Bath and North East Somerset
Local Strategic Partnership

Guide to Community Planning in your area

Community Planning Toolkit

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Content

<u>**Appendices**</u>

Chapter 1 – About Community Plans

1. Introduction

Local communities are increasingly being encouraged to have more control over their own areas, to say what they want in their own community or parish and to work with other organisations to make positive changes.

Community plans give communities the opportunity to influence their future. They provide a way for them to shape services in their area, as well as work together on wider issues such as tackling climate change. In parished areas, they set out plans for the town or parish council to adopt and act upon. They can also:

- Create a greater sense of community spirit
- Provide evidence of local needs and priorities for other plans to take into account
- Provide evidence for future funding applications

This document sets out a practical guide to starting, preparing and delivering your Community Plan.

2. What is a community plan?

A community plan is a statement from the community in a local area about how it sees its future, usually over a five to ten year period.   Community plans cover local areas and in parished areas, they are usually known as town plans or parish plans.

Community plans consider the key issues for the locality and highlight the concerns raised by people who live and work there. Involvement of the whole community is therefore essential to ensure that the plan is a true reflection of the community's views. Community plans build on these community views to develop a vision for the area and to set out the specific actions that will be taken to meet the local priorities identified.

Before beginning work on a community plan (including a parish plan) it makes sense to discuss this widely, including with your parish council if you have one and with Bath & North East Somerset Council, who can offer advice. This can include information on the potential geographical focus for your plan. This will depend on other plans in existence and the presence of community support.

3. Why produce a plan?

It offers a great opportunity to bring together everyone in the community to plan its future. They take time, energy and commitment but community plans can:

- stimulate interest in community issues
- develop community spirit, getting people involved and talking to each other
- strengthen a Town or Parish Council's relationship with the community and with local agencies, including the local authority
- prioritise local effort and resources

- develop voluntary action to meet local needs and provide evidence for funding applications
- provide opportunities for the community to respond to larger issues such as climate change.

These benefits can often lead to fresh initiatives and creative ideas for problem-solving within the community which otherwise may not have happened.

4. Who should lead the process?

In parished areas, if there is sufficient support to produce a plan, your town or parish council will need to pass a formal resolution to set up an independent steering group that will guide the process. Outside of parished areas, there may be other ways of agreeing to progress a community plan, and these will be different in each area. In all cases, you should involve your locally elected councillors from Bath & North East Somerset Council (information about this can be found on the Council's website www.bathnes.gov.uk). Also, make sure you speak to the Stronger Communities team at Bath & North East Somerset Council as early as possible as they can give you advice and support.

5. How does community planning fit within the wider framework?

It is important from the beginning to understand the context within which your plan is being prepared. A list of key documents and references is provided in Appendix 3.

It is also important that your plan becomes part of the framework of other community plans and strategies so that the community's needs are considered by decision makers and fed into the long-term plan for the area. The key strategic document for the area is the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2009 – 2026.

The SCS aims to create communities where everyone contributes and takes responsibility. To support this, it identifies the need for:

- people to tackle things for themselves, allowing communities to take responsibility for their own development and future
- local community planning to be supported and significantly extended

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) leads the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy and comprises representatives from the public, private and third (voluntary) sector. The Local Area Agreement (LAA), which is also agreed by the LSP, forms a key framework upon which central government funds the work of local public services. The framework is made up of:

- Children and Young People
- Health and Well being
- Economic Development and Enterprise
- Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
- Safer and Stronger Communities

A number of parish planning groups have found it very helpful to set out their plans according to this framework, including highlighting those issues which don't quite fit. This helps LSP members to see how local priorities fit in with the wider priorities for the area and can assist with making progress on plan priorities.

6. Will the plan become a legal / statutory document?

A community or parish plan is not a statutory (legal) document – as it is not subject to the same level of scrutiny, examination and status as some of the other more formal plans such as the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

Community plans are statements of local views, opinions and aspirations of the community. Plans can make recommendations for consideration in shaping future statutory and non-statutory plans and in some circumstances parts of a parish plan can be considered for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. However, this would have to be taken forward by Bath & North East Somerset Council and would be subject to a detailed sustainability appraisal and formal consultation. This could result in the content being changed.

A community plan is a very useful source of evidence of local needs and priorities from the community, and the Council will seek to utilise this as fully as possible. In terms of Planning Services, the plan may be used to support and give weight to any comments made on a planning application, and may also be used as evidence of local needs in future proposals. It is also useful to identify issues affecting a locality when drafting planning policy and the Council is in the process of developing its Local Development Framework.

Bath & North East Somerset Council is fully supportive of the community planning process but it is important to remember that the content of plans cannot override adopted local authority planning policy or any other statutory documents.

More details can be found about Supplementary Planning Documents in Appendix 4.

Chapter 2 – Getting Started

1. At the beginning

Before you start you need to make sure that there is adequate interest and enough people are willing to help. Anyone may propose the idea of a community plan, but the decision to go ahead needs to be made jointly with the community, and the community needs to be fully informed and involved right from the beginning. In addition, it is important that the area you choose for your community plan is the right one. Parish plans tend to be for a single parish. For community plans in unparished areas there is no set pattern but it is vital that the area is of sufficient size to for a coherent plan to be prepared.

The key to success at this stage is plenty of good publicity. In parished areas, one way to do this might be for the Town or Parish Council to organise and promote a special meeting, at which the idea of a parish plan is presented and explained. Your local area will have lots of active organisations within it and you can use them as a way to get their members involved in the plan. It is important to record attendance at events and meetings as this will be useful if you decide to go ahead and later need to demonstrate that your plan has been adequately consulted upon.

At this stage, your aim is to gather community support and interest. Later on you will need to get residents involved in practical projects, and to encourage people to come up with ideas, views and opinions. Through your early publicity and events, you may be able to start recruiting volunteers. You will need people who have a wide range of skills, interests, energy or spare time available, so don't be afraid to ask people to help.

2. Involving your local Town or Parish Council

If your plan is for a parished area, your town or parish council will need to pass a resolution supporting the process. In the unparished areas, it is important to discuss your ideas at an early stage with Bath & North East Somerset Council. In all cases, you will then need to set up a steering group to do the detailed planning and co-ordinate the project. You may wish to start this at an open meeting, but be prepared to approach people personally and ask for help. Ask for volunteers through local newsletters, and through clubs and organisations.

Throughout, the process, the parish council's role will be to support the steering group in their work and may also nominate a representative to sit on the steering group. The parish council may support the plan with funding and at the end of the process it is the parish plan's responsibility to formally adopt the plan.

3. Setting up a Steering Group

The steering group is usually made up of local representatives from the community to undertake the process. Involvement of local councillors, at parish and Bath & North East Somerset level, as well as of the relevant council officers at all levels, can really help you organise your plan and is very much recommended.

The purpose of the steering group is to keep the plan on track and to:

- **reflect** the views of all sections of the community
- **recognise** the distinctive characteristics of the area that people value
- **identify** local problems and explore opportunities to overcome them
- **draw** out and indicate how the community wants to develop in the future
- **prepare** a plan of action to achieve this vision, setting out who needs to be involved

Effective steering groups usually comprise between 8 and 15 members. They should representative a wide cross section of the community and you may also wish to invite key officers from the Council, Police, Health Authority and other key statutory organisations to provide an overview of their key priorities.

It is useful for a steering group to appoint a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. You may also consider allocating other tasks such as publicity, or co-ordination of volunteers, to individuals with the relevant skills and experience. Be prepared to bring in new people and ideas as the project evolves.

The Stronger Communities team in Bath & North East Somerset Council are available to discuss ways to support he group and maintain momentum.

Before you start it is advisable to write down agreed roles and responsibilities for the steering group. It should clarify how money will be spent and what is expected of, and offered to, volunteers. This will help everyone to understand the nature of the task and the role that they have to play.

Chapter 3 – Planning the Project

1. Identify the key tasks

Now that a steering group has been formed, it is important to set out the tasks you will need to undertake and to identify the resources you have available or will need to gain in order to deliver them. Of course this will be different in each area and there will be considerable variations between parish plans and plans in un-parished areas. However, most community plans require the tasks set out below.

a. Review of existing material

If community-led plans have been produced previously for the area then you should review the information in them to check which issues and actions are still relevant and could be incorporated into the plan. It may be that the process should be a "light-touch" "refresh" of a previous parish plan or other community plan. This will depend on the extent of change which has taken place in your area since the initial plan was adopted.

At an early stage, it is important that available documentation, including demographic and other data that highlights local needs and issues, is made available in a clear form to the steering group. Bath & North East Somerset's Council's Stronger Communities team can assist with providing a range of available information relating to your local area.

b. Engagement with stakeholders

The community engagement process is central to an effective plan. There is no prescribed method stipulating who to involve in a community planning process, as every community is different. It is important that the plan belongs to the community that produces it. Additionally however, an effective plan will also need to ensure there is the co-operation of all of those who might be affected. This includes everyone:

- who lives in, works in or regularly visits the community
- who has an impact on what goes on in the community
- that the community hopes to influence

It is therefore important to involve in some way

- your local Councillors and MP
- Bath & North East Somerset Council
- schools
- neighbouring parishes
- local businesses
- the Police
- NHS Bath & North East Somerset
- any other organisations and public services that your community works with, or might wish to work with in order to achieve a local priority

The steering group should not make assumptions on behalf of the community and will need to involve as many people as possible in identifying the issues for the area. This includes taking particular note of the concerns of those whose voices are not always heard, such as young and older people, disabled people, black and other minority ethnic communities and lesbian and gay people Therefore matters like the timing of meetings, whether disabled access is available, transportation and childcare may need to be catered for.

Each issue that is raised in the process will need to be investigated to some degree, but you will have a better chance of sustaining interest and achieving results if you narrow them down to sensible proportions. The steering group needs to make sure this process is clear and transparent to all. See Appendix 2 for some ideas to include in your consultation.

Bath & North East Somerset Council's Stronger Communities team is able to help steering groups engage in the most appropriate way.

c. Engaging the community

This part of the process can be resource-intensive and complex and is therefore set out in some detail in Chapter 4.

d. Preparing the report and action plan

This part of the process is set out in detail in Chapter 5.

2. Estimate the resources you will need and how you are going to get them

Once the tasks set out above have been clarified, it is important to estimate at this stage in broad terms, the money, people and other resources the steering group will need to sustain the process and deliver the plan. Depending on the work that needs to be carried out in your particular locality to deliver the tasks above, resources might include:

- publicising and promoting your ideas and activities to the community
- carrying out, inputting and analysing surveys
- organising meetings and events aimed at getting everybody involved
- administrative support costs, stationery, postage, telephone calls
- printing and distributing the final document

A good way to complete the tasks and to involve the whole community is to encourage volunteers to carry them out. Your plan will benefit from utilising all of the available skills in your area ranging from businesses, who might be able to offer support and volunteers with particular skills. Specific tasks that are vital to an effective community plan include:

- administrative tasks such as filling envelopes
- door to door deliveries
- creating eye-catching posters and leaflets
- computer and data input skills, and work with websites
- design of questionnaires
- drafting documents

- undertaking analyses of the strengths, weaknesses and future challenges for the area

No volunteer should be financially out of pocket unless they have agreed to donate their costs. You don't have to use special equipment or computer software to produce a plan; choose what best suits your purposes. However the final report and action plan should be available in an electronic format as it is likely that this will be the main means of distribution. Again, the Stronger Communities team can advise you on the free "E-Consult" software which the council provides and is available to help you with your consultation.

However, even where all volunteer resources are used to the full, there will inevitably be some costs associated with community plans. A budget should therefore be drawn up setting out the planned expenditure, and sources of income investigated. In parish areas, clearly the Parish Council may be able to offer financial support. Other sources of income to be explored include

- local sponsorship (including help in kind, e.g. photocopying);
- fundraising events
- grant aid from external sources

Since funding sources change regularly it is important that you approach your Stronger Communities team to get the most up to date information on what sources might be available. In addition, the Council has made available a website which shows all the up-to-date sources of funding available in the area www.open4community.info/bathnes/default.aspx

3. Set a realistic timetable

It is important that the steering group keeps the momentum up for delivering your plan. In addition there may be conditions that funding bodies set for meeting a timetable in return for making the funds available.

Chapter 4 – Engaging the community

It is very important that people in the community do as much of the work to produce the plan as possible as communities are best placed to identify their own needs and tackle their own problems.

1. Consulting with the community- key issues

The community engagement aspect of the plan is a key component of the process. Before embarking on it, it is important to consider some key principles of effective consultation. These include:

- deciding what you are trying to achieve from the engagement
- choosing the most appropriate method
- having an open mind about the outcomes of the engagement
- accepting that there will be differing views and priorities
- avoiding jargon
- working at the right pace and keeping people on board

You will also need to decide which will be the most effective way to engage the people in different parts of your community. Everyone in the community should be given an opportunity to contribute their views and their skills, energy and experience to produce the plan. It is particularly important to include people who may not traditionally involve themselves in community affairs.

For your plan to be as inclusive as possible you will need to gather information on people's likes and dislikes about your community and what they feel needs preserving and enhancing in a number of different ways. Just a few suggestions are:

- "drop-in" events – best held at the weekend so that people can come at a time that suits them. These can also be done successfully as a stall at another event, such as a summer fair. Use post it notes, maps, models and flip charts to prompt people to give their views and make suggestions
- suggestion boxes – placed around your parish for people to tell you their views
- beer mats in pubs – publicising the Community Plan with space to write views, with a collection box at the bar
- talking to individual groups –going out and talking to people in the village shop, church, post office, the pub or other places where people get together. Tell them why you're asking the questions and make sure you write down or record anything they say. You might visit local clubs and societies - for example, having an informal discussion at a mother and toddler group or with older people in sheltered accommodation.

It is vital that everyone has an opportunity to contribute their views in a way that is comfortable for them. Not everyone feels happy writing things down; some don't like speaking in public and sometimes people might prefer to express themselves in photographs or drawings. Some people won't get involved until they feel the plan relates to them, or because it just sounds boring. Try to think creatively and above all make it fun. For example, in-depth engagement to

address a particular issue or problem may best be carried out through informal discussions or through involving people with a keen interest in the subject in a topic group.

2. Producing a consultation questionnaire

Many communities have used questionnaires delivered to all households as the main method for gathering information to produce their Plan. This is a tried and tested method and usually forms a good starting point. Some key principles for designing a questionnaire are

- avoid "leading" or personal questions
- think carefully about the questions that you ask, and ask only relevant questions
- use simple, jargon free language
- use both "open" and "closed" questions and give people the opportunity to add further comments as well
- questionnaires should be confidential so consider how you will check who has and hasn't responded, and it is useful also to have a separate sheet for people to volunteer to get involved

Your Stronger Communities team can give you help and assistance with designing, producing, data entry and analysing the results of any questionnaire you decide to produce.

3. Using the findings of your engagement activities

a. Preparing the "Findings Report"

It is crucial that the feedback from all of this engagement work is recorded. For example, you may wish to keep a diary or scrapbook of the whole process, including drawings, pictures and any posters and leaflets you produce. Take photographs at meetings and consultations. Illustrations of the consultation process will show how you've involved everybody. It also helps to make the process more transparent, and it will enable you to keep track of where you've been successful or not, so that others can learn from your experience.

You will at this stage now have a mass of information gathered from existing sources and from your own research and consultation; following this, it makes sense to check how many people you have consulted, and any key attributes such as age and location. You may then need to consider whether sections of the community are under represented and try to rectify this. Once you are satisfied that the engagement approach you have taken is robust, you are now in a position to produce a report on what you have done so far. The steering group should appoint an editor who takes overall responsibility for ensuring the report is clear, accurate and inviting. In particular the editor should ensure the draft report. This should include:

- an introductory section on your community, with a map showing the parish boundary, population, a brief history, and any recent changes
- the context for your Plan and why you decided to do it
- who was involved and how they were involved
- the findings of the research, consultations and discussions. Include some 'real life' experiences, with examples and quotes
- the issues that need tackling and the opportunities that could lead to action

Illustrate the document with charts, graphs, photos or sketches, acknowledging copyright if applicable and be clear that this is a factual analysis of the work undertaken so far. If a local organisation has been involved, show results, such as "there's been a request for a short mat bowls club and the village hall committee has agreed to investigate". You may wish to include a summary of the views put forward to illustrate the strength of feeling from residents on specific issues, perhaps using graphs and diagrams. This may help you identify priorities for action and set out for local partner agencies the evidence you are using to set priorities

b. Sharing and discussing the findings

You have now written up your findings. The next stage is vital to ensuring that your work so far leads to firm action and that the final report is as accurate as it can be. It is suggested that you discuss the report at this stage…

…with the community

Producing your "findings" report is an important milestone in your project. Many people have worked hard and given a lot of time and enthusiasm to the project. It's worth promoting your efforts widely and celebrating. This is a good opportunity to hold a special event. Consider having an open day, a conference or exhibition. Make sure the event is well promoted. You may have to organise childcare and provide refreshments to encourage people to come. Organise workshops or discussion groups to discuss your findings and to propose further research or action if people feel this is needed.

It may be useful to bring in external speakers to help explain more complex issues or to answer questions. This could be a good opportunity to involve those people from other organisations whose help you need in order to tackle certain issues, for example local authority or other public service officers (see below)

…with Bath and North East Somerset Council & other partners

You may wish to organise a special presentation to local authority members and officers, or hold individual meetings with other organisations you need to influence. It is important to have a dialogue and build a constructive relationship. Do not expect people simply to accept and endorse your report. You need to work in partnership to explore issues from all perspectives and agree on realistic action.

Chapter 5 – Producing your Final Report and Action Plan

1. How to identify the actions needed

One you have incorporated any feedback into your final community plan report, it is time to identify the specific actions needed to address the key issues contained in it. The steering group should take responsibility for identifying the priorities and deciding what action is needed. In parished areas, there is now an opportunity for your Parish or Town Council and local Steering Group to get together to decide which actions need to be done urgently and which can fit into a longer time frame, as well as resources available and the feasibility of certain proposals. In un-parished areas, there is an opportunity now to check back again with local elected members and public services, including Bath & North East Somerset Council, about potential actions and their implications. Some key principles for an effective Action Plan are:

- **keep it clear and simple**. You may find there are issues where you are still not clear about the course of action to be taken. You may need to identify the "action" as being a need to carry out further research or consultation. This is fine as long as you are clear about the reasons for this action
- **try to prioritise, at least into high, medium and low priorities**. This will help you to identify which actions are needed most urgently
- **agree and allocate responsibility.** Unless an individual or a small group is given responsibility for making a particular action happen, it could just 'gather dust'
- **set a time frame**. Identifying a date by which an action should be carried out will help to ensure it is not forgotten and constantly 'put on the back burner'
- **break the actions down into manageable stages**. Define alternative options wherever possible and be imaginative in your thinking.
- **engage partners.** So much action requires a partnership approach with support that might come from within any of the public, private or voluntary sectors.
- **be pragmatic and honest**. Think through the resource implications and possible sources of finance – make it clear if you know some actions are going to be more difficult to achieve
- **don't always rely on others to resolve some of the issues that you may have**. You may be able to solve them in the community.
- **make actions enjoyable and easy to carry out**. For example, a village tidy-up day can involve lots of people and perhaps get some local media coverage
- **Build in a review process**. Although an action plan is produced and put on paper, things are actually constantly changing and ideally a plan should be constantly monitored and reviewed and in need of updating. It can be sensible to make one of your actions a specific review of the whole plan on at least an annual basis.

2. Publishing the plan

The final report and action plan (which together comprise the community plan) does not need to be expensively produced. The content and the quality of the document is far more important than a high cost publication and most of the distribution of the plan can be electronic.

A practical way to present the final plan would be in two parts:

- a detailed report explaining how the plan has been developed, including community engagement carried out and the conclusions that have been drawn from it. It may be useful to include the raw data as an appendix to the document to illustrate how such conclusions were drawn, to avoid any future ambiguity. The report could take various forms, including photographs, documents, sketches or even a video. This aspect of the report would also benefit from a succinct "vision" for the local community which links in with the vision set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy
- a succinct action plan clearly setting out what will be done, when, why, by whom and at what cost

Producing a separate executive summary document of the report and action plan is also a practical way to ensure that it can be distributed easily to a wider audience.

Chapter 6 – What happens next

1. Seeking approval

In parished areas, parish plans must be endorsed by the Parish Council. For other community plans it is important that the ratification and agreement process is agreed at the beginning of the process. It is important for example that action points are discussed with the other organisations that have been identified as having responsibility for any actions in the plan before they are agreed.

Identify also how best to link your plan with the work of Bath and North East Somerset's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). It is important that your issues are considered by decision makers when planning the long term strategies for the area. The Stronger Communities team will be able to talk you through how this process works.

2. Circulation

Think about how many copies of the final plan you will need to print, and consider whether you need to give every household in your community a copy. It may be more appropriate to give them an executive summary leaflet including the action plan.

The Parish Council should send the final version with a covering letter to all the people and organisations that have been identified in the action plan. They will have already been involved with the action planning discussions and so this is a good time to ask to meet and discuss how you can get started. Give them the name and phone number of someone from the community who will be their main point of contact.

3. Ongoing monitoring

The steering group can be a key motivator in making sure the Community Plan achieves results. Some members might leave and others join as people feel they have given enough of their time or if different skills and experience are needed. The steering group might also use the action plan to encourage local community action either on their own or in partnership with existing networks, such as conservation or food groups.

An effective way of ensuring action does take place is to establish task groups, perhaps based on the working groups who were involved in producing the plan. They can take responsibility for action. They can monitor progress and feedback regularly to the steering committee and / or the Parish Council. It is a good idea to pick out some simple tasks from the action plan, to notch up some early wins.

4. Continue to celebrate your successes

Don't be shy about informing the local newspaper and radio about your celebrations. You may get some media coverage that will help to make everyone feel special and make the event more memorable.

Remember also the organisations you've been in touch with along the way. Keeping up those relationships will reap dividends when you want to introduce new projects and schemes.

Appendix 1

Contact details

a. Bath and North East Somerset Council

Council Service	Contact	Role	Email	Tel
Arts	Ann Cullis	Arts Development Manager	Ann_cullis@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396455
Children	Liz Price	Children's Planning Manager	Liz_price@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477930
Community Development	Kathy Sinkins	Senior Community Development Officer	Kathy_sinkins@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477822
Community Safety & Drugs Partnership	Sue Tilley	Safer Communities Manager	Sue_tilley@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477415
Corporate Equality Team	Samantha Jones	Corporate Equalities Manager	Samantha_Jones@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396364
Economic Development	John Cox	Business Support and Development Manager	John_cox@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477294
Environment Team		Natural environment, biodiversity, countryside management, local natural reserves, trees, landscapes, and urban design	environmentteam@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477619
Fuel Poverty	Charles Garrett	Property Partnership Officer	Charles_garrett@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396341
Parks, Green Spaces	Andy Chard	Senior Parks Officer	Andy_chard@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396883
Heritage & Conservation	Tony Crouch	Manager	Tony_crouch@bathnes.gov.uk	01255 477584
Highways Development	David Horne	Highway Development	David_horne@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 394462
Housing	Gary Ward	Development Officer	Gary_ward@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477937
LAA/LSP/Sustainable Community Strategy	Sarah Brown	Strategy and Plan Manager	sarah_brown@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 395050

Council Service	Contact	Role	Email	Tel
Older People	Jeff Saffin	Group Manager, Adult & Health Services	Jeff_saffin@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396290
Planning Policy and Environment Team			Planning_Policy@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477548
Play Pathfinders programme	Alice McColl	Strategic Officer for Play	Alice_mccoll@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 395137
Research and Intelligence	Jon Poole	Research and Intelligence Manager	Jon_poole@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 842532
Sport & Active Leisure	Linda Deane	Active Lifestyle Manager	Lynda_dean@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396428
Stronger Communities Team	**Dave Dixon**	**Stronger Communities Manager for the Somer Valley**	**Dave_dixon@bathnes.gov.uk**	**01225 396532**
Stronger Communities Team	**Rachel Ward**	**Stronger Communities Manager for the Chew Valley**	**Rachel_ward@bathnes.gov.uk**	**01225 395360**
Stronger Communities Team	**Paul Pennycook**	**Stronger Communities Manager for Bath and environs**	**Paul_pennycook@bathnes.gov.uk**	**01225 477290**
Sustainability	Jane Wildblood	Sustainability Manager	Jane_wildblood@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 477685
Transport	Adrian Clarke	Transportation Planning Manager	Adrian_Clarke@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 395223
Youth Service	Graham Baker	Senior Youth Worker	Graham_baker@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 395688
Youth Service	Paula Bromley	Principal Youth Officer	Paula_Bromley@bathnes.gov.uk	01225 396984

* Stronger Communities Managers, will provide support and advice to steering groups. Contact your Stronger Communities Manager to help you identify a detailed contact list for your area.

b. Other key contacts

- Community Action - Rural Community Council, advice and support on rural transport and village halls: tel: 01275 393837

- Develop – enhancing Community Support - Meryl Hecquet, Email: Meryl@banescvs.org.uk

- NHS Bath & North East Somerset - Derek Thorne, Assistant Director Corporate Affairs, Primary Care Trust, 01225 831861

- BANES Local Involvement Network (LINk) Email: contact@baneslink.co.uk website: www.baneslink.co.uk

- English Rural Housing Association - Louise Davidson, Regional Development Manager, Email: louise.davidson@englishrural.org.uk

- Somer Housing Trust – Neighbourhood Teams, Email: enquiries@somer.org.uk, tel: 01225 366000

- Avon Local Councils Association, Bath & North East Somerset branch - Mr Peter Duppa-Miller, Email: peter.duppa-miller@virgin.net tel: 01225 837271

- Avon and Somerset Police

  - Bath and surrounds, Inspector Steven Mildren, Email: steven.mildren@avonandsomerset.police.uk

  - Midsomer Norton, Radstock and surrounds, Inspector Paul Kendall, Email: paul.kendall@avonandsomerset.police.uk

  - Keynsham and surrounds, Inspector Tim Stuckes, Email: tim.stuckes@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Appendix 2

Some ideas for consideration in your plan

Here are some issues you may wish to examine through your community plan. This is not a comprehensive list, just some ideas to get you started when scoping out your plan. The list below is set out according to the themes contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy

Children and Young People

Education & training – Pre-school, primary school, secondary, vocational & adult education, what is provided and does it meet the needs of your community? Could the school be used to provide additional services?
Childcare – Is there an after school club? Is there demand for better childcare facilities?
Children's interests - Are there safe and interesting places for children to play and explore? Sport, recreation and social activities – what do people do in their spare time? Is there sufficient provision for all age groups and interests?
Play - Does the children's play area need improvement?
Eco Schools: Are all your schools eco-schools? Are they becoming a hub for more sustainable living?

Healthier Communities and Older People

Health – Is there easy access to GP surgeries, drop-in clinics for the young and the elderly, chiropody, dentistry services?
Carers – Are people caring for sick or disabled friends or relatives isolated and need support?
Personal services - Can local people access the services of a dentist, optician etc?
Sport and Leisure – How do people keep fit? Is there adequate access to facilities?
Climate Change Impacts: How vulnerable are sick or elderly people to extreme weather, heat and cold?

Economic Development and Enterprise

Green New Deal- Are there ways to promote the local economy that will also benefit the environment? Woodland management for biomass heating? Local food growing and retail? Sustainable projects that can benefit local plumbers, electricians, builders and so forth, such as installing insulation or renewable energy?
Employment needs and opportunities – What exists already? Is more needed? Is there a shortage of skilled labour? Does the community make the most of its homegrown skills and products, crafts etc.? Is there access to job opportunity information?
Shops - Where do people shop? Can everyone get to the shops? Is good quality and fresh food available? Is there access to locally produced food? Are there mobile services? Are there ways of supporting local shops?
Finance - Is there a bank? A post office? ATM machine (preferably free)?
New technology – Is there a public Internet terminal? Faxing facility?
Not-for-profit enterprises – Are they adequately supported and promoted?

Visitors and tourism – Who visits and why? How do they get there? Are there adequate facilities for visitors? What are their accommodation, refreshment, transport and information needs? Could the information for visitors be improved?

Public houses –Could they be used to provide additional services?

Housing – Is there an adequate supply of rented and privately owned accommodation? Is it affordable? Do you need a housing needs survey? How energy efficient is your housing stock and could it be improved? How many people in your area are in fuel poverty?

Environment / Sustainability

Climate Change: Has your Parish Plan fully taken climate change into account? For example, have you considered a Climate Change lead who can ensure that the plan I written and delivered with this issue in mind?

Energy efficiency - Could homes and community buildings be made more energy efficient? What current measures are already in place within homes and community buildings? Are people aware of the grants available?

Renewable Energy - Could your community or residents generate energy, perhaps to create income by selling back to the grid? Or bulk purchase of solar hot water heaters or other technologies?

Climate change adaptation: Is your area at risk of flooding? How might your area be affected by intense storms, heavy rainfall or heatwaves?

Recycling – Are there recycling facilities? Are they well used?

Litterbins –Are there enough bins for public use?

Dog bins - Is there a need for additional provision? How could they be maintained?

Wildlife and natural habitats – Which sites/species are important and why? Do people visit and appreciate them? How are important sites being managed? Is there a need for a community garden, wildlife area or park?

Landscape – Are there local or national landscape designations? Has a Landscape Character Assessment been produced for the area? Could landscape be improved? Is it likely to change?

Built environment –Are there opportunities for new development? Is there a need for more affordable housing?

Historical assets – Are there historic buildings, places and features that might be used to promote local tourism / business? Do the local community appreciate them? Could local guides and walks be developed?

Historic sites and heritage features – Are they well managed, appreciated, promoted? Do they contribute to the quality of life in the village? Do visitor numbers create a problem or an opportunity?

Street lighting – Is there enough? Too much? Is it in a style sympathetic with the character of the village? Do public areas, such as car parks and alleyways feel safe?

Public transport – How well is the current public transport used? Who needs transport? Where do they live and want to go to?
Have you considered undertaking a transport needs assessment?

Traffic speed and volume – Are there road safety, parking and access issues?

Access to the countryside – Is the Rights of Way network well signed and maintained? Is there provision for walkers, horse riders and cyclists? Is it accessible to wheelchairs, people with pushchairs and others of limited mobility?

Safer and Stronger Communities

Equality do the groups and organisations in your community (and in particular the Town or Parish Council) offer equal opportunities to everyone, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, sexuality, disability.? Do they undertake regular equalities audits?

Democracy - Does your parish council represent the community effectively? Does everyone have a say in things that affect them? Are some people left out or excluded from some activities or facilities? Are all generations encouraged to get involved?

People – Who are the people who make up the community? Where do they live and work? Have you looked at the needs of particular groups of people, for example pre-school children and their parents, teenagers, the over 60s, people with hearing, sight, language or mobility difficulties, people who work shifts or long hours, and black and other minority ethnic communities?

Inclusion - How do people know about opportunities and social events? Do you need a parish newsletter or magazine or more notice boards? Is there a village website? Is the Internet used as a communication tool?

Volunteering – Is this encouraged? Is it given enough support? Given additional support could they provide new services in your community?

Police and community safety- What are local priorities and concerns about crime and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour? Could there be a role for a Neighbourhood Watch?

Church / village / community halls – Who uses them? What facilities do they offer? How could they be improved or adapted to enable more people to use them? Could they be more energy efficient or powered by renewable energy? Could they sell energy back to the grid to raise money for the community?

Library - Is there easy access to a library or a mobile library service?

Public toilets – Are there any, or is there a need for them? Could they be provided in an existing facility, such as the village hall? Could they maintained adequately?

Emergency Planning - Are you aware of what to do locally in the event of a civil contingency?

Appendix 3

Key Documents and reference points

a. Key documents

Sustainable Community Strategy
Local Development Framework - Core Strategy
Local Area Agreement
Joint Local Transport Plan

All available on www.bathnes.gov.uk or contact the Stronger Communities team

Regional Spatial Strategy - www.southwest-ra.gov.uk

b. Useful websites

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - www.defra.gov.uk
Department for Communities and Local Government - www.communities.gov.uk
Home Office - www.homeoffice.gov.uk
Action for Rural Communities in Rural England - www.acre.gov.uk
Bath and North East Somerset Council - www.bathnes.gov.uk
B&NES PCT - www.banes-pct.nhs.uk
Wildthings Biodiversity Action Plan - www.wildthingsbap.org.uk

c. Resources

Funding Website - www.open4community.info/bathnes/default.aspx
Allows for funding searches for different funding sources available locally

Local data website -
http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/BathNES/communityandliving/intelligenceproject/
Provides links to a wide range of data about the area.

National Statistics - www.statistics.gov.uk
The main site of the Office of National Statistics for the dissemination of local data; searchable by theme or by local area or postcode. Contains all principal national data sets.

ONS - www.nomisweb.co.uk
The ONS' labour market statistics site; also contains the option to conduct more advanced searches on Census data.

Avon and Somerset Police - www.avonandsomerset.police.uk
A variety of data sources relating to the West of England (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset). Contains useful, regularly updated summaries of national data sources

Intelligence West - www.intelligencewest.org.uk
A variety of data sources relating to the West of England (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset). Contains useful, regularly updated summaries of national data sources.

Education and Skills - www.dfes.gov.uk
A variety of data sources pertaining to educational achievement and adult skills.

Climate Change Adaptation - http://www.oursouthwest.com/climate/index.htm
The South West Climate Change Impacts Partnership (SWCCIP) can advise on how climate change will affect your area and help you explore adaptation measures.

Energy Efficiency - 0800 512 012
Advice number to determine eligibility for grants for insulation and energy efficiency measures

Domestic or Community Renewable Energy - http://www.cse.org.uk/
The Centre for Sustainable Energy can advise on obtaining and installing renewable energy technologies.

Selling energy to the Grid - http://regensw.co.uk/downloads/RegenSW_314.pdf
In 2010 a "Feed In Tariff" will be introduced which will allow small renewable energy installations to sell energy back to the grid. This is a link to a short briefing on the topic.

d. Other resources

Examples of questionnaires, report templates and action plans can be provided by the Stronger Communities team.

An e-consultation system is available free for steering groups to use. This also provides a facility for analysing data.

Data about the area can be found at -
http://cis/BathNES/communityandliving/intelligenceproject/

Appendix 4

Parish Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents

The new Planning system

1. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new system of statutory planning policy documents to replace the old Structure Plans and Local Plans. The essential framework for planning decisions is the Development Plan which consists of Regional Spatial Strategies prepared by Regional Authorities and development plan documents prepared by Local Planning Authorities. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) supersede the old Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Supplementary Planning Documents

2. The role of Supplementary Planning Documents is to supplement policies in the Development Plan. SPDs can expand upon or provide further detail on Development Plan policies but cannot be used to allocate land or formulate planning policy. SPDs may relate to a particular subject or a specific site. Together with Development Plan documents and other documents, SPDs form part of the Local Development Framework.

3. The new planning system sets out statutory procedures for the preparation of planning documents including procedures for the preparation of SPD. There are particular requirements for community involvement and sustainability appraisal and these are explained further below.

Parish Plans

4. Parish Plans are prepared by Parish communities setting out a vision for how the community wants to develop. They are therefore broad in scope covering a range of matters of importance within a parish and identify actions. Parish Plans currently do not have legal or formal status in the town and country planning system but elements of the Parish Plan can be adopted as SPD provided they are consistent with the policies of the Development Plan and subject to the formal preparation procedures.

Preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents

5. Annex 1 to this report illustrates the key SPD preparation procedures. For an SPD to have weight within the planning system it must be soundly based in terms of content and process and hence its preparation must accord with the Government's statutory procedures. These include the need for appropriate community involvement and sustainability appraisal. If an SPD is to be prepared, as with any document in the Local Development Framework, it must be included within the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is the Local Planning Authority's three year programme for the production of local development documents. The Council will only include SPDs in the LDS if it is satisfied that a clear and realistic timetable is set out for the SPD preparation because it is the Local Authority that is accountable for its progress.

6. **Pre- production Stage:** The first stage of preparation is evidence gathering to ensure that the SPD is soundly based on robust, credible information. At this stage, the Sustainability

Appraisal methodology needs to be agreed and procedures to undertake the appraisal must be arranged. The extent of community involvement must be determined in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Government guidance advises that this stage can take around 3 months to complete. However, some of the evidence gathering undertaken as part of the preparation of the Parish Plan may contribute to this stage.

7. **Production:** This stage involves the drafting of the SPD with the informal involvement of the local community. The draft SPD must also be subject to a sustainability appraisal. Once the draft is prepared, it undergoes formal public participation whereby it is placed on deposit for a period of 4 to 6 weeks for public comment. A Report on the Sustainability Appraisal must also be available during the public participation. Consultation arrangements must accord with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. This reflects the Government's statutory requirements for public consultation including the availability of documents, consultees and publication requirements. Public comments or 'representations' must be considered and amendments made to the SPD in light of comments received. Government guidance advises that this stage can take around 6 months to complete.

8. **Adoption**: Once the SPD is finalised, it can proceed to adoption. Government guidance advises that SPDs should be adopted by a Council resolution as a document in the Local Development Framework. Once adopted the appropriate publicity procedures must be undertaken. A statement on how the public participation has influenced the SPD and a statement on how sustainability issues have been integrated within the Plan are also required. Once adopted the SPD needs to be kept under review. Government guidance advises that this stage can take around 3 months to complete.

Conclusion

9. The new planning system has particular implications for the preparation of Parish Plans. Parish Planning groups should alert the Local Planning Authority at an early stage if they expect to go down SPD route or are likely to have any spatial action points arising from their Plan. Elements of Parish Plans can qualify as SPDs and have weight in planning decisions, provided their content and preparation adhere to national regulations and guidance.

Key References:

1. The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
2. Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations (2004).
3. Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (September 2004).
4. Creating Local Development Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12 (2004)
5. Local Development Frameworks – Guidance to Procedures and Code of Practice (Consultation Draft 2003)
6. Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide, March (2005)
7. Parish Plans : Guidance for Parish & Town Councils

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS
PREPARATION PROCESS

PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF SPD

- Project proposal for SPD eg rationale, time, resources, project programme, chain of conformity (parent DPD policy) etc
- Amend Local Development Scheme to include SPD (confirm milestones)

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1. PRE-PRODUCTION STAGE

SPD	**Community Involvement**	**Sustainability Appraisal**
EVIDENCE GATHERING: • Establish what info is available & what the gaps are • Undertake surveys	• Determine extent of Community Involvement (SCI or min. requirements)	• Scoping Report (if needed) • Agree appraisal methodology & programme (depends on appraisal of parent policies) • Confirm SEA requirements are met

Milestones: Commencement of SPD; SA Scoping Report
Time: 3 months +

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2. PRODUCTION STAGE

SPD	**Community Involvement**	**Sustainability Appraisal**
PREPARE DRAFT SPD • Consider options • Compile document	Informal involvement of local communities & stakeholders	Prepare Sustainability Appraisal report • Develop & refine options • Assess effects of preferred options
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION • SPD 'on deposit' for 4- 6 weeks • Publish Statement of conformity	Formal Community Involvement • Invite representations (Reg 17) • Publish Statement on consultation undertaken & main issues emerging	Final Sustainability Appraisal report on Deposit
FINALISE SPD • Consider representations & make changes to SPD (Reg 18)	• Prepare report summarising main issues arising from reps & how addressed	• Consider comments on Sustainability Appraisal & changes to SPD

Milestones: Preparation of draft SPD; Final SA report; consideration of reps
Time: 6 months +

3. ADOPTION		
SPD	**Community Involvement**	**Sustainability Appraisal**
Adoption by Bath & North East Somerset (Council decision making process) Ensure following available; • Adopted SPD • Adoption statement Undertake appropriate publicity Monitoring & Review	• Statement explaining how representations dealt with • Statement explaining how consultation has been taken into account	• Final Sustainability Appraisal statement • Statement explaining how sustainability issues have been integrated

Milestones: Adoption; Inclusion in LDF; Final SA Statement
Time: 3 months +