

Richmondshire Local Development Framework

Statement of Community Involvement



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solutions



The Richmondshire District Council Local Development Framework



covering that part of the district
outside of the Yorkshire Dales
National Park.

**This document is available in alternative
formats such as large print, braille and other
languages. If you would like a copy
please get in touch.**

Statement of Community Involvement

This document sets out how and when you can be involved in shaping the future of your area. There are challenging times ahead not only in meeting our own needs, but also in facing national and global issues including the potential impacts of climate change. The decisions we make today may have profound implications for our children and future generations.

In preparing our new development plan (Richmondshire Local Development Framework) to guide development and growth in that part of the district outside the National Park to 2021 and beyond, we want to involve local people, community groups and organisations. Whether or not you decide to be involved must be based on your personal choice rather than a lack of opportunity. It is also important that you get the chance to be involved at all stages and that we offer a range of ways in which you can make your contribution.

Residents, groups and organisations were involved in the preparation of this document and their feedback was both welcome and valued. The final version of this Statement was examined and found sound by the Secretary of State in July 2006, and subsequently adopted.

Cllr Melva Steckles
Leader of the Council

How to contact us

If you would like any more information please contact us either in writing to:

Planning Policy Team
Richmondshire District Council
Swale House
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Alternatively visit our website: www.richmondshire.gov.uk

Contents

1 Introduction

- ✈ The new planning system
- ✈ What makes up the Local Development Framework
- ✈ Links to other strategies

2 Statement of Community Involvement

- ✈ Our aims
- ✈ Our district
- ✈ Our communities
- ✈ Our principles
- ✈ Our methods

3 Consulting on Local Development Documents

– Our plans to involve you

- ✈ When we will involve you
- ✈ Who we will involve
- ✈ How we will involve you
- ✈ What you can expect from us

4 Consulting on Planning Applications

- ✈ What we do now
- ✈ How we would like to see the community involved in planning proposals

5 Making it Happen

- ✈ Our resources
- ✈ Reviewing what we do

Appendix 1: Timetable - key dates

Appendix 2: Statutory consultees, national consultees and other consultees

1. Introduction

The New Planning System

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) has introduced a new system for preparing development plans in this country. The new system replaces Local Plans with a Local Development Framework process.

The Government's objectives for changing the current Local Plan system are to:

-  Speed up the preparation of development plans
-  Ensure that plans are monitored, reviewed and kept up-to-date □
-  Achieve more effective involvement of the community
-  Promote sustainable development
-  Provide flexibility, to enable development plans to respond more quickly to changing circumstances.

The Local Development Framework will replace the adopted Richmondshire Local Plan and will provide a planning strategy and a set of planning policies for the district (outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority boundaries). It will open up opportunities in Richmondshire through development of the right quality in the right place that meets the needs and aspirations of communities.

What makes up the Local Development Framework? □

The Development Plan

It is the duty of every Local Planning Authority to prepare a development plan to guide future development and growth. This must conform to both national and regional planning guidance. More information on national guidance is available on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (www.odpm.gov.uk).

At a regional level, the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Assembly provide guidance. They are charged with the responsibility of producing an overall blueprint for the region known as a Regional Spatial Strategy. This is an important document as it sets overall levels of housing and employment growth within the region. The Regional Spatial Strategy is currently being revised and further details of regional planning policy are available on the Assembly's website (www.yhassembly.gov.uk).

The Development Plan for an area will be made up of both the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Local Development Framework. Structure Plans will no longer be produced by North Yorkshire County Council, but they will be required to produce Minerals Plans and Waste Local Development Frameworks.

Development Plan Documents

Instead of a single local plan, as at present, each local planning authority will publish a number of statutory Development Plan Documents which will form the Local Development Framework for its area. These will be:

-  **Local Development Scheme** – is a project plan explaining which documents we will prepare over the next three years and when.
-  **Statement of Community Involvement** – this explains how and when you can be involved in the process of preparing the documents that make up the Local Development Framework. You are reading our Statement of Community Involvement now.

 **Local Development Documents – these will include:**

**Core Strategy
and Strategic Policies**

The vision, objectives and strategy for the future development of Richmondshire, and strategic policies to deliver them.

**Development
Policies**

The policies that will be used to assess planning applications to make sure all developments in the District are in line with the Core Strategy.

Allocations

Site allocations for housing, employment and other development.

Proposals Map

Map of the district showing the policies and proposals from the other documents. There will also be specific maps for all settlements and other locations where more detail needs to be shown.

Area Action Plans

These will provide a planning framework for areas of significant change or conservation. There will be an Area Action Plan for Richmond and Catterick.

We do not necessarily have to prepare, examine and review each of these documents at the same time. Each of these documents should be shorter, simpler, and quicker to adopt and will therefore be more reactive to changing circumstances than local and unitary plans were.

Supplementary Planning Documents

The Council can also produce Supplementary Planning Documents as part of this whole process. Whilst these documents will not be subject to examination, they must relate directly to one or more policies in a development plan document. They are intended to give additional guidance to a development plan document, in particular to help explain in more detail how the policy or policies will be applied to development proposals.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is a statutory requirement to test every document or policy in the Local Development Framework to make sure that the environmental, social and economic implications of the emerging approach have been taken into account.

Annual Monitoring Report

The Council is required to publish an Annual Monitoring Report to review the progress and assess how successful the Local Development Framework has been in delivering the objectives. We must submit the monitoring report to the Secretary of State in December each year. It will be available from the Planning Policy team and on our website from January each year.

Links to other strategies

Richmondshire Community Strategy 2003-2018

Our Vision

'Richmondshire will be a place where people want to live, work and visit; where people enjoy a high quality of life and environment, feel safe, healthy and prosperous and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.'

Richmondshire's Community Strategy 2003-18, was prepared by the Richmondshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It sets out the vision, aspirations, priorities and framework for the future of the district. The Community Strategy is currently being revised, the revised Community Strategy will be published in April 2006.□

The Richmondshire Local Strategic Partnership brings together a wide range of key local organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The LSP is responsible for developing, overseeing, co-ordinating and monitoring the effectiveness of the Community Strategy.

The Local Development Framework will help to make the Community Strategy a reality by directing development of the right type, in the right place to make Richmondshire a better place to live, work and visit without compromising the high quality of our environment.

It will aim to deliver jobs and homes that match the needs of the district, coupled with services and facilities that support the needs of our communities.□

The Richmondshire Local Development Framework will take account of the North Yorkshire Community Strategy 2005 - 2008 in relation to the use of land and development. The North Yorkshire Community Strategy covers all of North Yorkshire and was prepared by the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership.

Our Values

Partnership:

We are committed to working in partnership to improve the quality of life for those who live in, work in and visit Richmondshire. We will add value by changing the way we plan and deliver services to make best use of our collective resources. We will take a co-ordinated and fresh approach to service planning and delivery, effecting real change in ways that do not prejudice opportunities or potential in future.□

Involvement:

We will be open, inclusive and accountable. We will work to improve the ways we consult and communicate. We will look to develop new ways of encouraging individuals and groups to become involved in shaping the decisions that affect them.□

Protection:

 **Equal Opportunities** – ensuring that there is no discrimination against individuals or groups on the grounds of disability, race, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, social and economic status, religious or political beliefs.□

 **Sustainability** – ensuring that by working to meet the needs of today, the actions that we take do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Richmondshire Communication and Consultation Strategy

We adopted our Communications and Consultation Strategy in April 2004. This strategy aims to support the delivery of our policies and services by setting out how we will:

- ✈ Put the **Community First** in planning for the future
- ✈ Put the **Customer First** in delivering our services.

It sets out our aims to:

‘communicate with and consult all sections of the community – young people, older people, ethnic minorities, the business community, voluntary organisations, parish and town councils, community groups, other service providers, representative groups, users of services and non users, and other stakeholders. We will communicate in ways that are appropriate to the different sections of our community’

and discusses the ways in which we currently consult and communicate, how you have told us you would like to be consulted and communicated with and the tools and methods that we will use in the future.

This Statement will put into practice the aims, principles and actions of our Communication and Consultation Strategy to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be involved in shaping the future of Richmondshire.

Links to other plans and strategies

Many of our other plans and strategies, and those of our partners, will feed into the Local Development Framework process. These include our: □

- ✈ **Housing Strategy** - which sets the vision and priorities for future housing development and how we will make better use of the homes we have already got.
- ✈ **Economic Development Strategy** - which sets out how we are going to develop the economy of the district.
- ✈ **Sustainable Development Strategy** - sets out how we will try to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- ✈ **Customer Access Strategy** - sets out how we intend to improve access to our services for our customers.
- ✈ **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Strategy.**

More details on our strategies and plans can be found on our website, www.richmondshire.gov.uk or direct from us by ringing: **01748 829100**.

Examples of our partners’ strategies that will feed into the process include: □

- ✈ Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan
- ✈ Community Investment Prospectuses.

North Yorkshire Compact

We adopted the North Yorkshire Compact on 8 March 2004. Compacts are agreements between public bodies and the voluntary and community sector which clarify the terms of their relationship to improve joint working.

This Statement will put into practice the aims, principles and actions of the Compact and ensure that it is conforming to national good practice, enabling the voluntary and community sector to play a full and active role in the Local Development Framework.

2. Statement of Community Involvement

The Government has made a commitment to enhance the opportunity for people to take part in shaping the places in which they live and work. Local authorities should aim for ‘continuous community involvement’ to build understanding and consensus in the preparation of the Local Development Framework for the local area. □

Community involvement is a continuous process and one which should enable the local community to have their say at a stage when this can make a difference. □

This Statement sets out how we propose to involve you in drafting our Local Development Documents and in considering planning applications. It lets you know how and when you can be involved, and provides choice so your involvement is meaningful.

Our Aims:

-  **To promote and improve active public participation in the planning system**
-  **To achieve greater community engagement and involvement throughout the Local Development Framework process**
-  **To secure a degree of consensus in planning the future of Richmondshire**

In short we want people to have the opportunity to be involved in the development of the policies that will determine what Richmondshire will look like in 2021 and how we will achieve this.

To achieve our aims we will:

Give you the opportunity to be involved in all stages of document preparation, in ways appropriate to you, but especially in the early stages when ideas or proposals are being developed.

This Statement identifies which groups and organisations will be consulted when each document is prepared. It explains when and how we propose to consult you. It sets out the principles and standards to be achieved by the Council in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and review of all Local Development Documents and in considering planning decisions.

Producing this Statement is a legal requirement, and once adopted, is legally binding. If we fail to carry out what we say we will do in the finalised Statement, the Government could make us withdraw our plans.

A word of caution

Any form of debate or consultation will result in a range of views, which may not be compatible. Inevitably, some ideas and views will not prevail. However, it is important during the Local Development Framework process that we can demonstrate that we have taken all views into account, even if it is not possible to meet all expectations or go along with every point of view.

Our District

Richmondshire is one of the largest districts in England, covering an area of just over 500 square miles and with a population of 49,990. It extends from the lowlands of the A1 corridor to the sparsely populated uplands of the Yorkshire Dales. Around two thirds of the district is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Richmond is the main administrative centre of the district, followed by Catterick Garrison, Leyburn, Hawes and Reeth.

Richmondshire is seen as a relatively prosperous district. Unemployment levels are currently 1.1% and we have high levels of educational attainment. 65.7% of all homes are owner occupied.

Yet, whilst we are seen as being a relatively prosperous district, we have diverse communities with a range of needs. Some of our rural communities are among the 10% most deprived for accessibility to services; for education, six of our wards are in the most deprived 30% with four in the worst 10%, Colburn, Richmond West and Hawes and High Abbotside are in the top 50% most deprived wards in the country.

Our Communities

A few facts:

- ✈ Richmondshire is one of the most sparsely populated districts in the country with 0.36 persons per hectare in a total area of 131,867 hectares. □
- ✈ Catterick Garrison is the largest British army base in the world. □
- ✈ 20.4% of the district's population is over 60, whilst 38.7% is under 30.
- ✈ 98.1% of the district's population belong to a white ethnic group, 1.8% belong to other ethnic groups.
- ✈ 51.62% of our population are male and 48.38% are female. □
- ✈ 26% of the district's population work in public administration and defence whilst only 6.3% work in agriculture, hunting and forestry. □
- ✈ 30.53% of households have 1 or more person with a limiting long-term illness.
- ✈ 14.6% of households do not have a car or van, 49.2% of households have at least 1 car and 36.1% of households have 2 or more cars.

Having a dispersed rural population raises particular problems in devising the most effective methods of consultation. In producing this Statement we are committed to overcoming these obstacles and making sure that all of our communities have opportunities to be actively involved, including groups of people often excluded from consultation exercises ('hard to reach' groups): □

- ✈ Young people
- ✈ People with disabilities
- ✈ People from minority ethnic groups
- ✈ Older people
- ✈ Rural isolation.



Our principles

When we consult with you we will:

Communicate clearly

- ✈ Write all documents in plain language
- ✈ State why we want to involve you, and whether your comments are being asked for on a formal or informal basis

Make it easy for you to get involved

- ✈ We will make it clear what you need to do and when to make your views known
- ✈ Hold any public meetings or events close to where those most affected live
- ✈ Provide a number of ways in which you can let us know what you think
- ✈ Encourage groups with little experience of the planning process to use Yorkshire Planning Aid to help in responding
- ✈ Make special efforts to involve groups that have not given their views on planning matters before

Make sure your involvement is meaningful and effective

- ✈ Involve you at all stages of preparing the Local Development Framework when your comments could make a difference
- ✈ Ask for your views when there is still an opportunity to alter the content of a document
- ✈ Explain what things can or cannot be changed and why
- ✈ Allow enough time for involvement
- ✈ Only ask for your views on realistic options

Share information and provide feedback

- ✈ Draft planning documents and background studies will be made readily available to the public, in paper form and on the Council's website
- ✈ Consider all consultation responses and give feedback to you on how your views have been considered
- ✈ Ensure that comments made are reported to Councillors to allow them to make decisions on planning documents
- ✈ Make your comments publicly available
- ✈ Keep you informed about progress and outcomes

Learn from our mistakes

- ✈ Review the effectiveness of each of our efforts to involve you, and if necessary, make alterations to these methods

Co-ordinate consultation

- ✈ Where possible we will co-ordinate consultation to avoid consultation fatigue

Data Protection Act 1998

- ✈ We will tell you how your comments will be recorded and the limit of how that information will be used, including your personal or contact details

Our Methods

We want as many people as possible to take part in preparing the Local Development Framework and are committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to do just that.

There are some things that we have to do to meet the minimum requirements set down in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, but there are many different things that we could do to achieve this including:

| Method | Main Considerations | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|---|--|
|  Documents available for inspection at the Council offices |  Minimum requirement-specify how and when people should respond |  Can give detailed information & provide for detailed responses |  Low response rates. Can exclude people with poor literacy skills. Reading & responding to documents can be time consuming |
|  Letters to statutory bodies & other national consultees |  Minimum requirement. Consult by letter |  Letters can be written to get specific feedback on particular policies |  Consultees may not have enough time to answer specific points |
|  Internet website e-mail |  All documents to be provided in pdf and word format |  Cheap to distribute, easy to update and amend. Increasingly used |  Not everyone has access. Low response rate |
|  Local Media |  Press releases & local radio, Curlew to explain documents and processes simply |  Can be sent to all addresses in the district. Raise awareness |  Lack of feedback. May be treated as junk mail |
|  Leaflets/ Brochure To be placed in local shops, offices, notice boards etc. |  Can publicise the proposed document, raise awareness & let people know how they can get involved. |  Can be sent to all addresses in the district. Raise awareness. Present an outline of the document in a simple way |  May be treated as junk mail |
|  Public exhibitions/ Displays/ stalls/ roadshows |  Visual way of showing proposals and disseminating information |  Takes the process to the community. Opportunity to air views and concerns |  Costly & takes time. Cannot visit everywhere. People who attend may not be representative of their community |
|  Formal written consultation/ community surveys |  Good introduction to main issues. Responses can help identify key interest & groups. Consultation around a number of key questions/issues |  Reliable, statistical data. Easy to understand & analyse. Can be targeted to a specific audience |  Can have low response rate. Can exclude people with poor literacy skills |
|  Richmondshire Residents' Panel |  Consultation around a number of key questions/issues |  Reliable, statistical data. Easy to understand & analyse. Cost effective |  Limited number of questions/key issues that can be raised |
|  Face-to-face meeting with selected stakeholders |  Identifies key issues and key groups |  Useful method of getting a targeted response |  Time consuming and slow |
|  Public meetings |  Useful when area specific proposals are made |  Good method of informing the public and getting their view, creating interest in local issues |  People who attend may not be representative of the wider community. Not everyone is comfortable in expressing their views in front of an audience. Meetings can become hijacked by single issues or the most vocal |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| | Focus Groups (selected groups of participants with particular characteristics) | | Useful for area-based discussions & presentation of options | | Provide an opportunity to explore issues in depth. Can help to involve 'hard to reach groups' | | Costly & time consuming. Works best with a trained facilitator |
| | Parish Forums | | Meetings that are currently held for public bodies to consult with residents of a particular Parish Forum Area | | Parish Forums are already in place | | Low attendance. People who attend may not be representative of the wider community |
| | Planning Aid | | Will target hard to reach groups and increase their ability to take part | | An independent broker, able to mediate between conflicting interests | | May be costly and time consuming |

Planning Aid Yorkshire

Planning Aid Yorkshire is a free, independent and professional service offering advice and help on planning matters. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. Assistance can be given to communities to help them understand and play a role in the new planning process.

Contact details for Planning Aid Yorkshire:

Telephone: 0870 850 9808
 Email: ykcw@planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
 Website: www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk

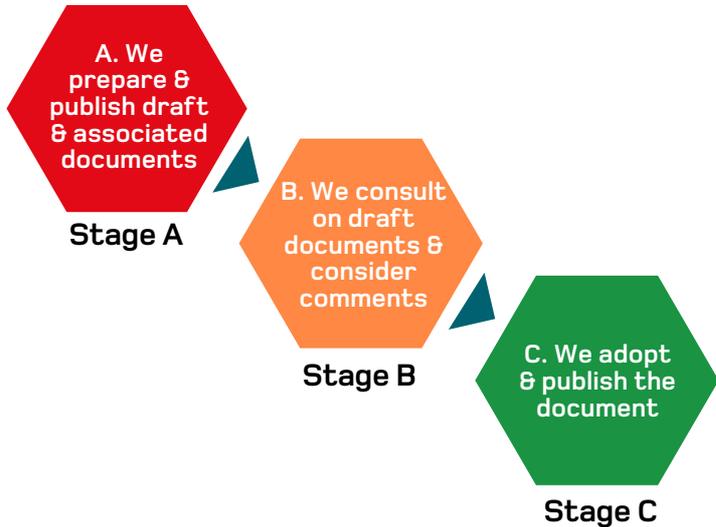
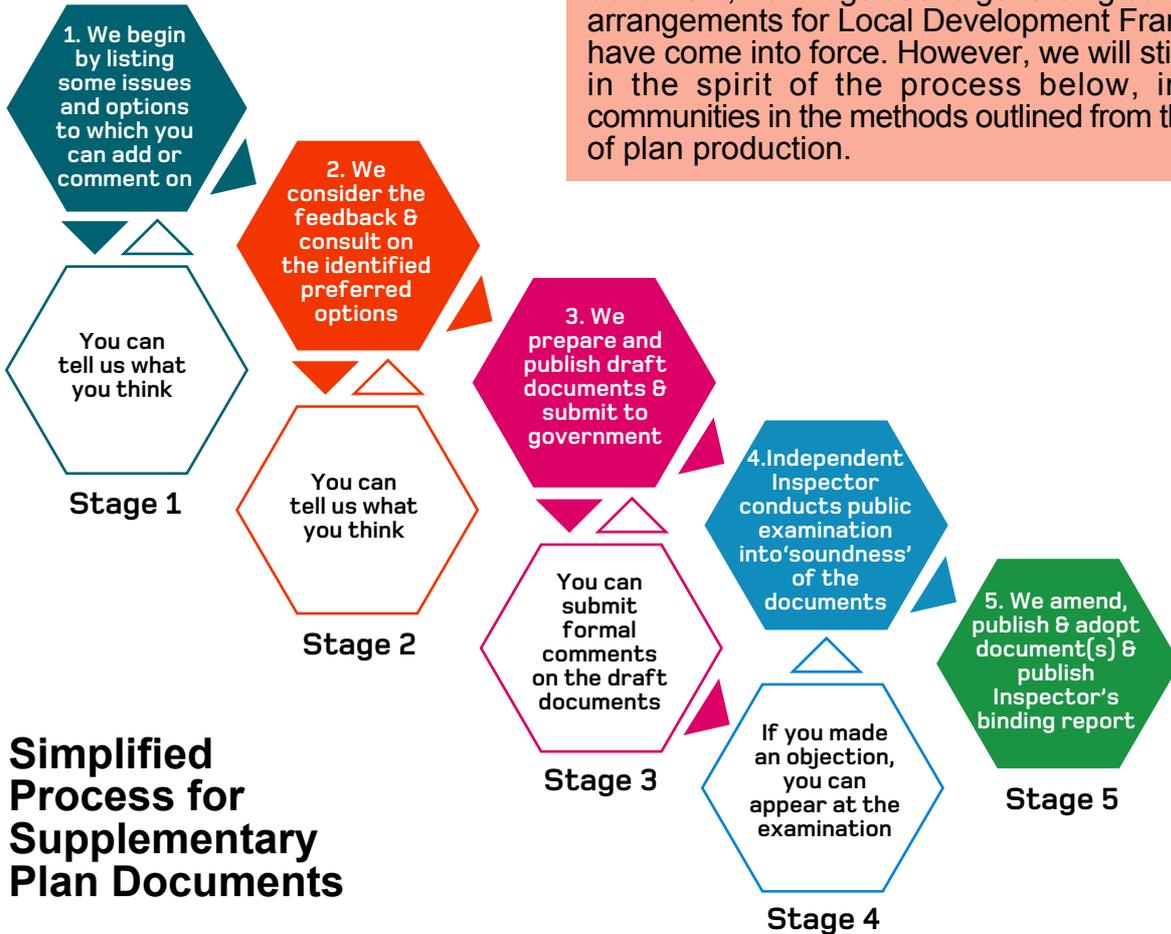


3. Consulting on the Local Development Documents

When we will involve you

We will involve you in all stages in the plan-making process.

Since the production and examination of this document, new regulations governing consultation arrangements for Local Development Frameworks have come into force. However, we will still consult in the spirit of the process below, involving communities in the methods outlined from the outset of plan production.



Site Allocations
Where a Development Plan Document contains specific site allocations there will be a further 6 week consultation period to allow representations to be made on any alternative sites put forward.

Timetable - key dates

If you want more details on the timetable please refer to the Local Development Scheme which can be found on our website or by contacting the Planning Policy Team. The Annual Monitoring Report will inform changes that may be necessary to the programme. Full details will be published on our website.

| Who we will involve | Statement of Community Involvement | Local Development Scheme | Core Strategy | Allocations DPDs | Area Action Plans | Annual Monitoring Report | Supplementary Planning Documents |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| General Public | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Hard to reach groups | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Business Sector | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Parish & Town Councils | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Voluntary & Community Groups | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Interest Groups | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Elected Members | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Statutory Consultees | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Central & Regional government | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Local Strategic Partnership | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Developers/landowners/agents | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Media | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |

Appendix 1 sets out a list of who will be involved. These include both bodies which the Government says we must consult with and those who we want to involve, to make sure that all views are reflected in the plan-making process. This list will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

Why we will involve you

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Identify local issues | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Share and gather information | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Help shape policy | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Test policy options | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| Keep you informed | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Provide opportunities to be involved | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Increase participation | ■ | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Build consensus | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ |
| Find out how you want to be involved | ■ | | | | | | |
| Indicate required level of engagement | ■ | | | | | | |
| Identify 'hard to reach' groups | ■ | | | | | | |
| Help you understand the process | ■ | | | | | ■ | |
| Raise awareness | ■ | | | | | ■ | |

How we will involve you

We have already set out on pages 11 and 12 the different methods that can be used for consultation. The table below shows which of these methods we propose to use for each group and document.

| All documents will: | | be available for inspection at our 5 Community Offices | | be placed on our website and available by email | | be advertised in the local media | | | | |
|---|----------------|--|------------|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | General Public | Hard to reach groups | Businesses | Parish Councils | Voluntary & community groups | | | | | |
| Core Strategy | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Allocations DPDs | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Area Action Plan DPDs | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Supplementary Planning Documents | | | | | | | | | | |

All documents will:

 be available for inspection at our 5 Community Offices

 be placed on our website and available by email

 be advertised in the local media

| Interest groups | Elected Members | Statutory bodies & groups | Central & regional Government | Richmondshire Local Strategic Partnership | Developers, landowners, agents | Media |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|-------|
|   Leaflets/ Brochure Planning Aid  Focus Groups  Written consultation/ surveys |  Leaflets/ Brochure  Written consultation/ surveys  Face-to-face meetings |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys | |
|  Leaflets/ Brochure  Planning Aid  Written consultation/ surveys |  Leaflets/ Brochure  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys | |
|  Leaflets/ Brochure  Planning Aid  Focus Groups  Written consultation/ surveys |  Leaflets/ Brochure  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Letters to statutory bodies |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys |  Face-to-face meetings  Written consultation/ surveys | |
|  Written consultation/ surveys |   Written consultation/ surveys Face-to-face meetings |  Written consultation/ surveys |  Written consultation/ surveys |  Written consultation/ surveys |  Written consultation/ surveys | |

What you can expect from us

If you:

- ✈ **Write to us** we will reply to the letter in full within 10 working days of the date that we receive it.
- ✈ **Telephone us** we will try to answer your query immediately over the phone if it is within office hours.
- ✈ **Email us** we will reply to the email in full within 10 working days of the date that we receive it.
- ✈ **Fax us** we will reply in full to the fax within 10 working days of the date that we receive it.
- ✈ **Meet us face to face** we will try to answer your query immediately. If we cannot answer your query immediately we will explain why not and let you know when you can expect the query to be dealt with.
- ✈ **If we cannot answer your query immediately we will explain why not and let you know when you can expect the query to be dealt with.**

If you:

- ✈ **Submit formal representations** we will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days of the date that we receive it. All formal representations will be logged onto a formal database. We will report all representations to the LDF Working Group (made up of District Councillors). We will then provide a written reply advising you how we have taken account of your views. *Please note that your representations and contact details will be logged on a database. This information will only be used for purposes associated with the Local Development Framework.*
- ✈ **Ask for planning or environmental information** we will explain your rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and what we are required to make available under the new Environmental Information Regulations (the Aarhus Convention).
- ✈ **Request a document** we will tell you whether there is a charge and ensure that the document is posted to you within 5 working days. We will also let you know where the document can be accessed (i.e. internet or Council offices).
- ✈ **Have submitted comments on any planning document** we will publish a Community Involvement & Responses Statement alongside the finalised Planning Document. This will set out the issues raised by respondents and the Council's response to each issue raised.

We will:

- ✈ Place copies of draft, final and adopted LDF documents in all local libraries in the district and our five community offices in Colburn, Hawes, Leyburn, Reeth and Richmond.
- ✈ Place all documents onto the Council's website at: www.richmondshire.gov.uk
- ✈ Make all documents available, on request, in alternative formats such as large print.

If we do not meet these standards and you do not feel that the matter has been adequately resolved by the Planning Policy Section then the Council has a complaints procedure, which is available on request.

4. Consulting on Planning Applications

Pre-application consultation

The Government is keen to increase community engagement in the planning system by encouraging developers to work with communities before submitting development proposals, particularly major schemes. Please note, at this stage the Government have not made pre-application consultation compulsory.

What we do now

All developers are already encouraged to discuss their proposals with the Council's Development Control Team at an early stage. This helps to identify issues and constraints as well as providing the chance to consider alternative ways in which proposals might be revised to overcome potential concerns. In some cases, applicants may be encouraged to consult with the community or other agencies before finalising their scheme. We consider this good practice.

Potentially, everyone benefits. Developers can 'test' local public reaction and identify potential areas of conflict, whilst the community is given a chance to influence proposals before they reach an advanced stage. Open and constructive debate at this early stage helps to flag up issues, voice concerns and allow alternative solutions to be explored before submitting an application.

Of course, it may not be possible to meet all concerns, nor does pre-application consultation prejudice the outcome of any application. However, it offers the chance to see how much of a consensus can be achieved and may reduce avoidable objections.

How we would like to see the community involved in planning proposals

We feel that pre-application consultation with the community on planning proposals should be tailored to reflect the scale, nature and complexity of any proposal. A wide range of consultation methods are possible including open meetings, exhibitions, workshops and surveys, but not all will be appropriate in every case. Applicants are strongly recommended to discuss their plans for consulting with the community as part of any pre-application discussion with the Council. At this stage we can advise on whether a development is likely to be "sensitive", the need for pre-application consultation and the level at which it should be pitched, including diversity issues. In all cases, including those not considered as major or "sensitive", developers should consider the benefits that early community consultation can bring. □

Town / Parish Councils and Meetings currently provide a valuable local community focus for planning matters and a useful source of local opinion. We strongly recommend early contact with the local council on all development proposals. □

If a proposal is likely to be controversial, it is vital to ensure that community engagement is fair and equitable, which may mean that Council Officers and Members will be unable to take an active role at this early stage.

As a guide, for:

-  major development proposals
-  developments requiring Environmental Impact Assessments which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement
-  proposals that clearly depart from the Council's Development Plan
-  proposals the Council advises are likely to be "sensitive"

the Council will expect applicants to:

-  carry out an appraisal to assess the nature and scale of the community consultation exercise
-  carry out the exercise
-  submit with the application, a report explaining the process they have followed, a summary of community comments / views received and demonstrate how they have been taken into account in finalising the submitted scheme

Major development proposals are considered to be:

- (i) housing development for 10 or more units or where a site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more
- (ii) where the floorspace of building(s) to be created is 1000 square metres or more
- (iii) where a site has an area of 1 hectare or more

For further advice on community consultation, please refer to the Council's "Guide to Community Engagement in Planning Applications".

For other development proposals we will encourage applicants to:

-  explain proposals to neighbours or the local community and local council
-  request views on the draft proposals
-  consider any views received
-  where appropriate, revise the proposals to take account of any views or demonstrate why it has not been possible to take account of any such views
-  submit with the application, a summary explaining the process they have followed and how neighbour / community views have been taken into account

What happens if a community consultation is not carried out?

We cannot refuse to register an otherwise valid application that has not been subject to a pre-application community consultation exercise. We can only emphasise the advantages of early consultation in helping to identify potential issues or areas of conflict that could be addressed at an early stage. The lack of pre-application consultation may result in requests for additional information, delays in determining the application or possibly a refusal that could have been avoided.

Essentially we are seeking to establish best practice.

Post application consultation

Consultation with the community, for example neighbours and Parish Councils, is already part of the process in determining planning applications. Existing consultation and publicity processes on submitted planning applications include:

-  Newspaper advertisements
-  Display of site notices
-  Neighbour consultations where properties are considered to be directly affected by development proposals
-  Consultation with Parish / Town Councils and Parish meetings
-  Consultation with specialist bodies and statutory agencies
-  Publication of weekly lists of submitted applications, including on the Council web-site

The Council's Communications and Consultation Service Charter, and advisory leaflets 'How Your Application Will Be Dealt With' and Code of Practice for Publicity and Consultations set out the process for dealing with and consulting on planning applications.

We will continue to use the above processes and keep them under review, for example through feedback from focus groups and user groups.

Post decision notification

The Council publish a weekly list of all decisions that have been issued, which is available on request by e-mail, in printed form or can be downloaded from the web site. Further details are available from the Council's Community Offices. □

Copies of formal decision notices, which set out the reasons for the decision and any conditions which may be attached, are sent to applicant's (or agents), Town/Parish Councils/Meetings and the County Council. They are also sent, where requested, to Government agencies and can be provided to any individual upon request. Decision notices can be inspected at Community Offices and copies of the plans and documents for recently determined applications can be inspected at Richmond Community Office

5. Making it happen

Our resources

This Statement of Community Involvement will be implemented, monitored and reviewed by the Planning Policy Team, within the Executive Core of Richmondshire District Council.

The actions set out in this document will be carried out by the Planning Policy Team alongside its other activities. Occasionally, other staff employed by us, or specialist expertise, may be sought to help carry out specific consultation, e.g. focus groups or public meetings. Wherever this is the case, at least one officer from our Planning Policy Team will be present. □

We have received money from the Government specifically to help improve the Planning Service. Some of this will be used to support ongoing community involvement in the Local Development Framework process. This will be in addition to using the existing communication and consultation processes supported by us and our partners, for example, The Curlew (our Council newspaper which is delivered to all homes within Richmondshire twice a year), Richmondshire Local Strategic Partnership, Residents' panel etc

Reviewing what we do

Each development plan document that we prepare will include a statement setting out how we have complied with this Statement of Community Involvement. We will assess each consultation initiative that we carry out and ask you for your feedback. □

Where we find that a change in our methods is required, we will publicise these changes on our website and in the local press. We will also propose them as updates to this document. Any changes (which will also take account of emerging best practice and Government requirements) will be highlighted in our Annual Monitoring Report.

Appendix 1:

Statutory Consultees

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 states that we must consult with the following if we think that the body will be affected by what is proposed in a Development Plan Document. □

- ✈ Yorkshire & Humber Regional Assembly
- ✈ Yorkshire Forward
- ✈ One North East
- ✈ Darlington Borough Council
- ✈ Durham County Council
- ✈ Craven District Council
- ✈ Teesdale District Council
- ✈ North Yorkshire County Council
- ✈ Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
- ✈ Hambleton District Council
- ✈ Harrogate District Council
- ✈ All Town & Parish Councils & meetings
- ✈ Commission for Rural Communities
- ✈ The Environment Agency
- ✈ The Historic Buildings & Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage)
- ✈ The Strategic Rail Authority
- ✈ British Telecom
- ✈ Hutchinson Orange
- ✈ Vodaphone
- ✈ O2
- ✈ South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust
- ✈ British Gas
- ✈ NEDL
- ✈ Northern Electric plc
- ✈ Transco
- ✈ Yorkshire Water plc
- ✈ Highways Agency
- ✈ Countryside Agency
- ✈ Natural England

Other Statutory and National Consultees

Includes bodies such as Internal Drainage Boards and agencies not included in the list of specific consultees, such as Royal Mail, Forestry Commission, Sport England etc

Appendix 1 *continued*:

Other consultees

We may also consult with local and regional groups, associations and organisations representing the interests of the following:

- ✈ Richmondshire Local Strategic Partnership Partners and Groups □
- ✈ Amenity Groups
- ✈ Ministry of Defence/Defence Estates
- ✈ Conservation/Wildlife Groups
- ✈ Public Sector Housing Groups
- ✈ Developers/Estate Agents
- ✈ Local Businesses
- ✈ Black and Minority Ethnic Groups/Local Disability Groups/Older Persons Groups/Gypsies and travellers etc.
- ✈ Youth Groups, Schools and Colleges
- ✈ Health Care Groups
- ✈ Other Groups e.g. Richmond Swale Valley Community Initiative □□□
Community Investment Prospectus Groups
- ✈ Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber

Please note this list is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where reorganisations occur.



How to contact us

If you would like any more information please contact us either in writing to:

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Swale House
Frenchgate
Richmond
DL10 4JE

Or email: ldf@richmondshire.gov.uk
Or telephone: 01748 829100
Or fax: 01748 825071

Alternatively visit our website: www.richmondshire.gov.uk

This document is available in alternative formats such as large print, braille and other languages. If you would like a copy please get in touch.

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