

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING NEWS

For expert help and advice call Kirkwells on 01282 872570

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

£10 MILLION FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: MISSED OPPORTUNITY?

A case of good news, bad news. The good news. £10 million for neighbourhood planning, on top of £17 million already earmarked for community right to build.

So far so good. But last week's DCLG announcement was surprising by how much control would seem to be being reinvested in local councils. Remember all the rhetoric and legislation around neighbourhood planning had put communities, particularly parish councils in charge.

So is this the natural tendency of the state to centralise? On the one hand, you could say it is the natural reaffirmation of the central role democratic, local government should be playing in neighbourhood planning. An argument we

can see some merit in. And, after all, the neighbourhood planning frontrunners did have to be local authority sponsored. But, on the other, you can see a real distrust of parishes and neighbourhoods to get the job done in all this. An argument we see less merit in, and one that will lead to a lot of disappointed neighbourhood organisations. Marched to the top of the hill and told "you are in charge", only to be walked back down and told "you are in charge, but the council holds the purse strings".

For some neighbourhoods, including a number of those we have worked with this will leave a bad taste in the mouth. Already cynical about their local council they may translate this cynicism on to the whole idea of neighbourhood planning. "Power, what

power". For other neighbourhoods this will come as a huge relief. Many's the time we have heard the comment: "Isn't this just a cheap way of getting us to do what the council should be doing?"

Missed opportunity? Maybe. More detail will surely be added to how local councils get their hands on some of the £10 million. And, hopefully, if communities really are to be in charge this will be a more balanced affair with councils bidding on behalf of communities with real council supported neighbourhood working.

Need to discuss funding of your neighbourhood plan? Call 01282 872570.

VILLAGE WANTS SAY ON ILKLEY'S PLAN

One of the implications of neighbourhood planning is, of course, that it one area's plan has repercussions for it's neighbours.

This problem has cropped up in Yorkshire where Addingham Civic Society are seeking appropriate representation on the Ilkley Neighbourhood Plan.

The Civic Society have set out their stall: "We will argue for appropriate representation for Addingham residents."

Daws Hill “Called In”

Members of a Wycombe scrutiny committee using their call in powers to look at the decision to exclude the real meaty sites from the Daws Hill Neighbourhood Plan (see issue 4 for the full story). Now from our local government days we know local government scrutiny, at the best of times, can be a toothless beast. But here we have backbench councillors

trying to reinstate the bits that the Daws Hill residents really need to be shaping back in to their neighbourhood plan. We do hope this succeeds, because earlier this week working with one of the frontrunner parishes we noticed that there remains a deep scepticism amongst some about how much power they really have. Particularly

after being told by ministers that "you are now in charge". So taking the juicy bits out of neighbourhood plans will only confirm in the sceptics that neighbourhood planning is a toothless tiger - so lets hope the backbenchers reverse the Cabinet decision .

Seeking neighbourhood area designation call 01282 872570 for help.

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WILTSHIRE PRODUCES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GUIDE

One of the criticisms aimed at local planning authorities by parishes is that the lack of guidance councils are providing on neighbourhood planning is very limited.

Well, that cannot be said about Wiltshire.

Here the Council have produced their own guide to neighbourhood planning.

Setting out everything from the policy framework within which neighbourhood plans must sit.



To advice on the environmental and sustainability implications of neighbourhood plans. To the neighbourhood planning process this is one of the best guides out there— not just relevant to Wiltshire.

Indeed, most parishes will be interested to learn what

Wiltshire is offering local people. And some of the cost estimates: £17,000 to £63,000 for a plan; £5,000 to £8,000 for examination; £1.50 per head for the referendum. To get hold of the guide go to: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planninganddevelopment/planningpolicy/neighbourhoodplanning.htm>



MAKE YOUR PLAN BETTER – PUT TREES IN IT!

BY VICTORIA BANKES-PRICE, THE WOODLAND TRUST

There's an old saying that a society grows great when men plant trees in whose shade they know they will never sit. Perhaps the same applies to communities and neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood Plans can't solve all your community's planning worries, but they present huge opportunities to shape local spaces positively, especially if you inject some colour into your thinking – remember, neighbourhood planning is about green as well as grey infrastructure.

For example, you may not be able to say no a big housing development, but you could soften its impact with trees and woods. Your plan could include policies requiring street trees along every new estate road, around supermarket car parks and business parks.

Urban trees bring massive benefits: they can enhance property prices, attract inward investment, improve air quality, help cool towns and cities, mitigate flooding, and provide homes for wildlife.

If land is available, why not think bigger?

Creating a community wood or orchard could bring people together, and provide you with food or fuel. Woods are great places to get out and enjoy the fresh air, improving your physical health, and providing escape from stress. For children, woods hold endless possibilities for imaginative play, developing their



self confidence and coordination, and a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. And of course, planting trees supports wildlife, and even more so if you plant near existing wildlife-rich areas such as ancient woodland.

Your plans need to protect existing trees and woods, as well as finding ways to replace them when they reach the end of their natural life, so remember the importance of tree preservation orders.

Any plan must be

backed up with evidence, and in line with national and local policy. The importance of protecting ancient woodland is clearly set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which also supports including greenspace in developments and states that planning should help increase

biodiversity. Local authorities are also improving their local plans to recognise the importance of greenspace and trees; you'll need to speak to your planning authority and get them on board.

There is abundant research showing the benefits of woodland and trees; see our microsite on neighbourhood planning:

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning.

The Woodland Trust is keen to work with neighbourhood planning groups to capture best practice and disseminate it to other groups. Please get in touch if you would like to work with us or discuss anything in this article. victoriabankesprice@woodlandtrust.org.uk

“For children, woods hold endless possibilities for imaginative play, developing their self confidence and coordination, and a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural environment.”

Community Right to Bid Goes Live

The Government's Community Right to Bid legislation is now Live. £11.5 million has also been found for community groups to buy important community assets - pubs, shops, and community buildings.

This article provides an outline of how the Community Right to Bid works.

The one thing we can say for certain is Community Right to Bid has significant benefits for community groups, whilst at the same time having significant impacts for affected property owners.

So if you are looking to buy a community asset, or you own a property and think Community Right to Buy could affect you and you need to find out more call 01282 872570.

What is it?

The Community Right to Bid (CRTB) would give community organisations the chance to bid for assets that are important to them. For example, a village shop or pub, a community centre, children's centre or library building.

How would it work?

The first stage would be to draw up a list of assets of community value. Communities would be asked to identify assets of community value. The local authority would then ask any affected owners for their comment on the possible listing.

At this stage, the local authority would decide whether, or not, to list the asset. Owners would be given the chance to object. A successful objection would see the asset left off the list. An unsuccessful objection would mean the asset would be listed.

Before selling an owner of an asset placed on the list will now have to notify the local authority of their intention.

The local authority would then have to notify the nominating community group, and publicise the sale in the local area. After this, an interim window of opportunity would open. This would allow community groups to bid for the asset. If a group requests to be treated as a potential bidder during this period the full window of opportunity will apply. If not, the owner may proceed with the sale at the end of the interim period of opportunity.

If a group is treated as a potential bidder, the land owner is under no obligation to sell to the community group. They can sell to any bidder.

What are the implications of listing?

The main impacts would be:

- ❑ Additional burden on local authorities in establishing, maintaining and administering the list of assets.

- ❑ Need for owners and businesses to comment and object to listings.

- ❑ Community groups given a right to bid - landowners can sell to any bidder.

Delay to sale of listed assets - this will vary depending upon whether or not the interim or full window of opportunity applies.

Summary

The Community Right to Bid will allow communities to identify and buy listed community assets, as and when they come up for sale. This will be done by limiting an owner's ability to sell during a prescribed window of opportunity.

If the Community Right to Bid interests, or affects you, call Kirkwells on 01282 872570.

£11.5 million is available to help community groups to buy important community assets - pubs, shops, and community buildings.

KIRKWELLS APPOINTED TO HELP PREPARE STRETTON PLAN

Kirkwells have been appointed by Stretton Parish Council to help support their neighbourhood plan preparation. Stretton are one of the Government's neighbourhood planning frontrunners.

Currently awaiting publication of their designation notice Stretton

had previously been one of a number of parishes in East Staffordshire who had attended one of Kirkwells' neighbourhood planning training sessions.

Kirkwells' Policy Director, Louise Kirkup said:

Neighbourhood planning is one of our specialities. So here at

Kirkwells we are really looking forward to supporting Stretton Parish Council, local residents and businesses to prepare their neighbourhood plan."

To find out more about how Kirkwells can help support your neighbourhood plan click here, or call Louise on 01282 872 570.

"we are really looking forward to supporting Stretton Parish Council, local residents and businesses to prepare their neighbourhood plan."

RICKMANSWORTH SEEK TO BECOME NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Parish council? You have it easy. Especially when it comes to designation as a neighbourhood planning area. Spare a thought for your counterparts in non-parished areas. First you need a written constitution showing why you

represent your area. Then you need to have at least 21 members. No mean feat in these days of general apathy. But in Rickmansworth this has not put them off. And consultations were held up until the middle of September on their application

to become a neighbourhood planning area. As we went to press—no details of the results of the consultation had been published, but we wish the Forum well.

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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