

Local Development Scheme

London Borough of Lewisham Place Directorate

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1. Introduction

1.1. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a procedural document that sets out the timetable for the preparation of Lewisham Council's key planning policy documents, specifically the new Local Plan and its associated supplementary documents.

Planning for Lewisham

- 1.2. The planning system in England is 'plan-led'. Local planning authorities (including Lewisham Council) must prepare and have in place an up-to-date plan for their area. The plan sets out policies and guidelines for the development and use of land, considering the direction provided by higher-level policies. For Lewisham, this includes policies contained in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the London Plan, which is prepared by the Mayor of London. Adopted plans are used as the basis for planning decisions, including the determination of planning applications, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.3. The Council has an adopted suite of planning policy, supplementary planning guidance and framework documents¹. These set out the locally prepared planning policy and associated advice for the Council, its partners, and other stakeholders to direct new investment across Lewisham for the benefit of local neighbourhoods and communities. The Council is committed to reviewing its existing planning policies. This work is being undertaken through the preparation and production of the new Lewisham Local Plan. This will ensure that the Council's plan-making, and consequential decision-taking, remains up-to-date and responds to the key challenges and opportunities facing Lewisham's residents and communities.

The LDS and local democracy

1.4. The LDS ensures that anyone with an interest in plan-making is aware of the planning policy documents the Council intends to prepare, along with the timescales for their production. The LDS identifies the key stages of the planmaking process, including the opportunities for public engagement and participation. This helps to ensure that residents, community groups, partners, and others with an interest in plan-making in Lewisham are informed of the opportunities to participate in the Borough's plan-making activities.

About the new LDS

1.5. This LDS updates and supersedes the previous document adopted in

¹ Lewisham's suite of planning policy framework documents are not prepared in the same way as supplementary planning guidance, and accordingly are not technically adopted; albeit that they are endorsed by the Council. Nevertheless, the suite of framework documents continue to provide a valuable input towards place-making across the Borough.

December 2022. The update is necessary because the timetable for completing the remaining stages of the local plan-making process has changed. The Council is now in a position to be able to map the remainder of the new Local Plan's examination and subsequent adoption process with greater certainty. This also provides an opportunity to identify a revision and review programme for the development plan's supplementary, guidance and framework documents that provide further detail to the new Local Plan. Their revision and review is necessary to bring them into alignment with the new Local Plan's policies.

1.6. The new LDS seeks to identify a realistic and reasonable timetable for the remaining stages of the new Local Plan process. Notably, these include the remainder of the examination in public and the subsequent adoption. The identified timetable will be used to monitor progress and performance. It is intended that the new LDS will cover the two-year period from February 2025 until February 2027.

2. Background and statutory requirements

What is the Local Development Scheme?

- 2.1 The LDS is a procedural document that sets out the key planning policy documents that the Council intends to prepare, along with the timetable for their production and adoption.
- The primary legislation relating to the LDS is the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004² (as amended) ('the Act'). The secondary legislation relating to LDS is The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012³ (as amended) ('the Regulations'). Additional information and guidance are included in the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance⁴ ('the NPPG').
- 2.3 The Council must prepare and maintain an LDS as required by Section 15(1) of the Act and the NPPG. Having an up-to-date LDS helps to ensure that "local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress" of Local Plans⁵.
- 2.4 NPPG⁶ states that it is expected that an LDS will be reviewed and updated at least annually, but that it may need updating more frequently if there are any significant changes in the timescales or the plans being prepared. Up-to-date and accessible reporting on the Local Development Scheme in an Authority's Monitoring Report is an important way in which authorities can keep communities informed of plan making activity.
- 2.5 The Council is legally required to publish the LDS. Accordingly, it is made available to view on the Council's webpage the latest adopted version will normally be hosted on the planning policy webpage.

What must the LDS include?

2.6 The LDS must specify⁷:

- Local development documents which are to be 'development plan documents' (i.e. Local Plan policies);
- The subject matter and geographical area to which each document is to relate;
- Which (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
- Any matter or area in respect of which the authority has agreed (or

² Web link to Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

³ Web link to Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012

⁴ Web link to National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

⁵ NPPG Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 61-003-20190315.

⁶ NPPG Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 61-035-20190723

⁷ Section 15(2) of the Act

- proposes to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee;
- The timetable for the preparation and revision of the documents; and
- Such other matters as are prescribed.

When can the LDS be revised?

- 2.7 The Council may revise its LDS "at such time as they consider appropriate".
- 2.8 To bring the LDS into effect, the Council must resolve that the scheme is to have effect and, in the resolution, specify the date from which the scheme is to have effect⁹. This LDS takes effect from **XX February 2025** (date TBC) and supersedes the version dated December 2022.
- 2.9 There is no statutory requirement for the Council to consult the public or to submit a new/revised LDS to the London Mayor or Secretary of State. Nevertheless, an up-to-date LDS provides those with an interest in planmaking that is taking place across Lewisham with a clear understanding of the processes and actions that will be undertaken to maintain a sound development plan for the Borough.

Making the LDS available to the public

- 2.10 The Council must make the following available to the public¹⁰:
 - The up-to-date text of the LDS this is provided under section 5;
 - A copy of any amendments made to the LDS this is provided principally under section 6; and
 - Up-to-date information showing the state of the Council's compliance (or non-compliance) with the timetable this information will continue to be provided through the Council's Authority Monitoring Report¹¹ (AMR).

Monitoring the LDS

- 2.11 The Council publishes an AMR every year, reporting on the implementation of Lewisham's development plan and other matters. The AMR supports the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach to planning policy, and is a vital tool in assessing how the Planning Service are supporting the Council's Corporate Strategy. AMRs are published online and can be viewed from the Council's planning policy webpages.
- 2.12 National planning practice guidance is clear that up-to-date and accessible reporting in the LDS is an important way of keeping communities informed of

⁹ Section 15(7) of the Act

⁸ Section 15(8) of the Act

¹⁰ Section 15(9A) of the Act

¹¹ Web link to Annual Monitoring Report's

plan-making activity. We will continue to use the AMR to provide updates on the preparation of local plans and other documents specified in the LDS. This includes the following information: progress against LDS timescales; where timescales have not been met, the reasons for this; and statements to confirm that documents in the LDS have been approved/adopted within the reporting year.

2.13 Within this monitoring context, the LDS performance indicators demonstrate that the Council has met its objectives for public consultation on the new Local Plan under Regulation 19, and subsequently submitting to the Secretary of State for the purpose of examination in public. However, as of Q4 2024 the timetable identified in the previous LDS is no longer aligned with the on-going examination. As the Inspectors have now published their post-hearing letter, and consultation on proposed modifications is imminent, this is an opportunity for the Council to review the LDS and identify a new timeline and milestones with confidence.

3. Lewisham's current planning policy framework

Development Plan

- 3.1 Lewisham's statutory Development Plan currently comprises the following adopted documents:
 - The London Plan (2021)
 - Lewisham Core Strategy (2011)
 - Site Allocations Local Plan (2013)
 - Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan (2014)
 - Development Management Local Plan (2014)
- 3.2 These documents have been prepared in accordance with relevant statutory procedures, which include examination in public by an independent Planning Inspector appointed to represent the Secretary of State.

Planning guidance

- 3.3 The Mayor of London prepares Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents to support implementation of the London Plan.
- The Council also prepares and publishes Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other guidance documents covering a variety of planning matters, including area masterplans. The current suite of adopted SPDs are set out in the table below. These can be viewed online at the Council's planning webpages.

Table 1: Lewisham's Supplementary Planning Documents

Title of SPD	Adopted
Shopfront Design Guide	2006
Bromley Road, Southend Village	2009
Planning Obligations	2015
River Corridor Improvement Plan	2015
Alterations and Extensions	2019
Surrey Canal Triangle	2020
Small Sites	2021

3.5 SPGs and SPDs include additional information and guidance to support implementation of specific adopted development plan policies. SPDs prepared by the Council are subject to public consultation and are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions. However, they are not subject to independent examination and do not carry 'development plan' status - therefore they do not carry the same weight as local plan documents or the

Mayor's London Plan. For further clarity, SPGs and SPDs cannot be used as vehicles for new policy – they can only be used to provide supplementary information and guidance on specific adopted policies that are contained within their parent local plan.

- 3.6 It is anticipated that the new Lewisham Local Plan's site allocations and policies will initially be supported by the suite of SPDs set out under Table 1, where that guidance remains relevant and necessary to facilitate growth and new development. Following the adoption of the new Local Plan, the Council will seek to bring forward a review of relevant SPDs to ensure that they remain in alignment with each other.
- 3.7 The Council has also prepared a suite of framework documents that provide guidance that contributes towards securing sustainable development at specific places across the Borough. Whilst these documents are linked to the spatial strategy, planning policies and site allocations contained within the new Local Plan they have purposefully not been prepared to the same status of the SPDs set out above. These documents are:

Table 2: Lewisham's framework documents

Guidance	Adopted
A21 Development Framework	2022
New Cross Area Framework	2018
Catford Town Centre Framework	2015

- 3.8 The new Local Plan also refers to a range of other Council documents that whilst not having the same status as the formally prepared SPDs have informed plan-making and when necessary, may contribute towards decision-taking. These documents are not part of the development plan. As corporate documents, the Council may periodically review their content:
 - Good Practice Guide: Control of pollution and noise from demolition and construction sites
 - Lewisham Council Playing Pitch Strategy Document
 - Lewisham Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyle Strategy
 - Lewisham Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2020–2025
 - A Natural Renaissance for Lewisham (2021-2026)
 - Climate Emergency Action Plan
 - Climate Emergency Retrofit Guide
 - Lewisham Energy Masterplan
 - Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027
 - Lewisham Surface Water Management Plan
 - Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
 - Ravensbourne Catchment Improvement Plan
 - The Lewisham Transport Strategy

- Lewisham Cycle Strategy
- Low Emissions Vehicle Charging Strategy

Lewisham's Neighbourhood Plans

- 3.9 Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011. It gives communities statutory powers to create planning policy documents that can help shape development within a local area. This can be achieved through the production of Neighbourhood Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders.
- 3.10 Neighbourhood Plans are produced by designated 'Neighbourhood Forums' for specific 'Neighbourhood Areas'. Once these types of plans successfully pass a public examination and local referendum, they can be adopted and will form part of Lewisham's statutory Development Plan.
- 3.11 Neighbourhood plans are required to be consistent with the strategic policies in Lewisham's development plan and should only include non-strategic policies, as set out in the NPPF. The Council publishes details of the Borough's emerging and made neighbourhood plans on its website Lewisham Council Neighbourhood Plans. As of January 2025, the Borough's current neighbourhood planning position is as follows:
 - Bell Green a neighbourhood area has been designated around the Bell Green gyratory, following an application for a Neighbourhood Area and Forum.
 - Corbett Estate Neighbourhood Forum and Area in 2015 the Mayor of Lewisham designated the Corbett Estate as a neighbourhood area and has also designated a neighbourhood forum for this area. These have subsequently lapsed.
 - Crofton Park and Honor Oak Park a referendum on the Crofton Park and Honor Oak Park Neighbourhood Plan was held and the Plan was adopted in May 2022.
 - Deptford Neighbourhood Action neighbourhood forum and area the Mayor of Lewisham designated the Deptford Neighbourhood Action community group (DNA) as a neighbourhood forum and area in February 2016. These have subsequently lapsed.
 - Grove Park a referendum on the Grove Park Neighbourhood Plan was held and the Plan was adopted in August 2021.
 - Lee a referendum on the Lee Neighbourhood Plan was held and the Plan was adopted in February 2024.
 - Sydenham Hill Ridge a neighbourhood area and forum has been designated. The Forum has given notice under Regulation 14 that the emerging Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Plan is out for presubmission public consultation. The consultation period began on Monday 25 November 2024 and will close on 20 January 2025. After submission, the local authority will publicise the plan (Regulation 16) and arrange for an independent examination. If successful at the examination stage, with modifications, if necessary, then the local authority will arrange for a neighbourhood plan referendum. If this is successful, then the plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the area.

4 Lewisham's future planning policy framework

Local Plan documents

- 4.1. The principle local plan document that the Council intends to prepare during the period covered by this Local Development Scheme is the new Lewisham Local Plan 2020 2040.
- 4.2. The new Lewisham Local Plan covers the period between 2020/21 to 2039/40; during which it will facilitate the delivery of at least 35,305 net housing completions. These will be achieved through the application of the new Local Plan's Spatial Strategy, its planning policies, and site allocations. During the new Local Plan period, the London Plan's ten-year target is sought through the delivery of at least 16,670 net housing completions during 2019/20 to 2028/29.
- 4.3. A detailed programme for the remainder of the examination period for the new Local Plan is set out below in **Section 5 (Local Development Scheme).** The Council submitted the new Local Plan to the Secretary of State for the purpose of examination in public on 3 November 2023. The new Local Plan's examination has taken place over the months that followed. Progress through the process over the succeeding months has been relatively rapid. This has included meeting the following milestones
 - appointment of the Inspectors.
 - their preliminary questions.
 - the publication of the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions.
 - the subsequent examination hearing sessions.
 - the Council's response to the post hearing actions.
 - the publication of the Inspectors' post-hearing letter; and
 - the preparation of the Inspectors' proposed modifications.
- 4.4. During much of the examination process, the Council's LDS remained broadly in alignment with anticipated milestones. However, this is no longer the case, and the new LDS seeks to account for the remaining stages of the examination that will lead into adoption of the new Local Plan by the Council.
- 4.5. The new LDS envisages the conclusion of the examination and the adoption of the new Local Plan during Q2/Q3 2025. It is understood that this will approximately coincide with the Mayor of London publishing the initial outputs of technical evidence that will outline how the Capital can accommodate (or not as the case may be) future housing growth identified through the Government's housing requirement calculation. This evidence, which is expected to include an initial attempt at housing distribution (across the London boroughs) will inform the preparation and production of the new

London Plan. Whilst this work signals the likelihood that the new Local Plan will need to be reviewed, at some point in the future, that process will not fully commence during the life of the new LDS.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.6. Only Local Plans are required to be included in the LDS. However, to help raise public awareness on planning activities, additional information on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) is included below.
- 4.7. Lewisham's current existing suite of adopted SPDs is aligned to the site allocations and policies contained within the adopted Plan namely, the Core Strategy, the Lewisham Town Centre Local Plan, the Development Management Policies document, and the site allocations. Following the successful completion of the examination in public and the consequential adoption by the Council, the new Lewisham Local Plan will entirely supersede those site allocations and policies. The same will apply to their related supplementary documents.
- 4.8. Although the superseded SPDs will technically remain as a material consideration for decision-taking purposes, they will be out-of-date as they will reference historic documents, site allocations and policies. Consequently, the Council proposes to initiate a programme of revisiting the suite of SPDs to ensure that they are up-to-date and in full alignment with the new Local Plan. In order for this work to progress the new Local Plan must first pass successfully through its examination at the very least progressing through its hearing sessions before any public consultation can be undertaken. This will ensure that the content of the SPDs will be in accordance with the adopted version of the new Local Plan.
- 4.9. Below, Table 3 identifies the SPDs that the Council considers will need to be revised to support the delivery of the new Local Plan. It sets out an indicative, but reasonable and realistic timetable for review that seeks to prioritise those SPDs that will be needed following the adoption of the new Local Plan. Those SPDs requiring a more comprehensive revision, and consequently extensive drafting, being scheduled for consultation at a later date. The timetable is predicated upon the successful adoption of the new Local Plan, which will provide the parent policies for the SPDs.
- 4.10. The Council will seek to manage the review process so that the review of the suite of SPDs can be expedited efficiently. For example, it is anticipated that some of the SPDs will require a relatively light-touch review that focusses upon either amending, or adding the relevant policy references to which they are linked. These SPDs having parent policies that have not been subject to extensive change under the new Local Plan. Consequently, the Council considers that preparatory drafting work could be undertaken in advance of the adoption of the new Local Plan and subsequent consultation tailored accordingly. The Council has prioritised the revision of these SPDs.

4.11. Other SPDs may require more extensive revision, or in some cases replacement with entirely new documents. It is anticipated that the new Planning Obligations will be such a document. This is because it will encompass a range of changes, including the review of Lewisham's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule¹². The documents that will be subject to comprehensive revision have been considered accordingly.

Table 3: Indicative Timetable for New and Reviewed SPDs

Title of SPD	Public Consultation	Indicative date of adoption
Shopfront Design Guide	Q2 2026	Q4 2026
Planning Obligations	Q1 2026	2026
 River Corridor Improvement Plan 	Q4 2025	Q2 2026
 Alterations and Extensions 	Q1 2026	2026
 Surrey Canal Triangle 	Q2 2026	2026
Small Sites	Q4 2025	Q1 2026

¹² This document assesses and confirms the scale of charges, in terms of cost per square metre, imposed by the Levy on different forms of new development across the Borough.

Neighbourhood planning and the LDS

4.12. Neighbourhood Plan programmes are not included in the LDS as these are led and prepared by Forums (with support from the Council). We will seek to provide updates on neighbourhood planning in the AMR.

Table 4: Lewisham's adopted Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Area	Adopted Plan
Bell Green	No
Corbett Estate	No
Crofton Park & Honor Oak	Yes
Deptford	No
Grove Park	Yes
Lee ¹³	Yes
Sydenham Hill Ridge ¹⁴	No

¹³ The Lee Neighbourhood Area covers parts of Lewisham and the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

¹⁴ The Sydenham Hill Ridge Area covers includes parts of Lewisham and the neighbouring London Borough of Southwark.

5 Local Development Scheme

The following table outlines the key stages of Local Plan production, including timescales for public consultation.

Lewisham Local Plan (Borough-wide)

The new Lewisham Local Plan will encompass a full review and update of the Council's current adopted local plan documents as follows: Core Strategy, Site Allocations, Development Management and Lewisham Town Centre plans. The new Local Plan will include spatial and detailed policies, along with site allocations concerning the use and development of land on specific sites. It will result in the publication of a new Policies/Proposals Map, which will help give effect to the policies. The plan will cover the twenty-year period from 2020-2040.

The new Local Plan sets out strategic objectives and a future vision for the Borough, along with the planning and delivery framework to help achieve these, centered on a new spatial strategy. The new Plan seeks to address key challenges, opportunities and identified needs in Lewisham (both at a borough-wide and localised sub-area level) across a variety of topic areas including high quality design; heritage; housing; economy and culture; community infrastructure; green infrastructure; sustainable design and infrastructure (including waste management); and transport and connectivity. The new Local Plan also addresses matters necessary to aid its implementation including infrastructure funding/delivery, site master planning and land assembly.

Key stage of production	Pre- production / consultation on issues and options	Consultation on draft Local Plan: Main Issues and Preferred Approaches	Publication / consultation on Proposed Submission Local Plan	Submission	Examination in Public	Adoption by Council
Statutory stage	Regulation 18	Regulation 18	Regulation 19	Regulation 22	Regulations 23 - 25	Regulation 26
Key dates	Consultation on Main Issues October – November	Consultation on the Local Plan: Main Issues and Preferred Approaches	Consultation on the Lewisham Local Plan Proposed Submission Document took	The Lewisham Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for the	i) Initial Questions/ Preliminary Matters – Winter 2024 ii) Inspectors'	Late Summer/ Early Autumn 2025

	2015, followed by ongoing public and stakeholder engagement to October 2020	document was held from 15 th January 2021 to 11 th April 2021	place between 1 st March 2023 and 26 th April 2023	purpose of examination in public on 3 rd November 2023	Matters, Issues and Questions – Spring 2024 iii)Public Hearing Sessions – Summer 2024 iv) Post Hearing Actions and draft modifications – Autumn 2024 v) Consultation on Modifications – Winter 2025 vi) Inspectors' Report – Spring/ Summer 2025	
Status	Completed	Completed	Completed - target met	Completed – target met	Pending – on target	Pending – on target

Risks and contingencies

The following risks may result in consequential delays to the Local Plan programme set out above.

- Internal staff resources it continues to be important that an appropriate and proportionate level of staff resource be committed to plan-making.
- Responses, by other participants, to the Consultation on the Modifications to the Plan, require the preparation of further modifications thereby generating delay in adoption.
- Legal or other challenges, such as intervention by the Secretary of State or judicial review. The Council will work with the Inspectors to ensure that any modifications, that they deem necessary are required for soundness. This will help minimise the possibility of judicial review on process grounds.
- Planning Inspectorate resources and timetabling. The Council will work positively with the Programme Officer, the Inspectors, and PINS to ensure that the process is positively project managed and remains on target for completion during 2025.

• An accelerated London Plan review process, which considers a higher housing target for Lewisham may result in a shortened lifespan for the new Local Plan. Rapid adoption of the new Local Plan provides the most effective solution for minimising the impact of this possibility.

6 Amendments to the LDS December 2022

The following table sets out the changes that have been made to the LDS December 2022, and which are incorporated into the revised Scheme.

Document	Reason(s)	
Local Plan Docu	ments	
Lewisham Local Plan / Policies Map	Timescales for plan production – Dates of key milestones in the plan process, specifically those relating to the latter stages of the examination process milestones, have been revised.	Following the publication of the previous version of the LDS (December 2022), the Council has gained an enhanced understanding of the process, and likely milestones following submission and progress
	The Council is confident that the LDS now sets out a reliable and achievable timetable for the latter stages of the examination process. These will comprise the publication of the Inspectors' modifications; their consideration of all responses; and the publication of their Final Report. It is anticipated that these latter stages will take place during Q1 and Q2 2025. It is anticipated that the earliest that the Council can adopt the new Lewisham Local Plan will	through several stages of the examination process. The identified timeline for the latter stages of the examination process and consequential adoption – of between six to eight months from publication of the modifications to adoption – is considered both reasonable and deliverable. The revision to the LDS has been prepared following consultation with the Inspectors.
	be during (late) Summer 2025. Identification of additional key risks and contingencies that may arise and be required during the remaining stages of the plan-making process.	The improved insight into the latter stages of the examination process has secured a fuller understanding of the potential risks that could arise. This is reflected in the identified risks and contingencies. It is noted and highlighted that following submission, and the start of the examination, the management of the process effectively passes to the Secretary of State (and those appointed to represent them). This significantly reduces the Council's ability to directly intervene and influence

		performance. Nevertheless, the Council will seek to positively influence the process by ensuring that it meets its timetable responsibilities. This is particularly relevant to progressing the examination through the consultation on the necessary modifications and then adoption. It is within the Council's gift to positively influence these stages and facilitate progress to adoption in a timely manner.
Neighbourhood Planning	Factual updates to inform the public about Neighbourhood Forums and Areas.	To provide an update of factual position.
Supplementary I	Planning Documents (SPDs)	
New and Reviewed SPDs Shopfront Design Guide Planning Obligations River Corridor Improvement Plan Alterations and Extensions Surrey Canal Triangle Small Sites	The identification of the key SPDs that will be brought forward or reviewed under the new Local Plan, following its anticipated adoption. This includes an initial timeline for the necessary actions/ processes required to align the suite of SPDs with the new Local Plan (following its adoption).	Lewisham's current existing suite of adopted SPDs is aligned to the site allocations and policies contained within the adopted Plan. Following the adoption of the new Local Plan (anticipated for Q2/ Q3 2025), the policies that the SPDs are based upon will be superseded. Consequently, it will be necessary for the Council to either re-align, review, or prepare new/ replacement SPDs so that the guidance they contain continues to be relevant. The initially identified timetable and processes are subject to the successful progress of the new Local Plan.
Procedural Docu		Manha and the Otation of the
Statement of Community Involvement	Deletion from the LDS.	Work on the Statement of Community Involvement has been completed, it has been adopted and is being implemented.