

Statement of Community Involvement



Autumn 2025

East Devon District Council Statement of Community Involvement



This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the policy for consulting the community, and anyone else interested in planning, on planning policy documents and planning applications in East Devon.

The SCI covers the following documents and proposals:

- **Planning Policy documents (including the Local Plan and other Development Plan Documents (DPD's), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) and other guidance)**
- **Neighbourhood Plans**
- **Planning Applications**

The majority of the SCI deals with the plan making process (covering policy documents such as the Local Plan and guidance associated with it). It also sets out the minimum consultation we will undertake on planning applications, pre-submission requirements for 'major' developments and the support we will offer to local communities undertaking Neighbourhood Plans.

Contact details

Planning Policy
East Devon District Council
Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, HONITON, EX14 1EJ

Phone: 01404 515616

Email: planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk

www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/
[@eastdevon](https://www.instagram.com/eastdevon)

To request this information in an alternative format or language please
phone 01404 515616 or
email csc@eastdevon.gov.uk

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Devon District Council recognises the importance of community engagement and is committed to involving people in the planning process. Community consultation is not just about inviting people to comment on planning applications; it is important in making sure that the whole community is given the chance to influence the wider development framework within which those individual decisions are made.
- 1.2 You can play an important and active role in the planning system by having a say in planning decisions affecting your local community. The main ways you can get involved are:
- Having your say during public consultation on draft plans and other planning policy documents
 - Commenting on planning applications (including other types of consents)
- 1.3 Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to have an up to date Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how it will involve the community in plan-making and when considering planning applications. In this document we set out who will be consulted, how we will consult and when it will take place.
- 1.4 The SCI is divided into three sections and sets out:
- Your opportunities for involvement in the preparation of plans and **planning policy** documents
 - The publicity and consultation that is carried out in relation to specific applications in what is known as the **development management** process
 - The **neighbourhood planning** process and opportunities for involvement in the preparation of neighbourhood plans, neighbourhood development orders and community right to build orders
- 1.5 The SCI sets out the publicity and consultation procedures that we will use, explains the statutory requirements that we must meet at each stage and what other methods may be undertaken in addition to these minimum requirements. We must comply with the adopted SCI in preparing relevant planning policy documents and in determining planning applications.

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- 1.6 We are required to review and update the Statement of Community Involvement regularly, and at least every 5 years. This revision to the SCI incorporates a number of factual updates arising from national changes to planning policies and procedures and revised contact details to bring the SCI up to date.
- 1.7 During the Covid-19 pandemic the Council introduced various new ways to become involved in planning matters through digital and online channels. This proved very effective and the SCI now reflects how the public and other stakeholders access information relating to the planning process. This includes an increased use and availability of electronic communications and increased use of social media to access information and interact with the Council. We have recognised the importance of ensuring that consultation is cost effective and that the Council is working effectively to free up limited resources, positively making best use of resources whilst helping to facilitate more convenient and effective engagement with the planning system and encouraging wider public participation.
- 1.8 Whilst it is likely that digital forms of publicity and consultation will continue to grow, we recognise that not all our communities will be able to readily access information digitally. In reviewing our SCI, we have sought to ensure there is equal opportunity for all to participate in the planning process and that information continues to be available in physical locations and in paper format. Upon request we will endeavour to accommodate reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities or other special requirements.

The National Policy Context

- 1.9 This SCI has been produced in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These highlight the government's commitment to engaging the public in planning, both in plan making and decision taking. The NPPF states that plans should "be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees". In relation to decision-taking, it states that "early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system".

Responsibility for making decisions

Officers

- 1.10 Council officers are responsible for conducting research, drafting planning policies, and evaluating planning applications. In certain instances, they may

prepare public reports or exercise delegated authority to make decisions. Significant decisions are typically made by Council committees, and occasionally by the Full Council. At these meetings, officers present recommendations, but the final decisions rest with the elected members of the Committee or Council.

- 1.11 Council officers offer expert advice on the technical aspects of planning, drawing on their professional experience. They are the primary point of contact for enquiries related to planning matters and provide support to both members of the public and elected Councillors. Their assistance covers all areas of the planning process, including planning applications and the development of planning policy.

Councillors

- 1.12 Councillors—also referred to as members—are the locally elected representatives for each area within the district and represent residents in matters covered by the District Council. The district is divided into wards, with each ward represented by one or more Councillors. Councillors participate in Council meetings, and many also serve on committees such as the Planning Committee and Strategic Planning Committee. Within these committees, members consider public statements, review and debate reports prepared by officers, ask questions, and ultimately vote on the recommendations presented.
- 1.13 Councillors serve as a vital link between the community and the Council, liaising with residents and raising concerns with Council officers. If not serving on the Planning Committee, your local Councillor can act as an advocate for residents or applicants in relation to planning applications. They can also offer guidance on the planning process and discuss local planning issues affecting the area. Councillors have the authority to request that applications be considered by committee, and there are formal provisions allowing them to address committee meetings. To contact your local Councillor, a full list of names and contact details is available on the relevant EDDC website page [Who is my councillor? - East Devon](#).

Parish and Town Councils

- 1.14 Parish and Town Councillors are elected representatives covering parish matters at a very local level. There are Parish and Town Councils throughout the district, these are formally notified of planning applications and are also consulted on planning policy issues and may choose to produce Neighbourhood Plans. Most Parish and Town Councils have their own

planning committees where they discuss applications and agree on a response to submit to EDDC.

Your Local Member of Parliament

- 1.15 The role of your local Member of Parliament (MP) is to represent the people of their constituency in Parliament. MPs can act as an advocate on behalf of individuals or groups in a wide range of situations, however, MPs are entirely separate from local government and do not have a role within it or any special rights or privileges. Therefore, when planning concerns are raised with MPs, these are often passed directly to the Council for consideration.

2. Plan-Making

Publicity and consultation on plans and planning policy documents

3. Consultation we will undertake when producing a Planning Policy document

Stage in Plan making	Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
Local Development Scheme	No set duration	<p>The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the project plan for production of future planning policy documents. It sets out plans that will be prepared and the timetable for their production, consultation and adoption.</p> <p>https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/policy-work/what-policy-documents-will-we-produce-and-how-will-we-consult-on-them/local-development-scheme/</p> <p>The LDS will be available in electronic form on the Council webpage.</p>

EVIDENCE GATHERING AND PREPARING DRAFT DOCUMENTS	<p>For the Local Plan and other DPD's this is the stage where we gather evidence and undertake engagement to determine what the plan should cover. Consultation is ongoing throughout this stage. The number and type of consultation documents we produce will depend on the issues involved and the revisions required. (Regulations 18 and 19 of Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)</p> <p>For SPD's, this is the stage where a draft SPD is produced for consultation which</p>	<p>For the Local Plan and other DPD's, a minimum of 6 weeks for the consultation document stage</p> <p>For other Policy Documents, a minimum of 4 weeks</p>	<p>EVIDENCE GATHERING</p> <p>We will gather evidence through some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing data • Use of specialist consultants • Exhibitions and Roadshows (where we provide material and/or officer attendance) • Workshops (where we work with interested parties to explore issues) • Focus groups (where issues or policies are discussed and interested parties give us feedback) • Surgeries (where advice is given by professionals on their particular area of expertise) • Attending Meetings of Other Groups • One-to-One Meetings • Questionnaires • Consultation with Parish Councils and elected Members <p>Any technical or background document that forms a (substantive) part of our evidence base will be available in electronic form on the Council webpage. We will endeavour to make these available as they are completed (although this may require authority from District Councillors).</p> <p>In relation to a local plan addressing Gypsy and Traveller issues the Council will have regard to the advice in Planning policy for traveller sites (2024) when preparing the evidence base.</p> <p>Details of the findings of consultation events will be available on our website and in paper format upon request.</p> <p>CONSULTATION</p> <p>We will notify those bodies, groups and individuals that we consider likely to have an interest in the subject of a Planning Policy document that we propose to prepare it, and invite representations about what it should contain and any proposals we have put forward. Any representations will be taken into account when preparing the document for consultation.</p> <p>Consultation will normally include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publicising it on our website and in any EDDC newsletter; • notifying any party whose details we hold and who has expressed an interest in the subject.
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	<p>sets out the approach that the Council intends to take (Regulation 12 and 13 of Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)</p> <p>Other guidance will also be produced in draft form for consultation</p> <p>As a minimum we must notify certain parties (as set out in the statutory regulations) that we are proposing a plan and invite them to comment on what it should contain. When we prepare the plan we must take these comments into account.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issuing a press release; • notifying those ‘consultation bodies’ referred to in the Statement of Community Involvement; • presenting to the Agents Forum, if appropriate; • notifying any specific interest groups/organisations; • advising adjoining authorities, which could include County Councils, other District and Parish Councils; • notifying District Councillors and Parish Councils; and • making the document available at EDDC reception. Note- If, under extraordinary events such as the Covid pandemic restrictions of 2020 and 2021, the Exmouth and Honiton District Council offices are closed to the public, documents will not be available to inspect at the reception desks. Alternative arrangements to view paper copies will be arranged upon request. <p>It may also include measures such as posters on local noticeboards, letters to residents, local events but this will depend on the resources available and the nature of the Policy document.</p> <p>The notification will give:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details about the Policy document; • details of where and when it may be inspected; • details of how to make representations; • details setting out that those making representations may request notification of our decision; <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the date by which representations should be received (being no less than 4/6 weeks) . <p>Our usual practice is to provide a representation form for responses but to also accept written responses in other formats and emails. Where someone is unable to respond in writing an Officer can act as a scribe provided the respondent gives their permission and confirms the content is accurate. It will be made clear that all responses will usually be made public, subject to redaction of some personal information and any racist or inappropriate content. Representations will then be recorded electronically and made available on our website. It should be noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone may make representations about a document • All representations must be received by the date specified in the notification.
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	<p>Supporting Documents</p> <p>Depending on the type of Policy document being produced, a variety of supporting documents may be required to inform it. Some documents are a legal requirement and these are described opposite.</p> <p>Consultation on SA report takes place alongside the Local Plan/DPD</p>	<p>SA/SEA- a minimum 5 weeks consultation with the ‘consultation bodies’ on a scoping report</p> <p>HRA- A minimum of 4 weeks for statutory consultees at stage a). A further 4 weeks for the public on the screening or full assessment</p> <p>EIA- A minimum of 4 weeks</p>	<p>Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) - At key stages of Local Plan and other DPD production, a sustainability appraisal (SA) will be undertaken. This report will detail the likely significant environmental, social and economic effects of each proposal or option and will be undertaken and made available for public comment, usually alongside the Local Plan. If consultation leads to the approach changing significantly this will be reviewed and re-consulted on. The SA report will be considered by the Inspector as part of the Local Plan or DPD examination. Strategic Environmental Assessment is also a requirement for the Local Plan and other DPDs, but this is incorporated within the SA report.</p> <p>Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - This assessment process requires the Council to screen the emerging policy document for potential impacts on the environment or internationally important habitats or species. The screening assessment may conclude that either:</p> <p>a) there will be no likely significant negative effects and a full assessment is not required, in which case the HR screening report should be referred to Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency for a period of at least 4 weeks (6 weeks is good practice). They may agree with the conclusion of the screening report or may recommend that a full assessment is required); Or</p> <p>b) there may or will be significant negative effects and a full assessment is required as part of the SPD work (in which case a full assessment must be carried out and the effects noted/addressed and/or mitigated).</p> <p>The screening and any subsequent full assessments will then be consulted upon in the same way as, and usually alongside, the Policy document.</p> <p>Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) - The Council is required to screen the emerging policy document for potential impacts on those with protected characteristics and to ensure they are not disadvantaged as a result of proposals. An EqIA will be made available for public comment, usually alongside the policy document. This will identify any potential impact on those with protected characteristics and outline how these will be mitigated. If an initial screening identifies a significant potential impact, a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken. If consultation leads to the approach changing significantly this will be reviewed and re-consulted on.</p>
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Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
			Consultation statement - All Policy documents require a Consultation Statement that sets out who was consulted, how they were consulted and where documents and other material were available to access, including any measures taken to ensure inclusivity. It will summarise the main issues raised and explain how these were addressed. For the Local Plan and other DPD's this is called a representation statement

PUBLICATION	<p>Publication of the Document</p> <p>For Local Plans and other DPD's this will be the document that we intend to submit to the Secretary of State) for consideration and subsequent adoption (Regulations 19 and 20 of Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)</p> <p>Anyone may make representations on the 'proposed submission document' at this stage, but they must be received by the planning authority by the date specified in the 'Statement of Representation Procedure'</p>	<p>For the Local Plan and other DPD's, a minimum of 6 weeks</p> <p>For other Policy Documents, a minimum of 4 weeks. Although exceeding requirements, it is usual practice to consult on SPD's for 6 weeks</p>	<p>For Local Plans and other DPD's</p> <p>A minimum of six weeks formal public consultation will be undertaken in readiness for plan Examination. The following documents will be made available on the Council's web site and at the main Council Offices in East Devon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant local plan or DPD • A submission policies map (if applicable) • The relevant sustainability report • A representation statement giving details of which bodies and persons were invited to make representations (under regulation 18) and how this was done, a summary of the main issues raised and how they have been addressed in the local plan. • Any relevant supporting documents. <p>Details will also be provided of where and when the above documents are available for inspection and this will be sent to the bodies and persons invited to make representations. This is called a 'statement of representation procedure'.</p> <p>It will be made clear that all responses will usually be made public, subject to redaction of some personal information and any racist or inappropriate content. Representations will then be recorded electronically and made available on our website. Redacted information will be shown on copies that will be sent to the Planning Inspector and may be viewed at the council office.</p> <p>For SPD's and other policy documents</p> <p>A minimum of four weeks formal public consultation will be undertaken on the revised SPD/other Policy document and the consultation statement. The consultation will follow the same format set out for the previous stage.</p> <p>The following documents will be made available on the Council's web site and at the main Council Offices in East Devon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant SPD or policy document • The consultation statement • Any relevant supporting documents.
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Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
	For SPD's this will be the document that we intend to adopt (Regulation 12 and 13 of Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)		It will be made clear that all responses will usually be made public, subject to redaction of some personal information and any racist or inappropriate content. Representations will then be recorded electronically and made available on our website.

SUBMISSION	<p>Submission of the Document</p> <p><u>Local Plans and other DPD's</u></p> <p>This is the stage the Local Plan or other DPD is sent to an Appointed Person (an Independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State)</p> <p>Before making recommendations on the plan, the Inspector must consider any representations made on the published plan</p> <p>There is no equivalent stage for SPDs and other policy documents as the decision is made by the Council rather</p>		<p>We will send the following documents to the Inspector in electronic or paper form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sustainability appraisal report; • A submission policies map, if the adoption of the local plan would result in changes to the adopted policies map; • A statement setting out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which bodies and persons were invited to make representation on the content of the plan (Preparation stage); • How those bodies were invited to make representations; • A summary of the main issues raised in those representations; • How any of those representations have been taken into account; • If representations were made at the publication stage, the number of representations made and a summary of the main issues raised; and • If no representations were received a statement that none were received; • Copies of any representations made at the publication stage; and • Any supporting documents the local planning authority consider relevant including the Equalities Statement and any assessment under the Habitats Regulations. <p>We will make these documents available as soon as practicable, and notify anyone with an interest that the Local Plan/DPD has been submitted.</p>
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Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
	than an independent Inspector		

Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
EXAMINATION	<p>Examination Stage</p> <p><u>Local Plans and other DPD's</u></p> <p>An inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination. The Inspector will determine whether the plan has complied with various legal requirements (including the 'duty to co-operate') and whether it is 'sound'.</p> <p>There is no equivalent stage for SPDs and other policy documents</p>		<p>We will publish (on our web site and at our main Council Offices) details of the date, time and place of the hearing and the name of the Inspector at least 6 weeks before the opening of the hearing. We will also send these details to anyone who maintains a representation on the plan.</p>

Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>Publication of the recommendations of the appointed person</p> <p><u>Local Plans and other DPD's</u></p> <p>We must publish the recommendations and reasons of the Inspector as soon as reasonably practical after receipt of their report.</p> <p>There is no equivalent stage for SPDs and other policy documents although a report will be considered by the Council setting out the reasons for recommending it for adoption</p>		<p>We will publish the Inspector's recommendations and reasons on our web site and at our principal offices. We will also advise those people who requested it that the recommendations are available.</p>

Stage in Plan making		Consultation Duration- (excluding Bank Holidays)	Consultation that we will undertake for each stage of Planning Policy document production
ADOPTION	<p>Adoption</p> <p>This is the stage where the document is formally adopted and given full weight in decision making</p>		<p>As soon as possible after the policy document is adopted (by resolution of the local planning authority) we will publish on our web site and make available at our main office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local plan, DPD, SPD or other policy document; • An adoption statement including the date on which it was adopted (this will also be sent to anyone who asked to be notified and, in the case of a Local Plan or DPD, we will also send a copy to the Secretary of State). In the case of an SPD, the adoption statement will also include, if applicable, any modifications made (pursuant to section 23(1) of the Act). • Any other supporting documents and, in the case of a Local Plan or other DPD, a copy of the sustainability appraisal document and adoption statement. • Details of when and where the plan can be inspected. <p>We will usually issue a press release advising that the policy document has been adopted.</p>
	Monitoring and Review		<p>Monitoring and Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will notify interested parties of monitoring processes/the Monitoring Report and of document Review (if proposed)
	<p>In addition for each stage we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the potential for holding stakeholder events. We welcome your suggestions as to events which would be of particular worth or value. • Issue relevant and informative press releases and press articles. • Make information available in a variety of formats so that those with special requirements are able to participate in the consultation. This may include: <p>*Large Print *Different font types/colours *Audio version (via our website) *Translation into other languages (via our website) *Face to face meetings with Officers</p>		

4. Development Management

The Council, as local planning authority, is required to undertake a formal period of public consultation, prior to deciding a planning application. This is prescribed in [article 15 of the Development Management Procedure Order](#). There are separate arrangements for listed buildings which are set out in [regulation 5](#) and [regulation 5A of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Regulations 1990](#) (as amended).

Planning Applications

In line with legislation, as a minimum planning applications will be advertised in one of the following ways:

- through an advertisement in the local newspaper;
- by posting a notice on the application site; or
- by a letter to immediate neighbours.

Additional consultation, using two or more of these methods and by writing to less immediate neighbours or other interested parties, may be carried out depending on the circumstances. This reflects current practice in development management. The time period for making comments will be set out in the publicity accompanying the planning application. Although most applications are subject to a 21 day consultation period, this can vary depending on the type of application and can range from 14 to 30 days. The consultation deadline for each specific application will be clearly stated in the letter, notice, advert and online. Information on statutory publicity requirements is available on the Government's website. The Council is mindful that in some instances consultation periods may not align with the timetable for Parish Council meetings where applications are being discussed and considered. In such instances, wherever possible, the case officer will be pragmatic in terms of agreeing extensions of time to allow sufficient time for comments to be made. Planning law prescribes circumstances where consultation must take place between a local planning authority and certain organisations (known as statutory consultees), prior to a decision being made on an application. The organisations in question are under a duty to respond to the local planning authority within a set deadline and must provide a substantive response to the application in question. Where appropriate, the statutory consultees can request additional information to be supplied by the applicant if it is necessary to help then reach a recommendation.

The simplest and easiest way to comment is online via the Council's website. This route is also encouraged as it enables officers to process and publish comments easily. If responding online is not available or suitable, comments can also be made by email or post. Full details are provided on notification letters and site notices of the different ways comments can be made. All comments must be made in writing and should be submitted within the consultation period set out on the website or in the consultation letter, site notice, or advert. You may still comment after the consultation period has expired and until a decision is made, however, a decision can be made at any time after the expiry of the consultation period.

To follow the progress of an application, search the online application database. Using the application reference number is the easiest way to find the application.

Pre-submission consultation

Pre-application consultation is the responsibility of the applicant but there are standards that the applicant is expected and encouraged to follow prior to making an application for planning permission.

Pre-Application engagement with the Council

Whilst we cannot require a developer to submit a pre-application proposal or engage with us before submitting a planning application, the take-up of our pre-application services is strongly encouraged. Pre-application advice is subject to payment of an appropriate fee based on the size and scale of the development. Details of fees for different development types are set out on the Council's website. Through the pre-application process you can get advice about the likely acceptability of the proposal, identify any problems you may need to solve, and verify the information required to be submitted in support of any subsequent application. This can provide greater certainty, raise the quality of the development, and speed up the application process.

Pre-application engagement directly with the community and other stakeholders

The Council's pre-application advice service is provided directly to the person making the inquiry and is not subject to public consultation. Prior to submitting an application applicant's are therefore also strongly encouraged to undertake appropriate and effective pre-application consultation with the local community and relevant statutory and non-statutory consultees. A number of statutory and non-statutory consultees offer their own pre-application advice services for applicants. Local engagement should include relevant Parish and Town Councils. Local community engagement is particularly expected by applicants that are promoting rural exception sites to meet a specific community need, on major sites (defined in the Local Plan as 10 or more dwellings) or, for other uses, 1000 square metres or 1 ha or more. The applicant is encouraged to seek the views through early engagement to take into account local knowledge, understand key issues, and make appropriate amendments to address comments or concerns of the local community.

Engagement should be early enough in the design process to be meaningful and ensure feedback can genuinely influence the layout and design proposals.

Consultation methods should be proportionate and tailored to the specific community, and could for example include:

- In person exhibitions and consultation events
- Dedicated websites and online surveys
- Leafleting to specific residents and business
- Publicity through social media and local newsletters
- Presenting at Parish Meetings

It is good practice for applicants to provide follow-up feedback to communities after local engagement has been undertaken, to explain how comments received have been taken into account.

5. Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders

A Neighbourhood Development Plan is a planning document, produced by the local community, which sets out policies for the type and location of development in the local area (usually a Parish, in East Devon). Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Legislation¹ sets out the regulatory requirements for making a Neighbourhood Plan. It can also allocate sites for development, and, once made, becomes part of the 'Development Plan' for the area. Local communities will be able to say, for example, where new homes and offices should be built, and what they should look like. The neighbourhood plan will set a vision for the future and can be very detailed, or generalised, depending on what local people want.

A Neighbourhood Development Order enables the community to grant planning permission for new buildings they want to see go ahead on a particular site or within a particular area. Neighbourhood development orders allow new development without the developers having to apply for separate planning permission so all supporting technical evidence must be provided early in the process in order to ensure the order is based on the same information usually required to determine a planning application.

The neighbourhood plan or order must meet a set of Basic Conditions to ensure it complies with local and national planning policy, to ensure it meets the principles of sustainable development and to ensure that the local community have had a genuine opportunity to be engaged with the process.

Neighbourhood plans and orders are subject to an independent examination to check that it meets the Basic Conditions. If the standards aren't met, the examiner will recommend changes. The District Council, as planning authority will then need to consider the examiner's views and decide whether to make those changes. If the examiner recommends significant changes, then the parish, town council or neighbourhood forum may decide to consult the local community again before proceeding.

Once the plan or order has met the basic conditions, the District Council will arrange a referendum to ensure that the local community has the final say on whether a neighbourhood plan or order comes into force. People living in the neighbourhood who are registered to vote in local elections will be entitled to vote in the referendum. If more than 50% of people voting in the referendum support the plan or order, then the local planning authority must bring it into force.

¹ [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)

Once a neighbourhood plan is in force following a successful referendum, it carries real legal weight. Decision makers are obliged to consider proposals for development in the neighbourhood against the neighbourhood plan. A neighbourhood order grants planning permission for development that complies with the order. Where people have made clear that they want development of a particular type, it will be easier for that development to go ahead.

Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders

In line with legislation, East Devon District Council will offer advice and assistance in the making of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders. The details of this commitment are set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol <http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1904166/planning-protocol.pdf>
Please note that an updated version is being produced.

To assist those involved in Neighbourhood Planning or the production of a Neighbourhood Development Order the Policy Team of the Council will:

- a) Maintain an up to date Neighbourhood Planning webpage on the Council's website that summarises the powers available under the Neighbourhood Planning regime and the key stages to developing a Neighbourhood Plan;
- b) Provide contact details of key officers in the Council that will be dealing with Neighbourhood Planning (including making of Neighbourhood Development Orders);
- c) Make available information on local and wider case studies as they emerge;
- d) Provide information relating to funding and resources;
- e) Offer explanation and advice to help a Community understand Neighbourhood Planning (including Neighbourhood Development Orders) and whether it is the right approach for them;
- f) Be available to attend inaugural meetings of groups wishing to apply for designation as a Neighbourhood Forum and / or Neighbourhood Areas and who wish to produce Neighbourhood Plans or produce Neighbourhood Development Orders;
- g) Hold an annual meeting open to all Parish Councils and other bodies and organisations to discuss and invite presentations on general Neighbourhood Plan matters;
- h) Provide general advice about the need for the Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order to be in conformity with the Development Plan

The Planning Policy Team (details on page 2 of this document) will be the primary point of contact for Neighbourhood Planning work. The inputs of the Policy

	<p>Team will include preparing formal reports and undertaking formal assessment process in respect to Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders as well as providing informal advice. It is stressed that any advice, comment or assistance provided by the Policy Team (or any other officers of the Council) will be the opinion of any particular officer at that point in time. Opinion expressed is in no way binding on the Council (be that any subsequent consideration by that officer or any other officer or formal recommendations to or decisions taken by the Council). Generally officers will not offer advice or comment on what the policies or proposals in a Neighbourhood Plan should say, or for example what areas of land should be allocated for development. But officers will offer comment, guidance and advice on the types of issues that could be appropriate to take into account in terms of a group thinking about Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order format, structure or more detailed content.</p>		
	Stage in Plan making that the District Council will undertake consultation	Consultation Duration	Consultation that we will undertake
Stages when consultation will be undertaken	Neighbourhood Area Designation Consultation	Minimum of 6 weeks	<p>Most of the consultation on a Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order is carried out by the community themselves. Through a Statement of Community Involvement (known as a Consultation Statement for neighbourhood plans and orders) they will need to demonstrate that anyone who lives or works in a Neighbourhood Area has had the opportunity to express their views and that these have been taken into account. An independent Examiner will determine this.</p> <p>We will consult at the stages on the left, through:</p>
	Neighbourhood Forum Designation	Minimum of 6 weeks	

	Submission Consultation and Publicity of a Plan proposal	Minimum of 6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written/email consultations with statutory consultees, general consultees and other relevant stakeholders, individuals and organisations who have expressed a wish to be consulted or have previously made comments and • By making the Consultation document available on the Council’s website and hard copies available at the Council offices, from the Parish Council and the local library, if there is one within the Parish- Note- this is subject to any access restrictions, for example public buildings being closed due to Covid; • Through press notices, notices on noticeboards and a notice on the Council’s website
	Referendum	1 day	Everyone who lives in the neighbourhood area and is entitled to vote will be invited to vote on the neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order. Ballot papers will be sent to the voters registered address and the ballot will be advertised on the Council’s webpage, at the polling station and on noticeboards in the Parish. A press release will usually be issued.

Consultation Bodies

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 require the Council to consult the following ‘specific’ and ‘general’ consultation bodies if proposals in planning policy documents affect them. A number of these bodies are also considered to be Duty to Co-operate bodies. It is important to note that the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (schedule 1) also requires qualifying bodies to consult the same consultation bodies in the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans. In instances where any of the organisations (bodies) detailed below cease to exist, successor bodies will be consulted.

Specific Consultation Bodies

Local Planning Authorities	The Coal Authority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon County Council 	Homes England

• West Dorset District Council	Natural England
• Taunton Council	The Environment Agency
• Mid Devon District Council	Historic England
• Exeter City Council	Network Rail
• Teignbridge District Council	National Highways
Town / Parish Councils	Marine Management Organisation
All Town and Parish Councils within and adjoining East Devon District	Relevant telecommunications companies
	Devon and Cornwall Constabulary/ Police and Crime Commissioner
Civil Aviation Authority	Relevant health bodies e.g. CCG, NHS PCT
Relevant sewerage and water undertakers	Relevant electricity and gas companies

In addition to the specific consultation bodies listed above, the council/qualifying body will involve as many people and groups as possible in the categories below:

General Consultation Bodies
• voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area
• bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area
• bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area
• bodies which represent the interests of different gender and sexual orientation groups in the local planning authority's area
• bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area
• bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area

Examples of organisations which are General Consultation Bodies
Environment and conservation groups (e.g. the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Devon Wildlife Trust)
National Landscape (previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) Partnerships
Minority ethnic groups
Gypsy and Traveller groups
Sport England
Youth groups, schools, colleges
Health care groups

Transport providers/operators
Housing interest groups
Landowners and developers
Local businesses/ bodies which represent local businesses
Local resident associations
Older persons groups
Religious groups