

PARISH PLANS AND THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- Over 18 parishes have completed a Parish Plan and more are underway.
- These plans have been key to informing the Wealden Community Strategy which has recently been updated using this evidence.
- The Plans will also provide important input into the Local Development Framework.

WE VALUE PARISH PLANS BECAUSE:

- **They give a consensus view:**
Parish Plans provide a view of what the community as a whole want for their village or town.
- **They identify what really matters to you**
Parish Plans tell us what the local issues are for those living in the area.
There is no set formula which means the plan is free to concentrate on issues which you think are most important.
- **They are not restricted by other Agencies**
Parish Plans are not constrained by statutory agencies or those with a wider agenda which maybe limited by funding.

AND ALSO

- **They are developed by the Community for the Community**
Parish Plans provide a means to excite and engage the local community and spur them into action.
- **They provide a source of information for those providing services and drawing up plans.**
Parish Plans provide a clear picture of what people want to see happening in their area and this can inform and guide policy makers and service providers.

HOWEVER,

Parish Plans have limitations such as:

- **Patchy coverage:**
Plans to date don't cover the whole of Wealden. The District Council must be fair to all residents across the area.
- **Out of date**
Many Plans were completed several years ago and don't always represent the situation at the present moment in time.
- **Not always realistic**
Plans shaped by aspirations rather than the limitations and constraints which those providing the services are working with.

AND

- **Working to a different scale:**
Plans tend to deal with issues of more local concern which may not be a high priority for the District as a whole.
- **Vision rather than action:**
Parish Plans should be a means to an end rather than an end in itself but how to deliver or raise funding is not easy.
- **Difficulty in making the connection**
Many actions require input from agencies outside the area but members of the Parish Plan Team don't know who or how to contact them.
- **Raising expectations**
Parishes with a Parish Plan have to cope with the frustration which arises when aims and objectives need to be translated into action. Does the rest of the community understand how much energy, commitment and access to funding this requires. They want to see changes happen straight away.

What can we do about it?

- **In order to address these challenges**, the Local Strategic Partnership, Wealden District Council and Action in rural Sussex applied to the Carnegie UK Trust to fund a research project. 5 Parishes have been selected to pilot this approach.
- **A methodology will be developed** to assist these parishes in delivering their Parish Plan.
- **Lessons learned** will provide a model of best practice across the UK.

YOUR IDEAS?

- Before we tell you more about this project, please discuss the following in your groups and identify three key recommendations:
- **What is needed to raise the profile of Parish Plans and make sure they are:**
 - Up to date**
 - Realistic**
 - Embody the wishes of the wider community**
 - And above all DELIVERABLE**

How best can Wealden District Council and other agencies assist you in delivering your Parish Plan?

THE CARNEGIE PROJECT

Introduced by
Mark McTaggart
Action in rural Sussex

Some Suggestions for Future Working

- Whatever works for one Parish must be available across the whole of Wealden.
- It must also be realistic in terms of staff time and the feedback provided needs to fit within a very tight timescale.
- We have put together some ideas to help you gather a consensus view from your town or parish.

The Action Plans Toolkit

A ready made solution to gather views from the wider community.

This could also offer a chance to piggy back by:

- Providing an opportunity for revising your existing Parish Plan which may be out of date.
- Obtaining information about local issues.
- Raising awareness and getting help to make things happen.