

July

2020

Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan



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Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 introduced statutory Neighbourhood Planning in England. It enables communities to draw up a Neighbourhood Development Plan (referred to in the rest of this document as a Neighbourhood Plan) for their area and is intended to give communities more of a say in the development of their local area (within certain limits and parameters).

These plans will be used to decide the future of the places where you live and work giving opportunities to:

- choose where you want new homes, shops and offices to be built
- have your say on what new buildings should look like
- grant planning permission for the new buildings you want to see go ahead

The National Planning Policy Framework states: "Early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area, including those contained in any neighbourhood plans that have been made."

What is a Community Engagement Strategy? A community engagement strategy guides you and your partners on how you will engage with your communities, interested people and organisations in the development of your plan. Your community engagement strategy will set out how you involve the community and other interested individuals and groups as you prepare planning policies, allocate sites for development and consider non-planning projects that the neighbourhood plan could include in Sleaford.

Community Engagement Strategy

This strategy outlines how we will work together to inform, consult and involve local people in the development of a neighbourhood plan for Sleaford. It is for everyone who has a role to play or who wants to get involved in influencing Sleaford's future.

We are working in unprecedented times; the continuing presence of COVID-19 in our communities means that most face to face activity will not be possible.

The working group will ensure it is following the most up to date guidance from government and where necessary seek the advice of Sleaford Town Council and North Kesteven District Council in planning any activity. Risk assessments should be developed and a protocol for any face to face interaction that is deemed necessary.

The Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan will seek to:

Inform you - Providing appropriate information about our neighbourhood plan and the policies and developments that might affect or interest you.

Consult you - Providing opportunities for you to have your say about our plan through consultations, surveys, workshops and conversations. Acting on the feedback we receive and showing how it has influenced the decisions made.

Involve you - Providing opportunities to get involved, over and above informing and consulting, to give you a greater influence over the making of a plan for the area.

Empower - More decisions on matters within the Neighbourhood Plan lie with the community

Everyone should have the opportunity to be involved in making Sleaford an even better place to live. If you live in Sleaford, you will have knowledge about the area and how it can be improved. If you are a local group or business you will have information and ideas that can help shape the future of the area. By taking part in our neighbourhood plan you can make sure that decisions being made are the best for you and Sleaford.

This strategy is for anyone who is interested in getting involved in improving Sleaford's future. This includes private organisations, voluntary and community groups, residents, workers, students and any individual with an interest in how their environment and community could change over time.

Our values

Our shared values in preparation of this plan are:

Democracy

Respect

Honesty

Inclusiveness

Transparency

How the Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan Working Group will aim to be inclusive

<p>Informing you about the Neighbourhood Plan so you know what is going on and when</p>	<p>Posters, postcards, fliers, banners, advertising and publications. Local newspaper press releases, publications, radio interviews. Newsletters, letters, leaflets or summaries. <i>Information stalls/open days/road shows/exhibitions.</i> <i>Public and specific meetings, presentations, briefings.</i> Website updates. Email, text alerts, Twitter, webpage subscription, Facebook</p>
<p>Consulting you about the Neighbourhood Plan allowing you to have your say or have an opinion about how the neighbourhood or how the plan will affect you and for your views to be taken and acted upon</p>	<p>Questionnaires and surveys, structure feedback forms, polls, surveys. Online surveys and e-consultation (via the internet). <i>Face to face interviews</i>/telephone interviews Residents', citizens', user panels and community groups. Discussion/focus groups Written consultation through letter or email. <i>Consultation events/workshops/exhibitions/general events/.</i> Documents or information available in offices, public buildings or online. <i>Verbal consultation with community representative acting as a scribe.</i></p>
<p>Involving you in the Neighbourhood Plan so you can influence, directly participate, design and be part of the development of the plan</p>	<p><i>Visioning events.</i> <i>Neighbourhood profiling (walkabout)</i> Online discussion forums. Review and comment on draft plan. Interaction with Members of the Local Planning Authority, Councillors, Parish Councillors and employees.</p>

<p>Collaborating and Empowering you in the Neighbourhood plan enabling people to become more educated to make a decision about planning in their neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Throughout the development of the plan there will be opportunities for the Sleaford Neighbourhood Planning group to collaborate with other organisations in a shared learning environment.</p> <p>Liaising with Neighbourhood Planning groups that are further down the line than Sleaford to learn from their experience.</p> <p>Creating good practice or case studies to help others preparing neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>Test out new ways of engaging to see if different methods work.</p> <p>Ensure the process of making the plan allows people to continue involvement.</p>
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**These activities depend on the Covid 19 restrictions in place*

Who we plan to engage with during the development of the plan

It is important to recognise the mix of people in the community to ensure that everyone has the chance to engage in the process. Grouping residents and businesses into stakeholder groups will help identify what methods are needed to ensure that their views are obtained.

The target audience that the working group aim to engage through the consultation process will include:

North Kesteven District Council (NKDC)

Lincolnshire County Council

NKDC Members

School Children (5 -16)

Young People (16 -30)

Elderly Residents

Families

People with Disabilities

BAME Groups

Faith Groups

Community Groups and Organisations

Businesses

Landowners

Shoppers

Workers

Visitors

Statutory Consultees

We have identified five key stages to the consultation process that the local community and key stakeholders need to be engaged and consulted with and these are outlined below:

Consultation Periods

- **Stage 1** – Launching the NP, awareness raising identifying key themes and issues. Highlighting the identified issues and developing a vision, objectives.
- **Stage 2** – Developing the evidence base.
- **Stage 3** – Draft Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14 Consultation) – This is the official draft NP consultation and the document will be consulted upon for six weeks and this will be organised by the NDPSG.
- **Stage 4** – Submission of the Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 16 Consultation) – The NP will be submitted to North Kesteven District Council who will organise a six week consultation period.
- **Stage 5** - Referendum – To draw people’s attention to voting at the referendum through publicity. The referendum is organised by North Kesteven District Council.

There are a number of stages which a NP needs to go through to ensure it reflects the community’s views and aspirations.

Table 1 identifies the key audiences to be consulted

Table 2 the stages of consultation required

Table 1: Engagement techniques

Engagement Technique	Consultation Stage	Audience	Timescales	Activities
Website and Social Media	All	All	Ready for end of August 2020	Creation of website Facebook Twitter
Promotion and Information Material	1,2,3 & 5	School Children (5 -16) Young People (16 -30) Elderly Residents Families People with Disabilities BAME Groups Faith Groups Community Groups and Organisations Businesses Landowners Shoppers Workers Visitors	Ready for end of August 2020	Posters Banners Leaflets In as many locations as possible around the town, ensuring all wards are covered.
Exhibitions and drop in sessions	2,3	Young People (16 -30) Elderly Residents Families People with Disabilities BAME Groups Faith Groups Community Groups & Organisations Businesses Landowners Shoppers Workers Visitors	Ongoing	Market stall, pop-up stalls, library, virtual.

Local Press	All stages	Young People (16 -30) Elderly Residents Families People with Disabilities BAME Groups Faith Groups Community Groups & Organisations Businesses Landowners Shoppers Workers	Throughout the life of the plan.	Standard, Target, Talking Newspaper
Questionnaires	Stage1	Young People (16 -30) Elderly Residents Families People with Disabilities BAME Groups Faith Groups Community Groups & Organisations Shoppers Workers	Sept-October 2020	Website and hard copies available with freepost envelopes.
School events/ Competition	Stage 1	Young people 5- 16 years Secondary years (Youth parliament?)	Sept-October 2020	Logo comp, poem, drawing, design and conduct own survey.
Business Forum	Stage 1	Local Businesses	October-2020	Zoom forum and interactive poll.

Feedback Events	Stage1	Young People (16 -30) Elderly Residents Families People with Disabilities BAME Groups Faith Groups Community Groups & Organisations Shoppers Workers	November 2020	Via website
People's Panel	All stages of consultation	Residents representing all cohorts Councillors, businesses, community groups	Expression of Interest to enrol Sept 2020	Act as a sounding board for the way in which people are consulted to ensure all get the opportunity.

Table 2: Stages of engagement and consultation

Stage	Action required	Consultation Methods	Outcome	Start Date	End Date
Stage1: Launching the NP, awareness raising, working group recruitment. People's panel	Outline of what a NP is, potential benefits, FAQ's. Develop promotional material. Identify groups/businesses/individuals to contact. Develop website email, Facebook and Twitter. Launch Plan.	Website Social Media Banners Posters Schools/groups Emails	To inform the community about the NP process and the importance of getting involved. To establish the people's panel.	August 2020	End September 2020
Stage1: Identifying key themes and issues	Mini online questionnaire to identify key themes. Household/community questionnaire. Business Forum. Young people consultation.	Website Social Media Questionnaires online and hard copy Zoom business forum Youth parliament - develop youth questionnaire Primary children - logo, pictures, poems	Identifying issues, undertaking analysis and report writing which will inform the vision and objectives	September 2020	November 2020
Stage 1: Feed back to community via working group	Presentation of the main consultation results.	Via Zoom Results to be published via website and community venues if safe and practical	Results will help to inform development of vision and objectives	October 2020	November 2020

Stage 2: Developing the evidence base	Neighbourhood Profile	Working group and volunteers will be provided with training to undertake an in-depth assessment of the design and character of the area.	Analysis will be combined into a report that will help shape design policies and identify community projects within the plan.	November 2020	March 2021
Stage 2: Developing the evidence base	Green Infrastructure and Local Green Space Assessment	Working group will be provided with a template, methodology and guidance to assess important local green spaces.	Local green spaces identified and can be protected in the plan.	November 2020	March 2021
Stage 2: Developing the evidence base	Design Code	Undertaken by Open Plan to provide more detailed building and design guidelines for development.	To ensure that future development respects and enhances the character of the neighbourhood and delivers high quality homes.	November 2020	March 2021
Stage 3: Preparation of Draft Neighbourhood Plan	Advice and support on undertaking six week consultation (Regulation 14)	Website Social media Press Email	Comment on draft plan.	April 2021	June 2021

<p>Stage 4: Preparation of documents to submit to NKDC for Regulation 16 consultation</p>	<p>Produce the Consultation Statement. Make the amendments to the NDP based on the comments received and formalise the Final NP. Produce the Basic Statement Conditions.</p> <p>The Parish Council and Working Group will submit the documents listed above to North Kesteven District Council and they will organise the consultation at this stage.</p>	<p>Email Website Newspaper</p>	<p>This is the last chance for all stakeholders to make comments on the NP before the examiner is appointed.</p>	<p>July 2021</p>	<p>September 2021</p>
<p>Stage 5: Referendum. Ensure the community aware of the opportunity to vote on the final plan</p>	<p>North Kesteven District Council will appoint an independent examiner to look at the NP.</p> <p>Following a successful examination NKDC will organise the referendum date.</p> <p>The Town Council along with District Council will advertise this along with poll cards being issued to each resident.</p>	<p>Website Newspaper Social media Banners Leaflets</p>	<p>Positive outcome, Successful examination. A good turn out to vote. A "yes" return in favour of the plan being MADE.</p>	<p>Date unclear at this stage. Subject to any amendments required.</p>	

Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Commitments

Sleaford Town Council as the lead organisation in the Neighbourhood Plan project, through a wider Working Group, have agreed to adopt a set of key commitments on community and stakeholder engagement revolving around transparency and inclusivity, but subject to proportionality.

These are presented as an agreed set of actions and approaches to engagement that will be offered to the community as part of this project:

- Undertake awareness raising of the Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan and plan making process and to encourage engagement in the process.

- Undertake formal 6 week consultations on an Issues and Options Consultation Report and a Draft Sleaford Neighbourhood Plan.

- A website will be provided for information sharing and will be maintained throughout the plan making process.

- Press releases will be issued giving activity updates or information will be provided through local newsletters.

- All information collected to inform plan making will be openly available.

- Communication will take place in a form best suited to each person or group as expressed by them.

- An open agreement to meet/communicate with individuals and groups during the project whatever their views and opinions as resources reasonably allow.

- Respond within a reasonable time to written representations that seek information or clarification.

- Explore all opportunities to involve anyone in the community in preparing the plan at all stages of the project.

- Where comments and suggestions are made that are not directly relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan, these will be recorded and forwarded to the appropriate person or organisation for action.

In return it would be reasonable to expect that anyone seeking to participate by providing information, opinions or analysis of proposals at any stage of the project is prepared to do so in writing to ensure that all comments can be properly noted as a true record of their views. There will in any event be a requirement, at the stages in the process where statutory guidance has to be followed, to publish comments made about the Neighbourhood Plan.