

Chardstock Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

Introduction

Chardstock Parish is in East Devon and has boundaries with South Somerset and the Devon parishes of Membury, All Saints and Hawkchurch. The population is less than 1,000, with the majority living in the main settlement of Chardstock village; the rest of the population is spread among ten hamlets. Eighty-five percent of the parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, while the important hamlet of Tytherleigh lies just outside the AONB and straddles the A358. The parish contains a number of listed buildings as well as a Conservation Area within the village. Much land in the parish comprises statutory or non-statutory sites of biodiversity interest. There is a mixed stock of good housing of varying ages that includes a relatively modern estate within the village itself. A primary school serves both the parish and the surrounding areas. Within the parish there are sports facilities, a community hall, a post office and shop, a church, and two public houses. The main industry is agriculture, but there are a number of self-employed people running small businesses.

The purpose of this consultation statement is to outline the consultation process used in the writing of the Neighbourhood Plan by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (the Group), formally set up with members selected from the Parish Council and the wider community. The process involved eliciting the views of parishioners on a range of topics, communicating with them and giving opportunities for feedback, which resulted in modifications to the Plan. It will show that stakeholders have been consulted in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Group was determined to make the consultations as inclusive as possible by eliciting the views of old and young alike, not just those living in the village but also those in the outlying hamlets and that part of the parish not within the Blackdown Hills AONB. In addition, the views of local businesses and farmers were sought. Different methods were used in the hope that this would enable communication with the widest audience possible. As well as using the more traditional method of placing items in the parish newsletter, the Group took advantage of the benefits of Facebook, the internet and email. It was felt that the younger members of the parish were more likely to interact using modern electronic devices – the medium was as important as the message. This statement highlights the fact that that ‘work in progress’ was communicated as comprehensively as possible through exhibitions, fliers, information in the local press, Facebook, the parish newsletter (delivered to every household) and an email database, as well as via posters around the parish. The exhibitions were set up to be accessible to all, with information given visually in maps and pie charts and using both numbers and written statements. It was important that parishioners took ownership of the plan. To this end, as the plan progressed, opportunities were given for feedback through questionnaires, informal conversations, emails and letters, leading later in the process to the formation of a focus group of parishioners, who met with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to give their feedback on the first completed draft of the plan. The Group feels that the consultation process outlined in this statement is in line with the spirit of the regulations.

Date	Event	Comment
November 2012	Village Development Plan exhibition and housing questionnaire	Exhibition attended by 130 people over two days; 245 questionnaires completed. Database of e-mail addresses started with over 80 subscribers.
2013	Neighbourhood plans produced by Upper Eden, Thame Town Council and Cringleford were examined and other councils going through the process were contacted. This confirmed the decision to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for Chardstock Parish. Seed funding of £2000 was provided by EDDC. Nine other parish councils were consulted about collaboration in the production of a questionnaire and neighbourhood plans and the possibility of gaining funding to hire a consultant.	Regular attention was paid to the development of EDDC's Local Plan.
2014		
24 April	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	
May	Notification in the Parish Newsletter of the Annual Parish Meeting, which would include an update on the Neighbourhood Plan.	
15 May	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	

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June	Notification in the Parish Newsletter of the July exhibition and outline of the Neighbourhood Plan in the chairman's annual report Set up Chardstock Neighbourhood Plan Facebook page	
2 June	Article in "View from the Blackdown Hills" on the ten Blackdown Hills parishes working together on neighbourhood plans – detail of Chardstock's launch event	
18 June	Article as above in <i>Midweek Herald</i>	
10 and 24 June	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	
July	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group formally set up. Distribution of the launch event flyer in the Parish Newsletter, along with Neighbourhood Plan questionnaires. A4 posters displayed throughout the parish and additional flyers distributed via the shop and pub.	Questionnaires were distributed with the Parish Newsletter, ensuring that each household would receive two copies; more would be available at the launch event.
3 and 9 July	Facebook progress report	Modified questionnaires produced for pupils of St Andrew's Primary School and for the Chardstock Youth Group.
4 and 5 July	Launch event and exhibition in Chardstock Community Hall in three sessions: 4 July, 2–4 p.m. and 7–9 p.m., 5 July, 9.30 a.m.–2 p.m. Displays focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the historical context of the village and parish• the environment – with a detailed summary by the parish naturalist Martin Drake• maps showing the BUAB and SHLAA sites• the background to neighbourhood plans• "difficult questions", with post-it notes for people's comments Displays were also produced by pupils from St Andrew's Primary School. Article in "View from Axminster" on Chardstock's Neighbourhood Plan launch event A dedicated Neighbourhood Plan page was set up on the Chardstock website, where all documents from the exhibition were made available.	Exhibition attended by 113 people (49% from the village, 43% from elsewhere in the parish, 8% from elsewhere). Most visitors spent upwards of 30 minutes looking at the exhibition, several over an hour. Additional questionnaires were available. Some filled them out at the time, but most took them away to complete. More residents signed up to the e-mail database, which now has more than 140 subscribers.
14 and 30 July	Posters put up to remind people about completing the questionnaire. Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	The closing date for completion of the questionnaire was extended to 18 August. A total of 279 questionnaires completed = 34% rate of response
July/August	Stakeholder consultation	A total of 121 letters/e-mails sent to "stakeholders" in the form of local authorities, statutory consultees and local businesses, including farmers. There were 31 replies, but no issues

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6 and 21 August	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	were raised.
1 September	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database	
24 and 25 October	Consultation event: Friday 24 October, 3–5 p.m. and 7–9 p.m., and Saturday 25 October, 9 a.m.–12 noon Exhibition showed in graphic form the statistics and comments as a result of analysis of the questionnaire and the developing framework for the NP policies: "BIPS" – Build, Improve, Protect, Sustain.	Event attended by 74 residents.
29 October	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database, including pdf files of exhibition content (which was also uploaded to the Chardstock website)	
November	Parish Newsletter included the "BIPS" outline of Neighbourhood Plan policies.	Residents were asked to respond to the "BIPS" with further comments and questions: 146 forms were returned, with more than 95% of respondents in support of the policies.
17 November	Facebook progress report	
22 December	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database reporting the change to Chardstock's status as a village considered unsuitable for sustainable development (this followed the refusal by EDDC of two planning applications).	
2015		
2 April	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database following the decision by EDDC to include Chardstock in a list of villages that should retain their BUABs, reversing the decision made by planners.	
13 June	E-mail to Chardstock database with a copy of the response by the Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan steering group to EDDC's consultation on the Local Plan – specifically Strategy 27, as this would affect the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan.	
August	Parish Council insert in the Parish Newsletter plus an e-mail to the Chardstock database with an update on the Neighbourhood Plan and the forthcoming Housing Needs Survey.	
September	Chardstock Parish Newsletter gave further details concerning the Housing Needs Survey to be carried out by Devon Communities Together in conjunction with the Devon Rural Housing Partnership. Questionnaires delivered to each household.	440 surveys were delivered and 117 forms were returned (response rate of 37%).
4 September	Facebook progress report	
5 September	Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan stand at Chardstock Street Fayre to answer questions on the Neighbourhood Plan and the Housing Needs Survey	
October	Completion of Housing Needs Survey report	Results and report uploaded to Chardstock website
2016		

Date	Event	Comment
February 4 February	Progress report e-mail to Chardstock database following the adoption of EDDC's Local Plan, which confirmed that Chardstock was no longer on the list of villages considered suitable for additional development.	This confirmation meant that we could now proceed with finalising the policies for the Neighbourhood Plan.
8 February	Facebook progress report	
March	Formation of a focus group and e-mail distribution of the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan for their feedback	Focus group consists of 21 people – a cross-section of residents from throughout the parish.
April 12 April	Facebook progress report	
	Focus group meeting to discuss their comments and feedback on the draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.	
June 19 June	Notification from EDDC that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment was not required.	
	Following revisions, including some helpful comments from EDDC, a new draft was circulated to the focus group.	
	Final Facebook progress report	Facebook page closed with the departure from the village of Councillor De Souza, who had been running it.
July	Work on layout of final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan	
August	Neighbourhood Plan published and printed copies delivered to every household. Notification and flyer in the Parish Newsletter informing the parish of a re-run of the exhibition held in October 2014, brought up to date to reflect the changes and developments since that time.	Many positive comments received on the presentation of the plan.
September 9 and 10 September	Exhibition in the Community Hall: Friday 9 September, 3–7 p.m., and Saturday 10 September, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.	A total of 34 people attended the exhibition.
	Copies of the Neighbourhood Plan sent out to statutory consultees, alongside other key consultees identified as having an interest in the parish. The plan was made available for public inspection on the Chardstock Village website from 26 September.	
November	Consultation period closed on 8 November. Responses were received from eight bodies, some of which were simply acknowledging receipt and confirming there were no comments to be made.	Historic England was pleased to note the value which the community places on its historic environment (policies CPNP 02 and CPNP 03) and suggested identifying other forms of heritage assets; this is being pursued with the intention of forming a schedule. Natural England's response was helpful in reformulating policy CPNP 04 to emphasise the national importance of the outstanding landscape value of the AONB. Somerset County Council was

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		particularly constructive in introducing a new clause into policy CPNP 03 concerning noise and light pollution. EDDC also made a number of small comments which led to overall clarification, as well as suggesting the addition of further references.
2017		
January	Amendments received from consultees incorporated in the Neighbourhood Plan. Revised plan and accompanying documents submitted to EDDC.	