

Annex G

Other Community Led Documents



Introduction

This annex will provide you with some information on a few other types of community-led documents which are not related to providing planning guidance. These other documents are for you and your community if you have identified issues in your area which are not planning related such as community safety, sports and leisure and litter.

LEAD – a framework for Community Led Planning

When preparing your community led document use the four key stages highlighted in the LEAD framework, these are Launch, Evidence, Agree and Deliver. You and your community will need to work through each of these stages in turn to produce your chosen document; once the accompanying checklists are completed you can move onto the next stage.



Framework Stage

LAUNCH

EVIDENCE

AGREE & PRIORITISE

DELIVER & MONITOR

Guidance Chapters

L1 - What are the other community led documents

L2 - Council support and assistance

L3 - Parish Council and Community Role

L4 - The different approaches available

Launch - Key Stages Checklist

E1 - What evidence is needed?

Evidence - Key Stages Checklist

AP1 - Drafting Wording

AP2 - Draft Document Consultation

Agree & Prioritise - Key Stages Checklist

DM1 - Monitor and Review

DM2 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Deliver & Monitor - Key Stages Checklist

Please feel free to contact us at any time through the process of preparing your community led document if you want to discuss any particular issues or get any further advice, you can email us at neighbourhoodplanning@testvalley.gov.uk

Framework Stage

Launch



L1 - What are the other community led documents?

Community consultations are increasingly important for the cohesion and growth of rural communities. They find out how a village or town feels about itself - its strengths and weaknesses, and how its residents want it to develop. Everyone in the community has a say in the consultation's outcome which could influence local decision making. Community Led Planning is a step-by-step process that enables everyone to participate in, and contribute to, improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of their local area.

Over the years Community Led Plans have taken on different names including Village Appraisals, Parish Plans, Market Town Action Plans. These have developed their own particular characteristics, tending to be used in different geographical contexts. One of the defining characteristics of all Community Led Plans is that they are not imposed from above but instead initiated and led by local volunteers who steer their community through the preparation process.

Community groups will be able to match the different tools available to their own circumstances and needs. There are a number of other community-led documents including:

- Parish plans
- Community resilience plans
- Neighbourhood priority statements
- These are explained in more detail in Chapter 4.

L2 - Council support and assistance

We encourage communities to get us involved at the earliest possible stage in the development of their plan. There are a range of ways in which we at TVBC, and other agencies, can support and help you to develop your Plan. These include:

- Provision of statistics and information on your area
- Mapping support
- Community engagement

How long does it take to produce?

On average a community-led document will take 1-2 years to complete. This will depend on the size and population of the parish and also the number of volunteers. You also have the options of producing a 'light-touch' Parish Plan that is quicker to complete but contains less detail and therefore may carry less weight.

What are the costs of producing a Plan?

This will also depend on the size and population of the parish and the number of volunteers. It can cost anything from £500 up to a few thousand pounds.

What funding is available?

Funding towards the costs associated specifically with the production of a community-led document is available from:

Test Valley Community Planning Grant:

- £1,000 for parishes with a population over 5,000
- £750 for parishes with a population over 1,000 but under 5,000
- £500 for parishes with a population under 1,000

Information on community grants can be found here: **Test Valley | Community Grants**

L3 - Parish Council and Community Role

Get your community involved

It is essential that the content of your chosen approach represents the views of the wider community, not just the parish council or steering group. Producing a community-led document will require a range of skills. Once the decision has been made by the Parish Council or Community Group to start the process, encouraging volunteers to assist with the preparation will be important.

It is important to remember that volunteers to help organise meetings, undertake leaflet drops, collating material and putting the plan together will be valuable to progressing your community's project.

Involving your Councillor

Your borough councillors are at the heart of a local approach to engaging and working with communities to better understand their needs and develop sustainable solutions within communities themselves.

Your Councillor should be informed of the decision to progress a community led document for your area. They will have a vital role of supporting, mediating, helping to find solutions and explaining the proposals within the borough wide planning policy context.

Find details of your councillor here: Who is my councillor?

Consider producing a Project Plan

Consider creating a project plan using the template found in Appendix 1. A project plan can help keep your plan on track and whilst there is not specific time period the average time taken to prepare one of these documents is about 18 to 24 months, but some do take longer.

L4 - The different approaches available

Parish Plans

Parish plans were originally introduced by the Countryside Agency as part of the vital villages initiative. We are now promoting and directing resources to neighbourhood plans but we will continue to recognise the important role parish plans can play in planning for the future and improving residents' quality of life. Parish plans are often used as a key source of evidence for neighbourhood plans and communities continue to produce them as useful reference documents for the parish council and partner bodies.

Parish plans are intended to take a holistic view of village life and differ from village design statements which are far narrower in their remit and focus on the quality of the built environment. If there is more than one village or hamlet within a Parish these can each have their own dedicated section within a Parish Plan, but through engagement you may find that there are similar matters faced by each of the settlements.

If the parish plan is endorsed by us (and other bodies identified as partners such as the local education authority, highways authority, residents' groups, businesses, interest groups) it will be used in decision-

making by the Parish Council and may form a material consideration in considering planning applications by TVBC.

The best parish plans incorporate an 'action plan' which sets out succinctly the issues of most concern to the local community, identifies actions to address those issues, the main body (and any partner bodies) responsible for their implementation and the time scale within which implementation is sought. It is envisaged that the parish council will take responsibility for overseeing implementation of the actions and will hold the relevant body accountable if progress is not made. Action plans can be reviewed and updated at the annual general meeting.

The former Countryside Agency have previously produced guidance for parish councils and communities who would like to produce or update a parish plan. This legacy document is still very helpful and can be accessed here: **Parish Plan Guidance**

What are the benefits to a parish council?

- A Parish Plan gives the council information which is statistically sound
- The public has an opportunity to be involved and contribute views and opinions
- Local authorities and other agencies have information and the reassurance that the community has been thoroughly consulted and that there is a consensus for action
- Funding may be easier to access as a result of Parish Plan evidence of need

What are the benefits to the community?

- It gives them the chance to say what is needed and wanted and how this could be accomplished
- It allows them to show what elements of the natural and built environment matter to them and should be enhanced
- It gives them the chance to show what development is needed for local requirements and where they can safely take place

Community Resilience Plans

Communities should adopt a proactive rather than reactive approach to emergencies, in order to be better prepared and help reduce their impact if they do happen.

The emergency services have to prioritise those in greatest need during an emergency. Communities may need to rely on their own resources until professional help arrives. Many communities spontaneously help one another in times of need. But communities who have prepared in advance are able to cope better and recover faster. If a community is prepared for possible risks, you can reduce the impact on your homes and businesses.

Community Resilience Plans are documents which outline the risks and challenges a community could face in the event of an emergency and provide reasonable actions a community can take to mitigate the impacts of an emergency.

Developing a Community Resilience Plan is not a dictated process and is open to be developed in a way that best suits that community. Identifying that communities of Test Valley all vary in size, population & risks, there is no 'one size fits all' approach to Community Resilience Plans. Plans should identify any reasonable risks and challenges that the community may face and should plan in how the community may respond to such events.

Having or developing a Community Resilience Plan can help communities with funding opportunities, as Community resilience can help bolster bids to improve or provide specific community infrastructure such as upgrading a village hall to have rest centre capabilities.

Test Valley have developed a template which can assist communities in developing a Community Resilience Plan which can be found on our website **here**. The template serves as a good place to start and help understand the contents your communities can consider for a resilience plan.

Test Valley Borough Council can provide a variety of support streams for Community Resilience Plans, by getting in touch with **Communityresilience@testvalley.gov.uk** or speaking with your Community Engagement Officer.

ACRE have produced guidance for communities on community resilience, which can be found here : **A Guide to Rural Community Resilience - ACRE**

The government have also produced a guide - Preparing for Emergencies: Guide for communities, that has useful information and links : **Preparing for Emergencies Guidance**

Neighbourhood Priorities Statements

The Levelling Up & Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 has introduced Neighbourhood Priorities Statements (NPS). These Statements can be prepared by the local community and provide an optional, "light touch" to Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).

Although they are only guidance the Statements provide communities with the opportunity to set out their aspirations for the future and identify any local planning issues. The council will then have regard to them in the preparation of the Local Plan. Greater weight can be given to Statements which can demonstrate high levels of community engagement. Neighbourhood priorities statements are made by qualifying bodies and in Test Valley this would be the town or parish council.

The idea is that the NPS will summarise the principal needs and views of the community in respect of 'local matters'. In terms of what constitutes a 'local matter' this can include:

- development, or the management or use of land, in or affecting the Neighbourhood area,
- housing in the Neighbourhood area,
- the natural environment in the Neighbourhood area,
- the economy in the Neighbourhood area,
- public spaces in the Neighbourhood area,
- the infrastructure, facilities or services available in the Neighbourhood area, or
- other features in the Neighbourhood area

There is no current government guidance available on Neighbourhood Priorities Statements but the South Downs National Park Authority were involved in the governments pilot project on NPS, which they renamed "Parish Priorities Statements (PPS)". In 2023, the National Park Authority encouraged all town and parish councils within the National Park to prepare a PPS as part of the evidence base for the South Downs Local Plan Review, and they can be found here: **Parish Priorities Statements - South Downs National Park Authority**

Launch

Key Stages Checklist

Once these steps have been completed you can move onto the next stage

Step 1 – Getting started

- ☐ Hold an initial event to determine community interest in delivering a community led plan or project
- ☐ Following community engagement, decide on the best approach to take for your Parish
- ☐ Contact made between all partners including parish or town council and local authority
- ☐ Make contact with a range of volunteers who might be able to help out in different ways

Step 2 – Establishing your working group

- ☐ Form a working group that is representative of your community
- ☐ Agree the purpose of the working group and establish the terms of reference

Step 3 – Taking stock and planning the way ahead

- ☐ Make sure that you have enough information and support needed to continue with producing a plan or project
- ☐ Produce a simple project plan that will help you to plan and undertake next steps
- ☐ Apply for funding

Framework Stage

Evidence



E1 - What evidence is needed?

Any approach will need evidence to back up decision making and to show the community consultation has been undertaken and to demonstrate support for the approach. Community led documents should be brought forward by the parish council, or by groups acting in partnership with, or supported by the parish council. As a minimum, evidence of the community support will need to:

- Show how the process was publicised to the local community
- Explain the extent to which different groups within the local community were involved and the different methods used so that the views of the whole community have been reflected
- Include details of the community engagement carried out at each stage, including meetings and other consultation events, and record of the outcome of these. This can include questionnaires and surveys undertaken
- Explain how the community engagement has shaped the initial proposal and its evolution at each stage, including any changes made.

- Provide a record of the community support for the proposal including that there is majority support from those involved in the process.
- Allow opportunities to comment on the proposal.
- Include a record of parish council or steering group meetings including minutes, detailing support for the process and the proposed development proposal at each stage
- Explain how the community group was selected and its terms of reference and relationship with the parish council.

Managing evidence

You will write your document whilst things are still evolving, so your evidence base may need to be updated as the plan develops, and as you engage further. As new sources of evidence come to light, some become out of date, and new issues arise to be addressed, just remember that any evidence you gather needs to be relevant and proportionate

Evidence

Key Stages Checklist

Once these steps have been completed you can move onto the next stage

Step 4 - Understanding your community

- ☐ Understand the issues that your community consider are most important and should be addressed in your chosen approach
- ☐ Gather existing facts and information about your area from as many sources as possible including through surveys/questionnaires, information you hold yourselves, data we may be able to produce for you and third-party sources
- ☐ Continue to engage members of your community using a mix of different methods on the plans being prepared to ensure ongoing community input and support

Framework Stage

Agree and Prioritise



AP1 - Drafting Wording

Top Tips

Add value - There is little point in your document addressing issues that have already been covered by another document, use the toolkits symptom checker to confirm this. Your document should address the matters raised by the community as part of the engagement or provide further local detail rather than duplicating existing guidance.

Clear intentions - Some groups have found it very helpful to write down in everyday English what they want their document to achieve as a first step. If you are clear on your intent, then you can be sure the final version will address what you want before getting bogged down in the language regarding areas like planning or resilience. The approach in your document can also be checked against your objectives to ensure completeness.

Keep it simple - There is no limit to your approach or the number of objectives you can include although you are best focusing on the issues where your chosen document can add value. The best community-led documents are often the most straight forward.

Writing your content

It will be important to acknowledge the relevant community aspirations in all these community-led documents. Depending on the document you are going to prepare you may be compiling a set of 'actions', these are things that the community want to happen, such as the development of an emergency action plan. Other documents might require you to produce a set of 'criteria' such as describing what issues the community will need to take into consideration over the lifespan of the document. Once drafted, consider applying "what if" to the policy to help determine if it is robustly written.

Working with stakeholders

To inform the document encourage stakeholders and officers to contribute regularly, push for an ambitious approach which will support the approach to addressing matters raised by the community. If you need help with engaging with certain stakeholders TVBC officers can help you make contact.

The neighbourhood planning team are also here to help you if you wish for us to read through your final policy wording and provide you with feedback before any community consultation.

AP2 - Draft Document Consultation

Engagement with the community needs to be considered from the very beginning when preparing any of these community-led documents. What your community will need from the outset is to focus on specific, well-defined purposes in order to make their chosen document an effective one. With the range of engagement tools available in the guidance provided in Annex A, the aim should be to consult with as many residents within your area as possible, ensuring everybody has the opportunity to have their say.

Make sure to note all feedback when you consult on draft documents and highlight whether any of the comments you receive during consultation result in changes to the content of the document you are preparing.

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the main elements of the preparation process and the legal requirements that that we have to follow for these documents. The SCI can be found here: **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) | Test Valley Borough**

Council

To help you keep on top of the engagement you have undertaken, all consultation should be compiled in the Consultation Statement document; this explains how the community and stakeholders have been consulted and their views taken into account during the development of the draft document. See Appendix 2 for an example of a table you can fill out after each consultation event.

Agree & Prioritise

Key Stages Checklist

Once these steps have been completed you can move onto the next stage

Step 5 – Prioritising and planning action

- ☐ Make sense of the information you have gathered about your community
- ☐ Consult with members of your community and seek input on the approach being prepared

Step 6 – Drafting your document

- ☐ Prepare draft objectives, and consult on these with us and the community to ensure they cover all issues raised by residents

Step 7 – Finalising your approach

- ☐ Carry out a public consultation on your draft document
- ☐ Complete modifications based on community feedback
- ☐ Arrange for your community-led document to be formally adopted by the Parish Council and endorsed by TVBC

Framework Stage

Deliver & Monitor



DM1 - Monitor and Review

This guidance note is aiming to give some general principles, but it is highly recommended that you discuss your review in the first instance with the Neighbourhood Planning team.

Before completing any document, it is recommended that you carefully check its content to make sure that what you are proposing can be achieved. You may find it useful to include targets and indicators to measure whether the content and actions are being achieved once your community-led document is adopted.

The evidence you gather from your monitoring should allow you to show both the positive outcomes but also suggest where certain aspects of your document are falling short so you can make necessary adjustments through a review of your document. The need and level of review will vary from document to document; there is not a one size fits all solution.

DM2 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows authorities to raise funding for new infrastructure by levying a charge on new development within their area. TVBC accepts bids for CIL funding between 1 April and 30 June each year. Bidding is open to Ward Members, Parish Councils, and other community groups and organisations that wish to deliver infrastructure that will benefit the residents and businesses

Further information on CIL can be found here:
Test Valley - Community Infrastructure Levy

Deliver & Monitor

Key Stages Checklist

Step 8 - Implementing, monitoring and reviewing your approach

- ☐ Agree that either your working group or parish/town council will monitor progress being made toward the implementation of your chosen document
- ☐ Make updates to your document whenever necessary to ensure it remains effective
- ☐ Work towards undertaking a full review after 5 years

Appendix 1

Project Plan Template

Appendix 1 – Project Plan Template

| Step/Task | Who | Resource Needed | Complete by | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----|-----------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 202X | | | | | | | | | | | | 202X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
| Step 1: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 1: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 2: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 3: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 4: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Step 2: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 1: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 2: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 3: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 4: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Step 3: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 1: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 2: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 3: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 4: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 2

Consultation Statement Template

Appendix 2 -Consultation Statement Template

| Consultation Stage | Engagement Method | Who was consulted | Who responded | Summary of Comment Received | Project Group Response | Action |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------|--|--|--|
| 1- Initial consultation event | Stall set up at village fete asking the public to complete a survey on recent events in the village | Community wide consultation | 46 responses | Concerns raised affordability of housing There are too many big detached executive houses being built in the village and not enough smaller homes The sports pavilion needs to be repaired after a tree fell into it following the recent high winds | Off the back of consultation decided to proceed with a community-led housing development | Feedback will be taken into consideration as part of first draft of document |
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