

Neighbourhood Planning

# Funding and Further Information and Advice

Published March 2015



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## Overview

Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council have been working with Suffolk ACRE (now Community Action Suffolk) and Suffolk County Council to support a number of towns and parishes in the districts to develop and deliver their community led plans. A range of different approaches have been used including parish plans, town plans and village reviews. These approaches all aim to identify a community's ambitions for their local area and an action plan to achieve them. Although these types of community led plans don't carry statutory weight, they have helped communities deliver local projects such as the provision of new community facilities.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights for communities including tools that can be used to influence how their local area develops. These new tools are Neighbourhood Development Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders and the community right to build. These are similar to parish and town plans in that they are not compulsory and they must be community led. However, the key difference is that they carry statutory weight and once the necessary processes have been successfully completed and the plan or order is adopted by the Council, they become part of the Local Plan and will be used to make decisions on planning applications. An important thing to keep in mind is that none of these plans can be used to stop development.

**Part 1** is a guide to help communities understand the options available to them by explaining the different types of community plan, the benefits and/or limitations of each type of plan to be able to make an informed decision about which approach is appropriate for them.

**Part 2** explains how to get started, practical advice on how to get the community involved in the process to come up with issues and options and how these can be turned into a vision and objectives.

**Part 3** provides practical advice on developing a plan and describes what needs to be done and when. It includes details of the early formal stages such as designating a Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum and how the Council will support the process.

**Part 4** explains the formal processes from submission of the plan to the Council, through the examination process and formal adoption.

**Part 5** provides further detail on where to find other help and advice and current sources of funding.



# Funding and Further Information and Advice

## Funding and Support for Neighbourhood Planning

Developing your neighbourhood plan will take time, expertise and money. Setting a budget will be an important part of your project planning so investigating what financial assistance and resources are available will help you set and manage this budget.

Although no dedicated financial support is available directly from the Council, there is a duty to support the neighbourhood planning process throughout by providing technical advice and guidance and by providing access to documents relevant to the local area.

### Contact the Local Planning team:

*Suffolk Coastal District Council:* [suffolkcoastallocalplan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:suffolkcoastallocalplan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

*Waveney District Council:* [waveneylocalplan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:waveneylocalplan@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

The community development/community led planning team can also provide advice and support with parts of the process, particularly around setting up your project group and community engagement activities, access to data and funding advice.

### Contact the Community Development / Community Led Planning Team:

*Suffolk Coastal District Council:* [Gillian.benjamin@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Gillian.benjamin@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

*Waveney District Council:* [Jo.McCallum@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.McCallum@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

*Suffolk County Council:* [Alison.Wheatland@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Alison.Wheatland@suffolk.gov.uk)

## What are the Costs of Producing a Neighbourhood Plan likely to be?

The costs of preparing a plan will vary according to a number of factors and each case will be different. Issues that could impact upon cost can include the nature of the Neighbourhood Area itself, the level of consultation undertaken, the timescales you want to work to and the complexity and scope of the proposed plan. It will also depend on how well you can utilise the existing skills within your own community and how much expertise or support you may want or need to buy in from outside in order to help you with specific stages of the process. Therefore it is difficult to give a cost estimate.



## What will the Council pay for?

In addition to providing technical support and advice in the form of officer time and Council resources, the costs associated with organising and paying for the examination and referendum are met by the Council. Government funding is currently available to Councils to support their duty to assist neighbourhood planning and they will be able to claim a reimbursement for some of the costs incurred.

## Other Local Funding

Through its support for community led planning, East Suffolk Partnership has small amounts of funding that can be used to contribute towards parts of the process, particularly the community engagement phases. However, this fund is limited and it would be expected that communities would have to at least match this amount themselves. The types of things this fund can be used for include contributions towards venue hire for public meetings and production of materials to promote consultation events.

All Suffolk County Councillors have a small 'locality budget' to help fund local projects in their electoral divisions. Your County Councillor may be willing to make a contribution towards the costs of developing your neighbourhood plan from their locality budget. Further details can be found on the County Council website [www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-council/councillors/locality-budgets](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-council/councillors/locality-budgets)

Other sources of local funding could include donations or income from fund-raising activities, or the use of the local precept in the case of Parish or Town Councils.

## Is there any Support Available from Central Government?

The Government has announced that there will be a new programme for supporting neighbourhood planning starting in April 2015. Groups are being encouraged to submit applications for neighbourhood planning grants in advance of April in order that they received awarded grants promptly. The support programme includes: -

- Grants of up to £8000 per neighbourhood area to contribute to costs incurred by the group preparing the neighbourhood plan or development order;
- Additional £6000 available for groups with more complex issues as a grant or specific packages of direct support where needed;
- An advice service and range of online resources providing technical support;



- Grants and support for groups wanting to prepare a Community Right to Build Order.

Further details are available from [www.mycommunityrights.org.uk](http://www.mycommunityrights.org.uk).

## Is there any Specific Neighbourhood Planning Funding or Support Available from External Bodies?

**A consortium led by Locality has been awarded a contract by the Government to provide a new programme of neighbourhood planning support. The Neighbourhood Planning and Community Right to Build Support programme runs from April 2015 to March 2016, with a possible extension for a further 2 years.**

### Locality

Locality has developed some useful toolkits for communities based on their experiences of working with the neighbourhood planning frontrunners. Of particular use are the Roadmap Guide and associated worksheets which set out what communities need to do at each step of the neighbourhood planning process. The following link gives access to a range of advice and guidance: -

 <http://locality.org.uk/projects/building-community>

### Planning Aid England (RTPI)

Planning Aid England (RTPI) can offer parish councils intensive support with the preparation of their Neighbourhood Development Plans. The available support is split into two key areas of training and direct support. This support is tailored specifically to the needs of each group. For a full range of the services provided and up to date online resources go to: -

 [www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/neighbourhood-planning)

## Are there any Alternative Sources of Funding?

It is possible that developers, landowners and local businesses may all be interested in sponsoring Parish Councils, Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums who are considering neighbourhood planning. This may be helpful, but care is required to avoid the impression of inappropriate influence over other members of the community.

The best place to currently look for direct financial support is probably Awards for All – the Lottery grants programme designed to help communities. All parish councils are eligible to apply to Awards for All funding provided their project does not exceed the value of £10,000.

 [www.awardsforall.org.uk/england](http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/england)

## Other Support Available

### Local Support

#### Community Action Suffolk

Offer help and support services to voluntary and community groups in Suffolk for community-led planning including:

- Community engagement;
- Community-led planning and consultations;
- Funding advice;
- Networking events and forums.

 [www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](http://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk)

#### Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council

More information on the following is also available via the websites for both Waveney District Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council. This includes details on: -

- Community led planning – which is the best approach for your town or village?
- Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan
- Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning
- Involving your community in Neighbourhood Planning

 [www.waveney.gov.uk/communityledplanning](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/communityledplanning)



## National and Regional Support

Communities can choose to take up free independent advice and guidance (depending on their needs) through the following organisations:

### Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE): Community Led Planning

Information on all aspects of Community Led Planning including policy, case studies, resources and toolkits, current projects, news and briefing notes.

🔗 [www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning](http://www.acre.org.uk/our-work/community-led-planning)

### Department for Communities and Local Government: Neighbourhood Planning

Department for Communities and Local Government web pages with links to case studies, FAQs and further information.

🔗 [www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/neighbourhood-planning)

### Localism Act - Plain English Guide

Produced by Department for Communities and Local Government, November 2011. Sets out Government proposals for shifting power back from central government to individuals, communities and councils. Includes changes to planning system (including neighbourhood planning).

🔗 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/localism-act-2011-overview)

### Locality

Provision of support and networking to community groups through online resources and other networking tools, practical workshops and seminars, and tailored advice through a telephone advice line.

🔗 [www.locality.org.uk/projects/building-community](http://www.locality.org.uk/projects/building-community)

### National Association of Local Councils in partnership with the Campaign to Protect Rural England

Provision of basic information about the planning system via a website, phone line and publications. Establishing a program of local events to inform the public and parish councils about how to influence local plans.

🔗 [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk)



**Planning Advisory Service: Neighbourhood Planning - Early practice**

🔗 [www.pas.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.pas.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning)

Planning Advisory Service web pages focusing on early practice within local authorities. Information is based on discussions with officers from the neighbourhood planning first and second waves of front runner councils. This website also signposts you to further information about neighbourhood planning and planning reform in general, including answers to some frequently asked questions.

**Royal Town Planning Institute: Planning Aid**

🔗 [www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/neighbourhood-planning/](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/neighbourhood-planning/)

Via the Planning Aid Service, the provision of free, independent, impartial, professional planning advice to people who do not have the means to pay professional fees. Provision of support and training to local communities to influence and contribute to planning strategy, policy and decision-making at all levels. It is also possible to sign up to the Planning Aid e-bulletin 'Up Front' a monthly news letter providing links up to date news and information and other Neighbourhood Plans.


NB This guide will be updated regularly to include the most relevant information as it becomes available. Check the Council's website.





[www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/communityledplanning](http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/communityledplanning) 

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Waveney District Council  
Serving the Community

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