

Parish Plan Protocol

What are Parish Plans?

Parish Plans are action plans developed by local communities. They set out a vision for the future of the community and list what actions will need to take place to achieve this vision.

In Herefordshire, Parish Plans are being supported both as a means of developing community led action across the County and as a way of local communities influencing the development of the county Community Strategy – 'The Herefordshire Plan'.

What is the Parish Plans protocol?

This protocol has been developed to help you get the most from your Parish Plan. Parish Plans tend to produce proposals or actions of three kinds. These are:

1. Actions that the local community can deliver itself (such as litter picks, community festivals, newsletters)
2. Actions that need assistance from service providers or other outside agencies (such as traffic calming or youth work)
3. Issues that are affected by the policies of service providers and other outside agencies (such as health provision and land-use)

This protocol, and its associated guidance, is designed to help you to progress your actions. It provides clear guidance on how to best link with Herefordshire Council and other agencies that serve the local community.

This should be used together with Parish Plans guidance produced by the Countryside Agency and local guidance produced by the Herefordshire Partnership.

Who is there to help?

A steering group oversees and supports Parish Plans work in Herefordshire. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

Development Workers:

Lynda Wilcox – Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC)

Contact: 01432 353492 or Email: halchereford@btconnect.com

Angela Downing – Community First

Contact 01432 262968 or Email: angelad@communityhw.org.uk

Herefordshire Partnership

Martin Heuter-Russell - Herefordshire Partnership

Contact 01432 383032 or Email: mheuter@herefordshire.gov.uk

Herefordshire Council

Shane Smith – Community Regeneration Support Officer Contact 01432 260611 or Email: shanesmith@herefordshire.gov.uk

Vicki Eaton (Replacement for Sam Banks)

Contact 01432 260146 or Email: veaton@herefordshire.gov.uk

West Midlands Planning Aid

Malcolm Reid – CCB Project Worker

Contact 0121 693 5568 or Email: wmccb@rtpi.org.uk

The Parish Plans Steering Group (PPSG) was formed to assist, advice, co-ordinate and monitor the parish planning process in Herefordshire and regularly report to the Herefordshire Partnership. The PPSG are also in regular contact with the Countryside Agency, who have awarded grant funding to a number of parishes in Herefordshire in order to enable them to develop a Parish Plan.

The PPSG will also ensure that your plan is made widely available to the Herefordshire Partnership to ensure that local priorities are taken into consideration.

What is the benefit of doing a Parish Plan?

- In one document it outlines people's vision for their community and the actions that will lead to that vision being achieved.
- Better co-ordination of local needs and priorities for the community
- Improved dialogue and clarity of aims and objectives between local organisations and local communities
- An information source for organisations when considering the views of local communities, reducing the need for additional research and consultation
- Your Parish Plan can feed into the wider community strategy (the Herefordshire Plan) so that it better reflects the needs and priorities within local communities.

Developing your Parish Plan

Having decided to produce a Parish Plan you should let the Parish Plans Steering Group know so that they can assist you with the development of your Parish Plan - please use the contact details listed above.

In addition to the above, you will also need to speak to various departments at Herefordshire Council in order to collect and discuss information relevant to your Parish Plan. Herefordshire Council can:

- Provide information on services in your area.
- Assist individual parish plans groups with the progression of a parish plan.
- Provide details of the plans and strategies that you might need to consider when producing your plan.

Herefordshire Council

Making Contact with Herefordshire Council

Initial contact should be made through Shane Smith, Community Regeneration Support Officer, Herefordshire Council, P.O. Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH. Tel: 01432 260611, Fax: 01432 260611 or Email: shanesmith@herefordshire.gov.uk.

Shane will:

- Act as the main point of contact for enquiries arising through parish plan projects and direct enquiries to Council contacts.
- Monitor progress and ensure responses are provided to enquiries within the Council's agreed timescale of 15 working days.
- Help arrange meetings with council officers, where appropriate.

Circulating your Parish Plan for comments by Herefordshire Council

Once you have prepared the final draft of your Parish Plan, please send a copy (ideally in a word document via e-mail, so that it is easy to circulate) to Shane Smith. Shane will then circulate the Plan to both the Parish Plans Steering Group and Herefordshire Council's key contacts for their comments. We do this in order to ensure that we are aware of any issues arising in your area that we had not previously been informed of and to offer technical help, assistance and feedback as and when required.

Shane will also be able to advise you about nominated Herefordshire Council Officers who will be able to offer advice and support when you are developing your plan (these are called "Key Contacts"). Once your plan has been submitted, Shane Smith will provide a co-ordinated Herefordshire Council response to your Parish Plans Steering Group within 10 to 15 working days of receipt

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Please note that if you would like your Parish Plan to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) we would advise you to contact Samantha Banks in the Forward Planning office on 01432 260146 (Email veaton@herefordshire.gov.uk) as soon as you start the parish planning process in order to discuss what is required.

Please see Parish Planning Guidance for further details.

Core standards for Parish Plans

These standards have been developed to ensure that your Parish Plan can have its desired effect. Support and advice is available through the members of the Parish Plans Steering Group to enable you to meet these standards.

1. Involving Local Groups and Agencies

Parish Plans should be developed in partnership with local groups, businesses, residents and with relevant groups and agencies that serve the community. Some agencies will want to be involved in supporting you from the outset to help you to get the best out of your plan. For example:

- They may suggest that you ask certain questions in a survey that might indicate a need within your community.
- They might want to work with you to promote opportunities for your community (e.g. funding, environmental projects).
- Other services such as Planning have set out clear guidance on how you will need to work with them to ensure your Parish Plan has a real impact.

Please see Parish Plans Guidance for more details.

2. Consultation and Involvement

It is essential to give all residents of the parish the opportunity to be involved in their Parish Plan. Evidence that the views of the whole community have been sought in developing your plan is likely to affect the impact of the Plan. For example, evidence of wide consultation is a major requirement of funding sources such as the National Lottery.

Parish Plans should be holistic and address the issues of concern to all groups within the community and state clearly:

- The reasons for involving the community in the ways chosen
- Who was involved and who wasn't
- How the views of traditionally under-represented groups (e.g. young people, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities etc) were sought
- Numbers of people responding
- Findings from surveys and other consultation activities.
- How the views and involvement of the wider community were sought in developing the Plan
- How the findings were translated into an action plan.

This information will help your Plan by showing that the actions are representative of the priorities of the whole community.

Please speak to your local development worker or refer to the Guidance Pack for tips and advice on how to involve the community

3. Sustainable Objectives

Your plan should, if possible, set out a vision for the future of your community and how you wish to get there. In doing this you should be considering the wider impact of the actions you propose on both the economic, social and environmental aspects of your community. For example, campaigning for better public transport connections benefits the economic viability of your community, reduces the need for car journeys and enables community members to access services such as leisure facilities that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

Please see Parish Plans Guidance for more details.

4. Action Plan

Your Plan should contain a clear action plan that sets out:

- Clear actions
- Who will deliver them
- Target dates for completion
- Outputs and outcomes
- Clear monitoring arrangements (how will you know how you are doing?)
- Prioritisation of the proposed actions
- Whether individual actions require funding and if so, what kind?

Action plans should be developed by all sections of the local community. They should also be widely promoted and available to the community.

Benefits of the Process

As already mentioned the Parish Plans Steering Group was formed in order to assist groups working on and planning their Parish Plans. The members of the group all have an interest in ensuring that your Parish Plan is as successful and comprehensive as possible. Your draft plan is circulated to Herefordshire Council representatives in order to highlight emerging issues to service providers and to share information about issues relevant to your parish.

We hope that you will benefit from this interaction, but highlight that this process is voluntary and that it is possible to develop your Parish Plan without following this process. This may however limit the effectiveness of your action plan and Herefordshire Council's ability to adopt your Parish Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance.