
**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

Placemaking Plan

Parish and Town Council Workshop

2nd February 2013

Chewton Place, Keynsham

FULL REPORT

Preface

From Jeff, Vaughan and Katie at Place Studio:

We were pleased to be invited to plan and manage this event for Bath and North East Somerset and would like to thank everybody for their obvious engagement in the day. There appeared to be a generally positive response to the collaborative approach being proposed by the B&NES planning team, yet there were also – and quite rightly – a number of tough questions and challenges. Jeff said at the outset that we are happy to be working with the team because we believe they are genuinely committed to finding a new, shared way of working with Parish and Town Councils. This is a potentially exciting and rewarding approach and one that our experience suggests is a national 'first'. Please join in as things evolve; this is a great opportunity to break the stranglehold of years of 'them and us'!

From Peter Duppa-Miller, Secretary of the North East Somerset Local Councils Association:

The Parish Councils, Town Councils and Parish Meetings in North East Somerset were truly grateful for this opportunity to better understand the Core Strategy position, the real benefits of working collaboratively with the B&NES Planning Policy Team to produce the Placemaking Plan and where Neighbourhood Plans might fit into the wider picture. Very many thanks to the Planning Policy Team, Place Studio, those who gave presentations and all those Local Councils which provided Placemaking Plan "Position Statements".

From the Policy Planning team:

The Planning Policy team was really pleased to be able to host this event, especially given the numbers of Parish and Town Councillors and Clerks that gave up a Saturday to attend and who were willing and enthusiastic participants.

As we hopefully made clear at the workshop, our main priority at the moment is to focus on taking forward the Core Strategy to ensure that we can strengthen our planning policy position and be in a more robust position to manage development proposals coming forward. Following this more of the team will be able to work on the Placemaking Plan, so that come May and the publication of the Launch Document we will be able to hit the ground running and be in a position to collaborate with you more fully. We are currently working up the more detailed programme and a proposed collaboration process, and will keep you up to date on progress.

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1 Introduction

This is a report of the Placemaking event on 2nd February. It is quite substantial because it is very much a full, verbatim record rather than something to sit and read from start to finish. It contains an outline of all that was presented as well as all that was recorded from participants, plus some post-event reflections and additions from the team and the facilitators. We have also tried to put it all together so that it can be useful reference material for you from here on, so there is a final section with links to 'Further Information' as available on the Placemaking Plan webpage, together with links throughout the document.

The report follows the format for the day. For each section we have included a short introduction/reminder. Each new section starts on a new page. Any questions, notes etc. from participants are shown in *italics*.

The day was facilitated by Jeff Bishop, together with Vaughan Thompson and Katie Lea from Place Studio. B&NES officers Stephen George, Richard Daone, Mark Minkley, Simon de Beer and Cleo Newcombe-Jones from the Policy and Environment team also led and presented through the day.

2 Parish Position Statements

Either ahead of the day or on arrival, people filled in Position Statement forms to highlight some key aspects of the current situation in their Parish or Town; [click here for the original blank form](#). Although some quick summarising of some results was done on the day itself, what follows below is a fuller and more thorough summary. (Copies of all forms were available at the end so that people could keep a copy of what they had noted. Please let us know if any were not returned.)

Key Local Issues

Ticked Issue	Number of Parishes
Traffic	27
Public transport	20
Affordable housing (for local people)	18
Design of new developments	12
Community facilities	10
Open/recreation space	9
Local employment	9
School provision	8
Safety	7
Health services	5

Other Issues Identified.

Transportation

- *Traffic speed*
- *Parking*
- *Highways Maintenance*
- *Park and ride siting*

Environment

- *Greenbelt*
- *Protection of landscape and views*
- *integrity of village and avoiding coalescence.*
- *Ecology*
- *Light pollution*
- *Drainage/surface run-off/flooding*
- *Sustainability and carbon footprint*

Community and Facilities

- *Community identity*
- *Crime Reduction (Secure by Design).*
- *Employment- linking jobs and housing.*
- *Retail protection and threat of out of town supermarkets.*
- *Retention of local post office and shop*
- *Additional allotments*
- *Broadband Internet Access*
- *Providing for older people.*

Local Governance

- *Local determination, equitability, custodianship.*
- *Democratic and accountability*

- *Meaningful community engagement, consultation*
- *Inclusiveness*
- *Communication with planners*
- *Direct operation of a Community facilities*
- *Budget management*

Development management

- *Plan-led development*
- *The need for development briefs;*

The Community Desire for Development

Wanted and Needed



1. Two Parishes
2. Two Parishes
3. One Parish
4. No Parishes
5. Five Parishes
6. One Parish
7. Three Parishes
8. Six Parishes
9. Three Parishes
10. Eight Parishes

Not Wanted or Needed

The Main Reasons

- *The result of a village survey*
- *To promote and safeguard community strength*
- *Improve environmental quality*
- *Improve opportunity and inclusion*
- *Crewe opportunities for local young people*
- *Support local services and facilities*
- *Promote responsible development*
- *Deliver needed type of investment*
- *Promote health and recreational activity*
- *A small number of new homes could be accommodated*
- *A minor expansion of the housing development boundary could enable affordable housing*
- *Limited in filling*
- *Lack of space.*
- *Green Belt and AONB*
- *Settlement designation*
- *Unsustainable location*
- *Lack of infrastructure*
- *No job creation*
- *Traffic and congestion*
- *Taken fair share already*
- *Lack of evidence of need*

Expectations of Development

- *Development based upon a thorough evidence base*
- *Affordable homes and housing of different sizes and tenures inc for young and older members of community*
- *Range of fine grain small sites*
- *Contributing to delivery of community infrastructure*
- *Linked to infrastructure*
- *Ample resident and visitor parking.*
- *Protect green belt and designated assets*
- *Avoid settlement coalescence*
- *Sustainable and green*
- *Integrated and connected development*
- *High quality*
- *Design responsive to local character*
- *Positively contribute to the realization of the Community/Parish Plan/Village Design Statement;*

Parish Planning Complete and Underway

Plan/Study Type	Number of Parishes
Parish/Town Plan	16
Housing Needs Assessment	6
Landscape Assessment	5
Village/Town Design Statement	3
Community plan	2

Others:

- *Parish questionnaire*
- *Conservation area appraisal (BANES is failing in its duty to complete or publish this)*
- *Actively considering the production of a village appraisal;*
- *Highway improvements assessment*

Parishes Considering a Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan

Yes.	17
No.	10

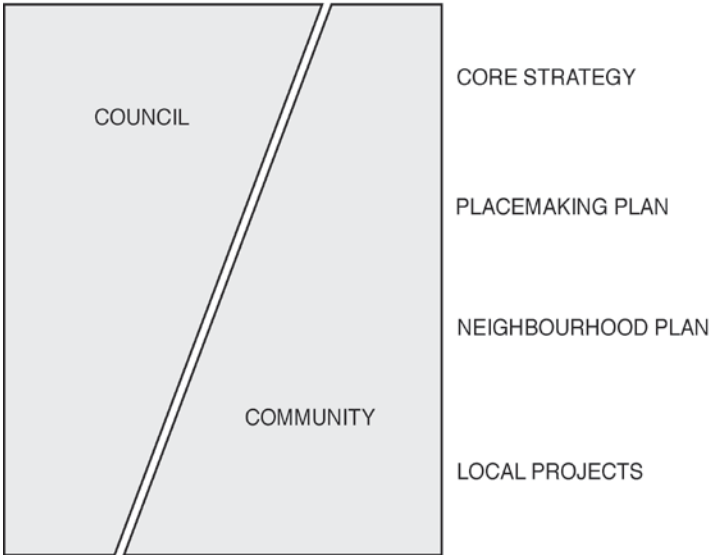
Comments on current Neighbourhood Planning position

- *Potential to control development*
- *Neighbourhood planning may be done in concert with adjoining Parishes*
- *Lack of clarity and certainty to enable decision*
- *Unsure of benefits of NDP in context of restricted development potential*
- *Workshop may lead to further reconsideration or confirmation of decision;*
- *A Parish Plan is more holistic and can involve all villagers*
- *Drafting and adoption sequence and timescale too long to be effective*
- *Involvement in the Placemaking Plan will be simpler, cheaper as effective for needs*
- *Concern that the Placemaking Plan leads to positive output*

3 Presentation – The Placemaking Plan

The day started with a presentation mainly about the forthcoming Placemaking Plan and the policy planning team’s aim to develop a highly collaborative approach to the production of that plan, working closely with Town and Parish Councils. The presentation focused on the Placemaking Plan, outlining the role of the plan to add detail to the Core Strategy. Lead officer, Stephen George outlined how the plan will

WORKING TOGETHER



be focused on creating the conditions for better places, and on providing greater clarity to enable the right developments to be delivered.

The presentation and the discussion that followed explored the benefits of a collaborative approach to the preparation of the plan between the Council and the local Town and Parish Councils.

Key points were:

For B&NES – local knowledge and resources input can provide detailed and locally relevant information to complement strategic objectives.

For Communities – opportunity to input into a key policy document to cement local level development management policies and protected valued assets. It also could form a foundation to a potential neighbourhood plan.

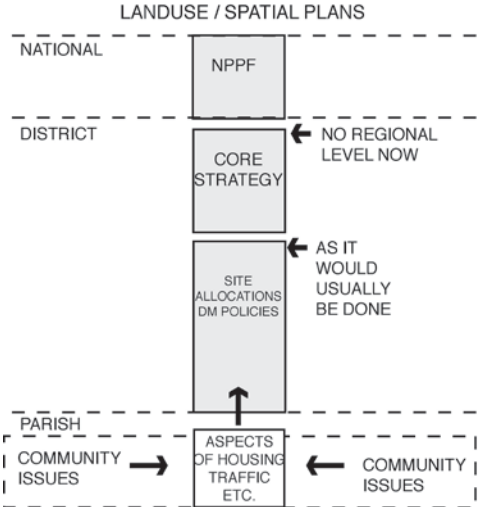


Jeff also drew up some diagrams following queries about the connection between well-established approaches to Parish/Town Plans and the Placemaking Plan (or Neighbourhood Plans):

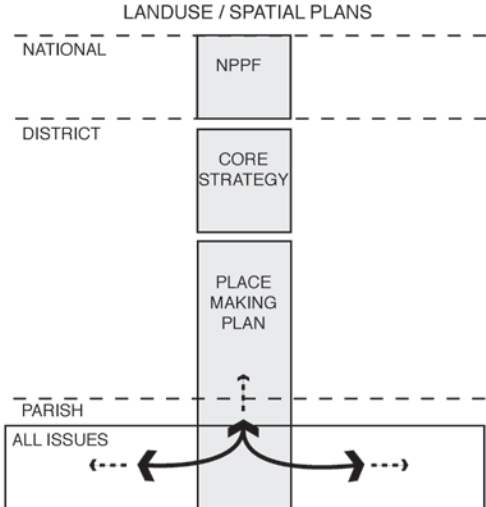
PARISH / TOWN PLANS



- Wide ranging, can include anything a community wants
- Can cover direct landuse issues, but has no weight in planning.
- But aspects of some (eg. Housing) have land use implications
- Minimal evidence base
- WIDE, SHALLOW, VERY LITTLE 'CLOUT'



- Narrowly confined to landuse or 'spatial' things
- 'Spatial' can cover aspects of housing
- Because of time, resource, skills can never get to real local detail
- Must have inspector / barrister- proof evidence
- MUST HAVE DEEP LEGAL 'CLOUT'



- By incorporating detailed local information that only communities can provide, the Placemaking Plan reaches right down.
- This strengthens the whole system (like bonding bricks) providing less opportunity for challenge.
- Can tie to more of the 'spatial' issues in Parish/Town Plans.
- DEPTH & BREATH – BEST OF BOTH WORLDS?

4 Question and Answer Session

During the break that followed the presentation, people were invited to ask questions of clarification about all that Steve had covered. These were divided into (a) Core Strategy, (b) Placemaking Plan, (c) Neighbourhood Planning and (d) Funding, including CIL – the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The questions that were asked and the responses to them, are as follows:

A. Core Strategy

Q.1 What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is referred to many times in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#).

Q.2 How are RA1 and RA2 villages defined?

These are defined in the Core Strategy, but essentially:

RA1 villages are defined as villages inset within the Green Belt which have a range of community facilities and at least a daily public transport service to main centres.

RA2 villages are those outside the Green Belt and with a Housing Development Boundary.

B. Placemaking Plan

Q.3 Why is it only B&NES doing it this way?

Many other Local Authorities are producing what are commonly called 'Site Allocations and Development Management' Development Plan Documents. B&NES are effectively doing the same work, but under term 'Placemaking Plan', which importantly will consider the wider context of sites and the contribution that they can make to enhancing their immediate environment.

Q.4 Time involvement with the Placemaking Plan?

We are very keen to design the process of collaborative engagement in the Placemaking Plan to enable local communities to focus on the important issues affecting their localities. The process will need to be flexible enough to enable different levels of engagement that reflect the resources available to different communities, and the level of change that they may expect. Important B&NES will manage the procedural aspects of plan making which can be very time consuming.

Q.5 Timescales and progress: Accountability for meeting / Can we receive regular updates to be kept in the loop?

We will keep local communities up to date with progress on the Placemaking Plan and provide a clear programme to enable them to properly input into the process.

Q.6 What LA support is available beyond the process support?

This is still to be worked out, and is dependent on the level of staff and financial resources that the Council has available.

Q.7 Resource: Have certain officers been seconded in to this project?

Once the Core Strategy has reached a point where less staff resources are required, then it is the intention that these staff will be in a position to work on the Placemaking Plan.

Q.8 Could you please consider allocation an officer to an area, or cluster of communities to work with and develop initiatives.

It may be that certain staff are allocated specific geographic responsibilities as happened with the production of the Core Strategy.

Q.9 Valued asset – what effect?

This will depend on the nature of the valued asset, and the 'policy hooks' available from higher tiered policy documents such as the National Planning Policy Framework and the Core Strategy.

Q.10 Evaluation of Biodiversity assets: How? Wildlife v. development

See response to question above.

Q.11 Define pro-development

The Placemaking Plan and Neighbourhood Plans will need to reflect the development targets set out in the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. These targets are based on the need to provide new homes and to facilitate economic development.

Q.12 How do we minimise inappropriate development whilst Core Strategy and Placemaking Plans are not in place?

Once the proposed changes to the Core Strategy have been ratified by the Council on 4th March, we will be in a position to demonstrate that the Council has a five year land supply. This will put us in a stronger position to refuse inappropriate development. The Council will be in an even stronger position once the Core Strategy has been through the examination, and the Inspector finds the document 'sound' and enables us to adopt it.

With the Placemaking Plan, the closer that we are to adopting it, the more weight that it will carry. In the meantime, development proposals will be assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework, the Core Strategy and the Saved Local Plan policies.

Q.13 What is the policy on infilling?

Ref: NPPF, and Green Belt policy in the Core Strategy. The exact definition and interpretation of infilling will be site specific.

Q.14 Infill would appear appropriate. What is B&NES view?

The view of the Council is reflected in its policies, and also in the NPPF.

Q.15 Consultation – real or pretend?

Absolutely real.

Q.16 Chelwood is an R3 village. No bus service etc at all! We have a Parish Plan. What purpose would a Neighbourhood plan and/or Placemaking Plan serve?

Places like Chelwood are unlikely to undergo much change. It is therefore envisaged that the Placemaking Plan would be fairly 'light touch' in such places

Q.17 How can opposing local views be overcome within time scales?

This is always a challenge, but one that a carefully designed process should be able to minimise.

C. Neighbourhood Planning

Q.18 What is required to turn a Parish Plan into a Neighbourhood Plan? Is There a difference?

A Neighbourhood Plan is 'spatial plan'; required to consider land use and development issues. It is also required to undergo an Examination and Referendum. It has a more specific remit than a Parish Plan, and importantly must be in line with the higher tiered policy documents of the NPPF, the Core Strategy, and the Placemaking Plan.

Q.19 4/5 years ago, Bathford Parish Council produced a neighbourhood design and a parish plan. There was a referendum. What is the status of these documents since the Localism Act was introduced?

They will continue to be material considerations in the determination of planning applications.

Q.20 If we can get to a stage where proposals emerge, how can we be assured development control will be supportive and proactive?

Please see answer to the question above. How 'material' they will be is dependent on the particular proposal.

Q.21 Conservation Area Appraisal: How does this link in?

This is an important consideration that should inform the formulation and consideration of planning applications within Conservation areas.

Q.22 What kind of help can we expect? Especially financial.

See 'implications' worksheet (Page 14 below), and the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol. The resources available to the Placemaking Plan is to be agreed.

Q.23 Can any group in the area form a Neighbourhood Plan?

Parish and Town Councils are envisaged as typical groups that could take forward a Neighbourhood Plan. However, a smaller or larger group, such as a cluster of Parishes, could apply to the Council to take forward a Neighbourhood Plan. Within Bath the situation is more complex.

Q.24 Can a NP be done in 12 months?

Given the requirements to undertake an examination and to hold a Referendum, this timescale is considered to be over optimistic.

Q. 25 How quick can we produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is estimated that the quickest period in which a Neighbourhood Plan could possibly be completed is about 12 months. However, it will probably take significantly longer.

Q.26 Can officers be persuaded to support Neighbourhood Plan methodology and placemaking outcomes?

They will have to in the consideration of planning applications.

D. Funding, including CIL

Q.27 Is CIL payable on all developments?

The charging schedule is still to be finalised and it is anticipated that the CIL will be adopted by April 2014. In summary and as currently proposed in the [Draft CIL Charging Schedule](#). CIL would be payable on all residential except affordable housing, and on employment and retail development.

Q.28 How much of CIL will go to the local (i.e Parish Council) level?

See ['Financial and Officer Support for Neighbourhood Planning and implications'](#)

Q.29 Is it correct that 15-25% of CIL will not be available until the Core Strategy is adopted?

Yes

Q.30 Why is CIL outside Bath much more than inside Bath?

Ref to [Draft CIL Charging Schedule](#). The difference is linked to the viability of development, which is heavily influenced by land values.

Q.31 If an application goes to appeal and housing pricing policy emerges will this be taken into account?

It would be a material consideration, although depends on the stage in the appeal process.

5 Community Presentations

Many thanks are due to those who gave short presentations with valuable insights into the neighbourhood planning work already going on across the area:

- Bob Piper and Jeff Humphries from [Paulton](#) who spoke about their experiences in producing their parish plan and produced a very [useful note with hints and tips link](#).
- Vito Pecchia from [Batheaston Parish Council](#) outlined some results that the community are seeing already as a result of their Parish Plan work, including a community festival and the building of a pedestrian bridge.
- Kate Atkinson outlined the steps that [Temple Cloud and Camely Parish](#) had taken to find out more about the new tools introduced by the Localism Act, including inviting the West of England Rural Network to talk to the Parish Council, and made informed decisions about community-led planning.
- Roger Buzby from Keynsham introduced the recently produced and extremely comprehensive, Town Plan
 - [Town Plan July 2012](#)
 - [Town Plan Action Points Only](#)

6 Workshop Sessions

In the afternoon two workshops offered the chance for Parish and Town Councillors to further explore, understand and contribute to the unfolding approach to the process of preparing the Placemaking Plan. The workshops offered an insight into:

- Implications of getting engaged with neighbourhood planning – **workshop 1**
- Introduction to practical tools for communities to survey and build an evidence base – **workshop 2**.

Parish and Town Councils that were able to send along two participants were encouraged to send along one to each workshop.



WORKSHOP 1 - IMPLICATIONS

Around half the group attended this session. Using a prepared handout, Jeff – with help from Chris Head (West of England Rural Network), Cleo Newcombe-Jones and Richard Daone (B&NES) – talked through the many implications of getting engaged with neighbourhood planning, formal Neighbourhood Plans and especially the Placemaking Plan. The aim was not in any way to put anybody off but to ensure that people went into whatever approach they chose ‘with their eyes open’. To show how it should not put anybody off, Jeff also made clear that (a) many of the implications are not entirely new because many communities have already tackled similar things in their Parish/Town plans etc. and, most importantly, (b) there is a possible ‘best of both worlds’ approach that could come from engaging fully with the Placemaking Plan. This approach could save time, secure good help, advice and support to communities and probably save money (for all)!

Lots of comments were made throughout the session. These are all included in the notes below. Some of the comments suggested some better ways to present the points so the note below is an updated version of the handout used on the day.

Time and Timing

- The Placemaking Plan timetable is quite tight, especially because of the need to move quickly to nip inappropriate development in the bud.
- There will also be key deadlines within the planning team’s programme.
- Equally, there is a need to respect community time and timing; it’s all voluntary input so that can take longer.
- Shared timetabling will be crucial.
- While using the various ‘tools’ can (should!) involve a very wide range of people, the main time pressure at local level will be on the core or steering group.
- *Creating Parish/Town Council ‘clusters’ can help everybody to make best use of time and other resources.*

Skills

- Communities are likely to need some combination of the following:
 - Cajoling people to join in
 - Photography, maybe drawing
 - Being able to use maps and plans
 - Drawing maps and plans
 - Word processing, maybe spreadsheets
 - Use of the web etc.
 - Writing
 - Desktop publishing (though this is less important if all material goes to B&NES to go into the Plan)
 - Pulling it all together and managing the process
 - Understanding at least some of ‘plannerspeak!’ (See Further Information)

Money (more later)

- A lot of this is quite minor but it can add up:
 - Copying maps, survey sheets etc.
 - Leaflets and other advertising
 - Printing photos
 - Questionnaire management (distributing, collecting, analysing)
 - Venues and perhaps catering for events
 - Projectors and other equipment
- The biggest cost can be final production, graphics, printing etc. (but, again, no need for that here as the results go to B&NES to put together, publish etc.)
- *And whatever is produced, all possible and appropriate use of electronic communication cuts down costs.*

But why not do a Neighbourhood Plan?

- Most importantly, it can seem tempting because various monies can be available to those choosing to do the new full and formal Neighbourhood Plans.
- However, there are 'snakes and ladders' that come with Neighbourhood Plans.
- Ladders:
 - Possibly more local discretion, influence and clout.
 - Access to time and money to help communities – see below.
 - *Plans are not the only choice; there are also Neighbourhood Development Orders (you give yourselves planning permission!) and 'Right to Build projects (classically for some affordable local housing). (See further Information)*
- Snakes:
 - Neighbourhood Plans must deliver what development the higher level plans agree, or more; they cannot include less.
 - Neighbourhood Plans are very cash-hungry – a town might expect to spend £60-70k, a larger village in the order of £30k.
 - They take a significantly larger amount of community time and effort than was the case with Parish/Town Plans.
 - *As a statutory plan, there is a long list of consultees who must be contacted.*
 - *Failing to secure a success with the referendum is a real risk and there are timing and other potential problems with referenda.*
- So if the key issue here seems to be money, what might a Parish/Town Council get if they chose the Neighbourhood Plan route?
- For any designated Neighbourhood Plan:
 - B&NES could apply to government for £30,000 to provide administrative support, pay for the examination and pay for and run the referendum.
 - If the last two costs are not too high, that should leave some money for help with the actual plan-making stage.
 - However, B&NES only get £5k of that up front (the rest right towards the end) so they will rightly be cautious about committing beyond that in case a plan is never completed.

- o The community doing the plan might get a grant of up to £7,000 from a soon to be appointed national agency.
- o Any community getting its Neighbourhood Plan would then receive 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy funds from any future development. (Those not doing plans only get 15%).

In addition, there can be help and support as follows:

- The new national agency may also be able to give you some advice and practical help.
- There is a legal obligation on B&NES to support you.
- The planning team thinks that could mean some fairly light touch:
 - o Help with designation
 - o Provision of advice, *eg. on exactly what evidence is needed*
 - o Assistance in plan preparation
- Later on they must:
 - o Validate the draft plan
 - o Manage the examination
 - o Manage the referendum

Then 'adopt' the plan (*the legal word is 'made' but most people still use 'adopt'*)
The Council will not be able to provide technical input into Neighbourhood Plans

And what help with the Placemaking Plan?

- While almost no direct money can be offered by B&NES for the placemaking work, the costs to the community and the demands on community time would be far less than if doing a Neighbourhood Plan.
- Here is the sort of practical help they hope to be able to give:
 - o Information – on populations, housing need, traffic figures etc. (see Further Information)
 - o People to offer advice and perhaps practical help – *eg. with questionnaires, surveys etc.*
 - o Top copy maps, plans, photos etc.
 - o Venues and some occasional refreshments
 - o Bits and pieces such as screens, clipboards, flip chart stands etc.
- More broadly, they also hope to be able to offer technical input such as:
 - o Running follow-on training days and workshops, *eg. on Character Assessment, Placecheck/visioning, site comparison and identification* – all up-skilling community volunteers
 - o Toolkits (as introduced at the other workshop) and also an overview to ensure evidence base consistency
 - o More support in terms of community engagement – they will have a budget for the Placemaking Plan and may be able to help you hold and run events in a Parish or Town (where development is proposed)
 - o They will lead the overall Placemaking Plan examination process with your inputs
 - o Potential for a lead contact officer for Placemaking Plan work, who has the capacity to be involved in more depth, plus a first point of contact for each area or cluster
 - o Perhaps some wider technical support, *eg. on Historic Environment, Landscape and Ecology.*

- However, the team's focus will be areas with the most development/growth and communities requiring more hands on support.

Other help

- Whichever approach is followed, help may be available from other sources such as:
 - [The Placemaking Plan webpage](#)
 - [The Wildlife Trust](#)
 - [Bath Energy Centre](#)
 - The two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – [Mendip](#) and [Cotswold](#) (*but very overstretched!*)
 - Consultancies such as [Place Studio](#) or [West of England Rural Network \(WERN\)](#).

The Best of Both Worlds?

- There is an alternative that seems to be about '**both**' not 'either/or' as outlined below.
- Much of what communities would contribute to the Placemaking Plan, the surveys and studies they might do and the information they would provide, would be the same in the Placemaking Plan as for a Neighbourhood Plan.
- The standard of evidence would also be the same.
- So if some communities started doing Neighbourhood Plans – say 10, that could be £50,000 to B&NES on day 1 to provide support, plus a possible £70,000 direct to all 10 communities.
- Although the Council's paid time to support the 10 must go to those doing Neighbourhood Plans, much of this help could help all – eg. a Neighbourhood Plan training event could also be open to all others.
- The 10 communities would then work on what is needed for the Placemaking Plan, with the benefit of even more, even wider and even fuller support as outlined above.
- Once the Placemaking Plan work is complete those communities can then make a judgement about whether or not it is worth going on to complete their Neighbourhood Plans.
- So working within the format of the Placemaking Plan can move forward without in any way prejudicing local decisions to do Neighbourhood Plans.

WORKSHOP 2 - TOOLKITS FOR EVIDENCE GATHERING

Workshop 2 was attended by the other half or so of the whole group, and deliberately provided a counterpoint to the rather heavy Implications session by giving people a 'taster' of some of the "tools" that they could use themselves, and ideally with local residents, at Parish/Town level. One key point behind this was that local people not only know and understand more about their own area than the planners but they may well have the ability to draw out a level of detail that the planners would never have the resources to do themselves – a major collaborative opportunity. The session focused on trailing two 'toolkits' and also included an outlined of data and resources available from the Council to support the evidence gathering undertaken at the local level.

Toolkits

This session focused on just two of the practical DIY survey tools that can be used as part of the process of gathering evidence about your parish to define character and manage development. The draft toolkits have been drafted by Place Studio and draw on established methodology. [A list other toolkits that may be of use to communities was also distributed and is available here.](#)

Survey Toolkit 1 - [Landscape Character Assessment \(draft survey available here\)](#)

This survey is designed to assist communities examine and record the distinctive character of the landscape in their parish. It is intended to provide the basis for community views to be recorded and structured within the existing [Landscape Character Assessment for the whole of the district](#). The group used this survey to assess the character of the landscape around Chewton House.

Survey Toolkit 2 – [Sites Assessment Survey \(draft survey available here\)](#)

The second tool is designed to help communities to examine and record key aspects of one of the sites suggested for development in and around their parish. The questions follow sustainability appraisal topics used by planners providing a methodology to produce strong evidence at the community level. The toolkits group used this survey to examine and record key aspects of potential sites for development – in this case the car park!

When using the toolkits the group was asked to critique the toolkits, to consider;

- o Ease of use – in their Parish
- o Language – is the survey written in a way that avoids jargon ensuring a broad spectrum of the community can get involved?
- o Practicalities – what may be the challenges to undertaking these surveys in your parish?

Most workshop participants formed into small groups and undertook both the landscape survey and site assessment questionnaire independently and, to a very large extent, without any guidance from the facilitation team. Both surveys were also completed within the allocated time of 15 minutes for each.

A small amount of written feedback was provided concerning the [toolkits](#) that were used at the workshop:

- *Both surveys were considered helpful in demonstrating how to undertake surveys objectively.*
- *Some concern was expressed that terminology remained difficult to understand eg "Pattern and Texture" in the visual qualities section of the landscape survey.*
- *Repetition in questions was also raised as an issue.*
- *Additional space for answers was requested. This was highlighted in relation to part one of the sites analysis questionnaire.*
- *It was suggested that questionnaires should ask how well visitors already knew the area or site.*

Making the Case (for development or against)

Leading on from the character and sites assessment surveying, the group were asked to use the evidence they had gathered to construct a case for either the 'site' to be allocated for development or not. In allocating sites as part of the Placemaking plan, community decisions may need to stand up to challenge by others. It's therefore important to make "robust" evidence led case.

This was a quick (and fun) exercise with the group split into two to argue their case either for or against allocation. The aim of this short exercise was to illustrate the ability of parties to make cogent arguments promoting their aspirations and the need to have a firm foundation of planning policy and evidence. The group arguing for the site (or the car park) not to be allocated won!

The facilitation team observed a tendency for the groups to consider the form and use of development in parallel with site analysis. This may indicate an advantage of adding an opportunity for community surveyors to put forward place making and land use principles for the sites they have assessed within an extended questionnaire.

Putting the Placemaking Plan into Action - Tasks, Tools and Resources

Mark Minkley, the Environment Team manager finished the session with an overview of how the Council may be able to support communities to put this into action (at the time of delivering this workshop the support offer had yet to be refined):

- Key approach to engagement is to manage available resources effectively and therefore our proposed approach is to facilitate a series of one day workshops in different places throughout B&NES, which all Parish and Town Council's are welcome to attend. It is likely that we will need to focus these on workshops on those places subject to greater levels of change, ie the towns and RA.1 villages.
- A dedicated parish page within the Placemaking Plan webpage will include resources, such as maps, templates etc and internal and external links to evidence and data produced by the Council and other bodies.
- The Council will provide guidance to aid in the production of a parish level evidence / data profile base.
- The evidence base provided by the Parish and Town Council's – the scope and detail of this will vary depending on their own resources and ability to contribute – will be a key element of the Placemaking Plan evidence base.

7 FINAL SUMMARY SESSION

As well as re-emphasising some of the main points about the next stages, encouraging people to join in and stressing the importance of filling in the Feedback Forms (see next section) this final session was also an opportunity for people from both of the separate afternoon sessions to suggest some key conclusions. These follow below:

From the Implications session/group:

- *Work with neighbours (parish clusters)*
- *Make clear to communities what B&NES needs to know*
- *Clarify the choice of Neighbourhood Plan or join with the Placemaking Plan*
- *If making a contribution to the Placemaking Plan, need some sort of proforma*
- *Do investment appraisal to help guide any choice of approach*
- *But get Neighbourhood Plan funding anyway!*
- *Be really clear what is right for you*
- *Let Parish/Town Councils know how and when to 'register' to be involved*

From the Toolkits session/group:

- *Get on and do it!*
- *Use the toolkits*
- *Build on and use work already done (don't reinvent)*
- *Also input to other strategies, eg. Green Infrastructure*
- *Think hard about which tool is best for you*
- *Generate as much information as possible*

Feedback Forms

As is usual, all participants were asked to fill in an evaluation form, except that it was slightly different on this occasion! As well as commenting on the value of the day, the form asked for some initial thoughts (not commitments) about what people might do following the day – what tools might be relevant to them, might they wish to join in as suggested with the Placemaking Plan. The key results are summarised below, whilst the [full analysis is available here](#):

- The day was found to be very informative about the Placemaking Plan and potential involvement by most participants.
- The workshops provided a useful insight into the approach the council are proposing.
- There was very strong support for running training events for clusters of Parishes.
- There was a clear request for help with questionnaires and Placemaking pro-formas.
- On the whole the attendees expressed support for the collaborative approach that the Council is proposing;
- But also articulated a need for more detail on how this will work in practice.

8 Further Information

Below are links to useful further information. We expect to add and update this list on the [Placemaking Plan webpage](#) as a useful resource.

- Parish online: http://gis.getmapping.com/gmis_portal/parishonline.html.
- A glossary of planning acronyms is available on the [Planning Policy Website](#).

Useful Links

Selected B&NES Planning Policy links

Placemaking Plan www.bathnes.gov.uk/placemakingplan

Neighbourhood Planning Protocol www.bathnes.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Community Infrastructure Levy <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy>

Learning from Other Parish and Town Councils:

Paulton: <http://www.yourpaulton.org/paulton-parish-council>

Useful notes with hints and tips:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/paulton_cp_notes_020213.pdf

Batheaston:

<http://www.batheaston.org/vision-plan>

Temple Cloud and Cameley:

<http://templecloudandcameley.wordpress.com/>

Keynsham Town Plan:

Click on the link below to see the full Town Plan and /or Action Points only:

- **Town Plan July 2012:** <http://www.keynsham-tc.gov.uk/Core/Keynsham-Town-Council/UserFiles/Files/Town%20Plan%20Final%20July%202012.pdf>
- **Town Plan Action Points Only:** http://www.keynsham-tc.gov.uk/Core/Keynsham-Town-Council/UserFiles/Files/TP_Action%20PointsONLY_vX.pdf

Toolkits, Sites Assessment Surveys and related information

Toolkit list:

- <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/toolkits.pdf>

B&NES rural Landscapes SPD

- <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/environment/landscape/landscape-character-assessment>

Site Assessment:

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/130202_tcs_pcs_delegate_list.pdf

Other information from the workshop

Financial and Officer Support for Neighbourhood Plans and the Placemaking Plan

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/np_and_pp_support_-_financial_and_officer.pdf

Feedback Form analysis http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/feedback_analysis.pdf

Delegate List http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Placemaking-Plan/130202_tcs_pcs_delegate_list.pdf