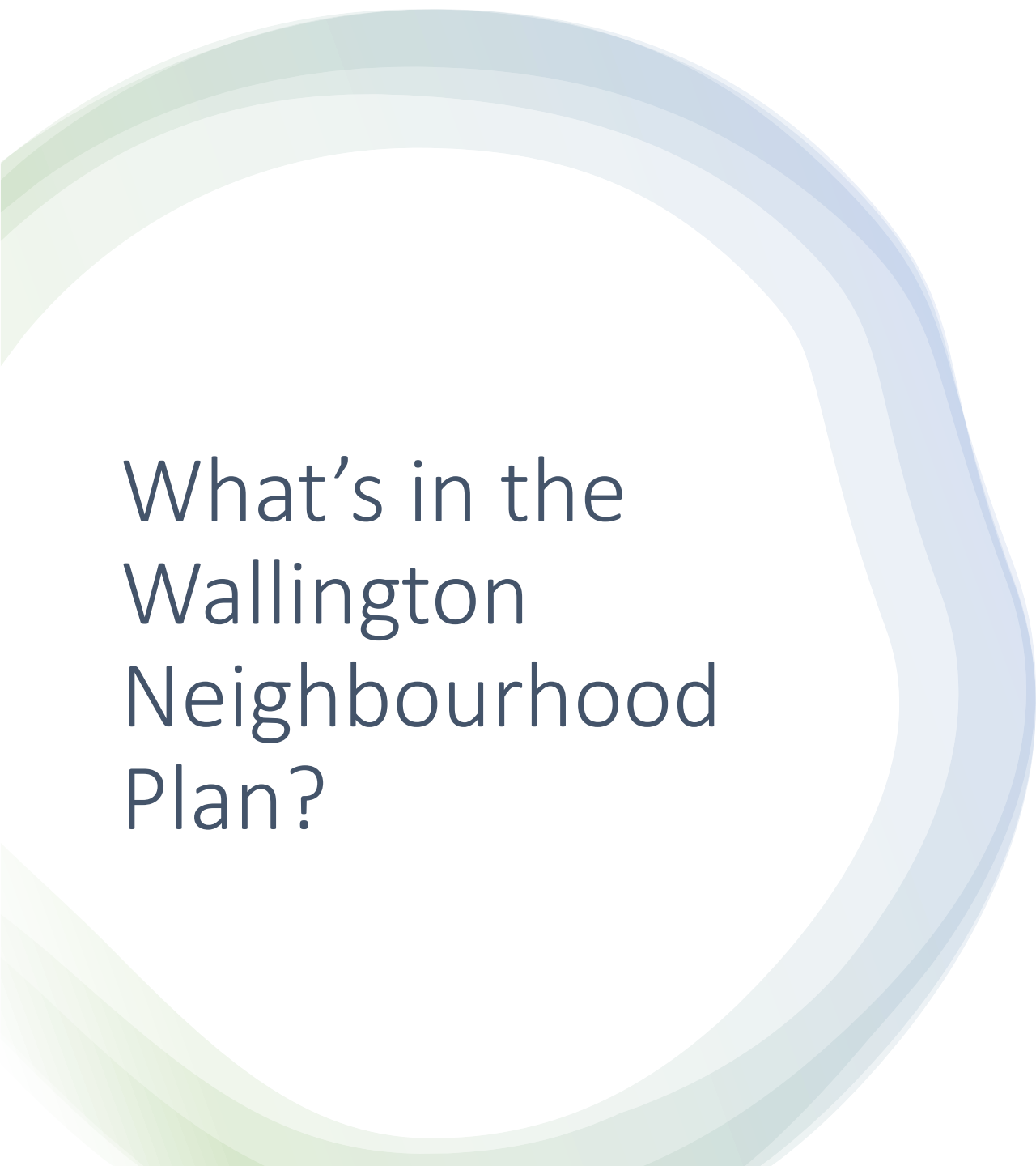
# Neighbourhood Plan Process

## Where are we in the process?

**Define Neighbourhood Plan Boundary**

**Develop the Draft Plan**

**Consult Locally on the Draft Plan**

**Amend the Plan and submit to North Herts Council**

**NHC conducts formal public consultation**

**The Plan is formally Examined**

**The Plan is finalised**

**We are here** →

**Local Referendum to adopt the Plan**

# The Final Plan

- The Plan is based on what Wallington residents told us they care about through surveys, drop-in events and consultations

- More than 5 years of work by Parish Councillors and many other local volunteers have led to the final stage:  the referendum

- <u>If accepted</u> by the majority of voters, residents' priorities for Wallington will have the same status as the North Herts Local Plan

- <u>If accepted</u> by the majority of voters, our Neighbourhood Plan is <u>the</u> chance to make certain that local opinions count in future planning decisions

# What's in the Wallington Neighbourhood Plan?

| What Wallington residents asked for: | In the Plan: |
|---|---|
| ❖ Protect our green spaces, equal to green belt | ✓ |
| ❖ Protect important local views | ✓ |
| ❖ Protect heritage assets which aren't "listed" | ✓ |
| ❖ Focus on housing needs for our village | ✓ |
| ❖ Protect the unique character of Wallington | ✓ |

# What the examiner said…

"I commend RWPC for the approach it has taken. It is best practice."

"Takes a very positive approach (to sustainability)."

"The views have been appropriately selected and relate to information in the Landscape Character Assessment."

"I am satisfied that the (heritage assets) are worthy of such protection."

"(The plan) seeks to ensure that the key features that contribute to the natural character of the area and which provide habitats and wildlife corridors, are not adversely impacted."

What our planning consultant said…

*"This is one of the most protective neighbourhood plans I have ever seen."*

# The referendum is critical…

***If Wallington accepts the plan,***
***we will have succeeded in getting***
***ALL the protections most wanted by***
***residents:***

- 22 locally significant views
- 5 non-listed heritage assets
- 13 green spaces