

9 steps in the Community-Led Planning Process

1

Initial work: Setting the foundations



- Raise awareness about the community-led plan: discover whether people within the community are interested. This may be in the form of an open public meeting, which should be well advertised, in a suitable location and at a suitable time. This stage may highlight those members of the community who wish to be part of your steering group.
- The initial meeting may highlight the issues and topics that your community wishes to be consulted on as part of the community-led plan.

- Contact local clubs and societies, local businesses, schools and others - get a wide variety of people involved.
- Whilst the Parish Council has to act as the lead organisation in the process the emphasis should remain on wider community involvement at all stages.

2

Creating the steering group: Starting the process and keeping it rolling.

- The steering group should ideally be a cross section of the community, possibly involving representatives from local clubs, societies and people of all ages.
- Try to create a group of roughly 8 - 15.
- Members of the Parish Council should not overly dominate your steering committee.
- From the steering group, working groups may be formed to investigate specific topics that are of interest to the community. You may consider establishing a youth forum.
- Consider what issues are relevant to your community.
- The steering group should aim to plan, oversee and ensure the smooth running of the community-led plan process.

3

Consider and plan consultation: Involve everyone, not just the 'usual suspects'

- Investigate what information is already available to avoid repetition.
- Decide upon the range of community consultation techniques that you will use. If you decide to use a questionnaire it will require careful design and piloting.
- Many communities are now realising that recent developments in participatory consultation techniques can be adapted to suit their community.
- There may be some members of your community who cannot attend an 'open day' or fill in a questionnaire - think about ways of getting them involved.
- It is advisable to involve as many affected outside agencies as you can to increase the sharing of information and ultimately the creation of more applicable expectations, targets and actions. Consult others such as planning and housing departments, social services, transport services and providers, the local health authority and schools.



4

Consider the costs involved and obtain funding:

- Consider the costs highlighted in this guide and others.
- Various funding sources exist, such as Awards for All, District Council, County Council, sponsors and local businesses.
- Action in rural Sussex can provide you with examples of completed grant application forms.

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Community voices: Gathering consultation responses and analysing data.

- If it is evident that various sections of your community have not been consulted then consider ways of gathering their views.
- Discover what actions are priorities, how long they will take, what funding they

will need and what assistance may be required from outside agencies.

- This is often a time consuming process and may lead to a great deal of work for your steering committee. You may want to 'buy in' some help.



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Bringing things together: Create your draft community-led plan.

- You may decide to include a description of your geographic location and details on the consultation process.
- You may wish to feedback the results from the consultation.
- Pilot your draft action plan amongst the community for comments and suggestions - it is always possible that something else may be added.

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Pulling the plan together: Developing the final action plan.

- This should be objective and written in a clear and concise manner that makes it approachable for people of all ages.
- Carefully consider the design, layout, printing and distribution of your community-led plan.
- Launch the plan and celebrate your success.
- Send copies of your final plan to all relevant authorities.

8

New directions and concrete actions: Obtaining project funding, training and working in partnership.

- Put plan into action: Carry out the actions within the proposed time period.
- Obtaining funding for actions: Your final community-led plan may be used as justification of need when applying for future funding.
- Training and information: Members of your community may want training in relation to specific actions and a newsletter updating residents on the progress of the actions will keep everyone informed.
- Working in partnership: Feed your community-led plan into your district community plan and liaise with relevant authorities and organisations that can help you achieve your actions.

9

Build on your successes: Monitor, evaluate and review - look forward

- Feed back successes and also factors that have inhibited success.
- Publicise your achievements.
- Review the process after a year to see how things have progressed.
- Keep the community informed.



Action in rural Sussex has 80 years of experience supporting communities to achieve their aspirations. We believe that working alongside communities to identify their needs is essential in order to plan effective and long lasting projects.

We are the market leader in delivering community-led planning in Sussex and have a skilled and experienced team who are expert in delivering community consultations and developing local solutions.

Action in rural Sussex can provide support for the whole of your community-led plan or for specific elements. Our services include facilitation of consultation events and focus groups, survey design and analysis, mediation between community groups, project design and help with project implementation.

For further information about our community led-planning service and to receive a quote, please contact one of the team below:

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