



Thinking of preparing a Community Led Plan?

Here is some guidance on how it can relate
to the Planning System in East Lindsey

July 2011

If you would like this information in another language, large print or Braille please contact East Lindsey District Council

Osoby pragnące uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszone są o zawiadomienie rady lokalnej East Lindsey (East Lindsey District Council)

如果您想要這份資料的其它語言版本，請告訴 East Lindsey 區政府。

Se desejar obter esta informação num idioma alternativo, por favor contacte o Município do Distrito de East Lindsey

Если Вы хотите получить эту информацию на каком-либо другом языке, пожалуйста, сообщите об этом в Районный Совет Восточного Линдси

Community Led Plans guidance on how they can relate to the planning system

The purpose of this guidance

This paper aims to answer the most frequently asked questions about parish planning and in doing so should help Town and Parish Councils to understand what Community Led Plans are and their relationship to the Council and the planning system.

This is not a toolkit for preparing a Community Led Plan. At the end of the document, there is some broad advice on making the most of your plan. Advice and guidance can be obtained from a range of government sources, many of which are listed at the end of this document, or by speaking with the Rural Officers at Community Lincs, Church Lane, Sleaford, NG34 7DF www.communitylincs.com or telephone number 01529 302466.

These are the most frequently asked questions about Community Led Plans and the planning system in East Lindsey

1. What is a Community Led Plan?
2. Can the Council adopt our Community Led Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)?
3. Can our Community Led Plan influence the Councils planning policy?
4. How can we influence planning policy if we don't prepare a Community Led Plan?
5. Can our Community Led Plan be used to help determine planning applications?
6. Can our Community Led Plan be used anywhere else?
7. How will the District Council help us with our Community Led Plan?
8. Where else can we go for help?

1. What is a Community Led Plan (CLP)?

In 2000, the Government published a white paper entitled "Our Countryside, the Future" in which they proposed that all rural communities should develop Community Led Plans to enable the needs of the community to be identified.

Community Led Plans can be summarised as:

- They are local action-based plans, which identify and address a range of problems and opportunities affecting rural communities;
- They can include social, economic and environmental issues;
- The whole community should be involved in producing the Community Led Plan, with the Town or Parish Council taking lead responsibility;
- The Community Led Plan should be consistent with related policies set out in East Lindsey's and/or the Lincolnshire County Council's documents and local strategic partnerships. This could assist in the delivery of actions within the plan. These are available on the relevant websites or by contacting the organisations involved;
- The plan should be based on information provided through survey, research, inclusive consultation and community participation, which can be evidenced;
- The plans identify actions, which can be taken forward by the Town or Parish Council, by other individuals and groups within the community or by other service providers and statutory bodies.

2. Can the Council adopt our Community Led Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)?

No. There are three reasons why the Council cannot adopt the whole Community Led Plan as an SPD:

1. Many proposals in Community Led Plans lie outside the scope of planning. Under the planning system, policies in on SPD must relate to policies in another local plan document, such as the Core Strategy. Community Led Plans are very wide ranging and can deal with other matters such as litter or dog fouling, these are not covered by policies in the local plan;
2. Community Led Plans often set out the community's aspirations for the use and development of areas of land. But SPDs cannot allocate land for development - that is a job for the Settlement Proposals Document, produced by the District Council in consultation with stakeholders (Town and Parish Councils are stakeholders);
3. The planning regulations require all policy documents in the local plan (including SPD) to be subject to the widest possible public consultation at different stages of their development. Whilst local communities will have been consulted on Community Led Plans, this will not be sufficient to satisfy the planning regulations.

3. Can our Community Led Plan influence the Councils planning policy?

It certainly can.

The Council has a duty to involve local communities when preparing planning policy documents. Community Led Plans will provide the Council with detailed local information and an overview of community needs and aspirations. This will be invaluable when drawing up local policies and proposals.

4. How can we influence planning policy if we don't prepare a Community Led Plan?

Town and Parish Councils can contribute to the different documents of the local plan at almost any time leading up to their formal submission to the Secretary of State. We advise checking with the Council's website (www.e-lindsey.gov.uk) to see when the different consultation stages are due to take place or give the Planning Policy Team a ring, the number is at the end of this document.

We expect Town and Parish Councils to be particularly interested in contributing to the Core Strategy and Settlement Proposals Document.

5. Can our Community Led Plan be used to help determine planning applications?

Sometimes, yes.

Provided the Community Led Plan can show that it is based on sound, tested evidence and community buy-in, there is a good chance that a relevant part can be a material planning consideration when determining planning applications.

The weight given to it will vary according to how it compares with competing or complementary policy guidance. Clearly, where it conflicts with statutory or adopted policy guidance, it will be afforded little or no weight.

It is unlikely that proposals in a Community Led Plan for the preferred use - or non-use - of land will carry any weight when judging applications on that land. This is because any site proposals must be tested through the full local plan process (previously known as the Local Development Framework).

Similarly, unsubstantiated statements such as "we want no more of this" or "we want more of that", even if supported by the majority or all of the community, can carry no weight.

On the other hand, where a Community Led Plan has identified, and provided evidence of the need for - or overprovision of - a particular type of development in the community, then this evidence can be a legitimate consideration and may be used to help determine a planning application for that development.

Community Led Plans can be particularly useful in defining and assessing locally distinctive characteristics to help the Council to measure the potential impact of proposed development on the environment or local character.

Some groups have been disappointed that parts of their Community Led Plans cannot be used as a material planning consideration, usually because they have not been drawn up to meet the stringent tests mentioned earlier in this document or because they have disregarded national planning policy guidelines. It is important, therefore, that before embarking on a Community Led Plan, where the intention is to influence planning decision-making, that you talk with the Council's planning officers. Contacts are listed at the end of this document.

Local Plan policies must be supported by sound evidence. Therefore, Community Led Plans can have even greater influence on planning policy if they, too, can show that they are based on sound evidence and have wide community support.

To summarise, we recommend that, to have greatest influence on planning policy, a Community Led Plan should:

- Solicit and reflect the views of all sections of the community;
- Identify which features and local characteristics people value;
- Identify local problems and opportunities;
- Set out how local people would like to see the community develop in the future;
- Set out a plan of action to achieve the community's vision; and
- Provide evidence to support its conclusions.

6. Can our Community Led Plan be used anywhere else?

Yes, it can.

Details and information collected during the formation of your plan can be passed onto other agencies such as the Primary Care Trust, bus companies, and local businesses. This information may assist them with their future business plans. It could persuade a shop owner that there is enough reason to stay open or give them information about how the community feels or uses a valuable asset.

7. How will the District Council help us with our Community Led Plan?

Officers in the Council's Planning Team can provide advice and share with you any evidence we may have on your settlement. Officers can also share their experiences of other plans across the District.

Additionally, the Council through the East Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership will circulate your draft Community Led Plan to partner organisations, these organisations can then provide advice to you on areas identified within your plan.

8. Where else can we go for help?

People who can help

Community Lincs

Church Lane, Sleaford,
Lincolnshire NG34 7DF;
Tel 01529 302466;

email

communityledplanning@communitylincs.com

(They can assess a completed plan for a Kite Mark Award.)

John Medler

- **Partnerships and Grants Team Leader**

East Lindsey District Council, Tedder Hall,
Manby, Lincolnshire LN11 8UP;

Tel 01507 601111 ext 514;

email john.medler@e-lindsey.gov.uk

Anne Shorland, Kay Turton and Paul Kisby - **The Planning Policy Team**

East Lindsey District Council, Tedder Hall,
Manby, Lincolnshire LN11 8UP;

Tel 01507 601111 exts 318, 323, 316;

emails

anne.shorland@e-lindsey.gov.uk

kay.turton@e-lindsey.gov.uk

or paul.kisby@e-lindsey.gov.uk

Information that can help

www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning

ACRE have useful pages on how CLPs relate to policy, case studies and the benefits of developing a plan.

- Local Government White Paper "Strong and prosperous communities" DCLG, October 2006.
- Planning Policy Statement 12 "Local Development Frameworks" ODPM, 2004.
- "Creating Local Development Frameworks - a companion guide to PPS 12" ODPM, 2004. "The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004", ODPM 2926.
- A Community Plan for a Sustainable Future" - Local Strategic Partnership for East Lindsey - November 2007

Commission for Rural Communities

- a website that has useful information about the needs of people who live and work in rural areas.

www.defra.gov.uk/crc/

Rural Communities database

- holds information on thousands of projects across the country that rural communities have undertaken.

<http://crc.rocktimeweb.net/>

Making the most of your Plan

To be successful all plans, strategies and policies have to achieve five objectives.

1. The plan needs to have a reasonable life span - this will give those parties who are using the plan time to achieve the actions in it - 5 years is a reasonable life span for a Community Led Plan.
2. The actions in the plan have to be deliverable - Having a plan that is full of aspirations that will never be met will not only dishearten those trying to deliver the actions but next time round the community may not want to take part if they can not see the results of the previous plan. Space out the actions in the plan over the life of the plan so that they are not only achievable but also manageable.
3. The plan needs clear priorities - Set a maximum of five priorities for the plan, worked out from the public consultation exercise. This will help focus the work, actions and funding opportunities.
4. Ensure that all partners have signed up to the plan before its adoption - this is very important, "buy in" by partners can ensure the success or failure of a plan. Start talking to partners as early as possible; get them involved in the process. If possible, in broad terms, any action plan needs to show how and who is going to fund the actions and who is going to delivery them.

5. Be aspirational but be realistic - the community may have big ideas, these are great but big schemes, and ideas usually are difficult to deliver and need to be funded. If you know you will not be able to deliver them in the lifetime of the plan, do not discard them, set a space in your plan at the end for them and take the life of your plan to ensure that these ideas are investigated and reported back to your community.

Do not forget the plan needs to be delivered - think about setting up working groups for each action in the plan. Make the delivery plan a permanent agenda item at your Town or Community Led meetings. Report via your newsletters and Community Led minutes the progress of the plan and most importantly to ensure success - KEEP THE COMMUNITY INTERESTED AND ENGAGED.