

Methods of consultation for Neighbourhood Planning

In the Statement of Community Involvement there is a list of the methods used when carrying out consultation on local planning documents. This list has been adapted for neighbourhood planning purposes.

- **News releases:** the Council has an in-house team dealing with communications who have a good working relationship with local media, including newspapers, radio and television. News releases improve the chances that articles will be published or broadcast and so reach a wide audience who can be made aware of planning matters in the district.
- **South Cambs Magazine:** the magazine provides regular updates on planning policy matters and is published quarterly by the Council. The magazine is delivered to all households in the district and is also placed in public areas in libraries and the Council's main office in Cambourne for visitors from outside the district to view it.
- **Direct letter:** a formal approach, which is used to officially notify particular groups and organisations about public consultations that are being carried out on planning matters. Where possible we try to send information electronically via email to help to reduce the costs of consultation to the Council.
- **Documents available in print:** the Council makes available for inspection at its offices in Cambourne any document that is being consulted on. This office is fully accessible to people with disabilities. Printed documents are made available for purchase from the Council at a modest cost.

For neighbourhood planning, printed documents should be available within the designated area relating to the neighbourhood plan. If there is a convenient local library or parish office within the area these would be suitable locations for the local community to view documents.

- **Monthly email update:** the Council sends out an email at the beginning of each month to all the Parish Councils in the district providing an up-to-date timetable of all the consultations that are current or are planned that will affect the district of South Cambs. This enables these councils to be aware of when they will have an opportunity to become involved in policy planning matters.

The Council publishes the information in this monthly email to Parishes within the local plan section on the Council's website so that a wider audience is kept up to date and is aware of consultations that affect the district.

- **Parish e-bulletin:** is sent out bi-monthly to help improve the way the Council provides information directly to parish councils. The bulletin provides news from all departments within the council and includes a range of subjects not just those relating to planning.
- **Leaflet drop:** this can be a useful way of informing people living and working in an area where a neighbourhood plan is planned. It can be easily targeted to a specific area.

- **Public exhibitions:** these assist in reaching the wider public and give the opportunity for discussion with representatives of the Council on a one to one basis close to where people live.
- **Posters:** these are sent to appropriate local libraries within an area where a neighbourhood plan is being prepared to be placed on notice boards to inform the local community of consultations. The Council will send posters to neighbouring Parish Councils and ask that they be placed on Parish notice boards. Also posters are produced to advertise public exhibitions to let everyone know when and where they are to take place.
- **The Council's website:** the Council publishes all its major publications and documents for consultation on its website which is a means of making information available to an increasingly wide audience. This is particularly relevant in the South Cambridgeshire area with its higher than average proportion of residents connected to the Internet.
- **Workshops:** these bring together key stakeholders representing service providers, agencies, developers, local community representatives and interest groups. The Council has found the use of independent and trained expert facilitators helpful. Workshops can be helpful for exploring site or subject specific topics.
- **Parish Forum:** a quarterly meeting of all the Parish Councils in South Cambridgeshire to provide information on planning matters. This provides a means of notifying Parish Councils about current and future consultations and also an opportunity for Parish Councillors to discuss planning consultation issues together.
- **Parish websites/ newsletters/village magazine:** many Parish Councils within the district have their own websites and/ or village newsletters or magazines and these can provide a local forum to discuss neighbourhood plan issues with the local community
- **Agents Forum:** a quarterly meeting of agents that act on behalf of developers and landowners within South Cambridgeshire to inform them on planning matters in the district. This can provide a means of notifying agents about current or future consultations and also an opportunity for agents to discuss together issues relating to planning consultations.
- **Young People's Involvement:** The Youth Council could be used to inform young people about consultations to encourage their involvement in the future planning of their area.