



Malvern Hills District Council

A guide to developing a Neighbourhood Plan

March 2013

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INTRODUCTION

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Localism Act provides a new statutory regime for neighbourhood planning.

Neighbourhood planning enables communities to shape the development and growth of a local area through the production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (Neighbourhood Plan), a Neighbourhood Development Order or a Community Right to Build Order.

Neighbourhood Plans will become part of the local statutory development plan and will form the basis for determining planning applications in that area. Neighbourhood Plans can range in complexity depending on the wishes of local people – they may be very simple or go into considerable detail as to where people want development.

Neighbourhood Plans can be used to:

- choose where new homes, shops and offices should be built, and
- have a say on what those new buildings should look like.

Neighbourhood Plans can be detailed or general, depending what local people want.

A Neighbourhood Plan must conform with the overall strategy of the Local Plan - the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP). A Neighbourhood Plan can be used to promote more development than is set out in the SWDP but should not promote less development.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is “made”, and adopted, it will become part of the Development Plan for South Worcestershire (including Malvern Hills District).

Neighbourhood Development Orders allow the community to grant planning permission for development that complies with the order. This removes the need for a planning application to be submitted to Malvern Hills District Council.

Certain types of development would be excluded from a Neighbourhood Development Order such as minerals or waste development (which would normally be handled by the County Council), nationally significant infrastructure projects and development of a type prescribed by Government.

The procedure for making a Neighbourhood Development Order is in many respects identical to that as for making a Neighbourhood Plan, including independent examination, consultation with and participation by the public, the holding of a referendum, voting rights and the obligation to make the order if more than half the people vote in favour of it.

A Community Right to Build Order is a sub-category of a Neighbourhood Development Order. A Community Right to Build Order gives permission for small-scale, site-specific developments by a community group. The essential difference between Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders is that the party proposing the latter is a “community organisation” established for the express purpose of furthering social, environmental and economic well-being in the area and that the order grants planning permission for a specific project on a specific site only.

What does national planning policy say about Neighbourhood Plans?

Paragraphs 183 to 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) say:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes and neighbourhood forums can use neighbourhood planning to:

- *set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and*
- *grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.*

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible.

Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.”

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Two types of ‘relevant body’ can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan – a parish / town council and a neighbourhood forum.

In areas where a parish or town council exists, these are the only bodies that can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

Where a parish or town council does not exist (which will not apply in Malvern Hills because the whole of the District is parished), community members can create a neighbourhood forum. Only one neighbourhood forum is allowed to exist for each neighbourhood to be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan. The neighbourhood forum must have the purpose of furthering the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area and seek to have representative membership from across the neighbourhood area. It must have a written constitution and a minimum of 21 members.

Who should be involved?

The parish / town council or neighbourhood forum for the area needs to initiate and lead the process, but this should not mean that they develop the Neighbourhood Plan in isolation from the rest of the community.

The involvement, throughout the process, of a broad range of local stakeholders will help to strengthen community support for the plan (very important at the referendum stage) and make its implementation easier.

The following is a list of stakeholders that the parish / town council or neighbourhood forum should seek to involve in the process:

- residents,
- community organisations,
- elected representatives,
- businesses,
- landowners,
- developers.

At certain stages it will also be necessary to involve officers from Malvern Hills District Council and, potentially, other public sector service providers such as Worcestershire County Council, as the highway authority, education authority etc. This might be to provide advice, guidance or information on a particular matter or to comment on draft documents.

What might a Neighbourhood Plan include?

Neighbourhood Plans can address and include policies on a variety of issues. The list below is not intended to be exhaustive, but provides an indication of the types of issues which could be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan:

- identify sites for housing, including affordable housing,
- provision for businesses to set up or expand in the parish,
- provision of cycle ways and footpaths,
- identify sites for community use such as schools, village halls, health centre, leisure facilities,
- design guidance for the parish,
- protection and creation of open space, green amenity areas, nature reserves, allotments, play areas,
- protection of important local buildings and other historical assets,
- promote renewable energy schemes and projects,
- restrict the types of development or change of use, for example; non retail uses in town centres, and
- provide sites for gypsies and travellers.

What are the benefits of developing a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan offers several advantages over simply relying on the SWDP or more informal plans, like community plans or parish plans.

Community-Led

Because Neighbourhood Plans are led by parish / town councils or neighbourhood forums rather than Malvern Hills District Council it means that community representatives write the plan themselves (or ask others to write the plan, but under their control).

Parish / town councils preparing plans have the opportunity to engage with the wider community right from the beginning of the plan preparation process, to make sure it genuinely represents the range of wants and needs in the local area.

More Influence

A Neighbourhood Plan would be part of the statutory development plan for the area. This means that Malvern Hills District Council or planning inspectors would have to make decisions on the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan and any other material considerations when considering planning applications or appeals in the neighbourhood area. In other words, the Neighbourhood Plan would carry more weight as a consideration in planning decisions, effectively giving the local community more influence and control over the development of their area.

More Relevance

Whilst the SWDP covers the whole of South Worcestershire, a Neighbourhood Plan would be focused on the needs of the neighbourhood and would allow the local community to specify in more detail what they expect from development. For example, it could contain more detail on things like urban design, affordable housing, and preferred sites/locations for housing and other development. This is about guiding and shaping development, but not undermining the delivery of development proposed in the SWDP.

The plan could also guide the provision of infrastructure, for example, setting out priorities for new development such as improving pedestrian links, upgrading paths and open space. This would inform subsequent negotiations between Malvern Hills District Council and developers.

Establishing a Dialogue

The team developing the Neighbourhood Plan will need to speak to a range of organisations, departments and local partners. This will establish a range of dialogues which would otherwise probably not take place, potentially influencing the activities of the various organisations involved.

The plan could include things like improvement of streets and public spaces or where community facilities should be located. This would provide the context for negotiations with local authority departments (e.g. highways) and could help to influence their future works or development.

Site Allocation

Providing it does not undermine strategic policies in the SWDP the Neighbourhood Plan allows the community to develop criteria and choose which sites are allocated for what kind of development.

Future funding for local communities

In January 2013 the Government announced that parish / town councils that take a proactive approach by drawing up a neighbourhood development plan, and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, will receive 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy (where it exists) arising from the development that they choose to accept. Neighbourhoods without a neighbourhood development plan but where the levy is still charged will receive a capped 15% share of the levy revenue arising from development in their area. The Government has indicated that it wishes to have these incentives in place from Spring 2013.

It should also be borne in mind, however, that developing a Neighbourhood Plan:

- may need to tackle some difficult issues,
- can take a lot of time and energy and requires considerable commitment,
- can be frustrating if ambitions are not met,
- can be a long process (up to two years), and
- will involve financial costs.

Are there any alternatives to a Neighbourhood Plan?

Parish / town councils do not have to prepare Neighbourhood Plans if they do not want to. Planning policies in the SWDP, together with saved policies from the adopted Local Plan will still apply, and development could be secured through submitting a planning application to Malvern Hills District Council.

There are alternatives to producing a Neighbourhood Plan. One alternative where significant change or development is proposed is to produce an Area Action Plan. This would form part of the Development Plan and would also have statutory status. Also, it would avoid the costs associated with a local referendum (and the risk of an adverse vote). However, Area Action Plans are local authority-led rather than being led by a parish / town council or neighbourhood forum and there are additional legal steps that would be required, including formal examination.

Additional guidance on things like urban design could be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Although this would also be local authority-led, an SPD can involve the community in drafting the document but it cannot be used to allocate land.

There are also more informal plans such as parish plans or community plans. As with SPD's, these can be a material consideration in planning decisions, but do not have statutory status as part of the local development plan, so carry far less weight.

It is suggested that the community carefully consider what it wants to achieve, and then ask whether these aspirations can be best met through a Neighbourhood Plan or by other means.

Does a Neighbourhood Plan need to comply with other legislative requirements?

Neighbourhood Plans are prepared under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plans must also satisfy the requirements of relevant environmental legislation and be compatible with EU and human rights obligations.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is likely to be required for Neighbourhood Plans where they are likely to cause significant environment effects. It is suggested that a 'screening opinion' should be sought to determine whether and SEA is required or not.

Where Neighbourhood Plans are likely to have a significant effect on an international nature conservation site, a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required.

It is suggested that the parish / town council seek the advice of the planning policy team at Malvern Hills District Council at an early stage to ascertain whether they are likely to trigger any of these assessments.

Whilst there is no formal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to have a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) this can be a very useful tool in assessing the environmental, social and economic effects of the plan and can incorporate any SEA required.

How long will it take to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and how much will it cost?

The time and costs involved in developing a Neighbourhood Plan will vary considerably depending on what is being proposed.

The Government have indicated that they see process taking approximately 1 year. Emerging experience, however, suggests that 15 months to 2 years may not be unrealistic.

It is advisable to estimate the time needed for the different stages of the plan-making process, the tasks required and the necessary commitment from the different people involved.

This Guide describes these stages in some detail and should assist in estimating time requirements. The neighbourhood planning team could also speak to individuals or groups that have undertaken similar exercises to gain insight into the time implications.

There may be ways of saving time. For example, where there is a recent community plan or parish plan, it may not be necessary to start from scratch with the Neighbourhood Plan. The existing plan would be part of the evidence base and quite a lot of material could be used in the new plan. Much would depend on how robust the existing plan was in terms of a strong evidence base and effective community engagement.

There will be financial costs associated with preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Estimates vary widely; from less than ten thousand pounds to several times this amount for larger and more complex plans. Some of the costs will be the responsibility of Malvern Hills District Council, such as the costs of holding the independent examination and the public referendum. Funding for other costs will need to be found by the parish / town council or neighbourhood forum preparing the plan.

It is advisable to prepare an estimated budget for the plan process. This could cover items like the costs of community engagement activities and professional consultancy costs if required (for example, specialist advice on environmental assessments).

It is possible to manage costs. Some professional support may be available from Malvern Hills District Council (see Section 8 – support available), support programmes or free support from local professionals (known as pro-bono support). Local organisations may also make venues available for no charge for community engagement events. Costs will also depend on the skills and time available within the community organisations producing the plan.

Will it be necessary to use consultants to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan?

Whether specialist external support is required will depend on a number of factors, including the scale and ambitions of the Neighbourhood Plan together with the skills available within the neighbourhood planning team.

If it is necessary to bring in consultants or other outside support - for example to, assist in writing some of the more complex policies or to undertake environmental assessments – it is suggested that any work required is clearly defined and limited only to those tasks that cannot be done without such support to keep the costs down.

Is there any financial assistance to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan?

In December 2012 DCLG announced funding for local planning authorities up to 31st March 2014 principally to cover the cost of providing support and advice to local groups which are progressing neighbourhood plans and to go towards the cost of the neighbourhood plan examination and local referendum.

Under the terms of the DCLG funding, up to £5,000 could be available to a local planning authority after it has designated a neighbourhood area. A second payment of £5,000 is available to the local planning authority prior to examination. This is intended to contribute towards the costs of the examination as well as other staff costs incurred at this stage. A third payment of £20,000 will be made to the local planning authority following the successful completion of the examination to cover the costs of any further steps that may be needed for the neighbourhood plan to come into legal force, including referendum.

There is no indication from DCLG that this funding can be diverted to local groups to support the preparation of neighbourhood plans.

In March 2013 DCLG announced that parish / town councils and neighbourhood forums will be able to apply for grant payments, up to £7,000 per neighbourhood area, to contribute to costs incurred by the group preparing a neighbourhood plan or order. The 2 year support programme will be launched on 15th April 2013.

DCLG have said that they will publish guidelines on eligible grant expenditure when the programme is launched. In the meantime, they have indicated that the grants can contribute to, for example, start-up costs, training sessions, community engagement costs, contribute to required studies, and incidentals such as printing costs.

TYPICAL STAGES AND STEPS TOWARDS DEVELOPING A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

There is no set process for producing Neighbourhood Plans - but there is a growing body of good practice from other parish / town councils and neighbourhood forums to draw on.

The typical stages and steps in the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan are summarised below. The steps may not necessarily need to be undertaken in this order and some may be undertaken concurrently. These are suggestions and may be amended in the light of practical experience as Neighbourhood Plans are progressed. Because a Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory document, some of the steps are obligatory – and these are shown in **bold** in the table below.

1. Getting Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a list of contacts • Get the community on board • Establish a Steering Group • Produce a programme for developing the plan • Develop a communication strategy
2. Identifying the Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather together relevant information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a profile of the area - Identify assets and designations - Review existing plans and strategies - Discussions with stakeholders - Summarise the findings to identify the area's strengths and weaknesses • Define and agree the boundaries of the neighbourhood area with Malvern Hills District Council (<u>MHDC to consult - minimum 6 weeks</u>)
3. Developing a vision and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft the vision and objectives • Check for conformity with strategic policies in the SWDP • Check the draft vision and objectives with the community
4. Drafting the Neighbourhood Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate Options • “Screen” to determine whether an SEA and/or AA is likely to be required • If required, prepare a SEA Scoping Report (<u>parish / town council to consult - minimum 5 weeks</u>) • Assess the impact of options • Develop preferred options (need to ensure that site-related policies are drawn up in negotiation with organisations that will be involved in the delivery of the action) • Develop an implementation plan • Check conformity with strategic policies in the SWDP
5. Consultation and Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-submission consultation and publicity (<u>parish / town council to consult - minimum 6 weeks</u>) • Prepare final Plan Proposal and (if required) SEA and/or AA • Submit Plan Proposal to Malvern Hills District Council (<u>MHDC to consult - minimum 6 weeks</u>)
6. Independent Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Examiner (MHDC to arrange) • Examiner's report published
7. Referendum and Adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referendum (MHDC to arrange) • Adoption (MHDC to adopt Neighbourhood Plan)

Stage 1 - Getting Started

Prepare a list of local contacts

A Neighbourhood Plan should be community-led, with the parish / town council in the driving seat. The plan depends on local leadership and participation to be successful.

Prepare a list of who to involve and record their contact details so that they can be kept informed as the plan progresses. The list could include representatives of community groups, representatives of community services / facilities (e.g. school, doctor, children's centre), elected councillors, businesses, landowners. Throughout the process gather contact details of those interested in the Neighbourhood Plan so they can be updated on progress and invited to comment at each stage.

Additionally, the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations identify the following consultation bodies that the parish / town council should consult before submitting a plan proposal and Malvern Hills District Council should consult after receiving a plan proposal:

- a local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority,
- Coal Authority,
- Homes and Communities Agency,
- Natural England,
- Environment Agency,
- English Heritage,
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited,
- Highways Agency,
- any person to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003; and who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority,
- where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood:
 - Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(7) or continued in existence by virtue of that section,
 - a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) and (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(8),
 - a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(9),
 - a sewerage undertaker,
 - a water undertaker,
- voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area,
- bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area,
- bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area,
- bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area,
- bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area.

When your plan is submitted to the local planning authority, the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations require that it is accompanied by a consultation statement setting out the names of those consulted, a summary of the main issues raised, and how those issues were addressed. It will be easier to produce this statement if a record of community involvement and consultation is kept throughout the process.

Get the community on board

If the community are not supportive of the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan, right from the start, then it will be extremely difficult to produce a document that reflects their priorities and aspirations, and that ultimately gets their support at a referendum.

The wider community should be informed about the parish / town council's intentions and given the chance to get involved right from the start. This could be achieved by holding a public meeting within the community, to explain the intentions of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, to identify broad issues that residents would like it to consider, and to recruit community volunteers for the steering group.

The parish / town council could also write to local groups / organisations to notify them of their intentions and to identify the level of interest these groups may have in taking part in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The key to keeping the community on board is plenty of good publicity and communications at the beginning of, and throughout, the process.

Establish a Steering Group

The parish / town council will need to set up a neighbourhood planning team (steering group) to co-ordinate the project.

Although this will need to feature representation from parish / town councillors, it is also important that wider representation is sought from the community as the goal of the process is to create a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects the vision of the entire community. The more representative the neighbourhood planning team is, the better the plan is likely to be.

Additional representation on the neighbourhood planning team could be sought from:

- residents,
- representatives of community organisations,
- business owners,
- landowners.

In an unparished area, the minimum number of members on a neighbourhood forum is 21, although there is no such stipulation in a parished area.

It will be important for the parish / town council to consider the full range of skills, knowledge and experience that will be required in a neighbourhood planning team. However, it is also important to remember that too large a group may make effective decision-making more difficult.

How the steering group is selected may influence the support the neighbourhood planning process receives from the community. A selection process that is fair, open and inclusive is likely to ensure a greater degree of community support.

If the parish / town council is holding a public meeting then this could be an ideal opportunity to recruit members to join the neighbourhood planning team.

Once the team is in place, it will be important to appoint a Chairman and Secretary, and also possibly a Treasurer and Community Consultation Coordinator. It will also be important to establish what the formal links are between the team and the main body of the parish / town council as the overall project will still need to be under the 'umbrella' of the latter. In this regard, and to help focus the work of the team members, it would be helpful to establish terms of reference for the neighbourhood planning team.

Produce a draft programme / time plan for developing the plan

Before embarking on the main activity of developing the Neighbourhood Plan, it will be helpful for the neighbourhood planning team to produce a draft programme of what it thinks it will have to do throughout the process.

In particular, it is worth thinking about:

- what activities will need to be carried out at each stage e.g. meetings, publicity, surveys, events etc.,
- what resources will be needed to carry out these activities e.g. people, materials, funding,
- how much time should be set aside to accomplish each stage.

This programme will help the neighbourhood planning team to focus and monitor its activity and to think about what resources might be required for developing the Neighbourhood Plan.

It is suggested that sufficient time is allowed in the timetable for the formulation of questionnaires, which always take longer than expected, and time is allowed for processing information, particularly if being undertaken by volunteers. At the drafting proposals stage, it is suggested that time is allowed to set up meetings with decision-making organisations, and time for negotiation on specific policies and actions.

There has been an indication from Government, that they would see the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan taking approximately one year. Emerging experience in other areas suggests that 15 months to two years may not be unrealistic timescales.

Develop a communication strategy

In any community-led planning exercise, communication and publicity with the wider community, from an early stage, and throughout the process, is vital. People are more likely to participate if they are kept informed.

In the case of developing a Neighbourhood Plan where the support of the community at the referendum stage is crucial to its adoption, the need to keep information flowing takes on an even greater significance.

The neighbourhood planning team may find it useful to create an informal and brief 'communication strategy', setting out how and when it means to communicate with the community and other stakeholders.

Different ways of getting messages out to the community include:

- placing regular notices in parish newsletters or magazines,
- using IT – e.g. parish websites, social media, email groups etc.,
- contacting local media (e.g. press, radio, television) for major announcements,
- putting up posters / banners,
- delivering flyers through letterboxes,
- talking with neighbours, community groups, businesses etc.,
- using established community events (e.g. church or village fete) to publicise, consult, or provide feedback on progress.

Useful Examples

- Steering Group Terms of Reference – Herefordshire Council
[http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Setting_up_a_steering_group\(2\).pdf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Setting_up_a_steering_group(2).pdf)
- Website - Much Wenlock
<http://www.wenlockplan.org/>
- Steering Group Terms of Reference – Kinnerley Parish
<http://www.knp.co.uk/evidence.html>
- Steering Group Terms of Reference - Lynton and Lynmouth
http://www.lynplan.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/138556/Steering-Group-terms-of-reference-July-2011.pdf
- Community Engagement Techniques – Herefordshire Council
http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Best_practice_community_engagement_techniques.pdf

Stage 2 - Identifying the Issues

Gather together relevant information

In order to help produce the vision and objectives for the area, it will be helpful for the neighbourhood planning team to get a clear picture of the community's characteristics and understand whether there are any current or emerging proposals that will affect the area.

It makes sense to try and use existing information wherever possible, thus trying to avoid unnecessarily re-inventing the wheel.

Create a profile of your community

Creating a 'profile' of the community will involve gathering statistical data on population size, household size, incomes, family composition etc. This helps to build up a social portrait of the community. Much of this information can be found online. Useful online sources of information include:

- Instant Atlas: Local Area Information by Theme
<http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/research-and-intelligence/information-by-theme.aspx>
- Knowing Our Communities: Ward Profiles
<http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/research-and-intelligence/knowning-our-communities.aspx>
- ONS Neighbourhood Statistics
<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>
- Nomis labour market statistics
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- Worcestershire County Council
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/research-and-intelligence.aspx>

Information about population size, health, employment, education, skills and groups of people with specific needs will help describe the 'baseline environment' which will be important in the event that a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is undertaken.

Identify assets and designations

It may be useful to do a stock take of all of the area's physical assets and take note of the various land-use designations that apply to the neighbourhood area to help understand the constraints and opportunities available for development and for conservation.

The area's physical assets may include community centres / village halls, churches, recreation grounds, play areas, sports facilities, allotments, health facilities, housing stock, footpath networks, highways infrastructure, employment sites etc.

Malvern Hills District Council should be able to provide maps showing, for example, the following:

- Development boundaries,
- Conservation areas,
- Listed buildings,
- Tree Preservation Orders,
- Open spaces such as allotments, churchyards, recreation space,
- Sites of special interest or importance.

A wide range of information and maps about the local environment is available on the following websites:

- What's in your backyard?: Provides access to environmental data at a local level
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/37793.aspx
- Your Right to Know: Public Registers of environmental permits and licences
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/epr/
- Natural England: Publications, maps and data on the natural environment
www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/default.aspx
- Nature on the map: Maps about nature, including the location of designated sites
www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside: Interactive map of environmental information
<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>
- The Land Information Search: Map based tool on land designations or features
www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/inf-d6dfk-mn
- English Heritage: Information on the historic environment
<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/>
www.heritagegateway.org.uk
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/>
- Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/LCA%20SG%20Draft%202011.pdf>

Information about landscape, nature conservation, physical assets and heritage, will help describe the 'baseline environment' if an SEA is required.

Review existing plans and strategies

It will be important for the neighbourhood planning team to try and understand what implications the following plans and strategies have on the community and on the neighbourhood area:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- Local authority planning documents (Saved Local Plan, draft South Worcestershire Development Framework documents, Supplementary Planning Documents)
<http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/>
- Malvern Hills Adopted Local Plan
<http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/cms/planning/local-plan.aspx>
- Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/minerals-and-waste-policy/emerging-minerals-local-plan.aspx>
- Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/minerals-and-waste-policy/waste-core-strategy.aspx>
- Other strategies relating to the environment, transport, etc. produced by different public service providers (Natural England, Environment Agency, Highways Authority)

It will also be helpful to review issues previously identified in other documents produced for, or by, the parish / town council. If the parish / town council have prepared any of the following, consider whether information can be used to inform the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Parish Plans,
- Village Design Statement / Village Appraisal,
- Conservation Area Appraisal.

Discussions with stakeholders

This stage is about engaging with residents, community groups and businesses to ascertain their views and opinions about the area, as well as their needs and aspirations for the future.

A variety of techniques and approaches can be used to maximise opportunities for involvement. These could include:

- survey / questionnaire (hard copy / web-based),
- community event (workshops / exhibitions etc.),
- focus groups or discussions at meetings of local groups,
- techniques tailored for different sectors of the community (e.g. online survey for young people).

The neighbourhood planning team will need to decide which methods to use to engage different sections of the community or to cover particular topics / themes in more depth. Landowners should be invited to comment on site-specific issues. Relevant organisations and hard-to-reach groups should be invited to comment on matters where they have a particular interest.

Some questions the neighbourhood planning team may wish to consider include:

- what are our strengths as a community? What do we do well?
- what can we improve or change in the community?
- what are we missing? What do we need to make the community a better place to live?
- what resources (e.g. people, places, services, land) do we have?

- what opportunities exist in the area?
- what are the barriers (physical, financial, environmental)?

It will also be useful for the neighbourhood planning team to establish contacts and have initial discussions with a range of stakeholders, to understand whether there are any other aspirations for the area that have not yet been gathered.

The team may wish to have discussions with:

- local community organisations,
- local businesses,
- local landowners and/or their representatives,
- officers at Malvern Hills District Council and Worcestershire County Council,
- officers from other public agencies and service providers, as appropriate (e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage etc.).

The neighbourhood planning team may find that some of the information and responses it receives from the community do not really relate to the Neighbourhood Plan per se (for example, issues regarding litter, social activities etc). Whilst these may not be subjects for the Neighbourhood Plan to address, they will still be important issues for the community, and they may be issues which could be addressed via a different route. The parish / town council may wish to formulate a separate action plan to deal with these wider social issues.

Summarise the findings to identify the area's strengths and weaknesses

The neighbourhood planning team will need to analyse all the information it has gathered and summarise the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the neighbourhood area. There will be factual information about the area which may not match with people's perceptions. There will be some topics on which there is broad agreement and some topics where opinion is polarised.

It will be helpful to keep a record of all the sources of evidence to demonstrate how the information leads to the conclusions drawn. This could be particularly important at the Independent Examination.

Define and agree the boundaries of the neighbourhood area with Malvern Hills District Council

The neighbourhood area is the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Plan (or Neighbourhood Development Order) will relate.

The expectation is that in most cases, neighbourhood areas will follow parish boundaries. However, a neighbourhood area can cover only part of a parish or a combination of parishes, if necessary.

If the proposed neighbourhood area covers more than one parish, then consent must be sought from each of the affected parish / town councils. This will also have implications for representation on the steering group and the scale of community engagement that the process will require.

Once the neighbourhood planning team is aware of the issues relating to development in the parish, through the gathering of evidence, then it will be able to make an informed decision on what the neighbourhood area for the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should be.

A proposal for designating a neighbourhood area must be submitted by the parish / town council(s) to Malvern Hills District Council, for their approval.

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations state that an application for the designation of a neighbourhood area must include a:

- map which identifies the area to which the area application relates,
- statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area, and a
- statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

Malvern Hills District Council must consult on the application for a period of not less than six weeks.

After designating a neighbourhood area, Malvern Hills District Council must publish the name of the neighbourhood area, a map which identifies the area, and the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the designation to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area.

Useful Examples

- Creating a Questionnaire – Herefordshire Council
http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Creating_a_questionnaire.pdf
- Questionnaire analysis - Kinnerley Parish
<http://www.kpnp.co.uk/onlinepolls.html>
- Application for Designation as a Neighbourhood Area – Kempsey Parish Council
<http://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/cms/planning/planning-policy/the-planning-policy-framework/neighbourhood-planning.aspx>
- Questionnaire analysis - Lyonshall
<http://www.lyonshall.net/nfDocuments.asp?Section=Lyonshall+Neighbourhood+Development+Plan&ButtonPressed=Sadmin137897>
- Application for Designation as a Neighbourhood Area - Chaddesley Corbett
<http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lgnl-pages/planning-and-regulatory-servic/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning.aspx>
- Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice - Chaddesley Corbett

<http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/cms/non-lqnl-pages/planning-and-regulatory-servic/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning.aspx>

- Application for Designation as a Neighbourhood Area - Pebworth

<http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/cms/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/np-consultation.aspx>

Stage 3 - Developing a Vision and Objectives

Developing a vision and objectives for the community will be an important first stage in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The vision should be an overarching statement, or series of statements, describing what the community will be like to live and work in, within 15-20 years time or the Local Plan period.

The objectives will set out what the community wants to achieve in order to help realise the vision. Detailed policies and actions can then follow from these objectives.

Draft the vision and objectives

As the Neighbourhood Plan will ultimately form part of the statutory planning framework for South Worcestershire (assuming it passes the examination and referendum), it would make sense for the vision of the plan to cover the same time period as that of the SWDP, which will run up until 2030.

The vision and objectives should be based on the information gathered during the Identifying the Issues stage. The neighbourhood planning team could draft a series of vision statements, setting out what it will be like to live and work in the area in 2030, or there could be one single vision statement that will describe this in fewer words. However it is drafted, it is important that the vision is realistic and achievable.

A typical Neighbourhood Plan vision statement might include topics such as:

- what the area will look like,
- what facilities there will be (eg. parks, GP surgeries, shops, schools) and what their qualities will be,
- what the social and economic outlook for the area will be.

The objectives will be more specific and will set out how the vision will be achieved. For each element of the vision, there may be one or a number of objectives, depending on the different priorities of the community.

For example:

- Part of the vision may state that there will be *“accessible, high quality areas of green space that allow for recreation and social interaction amongst all age groups”*.
- An objective, leading from this, could be *“to seek the provision of an informal, outdoor recreation space, within easy walking distance from the centre of the settlement.”*

Check for conformity with strategic policies in the SWDP

Once the neighbourhood planning team has drafted a vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan, it will be important to check that it does not stray too far from or offer a contrary position to the SWDP or propose less development.

The planning policy team at Malvern Hills District Council can advise the neighbourhood planning team on whether the draft vision and objectives are in general conformity.

Check the draft vision and objectives with the community

Before progressing, it is important to check that the community supports the draft vision and objectives for the area, as drafted by the neighbourhood planning team. There are many ways in which this endorsement can be sought, including:

- making copies available for public distribution and asking for comments,
- meeting with community groups and asking for their feedback,
- organising informal discussion groups,
- holding public meetings or drop-in events,
- publishing information in the local newsletter or website and providing an address to receive peoples' feedback.

Following informal consultation on the draft vision and objectives, any necessary amendments can be made before moving on to developing the detailed content of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Useful Examples

- Developing a Vision and Objectives – Herefordshire Council
http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Developing_Vision_and_Objectives.pdf
- Dawlish Parish Neighbourhood Plan, September 2011, Consultation Draft
<http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13658>
- The Community's Vision for Lockleaze – An integrated approach towards creating a sustainable community, 2010
<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbm9xb2NrbGVhemV2b2ljZXxneDoyZDZjNjFmMTExZWVhZDAz>
- Identifying values and objectives: Devonshire Park Neighbourhood Plan
<http://devonshirepark.wordpress.com/>

Stage 4 - Drafting the Neighbourhood Plan

Once the vision and objectives have been drafted and approval has been sought from the wider community, the neighbourhood planning team can start to think about the detailed content of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Generate options

It is recommended that the neighbourhood planning team generate options and explore whether they meet the vision and objectives, making clear that none of the options is a preferred option. Options may be general or specific and will vary depending on what the Plan is seeking to achieve. In generating options it is useful to consider a “do nothing” option which is essentially what would happen to the area and sites if the Neighbourhood Plan was not implemented.

It should be borne in mind that the Government’s intention is that Neighbourhood Plans should set out policies on the development and use of land in a neighbourhood area. The options generated should be credible, justifiable and achievable.

Is a Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environment Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment required?

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

An SEA is required for Neighbourhood Plans if they are likely to have significant environmental effects.

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC and was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or the ‘SEA Regulations’. Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’ (ODPM 2005) – available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practical_guidesea.pdf

Neighbourhood Plans are covered by these regulations but not all Plans will need a detailed assessment. There is a process known as ‘screening’ where those preparing a plan can seek a formal opinion as to whether an SEA is needed.

Annex II of the SEA Directive provides a list of criteria that can be used to judge whether an environmental effect is significant. Whilst the significance of environmental effects is to some extent a matter of professional judgement, if a neighbourhood plan has ambitious content then an SEA is likely to be required.

If an SEA is required, Government guidance suggests that it may not require the involvement of external consultants. The most straightforward way of recording impact assessments is to use a “do-it-yourself” SA template (incorporating the requirements of a SEA). An example is provided by Levett-Therivel which can be downloaded from the following website - <http://www.levett-therivel.co.uk/DIYSA.pdf>

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) / Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The purpose of a HRA is to determine whether a plan or policy is likely to have significant effects on international / European sites designated for their nature conservation interest (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites). HRA is often referred to as Appropriate Assessment (AA), although the requirement for AA is first determined by an initial “screening” stage undertaken as part of the full HRA.

The requirement for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of plans or projects is outlined in Article 6(3) and (4) of the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora ("Habitats Directive") and transposed into English Law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

Where a full Appropriate Assessment is required, this is likely to involve the engagement of professional advisers to carry out the study as it must be concluded that the plan will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The purpose of a SA is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of a plan. In doing so, a SA helps to ensure that decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development.

There is no legislative requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to have a Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

It is worth noting however that an SEA can be incorporated into an assessment on the wider effects of a plan, such as an SA in a combined Sustainability Report. Thus, a parish / town council producing a neighbourhood plan may still decide to undertake an SA if it feels it would be useful in appraising the plan's impact, particularly where there is a requirement for an SEA.

In conclusion, not every neighbourhood plan will need a SEA or AA – it will depend entirely on whether what is proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. It is recommended that the neighbourhood planning team contact the planning policy team at Malvern Hills District Council at the start of the process with a view to “screening” the contents of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan to determine whether a SEA and / or AA will be required.

Develop preferred options

Based on the agreed objectives (and the results of the SEA / AA exercise, if required) the neighbourhood planning team should consider what policies could be put in place to try and achieve the objectives.

Policies may take one of the following forms:

- policies may allocate specific sites for particular types and scales of development (e.g. residential, employment etc.),

- policies may specify particular requirements relating to each or any allocation (e.g. access, landscaping, location of green space, assessments needed etc.),
- policies may specify sites within the neighbourhood area to be protected or enhanced as environmental assets or areas of landscape character,
- policies may be more generic and apply to any future development within the neighbourhood area (e.g. local design policies, policies relating to transport and access etc.).

There is a need to ensure that policies are achievable and the neighbourhood planning team should ensure that any site-related policies are drawn up in negotiation with the relevant landowners or site promoters.

For site allocations and site-related policies, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to include maps showing proposed site locations and boundaries.

The neighbourhood planning team may find it useful to produce these maps as it starts to draft the Neighbourhood Plan policies. Showing proposed locations on maps will help in any communication with the wider community and can assist in getting their views on particular sites.

Develop an implementation plan

The neighbourhood planning team may also wish to draw up an implementation plan, showing what action is needed “on the ground” in order to achieve the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. This need not be part of the main Neighbourhood Plan itself, but could form an appendix to the main document, which continues to evolve as actions progress and new ones emerge.

An implementation plan would not set out policies but would contain the actions that need to be undertaken in order to deliver the policies that are in the Neighbourhood Plan.

An implementation plan should contain actions that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely).

When developing actions, the neighbourhood planning team may wish to consider the following principles:

- priority - is the action a high, medium or low priority?
- responsibility - which organisation is the lead for delivering the action?
- timescale - by what date should the action be carried out?
- partners - does the action require support from partners?
- resources - is funding or any other resource required?

An implementation plan must be drawn up in partnership with organisations that will be involved in delivering the actions. These stakeholders should also have been approached and involved in early discussions with the team as part of the information gathering stage.

If the community wants to “make development happen” it could consider, as part of the implementation plan, the creation of a Neighbourhood Development Order or a Community Right to Build Order.

Check conformity with strategic policies in the SWDP

At this stage, it will be advisable for the neighbourhood planning team to check with the planning team at Malvern Hills District Council to ensure that the emerging policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the SWDP.

Useful Examples

- Developing a Vision and Objectives – Herefordshire Council
http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Developing_Vision_and_Objectives.pdf
- Generating Options – Herefordshire Council
http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/Generating_options.pdf
- Development options: - Alsager Congleton, Middlewich and Sandbach Town Councils
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning/spatial_planning/cheshire_east_local_plan/town_strategies.aspx

Stage 5 - Consultation and Submission

Pre-submission consultation and publicity

Before submitting the plan proposal to Malvern Hills District Council, the parish / town council or neighbourhood forum is required by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations to undertake a pre-submission consultation for a minimum of six weeks. The consultation is required to:

- publicise the proposals, bringing them to the attention of a majority of those who live, work or operate a business in the neighbourhood area,
- publish contact details for representations and information about the proposed timetable for consultation,
- consult any statutory consultees whose “interests are affected”.

If an SEA / AA was required, it should also be made available for comment as part of the consultation.

The neighbourhood planning team should also consult with parish / town councils adjacent to its own parish boundary.

Malvern Hills District Council can help neighbourhood planning teams to identify wider stakeholder organisations that should be consulted on the draft plan.

Prepare final Neighbourhood Plan

Once consultation has been carried out with residents and local and wider stakeholders, an analysis of comments should be made and the neighbourhood planning team should consider whether any amendments need to be made to the draft Plan and SEA / AA (if required) before submitting it to Malvern Hills District Council.

Submit Plan Proposal to Malvern Hills District Council

Once the neighbourhood planning team has made any necessary amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan, it should submit the plan proposal and SEA / AA (if required) to Malvern Hills District Council.

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations state that that the submitted plan proposal must include:

- a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood plan relates,
- a consultation statement - which contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood plan, explains how they were consulted, summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted, and describes how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood plan,
- the proposed neighbourhood development plan, and
- a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act – ie, that the process that has been followed is in accordance with the Localism Act and is compatible with EU obligations, national policy and strategic policies in the SWDP.

Malvern Hills District Council will conduct a check of the plan proposal to ensure that it meets the above requirements, and if it does, will arrange for the independent examination of the document.

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Malvern Hills District Council will consult on the plan proposal documents outlined above for a minimum of six weeks on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the proposal to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. Malvern Hills District Council is also required to notify any consultation body which is referred to in the consultation statement that the plan proposal has been received.

Stage 6 - Independent Examination

Appointment of Examiner

Malvern Hills District Council will decide, in collaboration with the neighbourhood planning team, on who to appoint to undertake an independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. The examination will be paid for by Malvern Hills District Council.

The main function of the examination will be to check the relationship of the Neighbourhood Plan to:

- EU obligations,
- national planning policies,
- strategic policies in the SWDP, and
- neighbouring Neighbourhood Plans.

In general, the examiner is likely to consider written representations during the examination period, rather than oral representations. However he/she may decide that an oral representation is preferable in certain situations. In this case a public hearing must be held.

Examiner's report published

The result of the examination will be a report, issued by the independent examiner. The examiner's report will have one of the following recommendations:

- the draft Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum,
- it should proceed to a referendum, subject to certain amendments, or
- the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should be refused.

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Malvern Hills District Council will then consider the examiner's report to decide whether or not the recommendations should be followed and publish their decision, and their reasons for it, in a "decision statement".

Useful Examples

- Upper Eden Neighbourhood Plan Inspectors Report
<http://www.eden.gov.uk/upperedenneighbourhoodplan/>

Stage 7 - Referendum and Adoption

If you get to this point, well done!

Referendum

Assuming Malvern Hills District Council decides that the draft Neighbourhood Plan can proceed then the local authority will organise and pay for a referendum.

The referendum will normally be open to any individual registered to vote in the parish, but the independent examiner (or Malvern Hills District Council) may take the decision that the referendum should be extended, if certain policies within the plan have particular implications for surrounding communities.

A referendum is required to gauge community support for the Neighbourhood Plan. If over 50% of those who vote on the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan vote favourably, then the Plan will be adopted by Malvern Hills District Council.

If a neighbourhood area is wholly or predominantly business in nature and has been designated a "Business Area" by the local authority (these are unlikely in Malvern Hills District) there would be two referenda (one for residents and another for businesses) and the results considered separately. If there was a conflict in the results then the decision as to whether or not to adopt the Plan would rest with the local planning authority.

Adoption

If a majority vote is achieved, Malvern Hills District Council will adopt the Neighbourhood Plan, including policies which will take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the SWDP, where they are in conflict.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is brought into legal force, it forms part of the statutory Development Plan for that area. Consequently, decisions on whether or not to grant planning permission in the neighbourhood area will be made by Malvern Hills District Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

To ensure that the momentum is not lost and that community aspirations are met it is suggested that parish / town councils may also find it valuable to monitor the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and any associated implementation plan.

Useful Examples:

- Upper Eden Neighbourhood Plan 2012 - 2025
<http://www.eden.gov.uk/upperedenneighbourhoodplan/>

SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

Malvern Hills District Council

During the process of developing Neighbourhood Plans Malvern Hills District Council will offer continuing support to communities. This will include:

- Generic Neighbourhood Planning advice and guidance (e.g. the process, how to get started, what others are doing locally),
- Advice and assistance in terms of planning community and stakeholder engagement (e.g. what techniques could be used and when),
- Advice and guidance on whether emerging policies are in general conformity with national planning policies and the SWDP,
- Advice on technical, planning-related aspects of producing the plan (e.g. drafting policies, undertaking environmental assessments, negotiations with developers etc.),
- Signposting to relevant contacts within the District Council or within other stakeholder organisations (e.g. Worcestershire County Council, the Environment Agency, English Heritage etc.),
- In kind support through the provision of materials (e.g. maps, display boards for exhibitions and events etc.),
- Appointing an independent examiner,
- Arranging and paying for the referendum,
- Adopting the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan.

It should be noted that whilst Malvern Hills District Council can provide advice, it cannot write the Neighbourhood Plan for you.

The key contact at Malvern Hills District Council for Neighbourhood Planning support is:

David Clarke

Development Plans and Conservation
Malvern Hills District Council
The Council House
Avenue Road
Malvern
Worcestershire WR14 2AF

Telephone: 01684 862370

Email: david.clarke@malvernhills.gov.uk

Where to look for further information

- CLG, 2012 - Neighbourhood Planning Regulations – <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>
- Locality – Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap <http://locality.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-Roadmap.pdf>
- CPRE, 2012 - How to shape where you live: a guide to neighbourhood planning - <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning/item/2689-how-to-shape-whereyou-live-a-guide-to-neighbourhood-planning>
- PAS, 2011 - Neighbourhood Planning – a guide for ward councillors <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/aio/1256514>
- TCPA, 2011 - Your Place, Your Plan - http://www.tcpa.org.uk/data/files/your_place_your_plan.pdf

Where to get further advice

- www.planninghelp.org.uk
- www.pas.gov.uk
- www.planningportal.gov.uk
- <http://locality.org.uk/movement/policy/neighbourhood-planning/>
- <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/4591>
- <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>