

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING NEWS

For expert help and advice call Kirkwells on 01282 872570

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PROCESS, PROCESS, PROCESS

What can the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan, the first neighbourhood plan to go to examination tell us?

Well if pressed to sum it up in a few words we would say “process, process, process”. And as any of you who have attended our neighbourhood planning training will know the need to follow process has been one of the key points we have made. Failure to follow process could have serious repercussions.

So what can the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan examination tell us.



Firstly, that if your ambition as a parish council, or neighbourhood forum, is to have your plan become part of the statutory development framework you must ensure you follow the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

These Regulations set out the process you have to follow in preparing your plan from seeking designation to become a neighbourhood planning area through to publicising the making of your neighbourhood plan.

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BALSALL HEATH FIRST DESIGNATION

Balsall Heath in Birmingham has become the first area in the country to be designated a neighbourhood forum with the respon-

sibility for producing a neighbourhood plan.

Originally, identified as one of the Government's frontrunners in April 2011 the Bal-

sall Heath community are now consulting on a draft plan. To view this visit:

www.planningbalsalheath.info

OUNDLE 2020

Under the banner Oundle 2020 the local Town Council, interested businesses, groups, and local people have come together to prepare a neighbourhood plan for

Oundle 2020 is also committed to do this “by engaging fully with all town and other stakeholders and residents in converting desired wants into tangible and achievable

Oundle Neighbourhood Plan. This type of survey could be one of the key building blocks in preparing your neighbourhood plan. It is relatively



the Northamptonshire town. Oundle 2020 is a community wide initiative and aims to “produce a realistic, costed and pragmatic plan for the development of Oundle towards 2020”.

actions”. In preparing their plan one of the first things Oundle have completed is a survey of 802 (36%) of people living in the market town. This provides a platform for the development of the

cheap, simple to produce and if conducted by local people likely to generate a good response rate. To find out more visit <http://www.oundle2020.co.uk/>

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BRISTOL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING NETWORK

Neighbourhood plans will come in all shapes and sizes. And as we discuss elsewhere in this edition of *Neighbourhood Planning News* the resources to produce a neighbourhood will vary widely from area to area. As will the support. In Bristol, those looking to produce a neighbourhood plan have the advantage of their own *Neighbour-*

hood Planning Network. The *Neighbourhood Planning Network* (NPN) is a network of



voluntary groups within the Bristol area, working together to help themselves and each other get better involvement

in how their neighbourhoods are developed, through the planning system. The Network offers advice on process, engagement and how to respond to development proposals of all sizes. Even if you are not involved in the future planning of Bristol there is plenty of things to learn and to pick up on from here. Go to <http://www.bristolnbn.net/home>

NEW WEB SITE TO SUPPORT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has launched a new web site to support people and communities preparing neighbourhood plans.

The Forum for Neighbourhood Planning includes Forums, groups and resources. You can also sign up for *Up Front* a monthly publication specifically aimed at the Government's 233 neighbourhood planning frontrunners.

The site will be updated by the RTPI's Planning

Aid Service. Staffed by volunteers Planning Aid has been supporting neighbourhood planning in a variety of ways since April 2011.

The Forum for Neighbourhood Planning is the latest in the support tools offered by Planning Aid.

As well as this web site Planning Aid is also offering to support to many

of the frontrunners in the most deprived areas of the country.

The Kirkwells team have worked alongside Planning Aid many times in the past and would highly recommend their services.

Planning Aid operate a Planning Advice Line on 0330 123 9244, if you have a general enquiry telephone 0203 206 1880.



NORLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY GETS GREEN LIGHT

Hot on the heels in securing a neighbourhood plan designation was the Norland Conservation Society in Kensington and Chelsea. With 370 members the Society had been the first forum to submit their application for designa-

tion. But ultimately were pipped at the post. Commenting on the spate of applications for neighbourhood planning designation David Hortin at Kirkwells said: "Ultimately, this is not a race. And as we have seen in Dawlish, if you

want to prepare a statutory plan, you must get the process right."

Norland will be consulting on their neighbourhood plan during August. The plan takes as its focus the heritage and conservation of the area.

The Forum for Neighbourhood Planning is the latest in the support tools offered by Planning Aid.

PROTECT YOUR LOCAL HERITAGE

English Heritage have produced a guide to help communities protect their local heritage.

Advice is offered on what information about local heritage should go in to a neighbourhood plan. That information needs to be based on sound evidence.

This information should include:

- A description of the historic character of the area
- Listed buildings
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Registered parks or gardens
- Battlefields
- Local Heritage Assets

To help you the guide publishes a list of places of where this information can be found.

The guide also includes a list publications that will help you protect your area's distinctiveness.

If you need advice and assistance on heritage issues you can also call Claire on **01282 872570**.

PROCESS, PROCESS, PROCESS,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

And the first step here must be to seek that all important neighbourhood planning designation. *A key point here for any of the Government's 233 neighbourhood planning front-runners is that if you have not already done so you should seek to address this issue now.*

For more advice download our guides on neighbourhood planning designation for [parished](#) and [non-parished areas](#).

Ensure your plan is produced with regard to national planning policy

Secondly, you must ensure your neighbourhood plan is produced with regard to national planning policy, the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). This means:

Your plan should adopt a *positive* approach to achieving sustainable development;

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and your plan should contain clear policies on how this presumption will be applied in your area;

Your neighbourhood plan should set out how you are going to support the strategic development needs set out in your council's Local Plans, including their policies for housing and economic development;

Your plan should positively support local development, shaping and directing development in your area that is outside the strategic elements of the local plan.

The importance of making sure your neighbourhood plan satisfies all of the above can be seen from the examiners conclusions on the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan:

The Dawlish Parish Neighbourhood Plan reflects the NPPF by providing a positive approach to planned growth to deliver sustainable development with the aim of producing clear economic, social and environmental benefits. However because of its timing in relation to the production of strategic policies, it is not possible to demonstrate that the provision for housing growth is based on an objective assessment of housing requirements.

Before we look in more detail at the issue of "general community" the examiners comments on the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan are important in terms of timing. The timing issue here is the preparation of your neighbourhood plan in relation to the preparation of your council's Local Plan. Clearly, there is a danger of not being able to show your plan supports the strategic development needs of your local council's Local Plan if this is still at an early stage of preparation.

Make sure your plan is in "general conformity" with the strategic policies of your council's Local Plan

Thirdly, your neighbourhood plan must be in "general conformity with the strategic policies" of your Council's Local Plan.

To help you your council should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area. Your task will be to ensure your neighbourhood plan policies and site allocations are in "general conformity" with your local councils strategic policies.

At Dawlish, as we have just seen this was not possible. The local council's plans were still being prepared. But a key point to pick up here is the way in which emerging neighbourhood plans can be used to shape and influence emerging strategic plans. At Dawlish

the examiner noted that the neighbourhood plan and council plans were "in clear conflict", but as the strategic policies had yet to be settled "it may be possible to resolve these conflicts."

Meet your legal obligations

Under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations you will also have to meet appropriate legal obligations. In Dawlish is the neighbourhood plan was going to be a part of the statutory development plan this would have included:

European Union Habitat Directives

Human Rights obligations

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment

Habitat Regulations Assessment in respect of potential significant affects on the area's international habitat designations

Consultation process

Finally, we look at consultation process on the Dawlish Neighbourhood Plan. Once again you must meet any requirements in the regulations but how you engage your local community does give you a degree of choice and discretion. Here we would point out that whilst the examiner at Dawlish noted "considerable efforts have been made to engage the community" and that the Steering Group "appears to have reflected a cross section of community interests", he did note that with the exception of the Chamber of Commerce this did not include landowners and developers.

So whilst you have a lot of scope to look at how you will engage your local community our advice is make this as inclusive and representative as possible.

So process is all important, In the case of Dawlish it meant the difference between going to referendum

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neighbourhood plan (what they could have had) to having to settle for a non-statutory document that *may* influence Teignbridge Council’s Local Plan.

ST BEES—NO OBJECTIONS

St Bees Parish Council in Copeland has secured a neighbourhood planning designation.

After the six week consultation period no objections were made

to this application. Therefore Copeland council gave the go ahead to prepare a neighbourhood plan.

So far things seem to be all plain sailing for

neighbourhood planning designations, but if you know otherwise let us know on 01282 872570 or michaelwellock@kirkwells.co.uk

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OUR PLACE, OUR PLAN

Our Place, Our Plan is the name of the web site for the Tettenhall Neighbourhood Plan. This community in Wolverhampton is one of the Government’s frontrunners and with the support of the local council and the Prince’s Foundation their neighbour-

hood plan is at the early stages of preparation.

Tettenhall has organised workshops and a launch event at two venues. These events looked at the vision for the area. Tettenhall has now organised a number of themed task groups to start the

drafting of the neighbourhood plan. The intention is to prepare a draft plan by Autumn 2013 and have the plan made by Summer 2013.

To find out more about the work in Tettenhall visit [Our Place, Our Plan](#).

BUSINESS: ARE YOU READY?

The 6th of April 2012 heralded one of the biggest ever shake-ups in town planning. From now on neighbourhoods have the right to plan for their area.

No longer only the preserve of the local council town and parish councils and other representative neighbourhood groups will have the power to make planning policy.

Already over 200 parishes are experimenting with these new powers. And with £50 million rumoured to be up for grabs to support communities in this work up until 2015 expect many more to take up the baton and neighbourhood plan.

What will this mean for business? Obviously, if you are in an area designated for neighbourhood planning it will immediately be another layer of planning to negotiate.

But business is not an innocent bystander here. Those preparing neighbourhood plans will have to consult those who run businesses and work in that area. So business will have an opportunity to shape neighbourhood plans.

Indeed, our view, as



with all planning, is business needs to take this seriously. Neglecting to get involved at an early stage could lead to trouble later down the line. For example, a neighbourhood plan that prevents you building that new office, that much needed extension to a warehouse, or installation of a wind tur-

bine. So keep an eye on this one. Don't get caught out.

Where businesses can turn neighbourhood planning in to a real opportunity is by preparing their own neighbourhood plan. Trafford Park is preparing its own neighbourhood plan. Other business parks and industrial estates could do the same thing. Imagine the time and money you could save if your business park, or industrial estate, already had planning permission for telecommunications, renewables, car parking, or buildings extensions. Now are you ready for neighbourhood planning?

To find out more about how neighbourhood planning could affect your business call Michael Wellock on 01282 872570.

“businesses can turn neighbourhood planning in to a real opportunity is by preparing their own neighbourhood plan”

FUTURE FUNDING—STILL NO NEWS

It might be the question everyone's lips: “how do we pay for a neighbourhood plan?”

But still we have no news on how Government in-

tends to distribute the Budget's £50 million set aside for neighbourhood planning up to 2015. Obviously, this is going to

be the key funding stream.

Hopefully we will know more for the next issue of Neighbourhood Planning News.

BENTHAM TRAINING — HOW DO WE PAY FOR ALL THIS?

The latest in our neighbourhood planning training sessions saw some of the Kirkwells team head off to Bentham in North Yorkshire.

Like many of these sessions the key questions we have been asked have been:

- How much control do we really have?
- How closely do we have to follow the Council's policies?
- How do we resource all the tasks placed upon us?

But, literally, the first question on everyone's lips is:

- ***How do we pay for all this?***

Here we will concentrate on providing some of the answers on this key question, because this is a real concern.

So many town councils, parishes, and neighbourhood groups have limited financial resources, and little prospect of changing this position.

So if you are an area with little prospect of raising extra cash through the precept the answer has to

be twofold.

Firstly, what you can do using local people resources. What skills exist within your community that can be harnessed to produce a neighbourhood plan. These can range from local web designers who could put together a neighbour-



hood planning web site, to solicitors who could help with the legal niceties of neighbourhood planning.

Secondly, what financial resources can you attract to support your neighbourhood plan. The Government's promised funding is one source (see bottom of page 3); bids to other

funding sources can be considered. And the private sector—landowners and developers may see the benefit of neighbourhood planning, and be prepared to support your process.

So it could well be a cocktail of funding sources. But do not forget your key local resource. It is your plan, and you are in charge. Before we leave this subject one potential source of support you may have to discount is the local planning authority.

Your local council has to “support” and “facilitate” neighbourhood planning but does not have to support you financially. A key point bearing in mind. But, once again, if you develop a good working relationship with your local council they will be an invaluable source of advice and support.

If you need advice on funding your neighbourhood plan, or would like to arrange a training session contact Michael on 01282 87250, or michaelwellock@kirkwells.co.uk

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SOUTH DOWNS SETS NEW RECORD

East Staffordshire may hold the record (as far as we know) for neighbourhood planning frontrunners. But the South Downs would seem to have cornered the market in applica-

tions to become neighbourhood planning areas, with eight separate applications.

Clearly, neighbourhood planning is a big hit in this part of the world, but spare

a thought for the poor local council planners who will have to support and help these parishes.

To find out more visit:

[South Downs National Park Authority](#)

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*For expert
help and
advice call
Kirkwells on
01282 872570*

Kirkwells believe town planning is about making things happen. Whether that be redeveloping a difficult brownfield site, or protecting beautiful countryside. We only do well planned, high quality sustainable development. Development that creates great places.

Planning can often feel complex and bureaucratic. So we use our knowledge and expertise to take the strain - taking the load off you, making things clearer, and steering your neighbourhood plan through the planning system so you achieve your goal. If you need help from expert RTPI chartered town planners to make something happen call **01282 872570**.

To help you further our web site provides regular, free, easy to understand updates on all the big issues - just keep an eye on our news, and Kirkwells' comment pages. When you do have an issue you need to talk about - get in touch. We provide a free, initial, consultation service - just call **01282 872570**, or simply send your query to

michaelwellock@kirkwells.co.uk.

We are always happy to help and for all our clients provide the benefit of on-going advice and support.



RTPI

mediation of space · making of place

Kirkwells—chartered town planners recognised by the RTPI

NEED TO GET ON TOP OF ALL THIS?

Thinking of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan?

Not sure where to start?

Why not get help from our award winning team.

Sign up today for our special offer of low cost Neighbourhood Planning training.

Specially designed for parish and town councils - our seminars deal with all aspects of neighbourhood planning: including the neighbourhood planning process, how to work with your lo-



Not sure which way to go? Try our training

cal council, how to engage land owners and developers, and consult the rest of your community.

Our seminars also have the added benefit that one of our award winning team will come to you - we discuss the issues you want to discuss in your town or parish at a

time and place of your choosing.

To make sure you don't miss out book now. Our Neighbourhood Planning Seminars start from just £99.00 (plus VAT).

We will be happy to discuss your needs and arrange a seminar with you and your fellow Councillors.

Just telephone Michael Wellock on **01282 872570** or email:

michaelwellock@kirkwells.co.uk