

Financial and Officer Support for Neighbourhood Planning

For Neighbourhood Planning, the support offer is clear:

National

For communities

- Frontrunner funding - £20k per Neighbourhood (funding has now discontinued)
- Government funded support from the big 4 (Planning Aid, Princes Trust, Locality and NALC) until March 2013. Professional and in-kind support, general guidance and training up until end March – use this!
- From April 2013 (full details TBA by Gov) *Supporting Communities in Neighbourhood Planning Programme 2013-15*. To include direct, hands-on support and grants of up to £7k to communities. (DGLG rep mentioned there is enough in the pot to support only 500 communities – need to get in early!)
- Local Authority “duty to support” Neighbourhood Planning and fund examination and referendum included in Localism Act – details to be determined locally
- 25%/15% CIL potential – although only on commencement of development – late in the process from a community perspective

For local authorities

- Local Authority Neighbourhood Plan Grant Scheme - £5k at designation, £5k at submission for publicity and examination and £20k following successful examination. This will help to cover costs of supporting Neighbourhood Plans, although some costs are external (examination £5k) and referendum (~£1.50 per person in referendum area). National cap on funding so first come first served and most towards the end of the process. DCLG suggested an urban bias to this as Parishes have precepts etc.

Local

Outlined in [B&NES Neighbourhood Planning Protocol](#), support is fairly light touch as this process is community led and managed.

For communities

- Approve and advertise Designation (Neighbourhood Area/Forum)
 - B&NES Application forms available online – x3 in the pipeline 29.01.13
- Provide advice (p39)
 - My Neighbourhood: Neighbourhood Planning Protocol – including consideration of is this the best route for you? What are your issues?
 - Basic process checklist (p32-33)
 - Dedicated Neighbourhood Planning Webpage – updated regularly www.bathnes.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning
 - Dissemination of information through workshops and briefings
 - Dissemination of local case studies
 - Information on funding and skills for Neighbourhood Planning
- Provide assistance in plan preparation (p39)

- Electronic maps (hard copies available to purchase at standard copy rates)
 - Information on planning designations/policies
 - Guidance on designing community consultation activities
 - Support for community planning events (facilitation, feedback, presentations)
 - Provide advice on who to consult
- Validate draft Plan
 - Fairly formal validation meeting and written feedback
 - Fund and set up examination
 - We are currently trialling the RICS/RTPI Panel
 - Fund and undertake referendum
 - B&NES Electoral Services to lead on this
 - Adopt the plan

Key messages

- The Council will not provide the technical expertise needed to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan and the required background evidence/assessments – responsibility is devolved.
- The funding available for Neighbourhood Planning is actually fairly limited – get in early! You will need to draw on your own financial and volunteer time resources.
- Remember a Neighbourhood Plan must be permissive and pro-development & still in line with national policy/Core Strategy.

Placemaking Plan offer

We are currently working up the resources available as well as the detailed programme for the Placemaking Plan, however these are current thoughts about the likely offer and benefits:

- Policy team focus – professional input offer from the Council will be greater.
- Running follow on training days and workshops e.g. on Character Assessment, Placecheck/visioning, Site comparison and identification and toolkits – up skilling volunteers (could be used for Placemaking Plan/Neighbourhood Planning).
- Toolkits provided and overview for evidence base consistency (could be used for Placemaking Plan/Neighbourhood Planning).
- You will have more support in terms of community engagement than in Neighbourhood Planning– we will have a budget for Placemaking Plan and can help you hold and run events in your area (where development is proposed).
- We will lead the examination process with your inputs (for Neighbourhood Planning you are the lead).
- No need for a local referendum and associated campaigning (some communities see this as a wildcard in Neighbourhood Plan– unpredictable outcomes?).
- Potential for a lead contact officer for Placemaking Plan work – who has capacity to be involved in more depth.
- Wider technical support offer still needs tbc (e.g Environment/Historic Environment specialist input) – more significant than for Neighbourhood Planning.
- However, our focus will be areas with most development/growth and communities requiring more hands on support.

Key messages

- Greater technical support offer.
- Practical support rather than direct funding (but, get both!).
- Avoid leading on examination and need for a referendum.
- But – Planning team focus will be on larger settlements and those with most development and growth potential.
- Best of both – do Neighbourhood Plan work but include in Placemaking Plan for smallest settlements.
- Consider your capacity and desire to be independent– PMP route has a greater support offer but to B&NES overall timetable/structure.