

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR: Executive Director/Conservation Assistant

12 October 2006

THATCH AND THATCHING IN SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Purpose

1. To present to Cabinet the final draft of *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* and seek approval for adoption of the document as Council Policy. A copy of the Strategy is enclosed separately for members of Cabinet.

Background

2. In July 2005 the then Conservation Advisory Group considered a report and agreed the direction and proposed content of the Thatch and Thatching planning policy guidance document.
3. In December 2005 the Conservation Advisory Group considered the initial draft and recommended that officers should undertake an appropriate consultation exercise. The draft was completed in March 2006 and issued for public consultation on 10 March 2006. It was also published on the Council's website. The consultation period closed on 14 April 2006. A number of comments were received after the end of the consultation period and the East Midlands Master Thatchers Association, who was not consulted initially, requested copies of the document in July but have not responded to date.
4. On 26 April 2006 the comments were reported to the Conservation and Design Group and the following recommendation was made, "that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder presents the draft document to Cabinet to seek its approval and adoption as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes outlined in the attached appendix".
5. All of the requested amendments are contained in the version now put before Cabinet.

Considerations

6. All relevant comments from consultees have been incorporated. The version of the *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* presented is in accordance with Government's policy guidance.
7. *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* is now considered suitable to be adopted as Council Policy in support of listed building applications and the Historic Buildings Grant Scheme.
8. *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* has been promoted in the South Cambs magazine and is also placed upon the Council's web site.
http://www.scams.gov.uk/documents/retrieve.htm?pk_document=3912 [Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire](#)

9. The format of *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* is such that it can be adopted to become Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPD) under the LDF once the latter has been approved in 2007.

Options

10. Cabinet are requested to either:
- a. Approve *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* for adoption as Council Policy.

or

 - b) To require officers to bring a revised draft of *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* to a future meeting of the Cabinet incorporating additional amendments and revisions as required by Cabinet.

Implications

11. Financial	The production of <i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be funded from existing departmental resources.
Legal	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> is to be adopted as Council Policy in the short term. Following adoption of the new LDF (due March 2007), <i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be reviewed and cross-referenced to the relevant policies contained within the LDF. A sustainability appraisal will be prepared for the LDF and the revised <i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> (together with the sustainability appraisal) will then be issued for further public consultation prior to adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
Staffing	None specific.
Risk Management	Adopting <i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> as SPD will ensure that officers give the document due consideration when considering listed building applications and Planning Inspectors make reference to it when determining planning and listed building applications on thatched buildings within the district. It will also ensure consistent advice is provided on thatch.
Equal Opportunities	None specific.

Consultations

12. The draft *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* has been considered by a number of individual thatchers and National and Regional Societies of Master Thatchers and other organisations including English Heritage CPRE and Cambridge Preservation Society.

Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives

13. Affordable Homes	None
Customer Service	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will improve customer service by providing clear guidance principles to explain the Council's approach to thatch and thatching and by explaining the types of thatch and traditional details.
Northstowe and other growth areas	None
Quality, Accessible Services	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be used as guidance and therefore assist in achieving the Council's aim of the delivery of a high quality planning service.
Village Life	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will have a significant impact on the enhancement village life by ensuring that appropriate craft techniques and local materials are maintained and are relevant to their context and of demonstrable quality.
Sustainability	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will aid delivery of sustainable development by helping to ensure the adoption of appropriate thatch materials and details within the historic environment are appropriate to its setting.
Partnership	<i>Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire</i> will be a useful resource for both the District Council and Parish Councils to aid their consideration of listed building applications and the Planning Inspectorate in the determination of appeals.

Conclusions/Summary

14. Adoption of *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* as Council Policy will contribute to the policy objective of securing the preservation and enhancement of local thatch and thatching techniques through the following means:
- (a) Providing clear guidance principles to explain the Council's approach to thatch and thatching and the requirement for listed building consent.
 - (b) Providing information on the types of thatch and traditional thatched roof details.
 - (c) Providing specifications for longstraw and water reed thatch.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the adoption of *Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire* and refer the document to full Council for adoption as Council Policy.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Draft Thatch and thatching in South Cambridgeshire.

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