

Community  
Planning  
**Guidance**

For Town, Parish and  
Neighbourhood Plans

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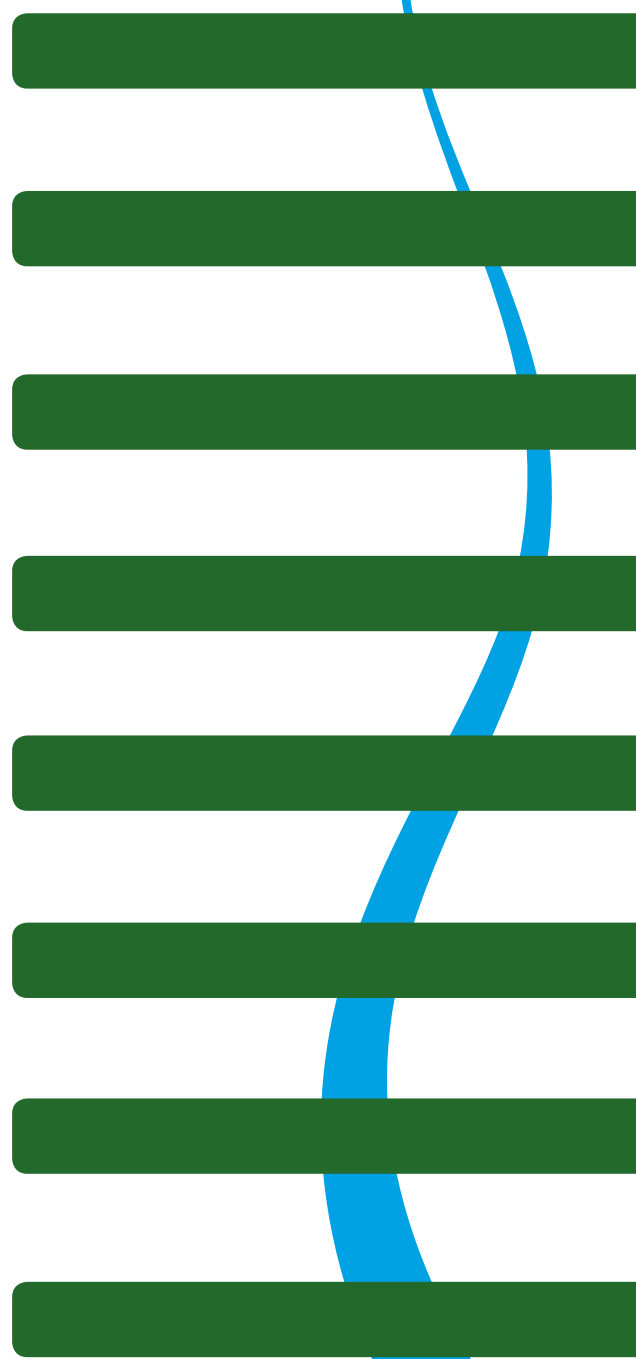
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## About the Guidance

This guidance has been developed for local communities in Herefordshire who are developing, or planning to develop a Parish or Community Plan.

It gives details of the help that is available in Herefordshire to support you in developing your plan together with details of further sources of advice and guidance.

The Guidance also includes some tips from the Herefordshire Parish Plan Steering Group on how to develop your plan, and attempts to answer some of your questions.

### How this guidance can be used

It has been produced in loose leaf format to enable the guidance to be updated and added to as necessary to ensure it is in line with current developments.

Part One of the guidance provides information to Parish and Community groups on how to produce a Community or Parish Plan.

Part Two contains guidance sheets written by service providers giving useful advice relating to specific areas e.g. Planning. It is anticipated that the range of guidance sheets will increase as time goes on and additional information will be provided.

This guidance has been developed for local communities in Herefordshire who are developing, or planning to develop a Parish or Community Plan.

## Context

In 2000, the Government's Rural White Paper "*Our Countryside – The Future*" suggested that all rural communities should develop Town, Village and Parish Plans to identify both problems and opportunities for rural services and to provide community input into the new planning system. In Herefordshire, so far, approximately one third of the parished areas of the county are involved in Parish or Community Planning initiatives.

Since the launch of the Parish Plan Initiative, a great deal of progress has been made in the development of these plans and this Guidance. It is hoped these changes and refinements will ensure that Parishes and Community Groups undertaking a Plan will have a clear understanding of what they can achieve.

## Acknowledgements

This guidance has been produced by Community First on behalf of the Herefordshire Parish Plan Steering Group. It has been funded by DEFRA through the Rural Social and Community Programme and Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium with funds from the Home Office Active Communities Department.

We are also grateful to the members of the Herefordshire Parish Plan Steering Group for their input and support.



# Introduction to Parish Plans

## What is a Parish or Community Plan?

A Parish or Community Plan should harness everything that is different and unique about the community in which you live and your vision for its future. Parish Plans should provide an opportunity for the community to state its views and provide information regarding how people feel about where they live. The end result should be a plan that reflects these views and an idea of when these things will happen. It should also note areas where the Plan may be influenced by, or influence external factors, e.g. Local Service Delivery.

As well as involving local communities in influencing the services and policies which affect them, Parish Plans also ensure that the Community Strategy reflects the needs of individual communities across the county.

## How can a Parish or Community Plan be used?

Parish Plans can be used for a number of benefits. Key ways in which they can be used may include:

- To take action to improve the quality of life in an area through practical projects, such as running a community transport scheme, or setting up a youth club.
- To manage change and address local needs through the planning process, such as supporting the protection of community facilities, or building affordable housing.
- To bid for funding for local initiatives and to encourage effective partnership working.
- To help influence and inform plans, policies and services of a range of organisations and service providers.
- To enhance a Parish Council's community leadership role, in line with Quality Parish ethos.

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## **Herefordshire Parish Plan Steering Group (HPPSG)**

The HPPSG is made up of the following organisations: Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Partnership, Community First, Herefordshire Voluntary Action, Herefordshire Association for Local Councils, West Midlands Planning Aid. The aim of the group is to work in partnership to ensure the county takes a co-ordinated approach to community planning. The group meets bi-monthly and organises training events and seminars, produces guidance, and oversees Best Practice and feeds into/reports back to the Herefordshire Community Development Partnership.

### **Contacts**

#### **Community First**

Director of Capacity Building and Service Development  
Community Planning Co-ordinator  
Development Officer Community Planning

#### **Herefordshire Association of Local Councils**

#### **Herefordshire Council**

Parish Liaison and Rural Services Officer  
Forward Planning  
Research Team

#### **Herefordshire Partnership**

Senior Community Involvement Officer  
Parish Plan Implementation officer

#### **Herefordshire Voluntary Action**

#### **West Midlands Planning Aid**

**For further information contact  
Community First 01432 262968 or  
Herefordshire Council on 01432 260611**



## What does writing a Parish Plan involve?

### **(1) Consulting your community**

This can often be the most interesting part of Parish planning. The issues that are important to you, your Parish council or Steering Group, may not be shared by the rest of your community. This is an opportunity to find out what other people think and to hear the views of people you may not usually listen to. It is an opportunity to find out what people think of your area and identify the key issues to include in your Plan.

For more information on a range of consultation techniques to ensure maximum community involvement, please refer to Guidance Sheet.

### **(2) Engaging with Local Service Providers**

The consultation should have highlighted key issues of concern or areas for improvement in your Parish. At this stage discuss your findings with Service Providers to ensure that actions resulting from this information are appropriate/realistic together with areas in which you may be able to obtain assistance. Service Providers can be statutory, voluntary or private sector agencies.

### **(3) Writing an Action Plan**

The next stage is to prepare an Action Plan based on the key issues from your consultation and from the discussions with Service Providers. The ones that are most important to your community should form the basis of your Action Plan. This is a vital part of the process as it sets out what needs to be done to achieve the community's vision. See Guidance Sheet for more details.

### **(4) Implementing the Plan**

Now the Parish Plan is completed, it is time to implement the actions identified by the local community. The Parish Council and/or the Parish Plan Steering Group can monitor and evaluate these actions.

A Parish Plan is written by the community for the community with support from the Parish Council.

## Who writes the plan?

A Parish Plan is written by the community for the community. It is essential to get support from the Parish Council. The process involves setting up a Steering Group which should consist of members of the community and the Parish Council. A wide community membership is useful to ensure the views of the whole community are expressed.

## Funding for Parish plans

There are two grants available to contribute to the costs of developing your plan:

### Herefordshire Parish and Community Plan Grants

This local scheme offers grants a maximum of £1,500 or 75% of the total project cost (whichever is the lesser) towards the cost of producing a Parish or Community Plan.

Contact: The Delegated Grants and Programmes Team on 01432 260753 or [delegatedgrants@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:delegatedgrants@herefordshire.gov.uk)

### Awards for All

This is a National Lottery grant scheme aimed at local communities. Grants are available from between £500 and £10,000. Contact: [www.awardsforall.org.uk](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk)

## Other Resources available for Parish Plans.

### Advice

Local organisations involved in Parish Plans are working to ensure that all participating communities are given the support and advice they need to get the best out of their plans.

In addition to written advice, a number of local sources of support are available to you. We suggest you speak to one of the contacts listed above before starting your plan and throughout its development. They will be able to advise on Best Practice, the process of developing your plan, and how to get the most out of your plan.

## Resources to assist with consultation

Significant levels of community consultation will be required in creating your plan. The more views that shape your plan, the wider levels of impact it will have. The following resources are available to assist you in carrying out good quality consultation.

### Guidance Packs

These information sheets have been developed to help you through the process of understanding consultation techniques and decide on those you wish to use. Guidance sheet.

### Local Development Workers

These personnel have been trained to advise and support you and are all members of the Herefordshire Parish Plan Liaison Group.

### Training

A training programme is delivered through the Herefordshire Parish Plan Steering Group (HPPSG). Training is tailored to the specific needs of Parish groups and may include training in consultation techniques, action planning.

### Maps

If you wish to obtain large-scale maps to use as part of your Parish Plan, for example in a Planning for Real® consultation (see Guidance Sheet or contact [www.nif.co.uk](http://www.nif.co.uk)), they can be purchased from Herefordshire Council. Maps can be printed up to AO sheets. Any maps included within your Parish Plan document will require the appropriate copyright licence information. Herefordshire Council can supply these maps at varying scales from A4 upwards. Contact: Parish Liaison 01432 260611.



## Guidance on questionnaires

Having read the consultation techniques guidance, you may decide to carry out a survey. The Research Team at Herefordshire Council is able to help with the preparation, and analysis of a survey. The help given can range from:

- Provision of guidance and advice by means of information on the Herefordshire Partnership website, to:
- More involved work in preparing and executing the survey and analysing its results.

The Research Team should be contacted early in the process of designing a questionnaire. It may be necessary to charge for some of the work, depending on the level of the involvement. Any charges will be made clear in advance. For further information, contact the Research Team on 01432 260464.

## Resources for Public Meetings

Public meetings will be an essential part of creating your Plan and the following resources are available to assist with this:

- Community First can lend various items of equipment to aid you in your public meetings e.g. flip charts, over-head projectors and screens, colour marker pens and facilitation support.

Contact: Development Officer – Community Planning on 01432 262968

## I.T. Resources

This may help create your Parish Plan in the following ways:

- Designing and printing promotional material to help advertise events
- Providing access to on-line advice and the ability to see the Plans of other parishes in the county.
- Creating software-aided questionnaires/survey sheets.
- Aiding data collection and collating results from returned questionnaires and surveys.
- Writing reports and presenting results.

## Community Resource Centres (CRCs)

These are located around the county and can provide photocopying facilities and I.T. resources. There is a small charge for using equipment in CRCs.

For more information on locating your nearest CRC, contact: Community First on 01684 580707.

# The Parish Plan Process

1

Find out what a Parish Plan is and the benefits of producing a Plan. Inform the community about the Parish Council's interest in developing a Parish Plan, drawing attention to some of the local issues. Consider holding a public meeting to involve and inform other parties. Contact your local development worker at Community First and the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) to help you through the process.

Find out if the wider community supports the idea of a Parish Plan. If they do, also inform the Herefordshire Council of your intent to produce a Plan.

2

Members of the local community form a steering group to develop and manage the process of producing the Plan. Discuss possible techniques and methods to use for consulting the community and discuss ideas with your development workers.

3

Draw up a budget and consider possible sources of assistance for your Plan. Discuss funding options with the development worker.

4

There are many ways of obtaining people's opinions. With the help of your development worker, prepare the consultation exercises you are going to carry out. Your worker will be able to provide examples and inform you of local training courses.

5

Conduct community-wide consultation, using a variety of methods. Don't forget to keep a record of all of the methods and results, as this is important evidence for your final Plan.

## 1:3 The Parish Plan Process

6

Input and analyse the data collected from the consultation process. Make sure a wide cross-section of the community has been involved. If there are gaps, alternative techniques may be needed to fill these gaps. Once this stage is completed you can begin to produce a draft Plan. Analysis is a crucial part of the Action Plan - ask the development worker for support where necessary.

7

Feed back the draft results to the community, local groups and other organisations involved in the process. Talk to local and county-wide service providers to see who you can work with to progress the issues and projects highlighted in the consultation exercises. Pin-point those projects that are realistic, how they can be progressed, and with whom they can be progressed, for inclusion in the Action Plan. Send copies to the Herefordshire Parish Plans Steering Group.

8

Re-draft the plan including all the feedback from the community and service providers. Include a clear and comprehensive Action Plan. The end result is the full final Parish Plan.

9

Send out copies of the Plan; or a summary of the Plan, to the whole community and to local service providers, Community First and any other people it may be of interest to.

10

Develop and implement the Action Plan. This may require formalisation of the Steering Group to take projects forward and source funding. Smaller working groups may be formed to look at specific topic areas or projects. The Parish Council may monitor the projects implemented to ensure they are the projects identified by the Action Plan.

11

Reviewing your Plan. Review on an annual basis. Consider new opportunities for addressing unresolved issues.

# Checklist for your Parish Plan Document

## Contents

It is helpful to have a contents page for your Plan with separate sections for different topics; e.g: environment, transport and housing.

## Glossary of Terms

Consider providing a definition of terms used in the document if you are using unusual terms such as Unitary Development Plan, Planning Guidance, etc.

## Methodology

Record all techniques and consultation activities that take place, including any promotion and publicity.

## Facts and Figures

Make sure that records are kept to show numbers of people involved. For example, what were the attendance figures for any open or public meetings? What were the age, gender, and numbers of attendees at any events that took place, such as a Planning for Real® event? How widely was the event publicised?

## Action Plan

Make sure there is a clear and separate Action Plan providing details of what the proposed actions are, who is going to help achieve them, when they will be completed/undertaken, etc.



To get the most out of the Plan, it is essential that Service Providers are engaged throughout the Plan process, not just at the end.

### **Service Providers**

To get the most out of the Plan, it is essential that service providers are engaged throughout the Plan process, not just at the end. It is, therefore, useful to record what contact has been made with service providers and the outcomes produced.

### **Illustrations and Photographs**

These can bring your report to life and show evidence of your consultation activities.

### **Reference to relevant Policies and Strategies**

Reference to relevant local policies and strategies, such as the Herefordshire Community Strategy, may help to maximise the outcome of your Plan, with regards to local service providers or funders.

### **Appendices**

It may be useful to have appendices to the Main Plan and Action Plan. These can contain full results summarised in the main report - such as full questionnaire results, all the ideas from a Planning for Real® event, etc.

# Setting up a Steering Group

- Agree what is to be done and in what order.
- Decide on the different roles needed on the Steering Group.
- Record the initial core membership of the group, making sure that the key roles are filled (see the following Steering Group Model Constitution).
- Draw up a detailed budget.
- Apply for funding.
- Ensure meetings of the group are well publicised, open to the public and welcome new members at any stage.

While awaiting decisions on funding, the lead person for each topic group can start making appropriate contacts, researching relevant information and involving other interested people. Meanwhile, the Steering Group can plan the consultation activities.

Remember that if you are applying for a grant for your Parish Plan, do not spend money BEFORE you receive an offer letter — you will not be able to claim money back for this activity.



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## Steering Group Tasks

### These may include:

- Deciding objectives, and agreeing a timescale and budget.
- Deciding on communication methods between members of the group.
- Agreeing how decisions will be made in the group.
- Setting up sub-groups to focus on particular themes that arise through the consultation process.
- Securing appropriate funding and resources for the project, managing funds and reporting back to funders as agreed.
- Acting as a point of contact and information for the people of the parish.
- Encouraging the widest possible involvement by all parts of the community.
- Making contact with local council officers and other specialists (for example: youth workers, Rights of Way officers, Planning Department) and keeping in regular contact with them.
- Obtaining advice and information about relevant matters and policies.
- Prioritising actions, using the findings from the consultation process and information from other sources.
- Ensuring that the Parish Plan is formally adopted by the Parish Council.
- Publicising and launching the Plan.
- Considering what happens once the Plan has been launched (implementation).

# Steering Group Model Constitution

**Here is an example of a constitution you could use, which can be adapted to meet local circumstances.**

## Name

The name of the organisation shall be the (name) Parish Plan Steering Committee, hereafter referred to as the committee.

## Purpose

The purpose of the committee shall be to work in partnership with the Parish Council to carry out the following tasks:

- Investigate and identify support for the Parish Plan.
- Identify sources of funding.
- Take responsibility for planning and budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.
- Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations to make the Plan as effective as possible.
- Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- Determine the types of survey and information gathering to be used.
- Be responsible for the analysis of the survey, the production and distribution of the final report.
- Identify priorities and timescale for local action in the Action Plan, including the lead organisations and potential sources of project funding.
- Report back to the Parish Council on progress, issues arising and outcomes from the exercise.



## Membership

- The committee will include up to 15 members.
- No more than three of these members will be members of the Parish Council.
- The committee may co-opt additional members at its discretion, so long as the total number of co-opted members does not exceed the number of elected members.
- A person shall cease to be a member of the committee having notified the chair or secretary in writing of his or her wish to resign.

## Officers

At the first meeting, the committee will elect a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, a publicity officer and a volunteer co-ordinator. All other committee members should have a specific role, to be agreed by the committee.

## Meetings

- The committee shall meet every two months as a minimum, or as may be required.
- At least five clear days' notice of meetings shall be given to members by written notices left at, or sent by post to, the member's last known address. All notices of committee meetings must detail the matters to be discussed.
- Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the committee members present and voting. In the case of equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
- The committee may decide the quorum necessary to transact business — with a minimum of five members.
- The secretary shall keep a record of meetings in a minute book, and circulate minutes to members of the committee not more than 14 days after each meeting.

## Working groups

- The committee may appoint such working groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the committee. Each working group should have a nominated chair, but this person does not have to become a member of the steering committee.

- Working groups do not have the power to authorise expenditure on behalf of the committee.
- Working groups will be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the steering group.

## Finance

- The treasurer shall keep a clear record of expenditure, where necessary, supported by receipted invoices.
- Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the working groups may claim back any expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Parish Plan. This could include postage and stationery, telephone calls, travel cost, childcare costs.
- The treasurer will draw up and agree with the committee procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses and the rates they may claim.
- The treasurer will report back to the committee and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project, and liaise with the Parish Clerk to set up a petty cash system and enable cash withdrawals and payment of invoices to be made as required.

## Changes to the constitution

- This constitution may be altered and additional clauses may be added with the consent of two-thirds of the committee present.

## Dissolution of the committee

- Upon dissolution of the committee any remaining funds shall be disposed of by the committee, in accordance with the decisions reached at an Extraordinary Meeting (called for that purpose) open to the public in the area of benefit. No individual member of the committee shall benefit from the dispersal.

The return of any unused funding given as grants to the committee may need to be considered if this was part of the condition of the grant.

At the first meeting, the committee will elect a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, a publicity officer and a volunteer co-ordinator.

## Planning an Event

What is the purpose of the event and what do you intend to achieve from it? This will affect both the type and structure of your event – for example, do you want something formal or more participative?

When will you hold your event? What time of day is most suitable? Will people have time to get home from work? Are there likely to be childcare issues? Consider the time of year. Will it be cold and dark? Are key people involved in other activities, such as harvesting? Are people away on school holidays or are other local events happening?

Where are you going to hold your event? Is it neutral? Some people may be put off attending something held in a church or at the local school. Check that the venue you want is available. Does it have adequate parking? Is it within easy travelling distance? How much will it cost? Other things that should be considered when booking a venue are: does the building have wheelchair access, an induction loop, heating, catering facilities and good acoustics? If the event involves group work, you may require more than one room.

Who are you trying to attract to your event? Different groups of people react differently to different types of events (e.g. old people/young people at different times of the day). Do you want representatives or speakers from various organisations such as the local authority, police, etc? If so, you will need to give them at least seven weeks notice and give them a clear brief of what it is you are expecting from them on the day.

Who will do what at your event? Which committee members will be responsible for publicity, refreshments, equipment, setting up the venue, etc?



How can you involve as many diverse groups of people as possible? You may need to consider running several different events to make sure that you get everybody's views. Without publicising your event no one will know that it's happening. You need to ensure that your material is eye-catching and contains all the relevant information: for example; time, date, venue, reason for the event and who's organising it. You also need to consider how you will distribute this information, e.g. leaflets through residents' doors (this will require a number of willing volunteers). Another method is putting an article in the local newsletter or parish magazine, but give at least six weeks' notice to ensure there is time to publish your article. Most of these publications are monthly, but check deadline dates. Posters can be pinned to local notice boards, but do not rely on this method alone, as people passing notice boards in cars cannot read them!

### **Conflict resolution**

Emotions may run high at any public event. If you know of any particular people, or issues, that may cause a problem, ensure you have an appropriate strategy in place to manage the situation.

### **Other considerations**

Will you need any help in organising the event? How long is the event going to take? Will you need to have a chairperson to oversee the event and make sure attendees adhere to the planned agenda? Will you need to establish some ground rules from the outset? How much is the event going to cost?

Remember — it is vital that all actions decided at the meeting are agreed and noted. Be clear about what will happen next, when and by whom. It is important to keep your community updated on progress and provide people with the opportunity to join in at any time.



## Key Principles for Community Involvement

- **Make it inclusive**  
Find ways to involve everybody - different ways if necessary.
- **Encourage a sense of ownership of the process.**  
Remember, the future well-being of local communities lies in the hands of the communities themselves.
- **The social, economic, environmental and spiritual needs of a community are interwoven**
- **Use appropriate techniques for each group you are trying to involve**  
Choose a technique that is most suited to the group you are trying to involve. For example, if you want to involve young children and adults and get their views on a variety of subjects, a Planning for Real® event may be better than a detailed survey. Young people may be more attracted to role-playing than attending a public meeting.
- **Use the most appropriate technique to get the type of information you require**  
Whether you want qualitative or quantitative information will influence the type of technique or event you use. Some are good for obtaining statistical information (surveys), while others are good at attracting large numbers of people (open days, Planning for Real®).
- **Target certain groups and get their views**  
If you want information or involvement from a particular group e.g. young people, or elderly people, you may have to go to them instead of them coming to an event.
- **Make events easy to attend**  
Everyone's spare time is valuable. People may be put off becoming involved if an event is hard to get to. Childcare can also be a problem. Either organise events around these issues or offer childcare facilities or activities.
- **Remember: the process is as important as the end result**  
Find non-threatening ways of letting people contribute. Through the process of involvement, people may learn new skills, increase in confidence, build up new social networks and gain in many other ways. These outcomes should not be overlooked in the quest for results.
- **Take time – there are no quick fixes**  
Develop skills, knowledge and confidence. Mighty oaks from little acorns grow!

## How to choose the right technique....

- Be clear about objectives and possibilities and outcomes at the beginning.
- Set aims and priorities – what are you trying to achieve by involving people?
- What level of participation do you want?
- What type of information do you want – quantitative or qualitative?
- Be realistic about what you can achieve.
- Resources: what do you need and what is available?
- Who is your client group?
- Who will carry out the consultation?
- When will you have enough time for the chosen method?
- How will you get everyone involved and will they benefit?
- Learn from others – there is plenty of experience of this type of work across the county.
- What happens next? Be clear about this at the outset.
- A good way of planning how to progress your Plan is to timetable when events are taking place.

You should state how long you wish to take to complete your Plan. Eighteen months to two years is generally accepted as a good timeframe to complete in. Give time limits to particular stages of the Plan. (For example, months 0-3: open public meetings, forming steering groups and raising awareness; months 4-14: community-wide consultation events; months 13-18: creating your Plan).



# Techniques for Consulting and Involving your Community

## Village or Community Appraisal

A Village Appraisal is a survey of the community, by the community, and for the community. An Action Plan is produced with the findings of this survey to make recommendations for the future of the community.

### What does it involve?

The community carries out a comprehensive survey. The questionnaire will be designed by the initial steering group and in consultation with the relevant agencies e.g. planning, transport.

#### Information gathered from the survey will be used to:

- Celebrate local distinctiveness of the community.
- Put together community Action Plans that may influence the way the village or parish can move forward.
- Assist with setting priorities and help to target limited resources.

Village Appraisals have helped establish transport schemes, low-cost housing schemes and newsletters, to mention just a few initiatives.

### Benefits of the Village Appraisal as a consultation method

- Factual record of local views.
- Reach people who are too busy or unable to attend a public event.
- Will be designed specifically to ask questions directly related to the current issues in the community.
- Anonymous, therefore people can express views they may not otherwise express.

Village Appraisals have helped establish transport schemes, low-cost housing schemes and newsletters, to mention just a few initiatives.

## Planning for Real®

Planning for Real® is an eye catching, hands-on method which people use to sort out what needs to be done to improve their neighbourhood.

### What does it involve?

A large 3D model of the community is made by the community themselves. This can either be done by local groups (youth groups, community groups, the Steering Group or by children at the local school, for instance). This model is then used at open meetings to suit the needs of the local people.

Participants place suggestions for the community on cards which are then placed at appropriate places on the model. Local Service Providers can be invited along to these events to talk about possible plans they may have committed to which may impact on the Parish Plan. After this initial consultation an Action Plan is produced which can then be taken forward by the community with the aid of the Service Providers.

Planning for Real® can be used in many ways, from strategic planning, designing playcare facilities, and analysing safety issues through to developing a Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

### Benefits of Planning for Real® as a consultation method

- Visual technique - allows participants to show or visually demonstrate their needs.
- Anonymous - ideas do not get attached to personalities.
- 3D pictorial technique which avoids language and articulation difficulties and gives the opportunity for all ages to have a say, including people who would not normally attend public meetings.
- More fun than a public meeting.
- Compromise and consensus are made easier as the focus is on the model and what it represents, and not on personalities or individuals.
- All ages can contribute to the process thereby getting 'ownership'.
- Large numbers of people can be involved.
- People from different backgrounds can be involved.
- Has a social aspect to it and encourages social interaction.

## Community Visioning

People think about their ideal vision for their community, how they would like it to be now and in the future, share these visions with others, create shared visions and make an Action Plan to realise these.

### What does it involve?

People come together to talk generally about their hopes, fears and concerns for their area and to celebrate the good things about where they live. An independent 'facilitator' steers the meetings and makes sure that all those who take part have an opportunity to have their say. The meeting begins by asking open questions, such as: What would make this area a better place to live? What are the problems? What are its opportunities? People are asked to write down their thoughts about their community and then stick them onto a giant wall map of 'topics'. These ideas are grouped together into rough topic groups; for example, transport/access/traffic could all be linked together. People are then given sticky dots and asked to prioritise the areas that are most important for them, to form the basis for further discussions. People then divide up to form topic groups to discuss the subjects identified from the first stage. These topic groups then relate back to the wider group with positive ideas for action - both by the community and with the help of external agencies. Action Plans are then drawn up.

### Benefits of Community Visioning

- The agenda is not pre-set but determined at the event.
- A very flexible process - can be adapted to suit different groups.
- Can be carried out in a few hours or over a few days - if plenty of people are involved a consensus view from the community can result.
- Successful events can promote active citizenship and make people aware of the issues which affect everyone and how they interrelate.
- All age groups can take part.

Successful events can promote active citizenship and make people aware of the issues which affect everyone.

## **Facilitated Discussions and Focus Groups**

Group discussions and participative exercises are led by a facilitator and designed to focus on a particular subject to obtain more detailed qualitative information: Participants are invited or selected from a cross-section of the community to represent a range of viewpoints.

### **What do they involve?**

These events are highly organised and structured. Questions or topics are planned beforehand; with participants given the opportunity to discuss, in detail, the relevant topics. The facilitator manages discussions and records the content.

### **Benefits of Focus Groups**

- Allow any topic to be discussed in depth with different sides of arguments explored.
- Targeted participants can ensure a range of views are represented.

## **Other Consultation Techniques**

### **Drama as a tool for community involvement**

Participatory theatre uses physical movement and creativity to explore people's own experience. It helps to engage people in a participatory way, exploring the blocks that frustrate and inhibit action, and creating a common vision. Used frequently in developing countries, this technique works well with people who are alienated by more formal or verbal participation methods.

### **Future Search**

This is the term used to describe a highly structured participative event that involves a large group of community members. Future Search includes exercises to review the past, explore the present, create ideal future scenarios and shared visions, as well as creating an Action Plan.

## Citizens' Juries

Provides a structured way of involving citizens in the decision-making process. People are chosen to be representative of the community, e.g. mix of employed/unemployed, appropriate mix of ethnicity, etc. There is no self-selection. Topics should be substantial enough to justify several days' attention. A debate takes place and the "jury" hears representations from "witnesses" who give different sides of a particular "argument." Witnesses may include council officers and members of the public with specific concerns and knowledge. Independent moderators help the jury run smoothly. Conclusions are drawn up in the form of a report to the commissioning body.

## Community Indicators

A tool for measuring and drawing attention to important issues and measuring local trends that are important to the community. It is also a system for measuring whether things are getting better or worse. It is a six-stage process that uses questionnaires, interviews and workshops to get people involved and find common issues.

## Imagine!

Understands and appreciates the best of the past as a basis for imagining what might be, and then creating it. Based on "appreciative enquiry", this technique consists of three stages. Questions are asked during interviews with community members and developed into "stories" about what worked in the past. The outcome of this leads to a set of "provocative propositions" that challenge the notion of what is possible. Each proposition describes an ideal future as if it was already happening. From this, partnerships are formed to take these actions forward.



## Participatory Appraisal

A method that creates a cycle of gathering data, reflection and learning, and action. Participants move through different stages looking at their perceptions of the current situation; identifying barriers or gaps for improvement; and proposing solutions for change. Methods used are highly visual, e.g. brainstorming, diagrams, timelines, mapping.

When thinking about how to consult with your community. Be Brave try something new!

## Parish Maps

Parish Maps provide a way of celebrating the ordinary and everyday features — such as landmarks, dialect, people and special events, which make a Parish or Community unique and special to the people who live there. They can take many forms: Parish Maps have been knitted, embroidered or sewn, painted, modelled, written, acted and sung! The finished maps serve as a reminder of all that is special that space. The process of creating it offers a sense of community and belonging and encourages people to take action, themselves, in shaping the future of the community.

## Place-Check

This is a simple participative technique that can be used with people of all ages. It focuses on the area in which the community lives. It seeks to raise awareness and identify action for change around the local environment. It asks three main questions: What do you like about the area? What do you dislike about the area? What improvements could be made? It is a way for people to engage in their “place” or environment in a different way and to make suggestions for change. These ideas then form the basis of an Action Plan that can be worked upon by the group (with the help of outside agencies where necessary).



# Using surveys in Parish Plans

When thinking about how to consult with communities, a common response is: “Let’s do a survey”. This is understandable, as a survey is one of the easiest, quickest and most statistically reliable methods of gauging community opinion.

However, surveys are not always the right method. Certain groups – young people, people with low literacy levels, busy people – tend not to complete them. A survey might be best used alongside other methods that involve all sections of the community (see section on Techniques for Consulting and Involving your Community).

And surveys are not as easy as some might think. There are many issues to be considered when planning and undertaking survey research:

- You need to be clear that a survey is the right approach to use.
- You need to consider whether you and your group have the skills and knowledge to carry out a survey.

Remember, much of the success of your Parish Plan depends on the quality of the community involvement you undertake.

## Types of Questionnaire

There are several different types of questionnaire:

### Postal/Self-completion

These are cheap, give time for respondents to think about their answers, and are not affected by what we call “interviewer effects”, where people say what they think the interviewer wants them to say! However, this type of survey requires a certain level of understanding to complete; you cannot control who responds; and it is hard to ask open-ended questions, such as “What do you think about your local post office?”

## Face-to-face

These tend to have higher response rates. You can target certain groups and ensure better coverage of your community. Surveys can be longer and more detailed and you can use more open-ended questions. However, face-to-face surveys are more costly; they tend to take more time; some people will view your questions as prying; interviewing is a skill in itself and there is a danger of “interviewer effects”.

You may wish to talk to your development worker to decide on which option you take.

## Tips for Designing a Questionnaire

- Keep the questionnaire as short as possible and use plain language.
- Start with an introductory section explaining the purpose of the survey, how to respond, deadline etc. OR include a covering letter in the mailout.
- Make sure the instructions for asking and answering each question are clear.
- Don't use leading questions.
- Don't include unnecessary questions.
- Make sure questions are clear and unambiguous.
- Don't combine two questions in one.
- Ensure that it is easy to complete the form.
- Begin with general questions; then move on to specific items. Place more important questions in the first part of the form
- Include questions to check that the respondents are representative of all the people whose views you want to know BUT don't include questions that can lead to individual identity.
- Include a space for respondents to raise their own issues.
- Make the form attractive in appearance.
- Choose the question type carefully: yes / no, multiple choice, single choice, free text, numerical response.
- Always allow an “other, please state” option.
- If you ask for personal data, e.g. age, gender – keep it to the minimum necessary to interpret the results.

# Report Writing Tips

## Writing Your Parish Plan

Report writing is like telling a story. It needs a beginning, a middle and an end. Reports do not have to be technical or be undertaken by experts, they just need to describe why and how an activity was undertaken, the findings that emerge and what actions are recommended as a result of the findings.

Before commencing writing a report it is recommended that you draft out a logical structure with main headings and sub-headings, so you are clear how the report will flow. Time spent on this at the outset will save time in the long run and will help focus thoughts.

## Report structure:

### Foreword

The Foreword often forms a personal note from the author and can be used to thank all those who have assisted in the preparation of the report.

### Contents page

The contents page will list all sections of the report with corresponding page numbers.

### Executive summary

If the report is long, an executive summary is helpful. It should be no longer than one side of A4. It should explain the purpose of the report, the methodology and the main recommendations.

### Introduction

This should explain the purpose of the report, why the exercise is being undertaken and, very briefly, the areas the report will cover.

### Aims and Objectives

It is useful at the outset to establish what the report wants to achieve. Aims provide a general direction for the report, explaining what the report is trying to achieve, under which a set of more specific objectives should be provided which explain how these aims are to be met. For example, an aim could be to undertake the preparation of a Parish Plan and an objective could be to assess local needs.

Sometimes groups choose to include a vision of how they see their community evolving.



**The Middle**

The middle section of a report should form the main bulk of the document and should be divided into sub-sections. This part needs to explain how the exercise was undertaken, with a summary of the findings and recommendations that have emerged. This section needs to be concise and to the point. The report's findings should justify the recommendations.

**Action Plan**

The recommendations of the report need to be placed into an Action Plan which has a realistic timetable attached. Volunteers from the community need to be responsible for progressing individual actions to ensure projects are rolled forward. This Action Plan needs to be regularly updated and made available to the local community so they are kept informed.

**Conclusion**

This should summarise and make clear the recommendations that are justified in the main part of the report and link back into the introduction and purpose of the report — so you have gone full circle.

**Appendices**

To keep the report as concise as possible, make use of appendices to store background information. For example, the full results of an event could be appended, with a summary of the results being included in the main body of the report.

**Glossary**

If any technical terms have been used within your report it is useful to include a glossary which will provide clear definitions of these terms.

**Helpful Tips**

- Your report needs to be eye-catching and interesting. This can be achieved through a layout that incorporates a good balance of text, drawings and photographs. Photographs and drawings should be used to support points being put forward in the text.
- The language of the report needs to be clear and simple to avoid any confusion. Consideration needs to be given to the font type. It needs to be attractive and large enough to be easily read. Paragraph numbers should be included to assist in the use and referencing of the document.
- After writing the report, make sure it is a “living” document, i.e. well circulated and publicised. It has not been written to lie on a shelf gathering dust!
- It is important to regularly update and monitor the report to ensure it remains alive and relevant to the aspirations of the community.

# Action Planning

After the consultation, the Action Plan is a very significant and important part of the Plan. Simply put, it is a record of what needs to be done, who is going to do it and when. Having the Action Plan as a living document will ensure that the Parish Plan does not sit on a shelf somewhere gathering dust – project completed. It is important that it is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-framed. Below are some tips for writing the Action Plan and a template (overleaf).

## Preparing your Action Plan

### Some tips on preparing an Action Plan:

- Keep it simple - the simpler it is, the easier it will be for people to work from.
- Keep it separate. There is no reason why you shouldn't refer to what you plan to do throughout your Parish Plan, but for future ease of use for yourselves, your parishioners and for Service Providers, it is strongly recommended that you create a separate section which draws together all of your intended actions.
- Arrange the actions into themes, such as environment, crime, health.
- Set clear timescales for each action.
- State who is responsible for delivering each action
- Be clear about what you can achieve as there may be barriers. For instance, is there funding available to support the action identified?
- Be ambitious - but don't go over the top. If you put in some simpler actions these can be achieved quite quickly and progress can be made while working towards tackling the bigger issues.
- If there are a lot of actions in the plan, they will need to be prioritised.
- Include details of how you will monitor and review progress.

## Action Plan template (See page 40)

There is no one way to write an Action Plan and the format may vary. Below is a guide to the kind of headings to include in your Action Plan to ensure it is as clear and easy to follow as possible.

### The Required Outcome

This is a brief description of what you want to achieve. It is important to log these even if you don't have a plan of action to achieve them at this point in time. The reality is that circumstances change: new grants may become available; European, national, regional and local government priorities may change; innovative solutions to your problem may be thought up by other groups, community development workers or service providers. An example of how to log an outcome without an action is shown in the attached Action Plan Template.

### The Action

What is the action that has been identified by the community through the community consultation? An example of how to log an outcome with an action is shown in the attached Action Plan Template.

### Who will do it?

Will it be done by members of the community, the Parish Council, community members with the help of voluntary sector or a combination of these? Will a separate person be responsible for co-ordinating the activity?

### Timescales

Is it a timed one-off action that can be booked in February (for example) or an ongoing issue, e.g. every Tuesday starting in March? When is the action likely to be completed?



**Cost**

What is the cost of this project or piece of work? Keep a note of finance and other resource implications.

**Funding Sources**

Grants available. Names of funders and funding deadlines. Fundraising targets. Agencies who can assist with funding.

**Who will apply for funding?**

Name people or lead contact to co-ordinate funding and fundraising activity.

**Who will monitor and evaluate progress?**

Will this be done by the Parish Plan Steering Group as a whole or by the Parish Council? How will the actions be evaluated and how often will the action be revisited for evaluation.

**Priority**

Is the action a high, medium or low priority? The wider community can be involved in the prioritisation process, once the plan is completed. It can be a way of re-engaging the community after the initial consultation has taken place and the Plan is in draft form.



Required outcome	The Action	Who will do it	Partners/ Dependencies	Time-scales	Cost	Funding Source/s	Who will apply for funding	Who will monitor/ evaluate progress	Priority (H,M or L)
e.g. Verges, hedgerows and ditches will be kept in good order. The state of road surfaces will be reported to the Parish Council on an annual basis	Employ a lengthsman to keep the parish attractive and tidy	Parish Council	District Council	Jan. 2007	£1,600 per year for 1st 3 years, £1,200 per year thereafter	District Council	John Smith	Parish Council	H
e.g. Provide a recycling service or facility within the parish to reduce waste and environmental impact	No current service or facility identified, but review annually	Parish Council	District Council	Annual Review	Not currently known	Not currently known	N/A	Parish Council	M

# Implementing your Parish Plan

Now your Plan is complete your community has a plan for the future. The actions in the Plan will improve the quality of life for your parish in the way people who live there have said. The actions outlined in the Plan will vary very much from parish to parish.

## Who is responsible for taking forward the actions outlined in the Plan?

When the Plan is completed, it goes to the Parish Council for approval or adoption. This does not mean that the Parish Council has to take forward all the actions outlined in the Plan. There will be some actions to be implemented by other people in the Parish. Local groups may be approached to take forward certain actions; Service Providers (both statutory and voluntary sector) may assist in the implementation of certain actions.

The Parish Council can monitor these actions through the Action Plan and make recommendations on how to implement them.

## What support is available to assist in taking forward these actions?

As outlined above, support could be provided from the Parish Council to help implement the actions outlined in your Parish Plan. In addition, support can also be provided through your local Development Worker (for details see Contacts list). Service Providers will also assist in the progression of certain actions.

## Working with Service Providers

Service Providers are not only statutory bodies, such as Herefordshire Council, other statutory and voluntary organisations may also be able to assist or work with Parishes to implement

Check on progress at your annual Parish Council Meeting

actions from their Parish Plans. These may include: the Primary Care Trust, the Police, and voluntary organisations such as Herefordshire Nature Trust, Herefordshire Voluntary Action, or Community First.

It is recommended that you speak with as many people from as many organisations as you can when developing your Plan. These organisations will then be aware of what you may want to do from the outset and can assist with developing the Plan. They will know exactly what assistance you will require when it comes to implementing the actions you have identified.

It may also be useful to keep a log of phone calls, emails and letters (including the dates, who you talked to and who said what). This will help with tracking responses.

## Have you identified priority areas and actions?

Once your Plan is completed and you have an Action Plan, actions should be highlighted in terms of priority for the Parish. Some will be long term, such as housing and planning issues that may be a priority for action but will take some time to deliver e.g. affordable housing.

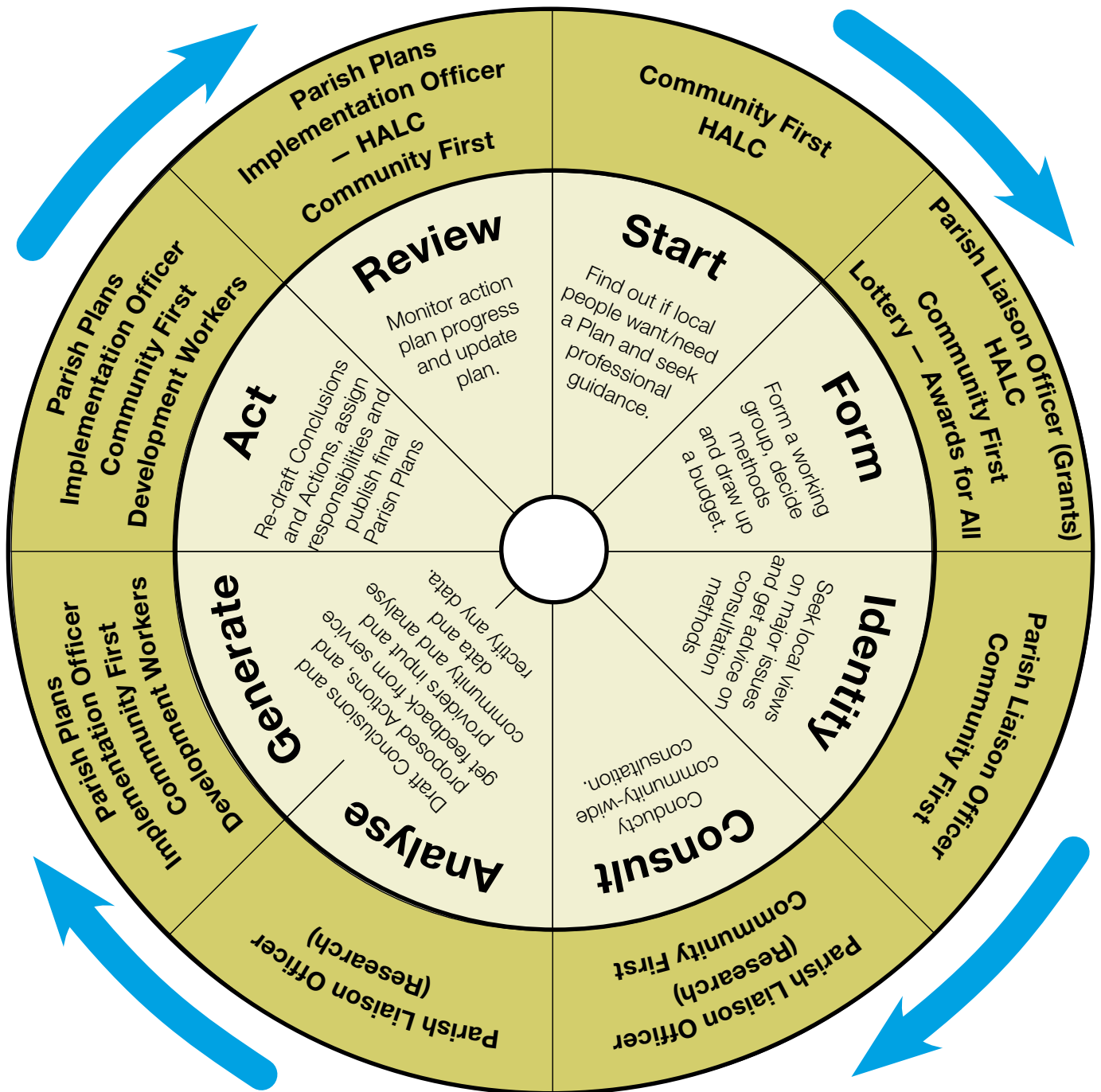
Other actions can be achieved relatively quickly, e.g. improvements to a footpath or a “rubbish pick”.

It is useful to include some short-term actions as top priority items. Your Parish will then quickly notice the benefit of having a Parish Plan.

In some instances, you may have uncovered an issue or concern for which you haven't been able to identify a suitable solution. It is important to log this in your Action Plan. It can then be noted by community development workers, or Service Providers, who might have a solution that you have not thought of.



This wheel takes you through the Parish Plan process, and lists the organisations who can assist you at each stage



**Produced by Herefordshire Council Planning Department**

## **Further Planning Guidance (FPG)**

For your Parish Plan to have an impact on planning matters in your area, you should consult with the Planning Department of the Herefordshire Council throughout the production of your document, and on its completion aim to have it adopted as advice that adds further detail to the information and policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has recently come into force. It introduces a new system of development plans, which at local level will require Local Planning Authorities to replace Unitary Development Plans (or local plans) with Local Development Frameworks (LDF's). Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) will enhance policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework and provide additional guidance to applicants and developers.

Herefordshire Council is in the final stages of the production of the UDP and the next step will be to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF) in accordance with the requirements of the new Act.

During this transitional and interim period, prior to the adoption of the UDP and the preparation of a LDF, Parish Plans are to be adopted as 'Further Planning Guidance' to the UDP, since old style Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) can no longer be formally adopted. Further Planning Guidance should, however, be afforded the same weight by both the Herefordshire Council and the Government's Planning Inspectors since it will be produced in the same way as former SPG.

## **What is Further Planning Guidance?**

Further Planning Guidance can take various forms and is advice which adds local detail to the information set out in the 'development plan'.

At present the adopted development plans for the County comprises:

**Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan**

**Minerals and Waste Local Plan**

**Leominster District Local Plan**

**Hereford Local Plan**

**South Herefordshire District Local Plan**

**Malvern Hills District Local Plan**

In addition, the Council is in the final stages of the production of a Unitary Development Plan, which when adopted, will replace the aforementioned Structure and Local Plans and will become part of the LDF.

Further Planning Guidance must be consistent with and clearly cross-reference the relevant emerging UDP/LDF planning policies. Only the planning components of Parish Plans can be considered for adoption as Further Planning Guidance. If Parish Plans are produced which are not consistent with the emerging UDP policies and proposals, then these plans cannot be adopted. Early consultation with a member of the Forward Planning Department is recommended so that more detailed guidance can be provided to those drafting new Parish Plans.

## **What are the Benefits of Adoption as Further Planning?**

Adopted FPG may be taken into account as a material consideration in development control decisions if it is formally adopted by the Council.

Once adopted, FPG can positively guide developers and help in negotiations with them, particularly in relation to issues such as design and local distinctiveness.

FPG can provide the justification for certain developments (e.g. a new village hall or recreation facility), which could help in securing possible planning obligations and future maintenance arrangements.

## **What are Planning and Land Use Issues?**

The following is not intended to provide an exhaustive list and may not be appropriate for every parish:

**Housing – sites and need**

**Local development projects – community facilities, play areas, new open spaces, village greens**

**Design**

**Protection of open spaces, amenity areas**

**Conservation proposals**

**Creation of new footpaths, cycle ways, car parks, safe routes to school**

**Rural employment sites, farm diversification, tourism**

## How to Adopt a Parish Plan as Further Planning Guidance – The Adoption Process

This can most effectively be achieved through a clear working partnership from the outset between the Planning Department in the Council and the community of the parish whilst the Parish Plan is being drawn up. This can avoid potential adoption problems later on and will provide useful assistance, particularly where Parish Plans are being drawn up which are intended to be adopted under the new planning system as FPG with the new legislative requirements.

Parish Plans being considered for adoption as Further Planning Guidance will normally be reported in the first instance to Planning Committee and then to the relevant Cabinet Member.

When a Parish Plan with land use development implications has been prepared, for it to be formally considered by the Council for adoption as FPG, the Planning Department (Forward Planning) will need the following:

**A written request with two complete copies of the Parish Plan at least six weeks prior to the Planning Committee date.**

**An electronic version (preferably in Microsoft Word) to assist in the production of the committee report.**

Officers will then write reports to accompany the Parish Plan for both Planning Committee and the Cabinet Member. Please note that these reports are produced in black and white only.

## Production of Finished Documents

When adopted, Parish Plans will need to be made widely available, as they will be used when making planning decisions. It is proposed that a list of those Parish Plans adopted by the Council are placed in the Forward Planning Pages of the Herefordshire Council website and that full copies are made available in Planning (Development Control) Reception and that relevant area development control officers are provided with additional copies for reference. It is likely that funds would be available from the Planning Department to help with the costs of printing the additional copies required for Council purposes.

## **Role of the Planning Department**

To explain the relationship between Parish Plans and the statutory planning system

To give advice on current and emerging development plan policies for the parish

To offer advice and explanation on conservation issues, such as listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeology, landscape and wildlife

To ensure that unrealistic expectations are not raised prior to the submission of any planning applications

To give advice on when planning applications will be required for projects and facilities etc.

To advise on the further planning guidance adoption process

To aid understanding of the planning process in general

## **How to Highlight Planning Issues in Parish Plans**

The planning issues within the overall Parish Plan will need to be clearly distinguishable. This may be achieved by grouping them in one section or by colour coding, or through the use of a different typeface from the rest of the document.

All planning related actions or information must be clear and unambiguous, to avoid any future problems relating to interpretations or inconsistencies.

## Use of OS Based Maps and Plans

All Ordnance Survey based maps reproduced within a Parish Plan will require the appropriate copyright license information. In order to avoid infringement of the Ordnance Survey copyright, each map will need:

**Title – what the map is of or showing**

**Key – identification of the map or plan’s information**

**Scale – set to variable if necessary**

**License Statement and Number**

**Watermark (if to be produced electronically i.e. on a website)**

Maps can be produced under the Herefordshire Council copyright license if the documents are produced in conjunction with Herefordshire Council.

Under the Herefordshire Council copyright any documents produced should not be sold for profit making. The cost of creating documents may be covered.

Maps can be supplied by Herefordshire Council with all the appropriate copyright information attached on request (fee payable).

## Further Help and Advice

In addition to the Herefordshire Council Planning Department, independent advice can be offered by West Midlands Planning Aid on planning matters and Parish Plans. Malcolm Reid can be contacted on tel: 0121 693 5568 or by email: [wmcpl@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk](mailto:wmcpl@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk)

## The following websites also contain useful information:

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/udp](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/udp)

[www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-advice)

[www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

**Produced by Herefordshire Council Research Team**

## **A summary of how to conduct community research using self-completion questionnaires.**

**Issue 2 June 2006**

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## **Introduction**

One of the easiest, quickest and statistically most reliable methods of gauging community opinion is through self-completion forms.

However they are not always appropriate and there are instances when other consultation techniques may elicit more representative responses.

Even when a self-completion questionnaire has been selected as the best tool for a piece of community research, there are many issues to be considered, plans to be made, pitfalls to be avoided and, last but not least, a form to be designed.

The aim of this brochure is to share some good practise in questionnaire design and to set the questionnaire design process into the context of a complete survey, giving a list of all aspects to be considered and pointers of where more help can be obtained. The good practise points are based on years of experience of the Herefordshire Council Research Team in conducting community research, supplemented with advice from various professional sources.

## Quick tips for questionnaire surveys

- Keep the questionnaire as short as possible
- Use simple and uncomplicated language
- Start with an introductory section OR include a covering letter. Make sure the instructions for answering each question are clear
- Avoid leading questions, keep them neutral
- Don't include unnecessary questions
- Make sure questions are clear and unambiguous, ask one thing at a time.
- Choose the answer options or question type carefully: yes / no, multiple choice, single choice, free text, numerical response
- Include questions to check that the respondents are representative of all the people whose views you want to know
- Beware of sensitive areas of questioning e.g. asking for income details
- Place more important questions in the first part of the form
- Maintain confidentiality and assure respondents of it
- Make the form attractive in appearance
- Allow an “other, please state” option wherever possible.
- Include a question which allows respondents free rein to express their opinions.

## Further tips for questionnaire surveys

Tip	Further Detail
Keep the questionnaire as short as possible	Respondents are deterred from completing a long or complicated looking form. Therefore, keep the questionnaire to the minimum number of pages without compromising the general appearance of the document. A longer questionnaire is more likely to exceed 100 grams – the limit for standard postal rates.
Use simple and uncomplicated language	Avoid jargon and explain any technical terms. For example when talking about a road, don't use just use the number, like A4103; use instead “the road from Hereford to Worcester”.
Start with an introductory section OR include a covering letter	People will only complete the form if they know what it is for, how to return it and how the information will be used. See Appendix B for an example of a covering letter.
Avoid leading questions, keep them neutral	Leading questions point respondents towards a particular answer and can lead to a biased result – one that won't stand up to challenge.
Don't include unnecessary questions	There's no point in burdening the respondent unnecessarily. Only ask questions if there is no other source for this data and be aware of raising expectations. For example, there isn't much point in asking whether residents would like a multiplex cinema in a small village as it is extremely unlikely to happen.
Make sure questions are clear and unambiguous, ask one thing at a time	An example of this is “Would you agree that the bus service is infrequent and unreliable?”. A respondent might agree that it was infrequent but find it perfectly reliable. How should he/she answer? Don't combine two questions in one. Also ensure that the questions ask what you want to find out. This sounds obvious but the mistake is often made and an awful lot of time, money and effort wasted on asking questions that do not elicit the information required.
Choose the answer option/question type carefully: yes / no, multiple choice, single choice, free text, numerical response	Appendix A contains a list of question types, their advantages and disadvantages and when they should be used with some examples.
Include questions to check that the respondents are representative of all the people whose views you want to know	The Research Team's experience is that relatively wealthy, older people are more likely to respond to surveys than younger, poorer residents. This could lead to bias if it is assumed that non-respondents have the same views as respondents. For example, questions asking people their broad age group and Council Tax Band of their home can be included and the results compared with known data to assess whether the respondents are generally representative.

Tip	Further Detail
Beware of sensitive areas of questioning e.g. asking for income details	There are some issues respondents don't like being asked about which will affect response rate. For example, questions about income.
Maintain confidentiality and assure respondents of it	Sounds obvious but some people are sensitive on the issue of confidentiality. Make age groups broad, don't ask for full post codes if it isn't necessary, avoid using a combination of questions that could result in an individual being identified.
Make the form attractive in appearance	<p>The questionnaire should look easy to fill in, look simple and uncluttered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Avoid having too many questions on one page and small font type. A minimum of font size 11 should be used, preferably size 12. Arial font is readable.</li> <li>● The use of colour can be very effective and clarify the structure of the questionnaire. However use with caution as it can make it harder to read for those with visual difficulties.</li> <li>● If colour is used in design (e.g. for logos), it may not come out clearly if reproduced/copied in black &amp; white.</li> <li>● Group related questions using borders, shading, numbering or colours.</li> <li>● Include “white space”. A well spaced page looks more inviting. This can be achieved by including “comments” boxes.</li> </ul>
Allow an “other, please state” option wherever possible	The questionnaire designer can never think of all the choices and possibilities and in some cases some responses may not be of interest or a complete list exhausting all possibilities may be too lengthy. Therefore, an “other, please specify” box caters for all possibilities. Eg In a question about dwelling type, the list might include, house, bungalow, flat, maisonnette, etc but omit converted railway carriage. The respondent who lives in a converted railway carriage can indicate his abode. (unless he doesn't want to risk being identified!)
Include a question which allows respondents free rein to express their opinions.	Some people feel strongly on an issue and want to vent their feelings. Ensure the form has sufficient space to allow this. It will save the questions being scribbled over, encourage response and may even bring forward important issues that the designer had not thought of.

## Factors in drawing up a survey time table

Factor	To Be Considered
Early planning phase	This is often under-estimated or ignored, however time spent thinking things through at this stage will pay off in getting the information needed. In particular, what are the goals of the survey? Are some preliminary focus group sessions needed to clarify issues for survey? Is a questionnaire the right research tool? Self completion questionnaires? Or face-to-face interviews? How are you going to boost response rates? Incentives? Reminder letters? How much money do you have for the survey? Who needs to be informed that the survey is going to take place?
How many people should be sent questionnaires?	If you are doing a survey of a small geographical area, such as a parish, or a small group of people, it is worth sending everybody a form. Although a sample may provide enough responses to give a valid result, from a public relations point of view, there are advantages in letting everybody have a say. If you are doing a survey of a larger population, it may be impossible to send everybody a questionnaire and a sample needs to be collected. The theory behind choosing a sample can be quite complicated and the advice of the Herefordshire Council Research Team or other professional group should be sought. As a basic rule of thumb, 400 is a good compromise between accuracy of estimates and survey work involved. At least 100 will be needed from any sub-set of this total for separate analysis. Allowance should be made for response rate. For example, a large area consisting of 5 separate villages for which separate reports may be needed. A sample of 400 would be sufficient for the area but would only provide 80 per village. Therefore, it is necessary to boost the sample to 500 to provide 100 per village. However response rate is anticipated to be 40%, therefore the sample needs to be $100/40 \times 500 = 1,250$ to ensure enough responses are received.
What deadlines are there to be met?	If the results are due by a particular date this might determine the survey time table and all survey activities be scheduled to meet this end point.
Best times for sending out questionnaires	It is as well to schedule the survey activities to avoid distributing questionnaires in the run up to Christmas or during peak holiday periods. They may well be other events you wish to avoid. Sometimes it is best to set the date for your mail out and schedule other activities before or after as appropriate. Make sure that your survey isn't going to clash with others – you don't want to hit people already suffering from “Consultation fatigue”. The Research Team could advise where you can find out information on other surveys planned or done in your area.

Factor	To Be Considered
Publicity	<p>Have press releases prepared for key stages of the survey eg at mail out of the forms, when the report is available, to help promulgate the results.</p> <p>You may want to consider posters, using local radio and other means to raise awareness that the survey is going on.</p>
Deciding who to send questionnaires to	<p>If you are doing an area survey sending a form to every household achieves a better response rate than selecting a sample. Things to consider: Are you only interested in a particular age group? Where will you find them? Do you want to survey households? Or everybody in a household? How many questionnaires can you afford? How many responses do you need to ensure that your results have statistical integrity? The Research Team can help you with the choices.</p>
Designing the questionnaire	<p>Time taken will partially depend on the computer software package used.</p> <p>A word processing package can be used but is a bit cumbersome.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council Research Team uses specialist software for questionnaire design, data entry and analysis. They can provide some assistance for questionnaire design and arrange for casual staff to do the data entry on behalf of community groups, for which a charge is made.</p>
Drafting the covering letter	<p>This should point out the purpose of the survey, how the information will be used, that confidentiality will be respected, and that feedback will be given, stating when and where.</p> <p>The letter should also state a deadline for returning forms. A telephone number for advice in completing the form or further information about the project may be provided. An example of a covering letter is given in Appendix A.</p>
Drafting other material	<p>You might want to send other items. For example, if you are going to reward people who have returned questionnaires, perhaps by putting their names in a draw for a prize, then a form for name and telephone number and additional envelope will be needed to keep the respondent's details separate from a confidential response.</p>
Obtain address lists	<p>Herefordshire Council can help with addresses or address labels for, say, all households in a given parish or post code sector. Contact the Herefordshire Council ICT helpdesk on 01432 260160.</p>

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Obtain address lists	<p>Herefordshire Council can help with addresses or address labels for, say, all households in a given parish or post code sector. Contact the Herefordshire Council ICT helpdesk on 01432 260160.</p>

Factor	To Be Considered
Data Entry	<p>The time taken depends on the length of the questionnaire, the number of “write in” responses as opposed to “tick” boxes, how many people are doing the task and the software being used. And the number of responses received. A very simple survey could be done by hand but few community surveys fall into that category!</p> <p>Herefordshire Council Research Team uses specialist software for questionnaire design, data entry and analysis and can arrange for casual staff to do the data entry on behalf of community groups, for which a charge is made. Data entry can start as soon as forms start to be returned.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council Research Team may be able to give you an estimate of the data entry time required based on their experience. Alternatively, some idea of the time taken to process a completed form may have emerged from the testing stage.</p>
Data cleaning	<p>Correcting obvious errors – a job for the suspicious analyst! E.g a question about commuting and a respondent’s replies imply that they cycle 60 miles to work every day?!</p>
Analysing the data – coded questions	<p>It is advisable to leave some time between the deadline date for returning forms before starting analysis – at least a week, as there are always some stragglers. Does not usually take long if a specialist software package is used and not too many cross tabulations are required.</p>
Analysing the data – text answers	<p>These take time. Answers have to be grouped into comments on issues or a coding system devised to allow for all the range of answers given. Researchers can help and advise.</p>
Analysing the data – further research	<p>You might want to drill deeper into the results to explain them. For example, suppose an issue crops up several times. You may want to know if it’s only a problem in a particular area or with one sub group of the population.</p>
Interpreting the Results	<p>You have calculated a percentage of something, eg residents in the parish who think there should be a play area for children. But what does this tell you about the opinion of the parish as a whole? In Appendix D there is a table showing the “Confidence Limits” you can place on your results.</p>
Writing the Report	<p>Do a full report, an executive summary, press release of the main results</p>
Feedback	<p>Make sure the people you surveyed know what the main results were, where they can obtain a full report and what happens next with the information you have obtained.</p>

## Factors in drawing up a survey time table

Item	Notes
Questionnaire Design & Data Entry	Word can be used for questionnaire design and Excel for data entry and subsequent analysis. However these can be cumbersome for complex questionnaires and the job can be done more efficiently using a specialist questionnaire design and analysis package. Herefordshire Council Research Team uses such a tool and can arrange for casual staff to do the data entry on behalf of community groups. Contact the Research Team for an indication of the likely costs for doing this.
Printing	Using a local printer gives a good impression. Don't forget to check whether paper costs, VAT and collation (e.g. staple-bound, folded) are included in the quotes you receive. Better quality paper is more impressive but is also more expensive and heavier. Remember to cost all the items that may need to be printed:- questionnaires, covering letters, reminder letters, reply paid envelopes, reports, publicity notices.
Envelopes	At least two sets will be needed. One for sending out the questionnaire, and another for the return of the completed form. If a reminder letter is used, another set of envelopes will be required.
Envelope stuffing	Volunteers can be usually found to do this for a community survey or you could pay for this from a temporary agency. Assume that 50 envelopes can be stuffed with a questionnaire, covering letter and return envelope per hour. You may also need to allow for expenditure on labour again if a reminder letter is sent out.
Addressing Envelopes	Think about where your addresses are coming from and how they will be transferred to envelopes. Is there a labour cost attached? Address labels for parishes or post code sectors can be obtained from Herefordshire Council via ICT Helpdesk on 01432 260160. If you are sending out reminder letters the cost of addressing envelopes occurs again.
Delivery Costs	Are forms going to be hand delivered or posted through the Royal Mail? The maximum weight for standard 1st or 2nd class postage is currently 60 gms so either make sure your questionnaire is not too heavy or be prepared to pay more. Reminder letters will involve extra postage costs.
Returned Form costs	Are the forms going to be collected by hand or posted back? If you are going to use a Royal Mail Business Reply Service, e.g. FREEPOST, for handling the returned questionnaires, allow 4-5 weeks for the process of setting up to be completed. There is an initial cost attached to setting up the service (£60) plus a per item handling charge (0.5p). However in some cases the Research Team may be able to help with this, depending on the level of help required for the survey overall.
Incentives	Are you encouraging a good response by offering a prize draw or other incentive? It will cost!
Analysis and writing the report	Who is going to do this? Is there a charge?
Distribution of the Final Report	How many copies? This and size and appearance will affect printing costs. How will they be sent? Think about postage costs.

## Question Types

Question type	advantages	disadvantages	example
Yes/No	Simple to code		
Doesn't take up a lot of space	Doesn't allow for “maybe” or “sometimes” or “Don't know” type of response. Respondent feels constrained.	“Do you travel to work by public transport?”	
Free Text	Allows the respondent freedom to express his opinion. Introduces richness to the survey – comments can be used to illustrate points when writing the report. May bring forward important issues that the survey designers forgot or did not know about.	Time consuming to enter, categorise and analyse. Writing may be illegible.	Please give your comments on the proposals in the .... Plan”
Single Choice	Easy to code and analyse. Straightforward for respondents to understand	Life isn't that simple! People may find it hard to choose and invariably select more than one box to tick.	Which is the better Godfather film? Godfather 1 Godfather 2 Godfather 3 Godfather 4
Multiple Choice	Allows respondents more freedom	Respondents may be tempted to tick everything.	Which of the following features would you like to see in the new village hall? Followed by a list of 10 items.
Numeric	Asks respondents for a number	Make sure you don't ask respondents something that will cause them work. EG a Rural Services Survey that expected an exact count of shops in a market town.	
Ranked choice	Asks respondents to rank a series of options	Useful in policy making – can see what priorities are	Instructions in the questionnaire are often ignored
Numerical Scales	Asks someone to score something on a scale, say 1-10	Easy for the analyst	People may not interpret the scaling in the same way

## Example of a covering letter

Dear Neighbour,

This questionnaire has been compiled by COMDEV in consultation with several groups of people in the neighbourhood - people like you. Its purpose is to enable you, together with your household, to say how YOU would like to improve Ross and its surrounding villages.

This is being sent to every address in the HR9 postal area because we need everyone's ideas. When you complete this questionnaire please consider the views of all the members of your family. There is an additional page for young people because, as citizens of the future, their opinion is just as important.

This information will help us to decide what are the most urgent priorities. Although we cannot guarantee that all your wishes will be met, the greater the number of completed questionnaires, the greater will be the evidence that projects are necessary, and the better our chances of success.

The result of the survey will be made available to everyone who can use it to benefit the community.

We thank all our sponsors, particularly the Millennium Festival 'Awards for All'. Without such funding this survey would not have been possible.

Finally, we thank YOU and YOUR FAMILY for spending your valuable time completing the questionnaire. Please return it, in the envelope provided, by the 28th February 2002.

Yours sincerely



**Jo Ashman (Chairman)**

## Example of a reminder letter

Dear Occupier,

### **The Herefordshire housing needs study**

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that the deadline for questionnaires to be returned is 30th. April 1999. If you have not already returned the questionnaire, it would be appreciated if you could do so at your earliest convenience.

If you are having any difficulties in completing the questionnaire or if you require another copy, please do not hesitate to telephone Xxxxx Xxxxxxx on

Although the questionnaire may look quite lengthy you should find it quite simple to complete.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your help and co-operation in completing this survey.

Yours faithfully,

## Confidence limits about the results

Confidence limits define the range in which a true value of a factor relating to everybody in the population of interest lies, given the uncertainty associated with the sample.

### Example:

Suppose a parish contains 456 households and 297 sent back questionnaires. The questionnaire includes a question

**“Has anybody in your household travelled to Hereford by bus within the last month?”** 73 respondents ticked “yes”.

You are trying to estimate the proportion of households within the village who travelled to Hereford by bus.

The proportion in the sample who travelled by bus is  **$73/297 \times 100\% = 24.6\%$** .

There is a 95% probability that the proportion for the parish as a whole lies in the range 21.7% - 27.5%. 21.7% is the lower confidence limit, 27.5% is the upper confidence limit.

The formula for calculating the 95% confidence limits for the proportion is:

**Lower limit:  $(p - 1.96 \times \text{Square Root } ((N-n)/(N-1) \times p \times (1-p) / n)) \times 100\%$**

**Upper limit:  $(p + 1.96 \times \text{Square Root } ((N-n)/(N-1) \times p \times (1-p) / n)) \times 100\%$**

where p is the sample proportion,

N is the number of people / households in the population

n is the number of respondents

In the example above,

**$p = 73/297 = 0.246$ ,  $N = 456$ ,  $n = 297$**

Lower limit =

$(0.246 - 1.96 \times \text{Square Root } ((456-297) / (456-1) \times 0.246 \times (1 - 0.246) / 297)) \times 100\%$

Upper limit =

$(0.246 + 1.96 \times \text{Square Root } ((456-297) / (456-1) \times 0.246 \times (1 - 0.246) / 297)) \times 100\%$

Produced by Herefordshire Council

# Sustainable Development & Local Agenda 21 UK

**Sustainable Development has been described as ‘treating the earth as though we plan to stay’...**

A more formal definition of sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It is about living more lightly on the earth, and encouraging actions and lifestyles which do not damage the land and water on which we are all dependent.

Sustainable development is about balancing the needs of environment with social and economic needs. It can make a real and positive impact locally, improving the quality of life for us now and ensuring a better future for our children and grandchildren.

Local Agenda 21 was the name chosen at the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio in 1992 and defines the process of developing local action plans, across the world, to work towards this aim of sustainable development.

**Actions which can be discussed at a Parish level may include:**

- greener travel and transport options for rural areas, such as road calming, cycle paths and safe footpaths to school
- promotion of alternative energy options
- awareness raising with the community and in the local schools
- promotion of local business
- promotion of local or natural products
- encouragement for sustainable farming and land management
- planning for protection of green spaces and tranquil areas
- encouraging wildlife
- reducing waste/ promoting recycling
- green buildings specifications

There may be particular environmental issues that your community already has strong views on. Expressing and articulating these views in the parish plan is one way of influencing service delivery and prompting action.

Environmental and sustainable solutions are high on the county agenda. Relevant local Council departments and other local organisations are listed below:

## **General enquiries and information**

Herefordshire Council Environmental Sustainability Unit Tel 01432 260132.  
Welcome to our Future 08000 565456 or [www.turntheworld.com](http://www.turntheworld.com)

### **Transport**

Herefordshire Council Green Transport Officer .....Tel: 01432 260514  
The Rural Transport Partnership .....Tel: 01432 262971 or 262970

### **Planning**

Herefordshire Council General Planning .....Tel: 01432 261787.  
Historic buildings, landscape, archaeology or ecology..... Tel: 01432 260387  
Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) ..... Tel 01432 350178

### **Waste**

Herefordshire Council Waste Management department/  
Community recycling schemes. ....Tel: 01432 261769

### **Energy**

Marches Energy Agency (Renewable energy)..... Tel: 01743 246007  
Herefordshire Council's Home Energy Conservation Officer  
(home energy efficiency) ..... Tel: 01432 261887

### **Nature/Wildlife**

Herefordshire Nature Trust (nature & wildlife)..... Tel: 01432 356872  
Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) .....Tel: 01544 310716  
Environment Agency (flooding & rivers)..... Tel: 0845 933 3111 or  
.....[www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)  
Forestry Commission (West Midlands) .....Tel: 01889 586593 or  
.....[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

### **Building design**

Association for Environmentally Conscious Building (AECB) ..Tel: 01559 370908  
..... [www.aecb.net](http://www.aecb.net)  
Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) ..... Tel: 01654 702400 [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)  
Community First (Community Buildings Advisor) ..... Tel: 01432 267820

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Produced by Herefordshire Council

# Transportation services for Parish Plans

## Introduction

Transportation matters such as road safety, heavy vehicles, bus services, facilities for pedestrians, etc. are often of great concern to people and so feature highly in any survey of opinions. In preparing a Parish Plan these items will need to be addressed and Herefordshire Council's Transportation Unit can provide some assistance in this.

The council's Transportation priorities are, however, focused on three national priorities- reducing road casualties, reducing dependence on car use and assisting economic regeneration. Budgets rely heavily on government funding and so follow these priorities. In many cases the council has approved means of setting priorities in order to achieve these objectives and this has the effect that unless local wishes match the objective measures of "need" there may be little scope to accommodate them.

This document sets out what support the council's Transportation Unit can offer and also provides a compendium of established criteria & policies which may affect what can be delivered.

## Summary

Item	Constraints	Indicative Timescale
<b>Provision of information</b>		
Traffic counts	If available	2 weeks
Accident Statistics	Only summary data can be provided	3 weeks
Speed measurements	If available	2 weeks
Current TRO's <sup>1</sup>		2 weeks
RuralTransport Partnership projects		2 weeks
Public transport details		2 weeks
<b>Action2</b>		
Speed limit change	Approved policy /criteria	18 months
Traffic Calming	Approved Funding & Prioritisation method	2 years
Other TRO	Enforcement, Staff Resources	2 years
Bus service changes	Legal framework, Financial implications	8 months
New Footways	Approved Funding & Prioritisation method	18 months
New Traffic counts	Resources, time of year	6 weeks
New Speed measurements	Resources	6 weeks
Speed cameras	Strict National criteria	2 years
Meeting	Staff time	3 months

## Council Criteria & policies

Criteria & Policies for the following are set out below:

**Speed limits**

**Traffic Calming**

**Safety highway improvements**

**Cycle schemes**

**Footway schemes**

**“Safer Routes to Schools” & School 20mph zones.**

**Pedestrian crossings**

# Determining Speed Limits

## Speed Limit criteria summary

### 1. Determine the end points

These must be points where the appearance of the road changes. Forward visibility to the start is NOT important; if it is inadequate then “countdown” warning signs should be used.

If no such natural points exist then some form of gating must be considered in order to create them.

Minimum length of limit is half mile (800m)

### 2. From a plan (1:10,000 scale), measure the length & count the number of accesses.

Use the table below to determine the “initial” limit:

Accesses per KM	Initial Limit
<10	National
10-20	50mph
20-30	40mph
>30	30mph

### 3. Adjust the limit:

Down by 10mph if the accident rate exceeds 1 per million veh-km

Up by 10mph if the road is dual carriageway.

### 4. Compare the resultant limit with observed 85% speeds

If 85%ile is less than the limit then no speed limit is needed

If 85%ile exceeds the limit by more than 10mph then additional speed reducing measure will be needed (Calming, cameras, special signing, etc.). Proposals should be discussed with the police & funding identified before proceeding.

In all other cases the speed limit can be imposed using standard signing.

## Traffic Calming Schemes

Traffic calming safety schemes are prioritised using the formula:  $\frac{(A+S) \times K}{C}$

### Where

**A** = anticipated reduction in accidents  
(of recorded accidents, with children & elderly being counted as double).

**S** = accident reduction due to expected speed reduction (1/20 speed reduction)

**K** = cost of injury accident (Nationally published)

**C** = cost of scheme

Currently budgets permit one or two Traffic calming schemes per year to be constructed (additional Traffic calming works may be undertaken as School 20mph zones)

For Environmental traffic calming schemes, priorities are set used the formula:

**pcu x residential units**  
**cost**

where pcu = 'passenger car units' i.e. counting heavy vehicles double and residential unit = dwelling within fifty feet of carriageway.

**At present there is no budget for environmental traffic calming.**

## Safety Highway Improvements

These are prioritised using a simplified cost – benefit approach:

**Expected accident reduction x accident cost**  
**scheme cost**

**Currently budgets permit up to about 4 improvements per year to be carried out**

## Cycle Schemes

There is an existing draft cycle strategy which includes schemes ranked as 'high', 'medium' and 'low' priority. This is used as a basis for scheme selection in consultation with the county cycling forum. The procedure for prioritising schemes is currently under review.

**In addition there is a programme of cycle parking provision (shelter and stands).**

## Footway Schemes

These are prioritised firstly on accident rate and in the absence of accidents using a measure of cost per potential user. Potential users are estimated as the sum of existing walkers on the route plus an estimate of any “suppressed demand” based on the ‘catchment’ at one or other end of the route e.g. size of housing estate, number of jobs on industrial estate, etc.

**Currently budgets permit only a single footway per year to be constructed.**

## “Safer Routes to Schools” and School 20mph Zones

This programme is prioritised using a relatively complex set of formulae devised by consultants to generate a rating for each school. The formulae take account two key factors – modal split (how pupils get to and from school and how they would like to) and accident rates and risk.

Schools where walking, cycling and bus use are already popular or where pupils who are currently driven to school would rather walk, cycle or use the bus rank more highly as do schools where there is a greater accident rate and risk. Combining these two factors means that the Council is able to target schools where the Safer Routes to School approach will be most effective i.e. schools where there is already a culture of sustainable transport use and schools where there is an accident history or where pupils are at greater risk of involvement in a traffic accident.

## Accident Risk

Accident levels involving children are already, thankfully, very low near schools and hence most 20mph zones will be implemented under the Safer Routes To Schools programme. It is, however, recognised that schools which are not included in the Safer Routes To Schools programme or are low down the list but where an accident problem emerges in the future will need to be addressed independently. Any proposals for 20 zones on this basis will be subject to authorisation by cabinet member.

The council’s intention is to provide 20mph zones at all schools over a 10 year period. Budgetary constraints, however are such that a longer period is likely to be needed.

## **Pedestrian crossings**

### **Introduction**

A two stage process is proposed as follow:-

**Stage 1.** Determine the appropriate form of crossing.

**Stage 2.** Determine whether the crossing is justified.

As different forms of crossing have significantly different costs associated with them, the criteria for justification are different and so the form of crossing must be determined first.

### **Form of Crossing**

The forms of crossing to be considered are:-

[a] Pelican/Toucan;

[b] Zebra;

[c] School Crossing;

[d] Refuge island;

[e] Other traffic management measures; and

[f] Traffic calming measure.

Items (d) and (e) will generally cost less than £3000 and so engineering judgement will be used to determine whether these should be pursued.

Item (c) and (f) are subject to established processes to determine justification and are not considered further here.

Items [a] and [b] will be considered in line with National Guidance as follows:-

**Obtain Counts (or estimates) of Vehicle flows;**

**Vehicle speeds;**

**Pedestrian flows; and**

**Visit the site to consider 'site factors'**

For the five<sup>1</sup> busiest hours calculate the average hourly two-way vehicle and pedestrian flows (V & P).

IF  $V > 1000/\text{hr}$

OR 85 percentile speed  $> 35$  mph.

OR Site is within and Urban Traffic Control (UTC) area or close to existing signals.

OR there is more than one lane of traffic in either direction.

OR there is the possibility of pedestrian confusion as to which way to look.

OR there are pedestrian-vehicle intervisibility problems.

OR a substantial proportion of pedestrians are young or elderly.

THEN the crossing should be a PELICAN or TOUCAN<sup>2</sup> crossing.

IF the 85 percentile speed  $> 50$ mph then at grade crossing are not appropriate.

IF the crossing is primarily for primary school age children then a school crossing patrol is the best form of provision.

**IF none of the above apply, the appropriate form of crossing is a ZEBRA crossing.**

<sup>1</sup> Where the site lies on a "Safer Route to Schools" the calculations will be based on only two hours, which must cover the relevant school start & finish times.

<sup>2</sup> TOUCAN crossings will be installed where the crossing forms part of an identified cycle route.

## Justification

### ZEBRA Crossings

If  $P > 20/\text{hr}$  and  $V > 300/\text{hr}$  then a zebra is justified.

Suppressed pedestrian demand should not be considered (the factors suppressing demand will normally preclude use of a zebra crossing).

The thresholds are intended to ensure that the crossing is used sufficiently to be respected by motorists and that there is a delay benefit to pedestrians from the crossing.

A further check should be carried out to ensure that traffic delays will not be excessive. The one-way traffic capacity of a zebra can be estimated as

$$Q = \frac{1800 - WP}{2.6}$$

where  $W$  is the carriageway width to be crossed (measured in metres).

If  $Q > V$  then adequate capacity exist; if  $V > Q$  then a Pelican Crossing should be considered.

### PELICAN / TOUCAN Crossings

A pelican is justified if both the following criteria are met:-

1.  $P > 20/\text{hr}$
2. Pedestrian Wait with pelican < Pedestrian wait without pelican.

For pelican crossings an allowance for suppressed pedestrian demand may be made if considered relevant.

The mean pedestrian wait with a pelican can be estimated as follows:-

Assess whether at peak periods the traffic flow is balanced or tidal (alternatively obtain a directional count).

If the one-way flow  $> 800\text{vph}$

Or tidal two-way flow  $> 13000\text{vph}$

Or balanced two-way flow  $> 1600\text{vph}$

Then mean pedestrian delay = 18 seconds

If the flow is lower then mean pedestrian delay

$$= \frac{0.5V(14.4 + W) + 2}{1800 - 1.15V}, \text{ subject to a minimum of 6, where } V \text{ is one way flow (veh/hr).}$$

**Within a UTC area, the situation is more complicated and each case will have to be considered individually.**

The mean pedestrian wait time without a pelican can be obtained from the cumulative distribution of gaps in traffic, which can be measured using a suitable automatic counter (which can also be used to obtain traffic flows and speeds).

### **“Safer Routes to Schools”**

If on a “Safer Route to Schools” a Zebra crossing would be justified but is precluded by site conditions then a pelican or Toucan can be installed even if it does not meet the justification threshold for a Pelican / Toucan.

*Please contact Parish Liaison and Local Development Officer, on 01432 260606 or email and you will be directed to the relevant officer for any further information or assistance on any of the issues raised above.*

#### **(Footnotes)**

- 1 TRO = Traffic Regulation order (Parking restriction, weight, limit, etc.)
- 2 Timescales for actions only apply if action fits the constraints identified

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# Cultural Guidelines

The aim of these guidelines is to offer help those who want to incorporate aspects of Culture within the Parish Plans. Culture is seen to form the essence of community activities and is the overarching body for arts, tourism, heritage, libraries, recreational use of the countryside, sport and physical activities. Each of these areas is a very distinct, however they also share a great deal in common. It is through bringing these areas together, and co-ordinating future planning that a real difference can be made.

Below are some areas that you may want to consider when implementing various aspects of culture within your plan. The measures have been designed to suit individual projects, to be gathered over time, but also remain flexible and not onerous in terms of implementation and monitoring.

## **1. “Involvement of the Community”**

Integration of communities across age, background and ability, and targeted schemes that specifically recognise diversity. This may include ‘flicks in the sticks’, ‘rural arts’.

## **2. “Best use of what we have”**

Building on the quality and range of the current cultural infrastructure. This means supporting the sustainability and growth of the local groups and organisations, as well as maintaining venues that currently exist.

## **3. “Promoting the uniqueness of Herefordshire”**

Promote cultural activities and opportunities to local people. This may involve cross parish work with other parishes which could attract visitors from outside the area if so desired.

## **4. “Healthy Living”**

Using culture in the broadest sense to create well-being in terms of fitness and mental health through learning and discovery, i.e. ‘mobile libraries’, ‘internet access’, ‘walking festivals’.

**5. “Preparing for future generations”**

Activities that encourage young people and children to develop new skills and knowledge acquired through cultural activities. They also, ensure the assets of the Parish are maintained for the long term for future generations to enjoy.

The above offers a few ideas that may help whilst compiling your Parish Plan. The decision to incorporate Cultural Aspects is entirely yours. However Cultural Services believes culture should be at the forefront of any parish plan as it binds together its parishioners and helps develop a healthy community.

*If you would like any further help or advices, or, if you would like a copy of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy then please contact: -*

Cultural Services Co-ordinator  
Herefordshire Council  
Plough Lane  
P. O. Box 4  
Hereford  
HR4 0XH

Tel: ..... (01432) 260631  
Email: .....cultural-consortium@herefordshire.gov.uk

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# Landscape and the Natural Environment

**Helping You With Your Research**

## Your Landscape

The landscape within your parish will have been influenced by a range of natural and man-made factors. Identifying and analysing key characteristics enables its distinctiveness to be defined and its important features assessed. You can use the County's Landscape Character Assessment as the basis for understanding the character of the landscape and identifying areas for restoration, enhancement or conservation. A starting point would be the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Guidance\*.

A considerable amount of more detailed information is also held by the Council and has contributed to this assessment. In addition the Conservation Section has piloted a project through LEADER+ and English Nature funding that mapped the opportunities for potential community action to improve landscape and biodiversity. For the present this covers the river valleys under a project entitled Herefordshire Rivers Lifescapes. We can provide you with more information about this if you wish.

**In addition the following information may prove useful to you:**

### **Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders**

There are nearly 500 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) covering a vast number of trees within the County. A TPO may cover a single tree or combinations of many trees. New TPOs are being added on a regular basis. Information is available upon where such Orders have been made. However the presence of trees changes over time so some of the older TPOs might benefit from review.

### **Hedgerows**

Hedgerows are extremely important to the County although very limited information is held upon them. The removal of countryside hedges is covered by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The Council keeps a register of those hedgerows upon which Removal Notices have been served and the decisions made in relation to them. Tythe Maps are an indicator of important hedgerows and information upon these is available at a range of locations.

### **Parkland**

Reference is made to English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens in the Guidance Note on the Built and Historic Environment. Parklands are important to the character of certain landscapes and can influence the landscape beyond their particular boundaries. Information is held upon the designed visual envelope of historic parks and gardens.

### **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)**

If your parish falls within either the Wye Valley or Malvern Hills AONBs, then you are in an area designated as being of national importance for its landscape beauty. Management Plans have been prepared for both of these areas. They provide some indication of actions considered appropriate to protect or enhance the characteristics of the respective areas.

Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands for land over 2 ha have been identified by English Nature and the Forestry Commission. The Conservation Section of the Council has some information in relation to these, although the two Government agencies should hold more detailed data.

### **Other Landscape Features**

Information is held upon other landscape features of visual importance. These might include settlement pattern, footpaths, bridleways, village gateway features, hedges, orchards, rock formations, rivers or abandoned railway embankments. These can have nature conservation interest as well as visual importance.

When preparing your parish plan, you may wish to look at the following issues:

Are all important trees (including veteran trees and hedgerow trees) considered in terms of whether they need protection or not? Many parishes have "Tree Wardens" who are prepared to work on behalf of the parish to ensure important trees are properly cared for. Covering this topic within the parish plan can help with their work.

Might the community be able to tackle areas where landscape enhancement or restoration would be of benefit? There are opportunities for external funding in some instances and the opportunity to take advantage of schemes as they arise is often increased where there is community support. Economic regeneration benefits can accrue.

Recording landscape features and change, including that within a working landscape, can be an interesting leisure pursuit as well as an educational project for young and old alike. Cultural benefits can also be achieved, encouraging citizenship through knowledge and a sense of ownership and belonging.

Prominent and cherished views are an important part of the landscape. If you are considering views within villages, both views out of and into the village are also important. You could consider grading them according to their prominence or their vulnerability.

## Nature Conservation and Wildlife

Often termed biodiversity, the variety of life within the County is critical to the health of its natural environment. Information is held upon:

### **Nationally and internationally important natural habitats**

Examples include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs). Respectively there are 76, 3 and 4 areas with these designations.

### **Locally important natural habitats**

There are 7 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), some 700 Special Wildlife Sites (SWSs) and over 50 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). There are also some 10 Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGs). Reviews of these are anticipated such that the number may change over time. There are also 25 roadside nature reserves where the Council operates specific land management regimes in order to retain particular habitats.

### **Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan**

Produced by Herefordshire Nature Trust, this sets out actions in relation to a range of habitats and species. Parishes can help to contribute to a range of activities within the Plan.

### **Local Biological Record Centre**

This is at an early stage in its establishment. It is intended to house information about habitats and species around the County. It works closely with local recorders and its database should eventually provide a substantial source of information to assist assessment of the impact of development upon the natural environment.

Parishes can help considerably in maintaining and enhancing biodiversity. You can combine local interest and knowledge with the ability to attract a range of external funding often not available to larger organisations. You are also increasingly taking responsibility for land management, such as through the Parish Lengthmans Scheme. Examples of initiatives you might undertake in relation to nature conservation include:

Managing roadside verges for the benefit of biodiversity

Establishing Local Nature Reserves

Identifying veteran trees with wildlife value

Parish Plan Contact: ..... Bill Bloxsome (wnb@herefordshire.gov.uk)

\*Parish Councils were consulted on the Draft Landscape Character SPG and should have a copy of the document. The revised document should be available from the Planning Office when printed. Advice will be available upon this from your key contact.

Produced by Herefordshire Council

# Your Built and Historic Environment

Researching your area

## Historic Buildings and Areas

The following information is available from the Conservation Section of Herefordshire Council which might assist in the preparation of your Parish Plan.

### Listed Buildings

These are buildings included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. Plans showing their location and descriptions of their features are available. English Heritage produces an annual list of those Listed Buildings that are either grade I or II\* and considered to be “at risk”. The Conservation Section possesses copies of this and they also have historic information relating to a 1996 “Buildings at Risk Survey” for all Listed Buildings within the former Leominster District area.

There are over 5,800 listings for Herefordshire, although some contain more than one building. Listed Buildings are categorised as grades I, II\* and II and the proportions of each category within Herefordshire are 1%, 5% and 94% respectively. The Department of Culture Media and Sports (DCMS) places buildings on the List on the advice of English Heritage

### Conservation Areas

These are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Currently there are 64 such areas within the County (see Appendix 1). A programme for the preparation of conservation area appraisals is underway to identify the special qualities and local distinctiveness of each area in order to enable rational and consistent judgements. These appraisals may also look at whether the existing conservation area boundaries remain appropriate.

Plans showing the boundaries of conservation areas are available.

### **Historic Parks and Gardens**

There are some 24 sites within the County that are included on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Plans and descriptions of these are available. Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust has published a more extensive list of parks and gardens within the County although only small remnants remain to be seen of some of these. The Garden Trust's book containing these is entitled "Historic Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire" and is available in libraries.

There are no Registered Historic Battlefield or World Heritage Sites within the County.

### **Issues you may wish to consider in relation to historic buildings and areas when preparing your parish plan might include:**

Are there locally important buildings that you might wish to identify. These would be in addition to Listed Buildings and include those that are important for example, because they were linked with notable local people or events, contain locally distinctive features or contribute significantly to the character or appearance of a conservation area. You would need to specify why they need to be recognised as locally important.

What are locally distinctive features. Some parishes or communities have produced "design guides". Such documents could be produced as part of or separate to a parish plan. Any description of local features need not just relate to buildings but could, for example, cover designed spaces, landmarks, panoramic views, street furniture, boundary treatment or highway characteristics.

Treatment of intrusive or damaging areas, the areas that detract from the character of the area where changes would be welcomed.

## Archaeology

An extensive range of information about nationally and locally important monuments and archaeological sites is available from the County Sites and Monuments Record within the Conservation Section. You can visit the records at the Town Hall and it is also accessible on the web at [www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk)

### Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Currently there are some 280 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the County. However, the County is significantly under-surveyed and many important new sites are being recognised as being of national importance and worthy of protection.

Hereford City Centre is an Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) being one of only 5 in the whole of England.

The County Sites and Monuments Record presently contains some 15,000 references to archaeological or historic sites. This can be used to build up an historic picture of your area.

Since 1999, the Archaeology Service has organised monthly historic landscape walks throughout the County. Details of these are available.

A range of surveys and analyses have been undertaken of various types of sites which may contain information that you can use, in some instances subject to the agreement of third parties. Some surveys have and are being undertaken with local communities funded, for example, under the Local Heritage Initiative or through LEADER+. You may wish to seek advice upon what historic information is available or how you might work with the Archaeology Service upon projects that might be included in your action plan.

Archaeological issues that you might wish to explore within your Parish Plan include:

What archaeology is in your parish and what is characteristic or distinctive about that archaeology? This could form a statement in the parish plan.

Are there opportunities for archaeology in your parish? Opportunities can include establishing an archaeological walk based on the existing public rights of way network and promoting a greater awareness of the local heritage through walks, talk, leaflets and interpretation panels.

You may like to set up a local parish archaeology group. The group could research the archaeology of the area and enhance the present record or carry out practical conservation tasks, under supervision. A group would have the ability to establish projects through schemes such as the Local Heritage Initiative.

## APPENDIX 1: CONSERVATION AREAS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Almeley	Hampton Bishop	Ocle Pychard
Aylestone Hill, Hereford	Hampton Park, Hereford	Orleton
Aylton	Hoarwithy	Pembridge
Bircher	Huntington, Hereford	Peterstow
Bodenham	Kingsland	Putley
Bodenham Road, Hereford	Kington	Ross on Wye
Bosbury	Ledbury	Staunton on Wye
Bromyard	Leintwardine	Stoke Lacy
Broomy Hill, Hereford	Leominster Town	Stretton Grandison
Bulmer Gden Sub, Hereford	Leominster Bargates	Sutton
Burghill	Leominster Bridge Street	Tedstone Delamere
Central Hereford	Leominster River Meadows	Thornbury
Cradley	Lingen	Ullingswick
Colwall Stone	Linton	Wellington
Dilwyn	Llanwarne	Weobley
Dorstone	Lucton	Whitbourne
Eardisland	Lugg Bridge, Stapleton	Widemarsh Common,
Eardisley	Lugwardine	Hereford
Eastnor	Luston	Wigmore
Fownhope	Malvern Wells (Part)	Withington
Hafod Road, Hereford	Mordiford	Woolhope
	Much Marcle	Yarpole

Parish Plan Contact: ..... Bill Bloxsome (wnb@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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# Public Rights of Way

Rights of Way have always been an important resource in local Parishes. Many are used on a daily basis for recreational purposes, and as popular routes to local services in the area. There is also an increasing awareness of the role of public rights of way in bringing health, economic and sustainable transport benefits to the community.

This guidance offers assistance to parish councils who wish to consider further the role of Public Rights of Way and how the network can bring benefits to the local community.

## Information that may be Helpful

### Definitions

**Footpath** - may be used only for walking.

**Bridleway** - may be used for riding or leading a horse, as well as for walking. Cycling is permitted, providing cyclists give way to riders and pedestrians. Driving a horse-drawn vehicle is not permitted.

**Byway open to all traffic (usually called 'a byway')** is used for walking, riding or leading a horse or cycling. There is also a right of use for any kind of wheeled vehicle, including motor cars and horse-drawn vehicles.

## Areas you may wish to consider

Outlined are some of the issues that you may wish to consider:

A Survey of the local network. This would provide a clear view of what provision is currently available. This can also indicate ease of use of the network, and those areas that require attention.

Assess what types of improvements the community feel would be of benefit. E.g. More accessible routes for those with disabilities, or elderly users, applying less restrictive access, safer routes off busy roads, circular routes established around villages etc.

Consult widely with local people – those using the rights of way will have an idea of the general state of certain routes.

Other sites of special interest – is access sufficient to these areas? Further maintaining access points and routes to viewpoints could be considered.

Identify the key routes. Look into developing and promoting routes. This could be through promotional leaflets, permissive paths etc aimed at encouraging both local and tourist interest in the area.

#### Rights Of Way Improvement Plan

Herefordshire Council has a duty to prepare a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) by November 2007. Already, wide scale consultation has been undertaken with Parish Councils who in many cases have outlined a number of improvements that they would like considered in the future. These project proposals that were submitted by parishes have been collated and prioritised for works to be carried out over the coming years of the plan.

Herefordshire's ROWIP sets out to encourage community action and consultation at a local level, whereby much of the network is being considered locally and awareness raised as to its increasing potential.

Parish Councils have the opportunity to outline initiatives and improvements that can enhance their local rights of way and access for the community.

*For further guidance and advice please contact:*

Email: ..... [rightsofway@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rightsofway@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Tel: ..... 01432 260572



Produced by Community First on behalf of Herefordshire Partnership,

supported by



DEFRA Rural and Social Community Programme