

PARISH PLAN AND DESIGN STATEMENT – MORE ABOUT

An effective Parish Plan

- Parish Plans should: identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved. They should set out a vision for the community in the future and identify the action needed to tackle issues of concern in addition to including everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in the community, from employment needs to playgrounds. The Parish Plan should consult everyone and give them a chance to say what they think about the social, economic and environmental issues affecting them and how they'd like to see their community improved during the next 5, 10 or even 15 years. The whole community has to be involved, not just those who come along to Parish Council meetings.

An effective Design Statement:

- is developed, researched, written and edited by local people;
- is representative of the views of the village as a whole;
- has involved a wide section of the village community in its production;
- describes the visual character of the village;
- demonstrated how local character and distinctiveness can be protected and enhanced in new development;
- is compatible with the statutory planning system and the local planning context;
- is suitable for approval as supplementary planning guidance;
- is applicable to all forms and scale of development; and
- is about managing change in the village, not preventing it

A DS is important to local people because:

- it sets out the character of the village in a way that will encourage locally distinctive design;
- it gives the community a recognised voice in the planning processes that affect the visual quality of the village;
- it supports and strengthens the role of the parish council when consulted over planning applications;
- it is representative view of local people of the character of the village;
- it demonstrates local commitment to high quality design and appropriate development that will improve the quality of life of the village;
- it enables local priorities to be considered in the development process;
- it enables local people to be able to respond in an informed and professional manner to planning and development proposals in the village; and
- it is applicable to all villages and settlements, not just conservation or specially designated areas.

A DS is important to planners because:

- it represents the view of the whole village community;
- it complements the existing planning and development control system and strengthens the local planning authority's position when advising or negotiating on design and at appeal;
- it provides a structured, flexible approach to assessing village character;
- it is not a drain on their resources as it is undertaken by the community themselves;
- it is applicable to all areas not just conservation of designated areas;
- it enables local people to make a positive contribution to the development debate, rather than having to rely on protest and a NIMBY (Not in my back yard) stance to make their views heard;
- it provides support for elected members' decisions;
- it can be used as guidance in design and development briefing, when approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance;
- it enables an informed dialogue to take place with the community; and
- it can be material evidence when used at appeals, when approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance

A DS is important to designers and developers because:

- it describes the visual qualities and character of the villages as an inspiration for design;
- it describes the character of the village as perceived by local people;
- it can shorten the process of planning negotiation and application by reducing conflict and NIMBY responses; and
- it encourages villagers to take a positive view of development