

Neighbourhood Planning

Service Level Agreement

September 2012



**Herefordshire
Council**

1. The Agreement

This Agreement is between:-

- a) Herefordshire Council's Neighbourhood Planning Team, and
- b) ...Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group.....Parish Council

2. Introduction and Purpose

• Introduction

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the following provisions into the planning process:-

- Neighbourhood Development Plans
- Neighbourhood Development Orders
- Community Right to Build Orders

In Herefordshire Neighbourhood Development Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders can only be undertaken by a Parish/Town/City Council.

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 Herefordshire Council are responsible for:-

- a) Undertaking certain statutory requirements, and
- b) The provision to Parish Councils¹ of technical advice and support

• Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to:-

- a) Confirm how Herefordshire Council will undertake its statutory duties
- b) Confirm the level and extent of the technical advice and guidance that Herefordshire Council will provide
- c) Confirm how the Parish Council will aim to progress the Neighbourhood Development Plan

¹ - Parish Council refers to a parish, town, city or group of parish councils

3. Memorandum of Agreement

This **Agreement** is between:-

Herefordshire Council (namely the Head of Neighbourhood Planning), and

.....Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group.....Parish Council
(namely the Chairman of the Council)

Designation of Neighbourhood Area

Date Submitted:20th May 2013.....

Date of approval by Herefordshire Council3rd July 2013.....

Signatories:-

a)

Head of Neighbourhood Planning

b)

On behalf ofHumber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group.....Parish Council

This Agreement will commence on: -

4. Specification of Work

• Background and context

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The associated Regulations (The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) require Herefordshire Council to undertake certain provisions. In addition the Council is also required to provide technical advice and support.

This agreement sets out how the Council will meet its statutory obligations and the level of assistance it will offer to parish councils.

Once an application for a neighbourhood area has been submitted to Herefordshire Council a 6 week consultation period will be undertaken via the website and notices will be displayed within the parish, organised by Herefordshire Council.

Herefordshire Council will notify the parish council and ward member of this consultation period.

This agreement should be read in conjunction with the 'Guide to the procedures' guidance note.

• The Statutory Obligations for Herefordshire Council

Following the completion of the statutory procedures Herefordshire Council will meet the following standards (as set out in its formal governance arrangements) :-	Decision made within:-
Agreement of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area Regulation 7	Two weeks following the end of publicity period
Approval of conformity of draft plan Regulation 14	Four weeks following submission to Neighbourhood Planning Team
Publicise the submission plan and other relevant documentation and review the comments received Regulation 16	Publicise within two weeks of receiving the submission documents. Review comments within four weeks of close of consultation
Approval of the appointment of an examiner and move submission plan/order for independent examination Regulation 17	Within six weeks of close of consultation
Consideration of Inspector's Report and provision of 'Decision Statement' Regulation 18	Four weeks following the receipt of the Inspectors Report
Arrange Referendum date	Referendum to take place within 60 days of the decision document upon the Inspector's report.
Adoption of Plan Regulation 19/20	At the first available meetings of Cabinet/ Council following a positive referendum result

• **Technical advice and support**

Herefordshire Council will:-

Topic	Advice and support
Published advice	<p>Provide on its neighbourhood planning website:-</p> <p>http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/planning/59632.asp</p> <p>A comprehensive information base in respect of the legislation and procedures involved</p> <p>A set of guidance material in relation to the process and the practicalities involved</p>
Professional advice	<p>Provide a named officer as the first point of contact for advice and technical support</p> <p>The Support Officer contact in this case is: -</p> <p>.....Gemma Webster.....</p> <p>Contact Details</p> <p>Telephone:.....01432 260139.....</p> <p>E-mail:.....gwebster@herefordshire.gov.uk.....</p>
Initial meeting	<p>At the request of the Parish Council and following designation of the Neighbourhood Area the support officer will attend and provide an overview on the procedures and issues This advice will cover:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal procedures to be followed • The preparation/content of a project plan • Methods of consultation and engagement • Consultation with the “Consultation Bodies” • The requirements of other legislation such as the Human Rights Act, the Habitats Regulations and Environmental Assessments
Provision of background data/evidence	<p>At the request of the Parish Council, the support officer will provide and/or direct to the appropriate source:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Annual Monitoring Report planning data that the Council has available for the past 5 years • Provide conformity advice and up to date information on the Core Strategy (Local Plan) policies • Advice on any requirement for Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment • Provide list of planning applications made in the last 5 years • Links to research data - see appendix 1 • Access to LDF evidence base data • Maps showing constraints data • Assistance with methods and processes of consultation • Up to date information on any grant and funding available • Other appropriate data the Council holds • Provide comments to emerging drafts • Digitising of the final proposals maps

Topic	Advice and support
Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan	Provide advice and support in relation to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conformity of the Plan • Suitability of the Consultation Statement • Suitability of any Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment undertaken • Conformity with other legislative requirements • OS mapping requirements (including copyright issues)

Herefordshire Council will not offer support/assistance in the following areas:-

- Writing Documents
- Undertaking primary survey work
- Attend every meeting/consultation event organised
- Direct financial support

5. Obligations for the Parish/Town/City Council

The Parish/Town/City Council will:-

Following agreement by the Council of the Neighbourhood Area
Establish a steering group to develop the Neighbourhood Development Plan with a clear reporting link to the Parish Council via a Terms of Reference
Arrange an initial meeting of the Parish Council/steering group and invite the support Planning Officer from the Neighbourhood Planning team
Prepare a Project Plan for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Project Plan would include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An indicative timetable for completion of the Neighbourhood Development Plan • The provision of regular updates on progress to the Council • Programme discussions with the Support Officer at the stage of preparation of the Draft Plan
• Provide to the Council the Final Plan in electronic format
• Provide results of primary source data which would be helpful to the Research team

Facts and Figures about Herefordshire: information available below county level

The first section below explains what information is available for different areas of Herefordshire and how to access it. The second section why different amounts of detail are available for different types of area.

Section 1: Facts and figures available for areas of Herefordshire

The Facts and Figures about Herefordshire website contains information about the county and areas within it.

Information can be accessed by:

- **topic** - including sub-county data and analysis where available; or by
- **area** – including profiles that contain a range of different topics for one area

Wards, towns and localities

Statistics are **most regularly published** in 'lower super output area', therefore it is possible to produce information on wards, towns and localities but not always on a parish basis.

The best place to start for information is the About Your Area section of the website, where you can find an area profile for each locality, ward and town/city. These contain a range of statistics about the area of interest and smaller areas within it as well comparative figures for Herefordshire. You can search by parish and village name to find the relevant ward or town profiles that cover the area you are interested in.

Parishes

The national census, which takes place **every ten years**, is the only source of most statistics for smaller areas like **parishes**. Parish level data from the 2011 Census will be available from early 2013. The level of detail available for parishes depends on their size:

- **All** parishes regardless of size have headcounts of population and households from the 2001 Census – these are published online
- **Most** parishes and group parishes have a 2001 Census Key Statistics profile – although some have to be combined with neighbouring parishes because they are too small. These are available from the Research Team.
- **A few** parishes have more up-to-date information because they can be created from one or more entire LSOAs. These are:
 - Burghill – LSOA in Burghill, Holmer & Lyde ward profile
 - Clehonger – LSOA in Stoney Street ward profile
 - Belmont Rural – 'Belmont-Whitefriars' & 'Belmont-Abbotsmead' LSOAs; see Belmont ward profile
 - Hereford – contact the Research Team for Hereford parish profile
 - Leominster – published as Leominster market town profile

The table below gives a summary of key pieces of information available for different areas, and links to access them:

	Parish	Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)	Ward	Locality
Area profile <i>A range of statistics about a particular area</i>	Key statistics from 2001 Census (NB. Small parishes are merged with larger neighbours) <i>Contact Research Team</i>	Regularly updated in relevant ward profile	Regularly updated	Regularly updated
Key findings about... <i>Narrative about an area</i>	-	-	-	Regularly updated
Population	2001 Census	Annual mid-year estimates	Annual mid-year estimates	Annual mid-year estimates
Indices of deprivation	n/a (published at LSOA level)	See relevant ward profile	See relevant ward profile	See locality profile

All of the above information can be obtained in www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures

Section 2: Understanding geographies

There are two key things to remember about statistics for areas smaller than counties:

1. the difference between **statistical** areas and **administrative** areas, and
2. how different areas 'nest' into each other (the geographical hierarchy)

Administrative geographies

Administrative geographies are often well-known and meaningful to people, and statistics are needed for people and organisations to understand the characteristics of their areas. Commonly used administrative geographies in Herefordshire are **parishes**, **wards** and **localities**. Statistics can also be produced for Hereford city and the five market towns. In larger urban areas, some wards can be smaller than parishes.

Statistical geographies

In 2004, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) designed a standard set of statistical areas to avoid the problems associated with these administrative areas. They were designed to have similar population sizes and, to a certain extent, similar characteristics. With a clear hierarchy: **Output Areas** (OAs) of about 300 people group together to form **Lower Super Output Areas** (LSOAs) of about 1,500 people, which in turn group to form **Middle Super Output Areas** (MSOAs) of about 7,500 people. MSOAs do not cross county boundaries.

More detail about the statistical areas can be found in an article available from:
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures/definitions.aspx#OAgeogs.

The relationship between administrative and statistical geographies in Herefordshire

OAs were designed to respect parish and ward boundaries and LSOAs to respect ward boundaries so it is possible to create statistics for current (2003) wards and parishes by aggregating the statistical areas.

If ward or parish boundaries change (ward boundaries are being reviewed for the 2015 local elections) so that they are no longer aligned to the OA or LSOA boundaries, statistics will have to be created by 'best-fitting' the statistical geographies to the administrative ones.