Neighbourhood Planning

Topic Notes for Town and Parish Councils

5. Guide to community consultation and engagement

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Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition
The Cottingham Neighbourhood Plan aims to be a community led, locally relevant and widely influential guide for the future development of Cottingham.

Join us on:
Friday 19th September (12pm-6pm)
Saturday 20th September (10am-4pm)
Cottingham Civic Hall, Market Green

to view and comment on the work undertaken so far and to discuss the process with experts and professionals who are helping to guide the process.

Have Your Say!
North Cave Neighbourhood Plan

Your Neighbourhood...

Woodmansey Neighbourhood Development Plan

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EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

November 2015
East Riding of Yorkshire Council has prepared a series of topic notes on Neighbourhood Planning for Town and Parish Councils in the East Riding. The notes cover a range of topics and together aim to answer the key questions Town and Parish Councils may have in relation to Neighbourhood Planning in the East Riding.

The topic notes can found on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's dedicated Neighbourhood Planning webpage at:

http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/east-riding-local-plan/neighbourhood-planning/

A summary of each note is provided below.

**Summary of Neighbourhood Planning topic notes**

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Includes sources of further information on Neighbourhood Planning.

This note (Topic Note 5) considers community consultation for Neighbourhood Plans and Orders. It provides Town and Parish Councils with advice and best practice on how to involve the community in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and Orders. Key information in this note is included within a green box.

A glossary of key terms for Neighbourhood Planning has been set out in East Riding of Yorkshire Neighbourhood Planning Topic Note 1.

Town and Parish Councils may also wish to read East Riding Neighbourhood Planning Topic Note 3 which provides a step by step guide to the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan or Order.

These notes should not to be regarded as definitive legal advice. It is the responsibility of Town and Parish Councils to obtain their own independent legal advice in relation to their responsibilities under the Localism Act (2011).
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What is consultation?

Consultation is a two-way process between Town and Parish Councils and the community. It allows people to express their views by responding to communications in a variety of forms (electronic, face-to-face, telephone, postal, forum) and enables Town and Parish Councils to provide feedback to residents on how their comments and views have shaped policy and other improvements.

There is no set process on how to consult when preparing Neighbourhood Plans and Orders. The amount and scale of consultation will depend on what is being proposed and who is being involved in the Plan or Order. All Town and Parish Councils will need to decide which methods are most appropriate for them.

Consultation is a necessary part of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or Order. Town and Parish Councils submit a Consultation Statement with their Submission (final) Plan or Order. This explains the consultation process informing the Plan or Order and what has been amended as a result of comments made.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council would suggest Town and Parish Councils consider the advice below in relation to consultation:

- Ensure Plan or Order preparation process is open and transparent at all stages.
- Ensure consultation is included within the project plan.
- Consider the community and residents to ensure equality of opportunity to participate.
- Ensure the aims of consultation and what it is trying to achieve is clear.
- Consider what questions are being asked or residents and what the consultation needs to find out.
- Think about the timing and length of consultation. For example, it needs to be accessible so people have time to go to an event or to read information and fill in questionnaires.
- Ensure the consultation, including any documents, is easy to understand.
- Give enough time to carry out the consultation and analyse responses.
- Ensure the Data Protection Act is complied with.
• Observe and display copyright of any material such as maps and photographs.

• Ensure consultation and responses are recorded and published. This could include photos of events, copies of interactive exercises and written/oral representations.

• Listen to people’s views. Be flexible and open to considering alternative option.

• Provide feedback to people. Thank them for their contribution, tell them what you learnt and what your will do with the information.

Why does consultation need to take place?

It is necessary to undertake consultation on Neighbourhood Plans and Orders to ensure the Plan will deliver the development wanted by the community in a sustainable way, whilst meeting the basic conditions.

The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) requires Town or Parish Councils to be inclusive and open in the preparation of its Neighbourhood Plan or Order and ensure that the wider community:

• Is kept fully informed of what is being proposed;

• Is able to make their views known throughout the process;

• Has opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the emerging Neighbourhood Plan or Order; and

• Is made aware of how their views have informed the draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order.¹

It also requires Town or Parish Councils to consult any bodies² whose interests may be affected by the Plan or Order. Public bodies, landowners and the development industry should be involved in the preparation of Plans and Orders.

Consulting all of these people/groups will ensure Town and Parish Councils understand the issues being addressed by the Plan or Order. It will result in proposals that are

² The bodies are set out in Schedule 1 to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), available from: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made
more likely to provide sustainable and realistic development that benefits the community.

At the end of the process the Neighbourhood Plan and Order will only be made (adopted) if it passes the referendum. Therefore, input from a significant proportion of the community is required throughout the preparation process. This will be important to ensure there is support from the wider community before the Plan or Order reaches the referendum stage.

Informal, interesting, quick and fun ways of finding out what the community wants can help to include local people who may feel marginalised or excluded from the decision making process. This could include a range of groups, such as the young, elderly, disabled, housebound, or those with low literacy skills.

**How should consultation be planned?**

It is recommended that Town or Parish Council take into account consultation in their project plan. Further information about preparing a project plan is set out in East Riding Neighbourhood Planning Topic Note 3. This will enable consultations to be planned more effectively and linked to relevant stages of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan or Order.

Town or Parish Council should consider how they will communicate with the community and other stakeholders through the preparation of the Plan or Order. The project plan should be flexible to allow for additional consultation where necessary, for example on new issues as they become apparent throughout the process of preparing the Plan or Order.

**Who should Town and Parish Councils consult?**

Town or Parish Councils lead on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan or Order. However, they need to involve the rest of the community in its preparation, which would include:

- Residents (such as school children, young people (16-30), older people, commuters, families, single people, and people with disabilities)

- Community organisations (such as civic societies, sports clubs, faith groups, residents groups/forums, black and ethnic minority groups, Travellers and Gypsies, scouts, brownies, and older people’s forums)
• Businesses (such as chambers of Commerce, employers, employees and businesses run from home)

• Health and social care services (such as doctors, dentists, schools, and old people’s homes)

• Landowners

• Developers

• Elective representatives (Ward Councillors)

• Educational establishments (schools, colleges)

• Residents who are active in the voluntary sector

• Government organisations (such as Natural England, Highways England, Environment Agency and Historic England) to provide advice, guidance or information on a particular issue and comment on draft documents.

• Officers from East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

The Town or Parish Council should try to involve existing groups, and target those people who are not normally involved in planning matters.

Planning Aid England have prepared some useful guidance on working with land owners and the development industry. This is called 'How to work with landowners and the development industry – Putting the Pieces Together', and is available below: Planning Aid.

http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/resources/documents/29

Where possible Town and Parish Council’s should set up a dedicated neighbourhood planning website, or a separate page as part of their own website. This can be used to keep the community up to date on progress with the Plan or Order, advertise consultation events and provide feedback on any decisions that are being made. Following this process will ensure that the preparation of the Plan or Order is open, transparent and fair.

Further actions for Town and Parish Councils at the start of the Neighbourhood Plan or Order process (including setting up a website) is set out in East Riding Neighbourhood Planning Topic Note 3.
When carrying out consultation it is very unlikely everyone will agree on every part of the Plan or Order. Just because someone has a very strong opinion does not mean that their views should be given more weight than other members of the community.

Although consultation is very important it is not the only consideration in preparing a Plan or Order. Options supported through public consultation will still need to meet all of the basic conditions, for example ensuring that the Plan or Order is in general conformity with the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document.

Involving the community throughout the process will strengthen community support. It will make it more likely that the Plan or Order will pass the referendum at the end of the process and can then be made (adopted) by East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

**Additional consultation with some consultees**

It may be appropriate for Town and Parish Councils to hold discussions with some consultees outside of a public consultation event. For example, if land is being allocated for development discussions will need to be held with land owners to ensure that they want their land to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan or Order.

Separate discussions may also be helpful with a particular consultation body to ensure the Plan or Order is consistent with their objectives. For example:

- The Environment Agency - where a Plan or Order includes areas that are identified as being within an area at high risk of flooding.

- Natural England - where a Plan or Order includes important natural landscapes or habitats.

- Historic England - where a Plan or Order includes buildings or sites that have been identified as important heritage assets.

Discussing issues with stakeholders early in the process is likely to save time and resources. It could also prevent the community for becoming disengaged if changes to a draft Plan or Order become necessary.

**When should consultation take place?**

It is advised that Town and Parish Councils undertake consultation from very early in the process and continue to consult at all major stages of preparing the Plan or Order. Starting early will mean that the process is more open and transparent and the community is aware of Neighbourhood Planning from the start. Community
engagement and consultation is likely to be continuous however it is likely to be focused on several stages:

- The Town or Parish Council’s intentions to produce a Plan or Order and the issues that could be included
- The identification and designation of the proposed Neighbourhood Area
- Defining the vision and objectives
- Shaping potential options for the Plan or Order
- A draft of the Plan or Order
- Formal Pre-Submission consultation prior to the Plan or Order's submission to East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Consultation should take place from the very start of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan or Order. It should be continuous and always be undertaken at a stage when there is still opportunity for people’s views to be taken into account in developing the final Plan.

When considering consultation Town and Parish Council’s should think about what evidence and information they already have available. This could include information from other sources, such as the evidence base for the East Riding Local Plan. If alternative approaches are put forward the consultation it may be necessary to consider whether new or different evidence is required to support the Plan or Order.

The length of time for a period of consultation will depend on a number of factors including:

- Time of year – During summer or Christmas holidays people may be busy and require more time to comment
- Other local events – These could provide an opportunity to consult people who otherwise may not have engaged in the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- Whether the consultation is a one off event or gives people a period of time to respond to issues - Best practice is to allow at least 6 weeks for consultation if there are no major holidays/distractions from the consultation.
• Time of Day – For one off events think about the time of day. Day time meetings may not attract those who work or are at school during the day. Evening meetings may not attract commuters, people with young children or night shift workers.

The consultation stages likely to be undertaken by a Town and Parish Councils and the types of issues that could be considered at each stage are set out overleaf (figure 1).
Proposal to Prepare a Neighbourhood Plan/Order

- If the Community are not supportive of the idea of a Plan or Order from the start it will be difficult to produce a document that reflects their priorities and aspirations, and which will gain support at referendum.
- The Community should be informed of the intention to produce a Plan or Order and given the opportunity to get involved. At this stage the Town or Parish Council should:
  - Asking people their views on whether a Plan or Order should be produced.
  - Explaining what Neighbourhood Planning is, the types of issues that can and cannot be covered and the process involved.
  - Giving people and groups the opportunity to be involved from the outset, including the opportunity to sit on the steering group.
  - Identifying what local skills are available to help develop the Plan and whether these people/organisations are willing to be involved in the preparation of the Plan or Order.

Developing a Vision, Objectives and Shaping Potential Options

- Consulting early in the process allows Town and Parish Councils to get an idea of the issues that are important to the community. This can help shape the vision, objectives and potential options for the Plan or Order.
- At this stage the Town or Parish Council could consider consulting the community on:
  - The area’s strengths and weaknesses.
  - What makes a good neighbourhood.
  - How the area could be improved or changed.
  - Opportunities that exist in the area.
  - Constraints that exist in the area.
  - The barriers to improvement/opportunities (physical, financial, environmental).
  - How issues raised should be prioritised.
- When considering the above it may be helpful to think about the economy, housing, transport, the environment, community infrastructure and energy.

Options for the Plan

- At this stage the Town or Parish Council could:
  - Ask the community’s opinion on the draft vision and objectives.
  - Ask the community their opinion on different approaches/options that the plan could take, for example:
    - Whether the Plan should allocate land for development, and if it were to allocate land suggest options for how much land and where.
    - Should the Plan identify sites that should be protected or enhanced? If yes, propose options for which land should be protected and enhanced, setting out why?
    - Should a masterplan be drawn up for sites allocated in the Local Plan? Propose options of which sites and what issues the Masterplan could cover.
  - It is possible to set out a range of options and a preferred option, with an explanation as to why it is currently the preferred option. However, the community must have the opportunity to select or propose other options.
  - Depending on the options and how people responded it may be appropriate to undertake more than one options consultation. For example, if people are asked whether they wanted the Plan to allocate sites for development, they should be given an option of which piece/s of land should be developed, remembering that the Plan needs to be realistic.

Draft Plan

- At this stage the Town or Parish Council could:
  - Ask whether the community agrees with key elements of the Plan or Order.
  - If the community does not support elements of the Plan or Order, ask why and what they would change.
  - Explain why other options were not taken forward.
  - If an Environmental Report is required it should be made available for comment.
  - Consultation at this stage should be widespread.

Pre-submission Consultation and Publicity

- At this stage the Town or Parish Council will have to ensure that the consultation follows the The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Town and Parish Councils must publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the Neighbourhood Area:
  - details of the proposals for a Neighbourhood Plan or Order;
  - details of where and when the proposals for a Neighbourhood Plan or Order may be inspected;
  - details of how to make representations; and
  - the date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised;
- Town and Parish Councils must also consult any body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Regulations whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a Neighbourhood Plan or Order; and
- Send a copy of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan to the Local Planning Authority.
- Following this consultation the responses should be analysed to determine whether any changes need to be made before the Plan or Order is submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire Council for the Independent Examination (see East Riding Neighbourhood Planning Guide Note 3).
Where should consultation take place?

The best place to undertake consultation events will depend on who is being engaged and the methods being used. Locations that Town and Parish Councils may wish to consider are listed in figure 2 (below):

Figure 2 - Locations to consider for consultation events

- Community Centre / Village hall
- Shops/post office
- Pubs
- Village fetes/shows
- Schools
- Youth clubs
- Existing gatherings such as community clubs and societies
- People's homes
- On the street

Wherever possible venues should have good access that caters for those with disabilities, be accessible by public transport and have car parking nearby.

What methods of consultation should be used?

A range of different methods of consultation can be used, although some methods may be more or less appropriate depending on the purpose of the consultation. The main strengths and weaknesses of different methods can be found in Appendix A to this note.

Several different methods may be needed at each stage in order to conduct an effective consultation that reaches the whole community.

When thinking about which methods of consultation, Town and Parish Councils should consider the following questions:
• What are we trying to find out?

• Is there a particular group we want to target?

• What do we already know about the target group?

• Have we carried out consultation with this group before and what was the result?

• What is the most appropriate channel of communication for that group?

• What information do they need in order to make an informed response?

• How will we record the responses?

• What resources do we have/need for the consultation?

• How much time do we have/need for the consultation?

• What are the lead in times in order to finalise the Plan or Order?

• What impact will the consultation have on the Project Plan and other stages in preparing the Plan or Order?

• Are we prepared to adjust our plans as a result of feedback?

A list of potential ways of consulting with the community is set out in figure 3 (overleaf):
Figure 3 - Ways of consulting with the community

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Advertising and providing information:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Documents available for inspection</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>• E-mail</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Media (local press, tv, radio, town/parish newsletter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Leaflets</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Brochures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Telephone Hotline</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Formal written consultation</td>
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<tr>
<th>Meetings/events:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Public exhibitions/displays/drop in sessions/road shows</td>
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<tr>
<td>• One to one meetings with selected stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consultation events/workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public meetings</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaires/surveys by:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Direct mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Face to face</td>
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</table>

This list of methods is not exhaustive and it is possible to use different methods at different stages of the process.

Consultation can use a mixture of direct and indirect methods:

- Direct consultation - includes methods, such as letters, emails, meetings, workshops, and telephone conversations. In these instances there is direct contact between those seeking views and those giving views.

- Indirect consultation - is aimed at reaching the wider community. It includes methods, such as radio, newsletters, newspapers, leaflets and advertising. This does not involve any direct contact between those giving and receiving information.

Community engagement exercises can raise unrealistic expectations if they are poorly run, leading to disappointment. It will be necessary to explain the scope and limitations of the planning system and of the Neighbourhood Plan or Order.
All relevant sections of the community should be represented in the preparation of a Plan or Order. It is likely that a combination of different (direct and indirect) consultation methods will be required to obtain full representation of the community.

**How can Questionnaires/Surveys be used?**

Questionnaires are a very popular method of engaging large numbers of people. They can be used to gain information on the views of the community. Successful questionnaires need adequate preparation time.

Preparing a questionnaire will require Town or Parish Councils, with support from East Riding of Yorkshire Council to:

- Identify the information they need and how it will be used;
- Target participants that are representative of the population;
- Decide how to collect responses;
- Consider which questions should be included in the questionnaire/survey;
- Design of the questionnaire/survey;
- Test draft questionnaires to ensure they are easy to understand and complete;
- Identify the response rate required to make the results meaningful;
- Consider how to encourage people to respond, including explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and potential incentives; and
- Set out what will happen once the responses have been received, including the collation, analysis and publication of results.

**Further information**

Herefordshire Council have prepared a useful guide to preparing a questionnaire for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning. This is available below (the document is called 'Guidance Note 29: Creating a Questionnaire'):


Some brief guidance on questionnaires/surveys is available from Loughborough
How should Meetings/Events be planned?

Publicity is important to ensure that people will attend an event or meeting. A number of different types of events can be used by Town and Parish Councils to engage with members of the local community on their Plan or Order.

**Formal Meetings and Events**

Formal events, such as public meetings or workshops, are usually structured and often include presentations. A potential structure could include:

- Quick and simple interactive activity on arrival.
- Introduction and opening of the meeting by the Chairperson.
- Presentation explaining what has happened so far in the process, the stage the Plan or Order is currently at and the aims of the event.
- Interactive group activity or open forum for discussion.
- Feedback on the activity/discussion.
- Presentation to close the meeting and explain next steps.

When planning formal meetings and events, Town and Parish Councils should consider:

- Who should be invited to attend? Is it a public meeting or being targeted at specific groups or stakeholders?
- Who has the skills and knowledge to act as Chairperson, give a presentation and facilitate discussion? Facilitators may be needed to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in the event.
- Is any equipment required? For example, there may be a need for a microphone, overhead projector or equipment for interactive activities.
• How should the room be laid out? – The format of the event may determine the layout of the room. If workshop activities are being carried out it is often appropriate to seat people in small groups around tables. For an open forum discussion a theatre style layout may be appropriate.

• Ensure someone is, and can be seen to be, taking notes including an attendance list.

**Informal Events**

Informal events can run for long periods of time to allow people to ‘drop in’ at their convenience, for example before/after school or work. They give people the opportunity to find out what’s going on and ask questions of people who are directly involved in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan or Order.

When planning informal events consideration should be given to:

• The location of the event.

• The time of day or week on which the event is held, which is likely to influence who will attend.

• Preparation of a display to set out key issues being considered and answers to frequently asked questions.

• Providing interactive activities or a short questionnaire to record people’s views.

Informal events could be held alongside existing community events, such as a village show/fayre, or specifically arranged to discuss the Plan or Order.

**Interactive Activities**

Interactive activities can be undertaken at a range of different types of consultation events, such as at workshops, public meetings and drop in sessions. They can be used to gauge peoples' knowledge and understanding, or to seek their views on a particular issue/option.

Activities can be self led or facilitated:

• Self led activities allow individuals to quickly give their views, without interruption, with as much social interaction as they wish.
Facilitated activities allow people to explore each other’s views and consider issues in more depth. The facilitator can draw attention to issues that are raised and try to get people to expand on particular points.

Activities can be a more informal way and less resource intensive way of obtaining views than speaking to people individually. They also help ensure that everyone who attends the event has their say. Creative and interesting activities can grab peoples' attention and encourage participation. A number of examples are set out below.

**Thermometer** – Asking people to place red dots on a map to show issues or options they like and blue dots to denote other that they do not like. Alternatively, people could be asked their opinion on a particular matter as they enter a consultation event and asked the same question on their way out to see if their view has changed.

**Identifying opportunities, constraints or threats** - At workshops group discussion can be focused around a particular theme or issue. Small groups can keep a record of key points that have been discussed then provide feedback to the larger group.

**Prioritisation of issues** - A number of issues or options can be compared against each other in terms of their importance. This can use a scoring system, which is completed on a grid to help determine which options or issues are seen as being the most.
**Visioning and prioritising** - Activities can be used to find out what people think is important to make a place work, for example by placing stickers on a board to highlight what is important to them. This should also provide the opportunity for new issues to be identified. The exercise can be carried out by groups, with discussion around the issues, or by individuals.

**Considering Options** - Activities can be designed to enable people to consider the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and come to a conclusion about whether there is a preferred approach or if a combination of approaches is required.

**Maps** – Asking people to place a sticker or mark on a large scale map to indicate the area that they live/work. This can be used to identify areas that are underrepresented and indicate whether additional consultation is required. Different coloured stickers could represent different ages to determine if all age groups are represented.

**Mad/Sad/Glad board** – Allows people to place post it notes on a display or map to identify what how they feel about issues, an area, or a specific proposal.
**Solution Tree** - A statement is placed in the trunk of the tree. Individuals are asked to identify the causes of the problem in the roots of the tree and solutions in the branches.

How should consultation be recorded?

Town and Parish Councils should always keep a record of consultation.

Town and Parish Councils should maintain good records of all consultation events and making them publically available. This will:
• Enable the preparation of the Plan or Order to be undertaken in an open and transparent manner; and

• Ensure the community remains engaged throughout the process, enabling them to see how and why certain decisions are being made.

Recording consultation will also make it easier to prepare the Consultation Statement which is submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire Councils alongside the Plan or Order.

Records should be kept of:

• Who is contacted;

• When they are contacted;

• How they were contacted;

• How they responded;

• What their response said; and

• The Town or Parish Council’s reaction to their response and any changes made to the Plan or Order as a result.

Records should include written minutes of meetings, notes of discussions, taking photographs at events and keeping copies of consultation materials.

Information on consultation could be uploaded onto the Neighbourhood Plan or Order’s website, on the Town or Parish Council website, or made available to view on request.

Remember that if records are made publically available the Data Protection Act will need to be adhered to.

**Further information**

Information on data protection is available from:

Information Commissioners Office

- ‘The Guide To Data Protection’

How can future consultation be improved?

Consultation should not be a one off event and Town and Parish Councils should review the methods used to identify what went well and record how future consultation could be improved. This evaluation should consider whether:

- Consultation was successful in meeting the aims and objectives.
- There was a high enough response rate.
- The methods and activities used were appropriate and well received.
- There are sections of the community that did not engage or could have been engaged more effectively.
- Anything should be done differently in future consultations.
- There is a need to undertake further consultation.

Town and Parish Councils may wish to share their experiences with other Town and Parish Councils to help build a shared knowledge of consultation techniques and good practice.

How should Town and Parish Councils feedback to the Community?

Consultation should be clear and transparent.

Town and Parish Councils should provide clear and timely feedback on the outcomes from consultation. This is provides assurance to residents that their views have been listened to and used to prepare the Plan or Order.

It is important to let people know why their views are being collected, ensure responses are analysed and provide feedback to the community. This should set out how responses to the consultation has helped to shape the Neighbourhood Plan or Order. This can be achieved by:
• Referring to ‘what you told us’ or ‘you said, we did’ in the next consultation document and/or at the next consultation event.

• Keeping the website up-to-date.

• Publishing information in the Town or Parish Newsletter.

• Utilising social media.

**How should a Consultation Statement be prepared?**

| A Consultation Statement must be submitted to East Riding of Yorkshire Council with the Plan or Order. |

Town and Parish Councils submit a Consultation Statement with their final (Submission) Plan or Order. The Consultation Statement should record how the Neighbourhood Plan or Order has been prepared. This should include detailing the various consultations that took place from the inception of the Plan or Order through to the Submission Plan or Order. It is an important document which:

• Contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;

• Explains how they were consulted;

• Summarises the main issues and concerns raised through consultation; and

• Describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan or Order.

This means it is important for Town and Parish Councils to keep a record of consultation events and other documents published as part preparing the Plan or Order.

More detailed information on producing a Consultation Statement is available from Planning Aid England, in their publication ‘How to write a consultation statement - Putting the pieces together’ which is available from:

### Appendix A - Consultation Methods - Strengths and Weaknesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advertising and Providing information</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Documents available for inspection</td>
<td>• Traditional method of consultation in allowing the community to view relevant documents.</td>
<td>• Logical and familiar place for a consultation document to be available.</td>
<td>• Limited opening times to view hard copies.</td>
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<td>• Complex issues can be explained and background information can be included in consultation document.</td>
<td>• People can be put off by thick and complex documents.</td>
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<td>• Online documents can be viewed at any time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>• Standard form of consultation where stakeholders are formally invited to comment on an issue or document.</td>
<td>• Formal consultation.</td>
<td>• Delayed responses due to post.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Able to target relevant stakeholders.</td>
<td>• Depending on the number of letters sent it can be expensive.</td>
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<td>• Can only contact those</td>
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<td>Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
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| Website | • A convenient method for those with internet access to view and download documents and information at their convenience.  
• Can be used to keep people up to date on what is happening and to provide feedback.  
• Keeping the website up-to-date can help ensure the Plan or Order preparation process appears open and transparent. | • Accessible to anybody with internet access.  
• Detailed information can be viewed and downloaded at the stakeholders convenience.  
• Easily updated and amended. | • Excludes those without internet access.  
• It may be difficult to download documents in areas with slow connection speeds. |
| E-mail | • Email allows Town and Parish Councils to build up a network or database of electronic addresses for sending and receiving documents and consultation responses. | • Direct communication with all types of consultees without the need to post documents.  
• Quick to send documents.  
• Cost effective. | • Excludes those without internet access/email account.  
• Email servers can occasionally fail.  
• Email addresses |
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| Media (local press, tv, radio, town/parish newsletter) | • Media can include adverts and stories to raise the profile of the Plan or Order.  
  • Advertise events and publish results of previous consultation.   | • Can potentially reach out to a large audience.   
  • Can be effective in prompting public awareness.  
  • Town and Parish Councils can control the content of their newsletter. | • Residents may not read publications.  
  • Articles and stories can be too simplified and may not communicate the intended message effectively.  
  • Town and Parish Councils cannot control the content of media publications that it does not manage. |
| Social Media                               | • Twitter, Facebook, SMS etc can be used to stimulate ‘live-time’ comments and feelings about a single issue. | • Modern approach to communication and relies on Town and Parish Councils responding to comments in a timely way using the same method.  
  • Attracts the comments of many people who would not normally engage with consultation. | • Comments are unsolicited and therefore can be negative.  
  • Unable to restrict comments from only town/parish residents |
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| Leaflets/ brochures/posters | • Leaflets and brochures can be used to promote and raise awareness for particular issues or document. | • Raise awareness of key documents and issues.  
• Can present 'bitesize' chunks of information.  
• Could be utilised to target hard to hear groups. | • Glossy leaflets can be costly to produce and distribute.  
• Leaflets may be treated as junk mail and not be read. |
| Hotline                 | • A dedicated telephone line to take Plan or Order queries and information requests. | • Accessible to a wide range of consultees.  
• Direct access to information. | • Costly to run in terms of running costs if number is freephone.  
• Difficulty in manning the phone number at all times though it can be redirected to different people’s phones.  
• Difficulty in raising awareness of hotline. |
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| Formal written consultation | • Traditional form of consultation that invites numerous responses especially on the key issues that affect communities.  
• Consultation can identify key interest groups that wish to be involved in the planning process. | • Given a large enough sample, important data can be retrieved.  
• Consultation forms a good basis for understanding the key issues.  
• Able to target specific audiences if necessary depending on the topic to be consulted on. | • Low response rate from certain groups/ areas are likely.  
• Consulting on long documents can put people off.  
• May need to offer incentives in order to encourage responses.  
• Costly financially and in terms of human resources. |
| Public exhibitions/ drop in sessions/road shows | • Useful close contact with the community where proposals can be discussed.  
• Exhibitions need to be held in accessible locations where the community can easily attend. | • Can generate general public awareness.  
• Face to face contact with the community.  
• Gain instant feedback on proposals. | • Resource and time intensive.  
• Tends to attract those people already interested in the Plan or Order who may not |
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|        | • Can include interactive activities to gain peoples' views and share information.  
        | • Participants can be given information to take away with them. | • Raises local awareness.  
        |                                                      | • Useful forum for two way exchange of information.  
        |                                                      | • Can be combined with other events such as Parish Fayre or Show.  
        |                                                      | • Can appeal to groups who would not engage in traditional methods of consultation. | fully represent the wider community.  
        |                                                      | • Requires publicity.  
        |                                                      | • Some people do not feel confident to speak at these events. |
| One to one meetings with selected stakeholders | • Meetings between individual stakeholders and the Town or Parish Council to discuss key issues. | • Face-to-face contact with key stakeholders.  
        |                                                      | • Identifies key issues and ideas from those selected stakeholders. | • Very time consuming.  
<pre><code>    |                                                      | • Selective consultation. |
</code></pre>
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<th><strong>Method</strong></th>
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</table>
| Public meetings | • Open meetings between Town or Parish Council and the community giving the community the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions.  
<p>|               | • Answers can be heard by others in the room.                                   | • Face to face contact with the community.                                                       | • Resource and time intensive.                                                                         |
|               |                                                                                  | • Gain instant feedback on key local issues.                                                     | • Tends to attract those people already interested in the Plan or Order who may not fully represent the wider community. |
|               |                                                                                  | • Ability to communicate with large numbers of people at one time. Raises local awareness.       | • Requires careful planning and a strong ‘chair’ for the meeting.                                      |
|               |                                                                                  | • Forum for two way exchange of information.                                                     | • Some people may not be confident speaking in public.                                                 |
|               |                                                                                  | • As questions/comments are unknown the public can feel a greater sense of success in challenging or contributing to the debate. |------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               |                                                                                  | • Good experiences at public meetings can encourage people to become more involved in the process. |------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus groups  | • Selected groups of participants (usually 6-12 people) with particular characteristics discuss issues and share | • Able to gain understanding of public concerns.                                                | • Small focus groups may not fully represent the views of the wider community.                      |</p>
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| Consultation events/workshops | • Events can be structured and include the use activities to capture ideas and views of a much larger group of people.  
• They can begin with a briefing or presentation but should include interactive activities. | • In-depth look at potentially complex issues.  
• Captures strength of feeling/behaviours regarding the issue.  
• Events can be fun and targeted at a community. | • Resource and time intensive.  
• Needs to be structured to achieve best results.  
• Selection of people to be involved needs to be |

views. This can be facilitated or self led.  
• Useful for area or subject based discussions.  
• Issues can be explored in depth.  
• Provides a potential forum for involving marginalised groups in the planning process.

• Costly if a trained facilitator is involved.  
• Peoples' views can change and be influenced when in a group.  
• Should be complemented by other consultation methods.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can include interactive workshops such as 'enquiry by design' and 'planning for real'.</td>
<td>broader range of people.</td>
<td>appropriate to the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Allows focused discussion on proposals and ideas.</td>
<td>Output can be dependent on the suitability of the interactive activities that take place at the event.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Creates 'ownership' of issues put forward.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 'Hands-on' involvement by communities.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Allows people to work actively and collaboratively on an issue or task.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Output can be dependent on the suitability of the interactive activities that take place at the event.</td>
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**Questionnaires and Surveys**

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<th>Method</th>
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<th>Weaknesses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail survey/questionnaire</td>
<td>• A paper survey which is posted directly to recipients and relies on self-completion and return using freepost</td>
<td>Suitable for large populations, relatively efficient method with addresses chosen either at random</td>
<td>Can result in low response rates and therefore additional</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Addressed envelope.</td>
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<td>or from a representative sample.</td>
<td>follow-up mailings may be necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online survey/questionnaire</td>
<td>• Online form which can be returned via a website (e.g. survey monkey), emailed, or printed off and returned as a hard copy.</td>
<td>• Structured survey that navigates the person through a broad set of questions.</td>
<td>• It may be appropriate to offer support, over the phone or in person, to help people complete a questionnaire, this could be resource intensive.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Provides good quantitative data.</td>
<td>• May require incentive to initiate a response.</td>
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<td>• Nature of the media used can mean that responses are not representative of all users/residents.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Any written text within the survey requires careful analysis and interpretation.</td>
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<td>• Need to ensure that participants are representative.</td>
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<td>Method</td>
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<td>Strengths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Face to face survey</td>
<td>• Structured/semi structured survey which can be carried out in a variety of locations, for example on the street, at an event (Town or Parish fayre), in residents homes.</td>
<td>• Provides good qualitative data, using a structured method.</td>
<td>• Some people do not like being approached and therefore resources are required there is a high response rate</td>
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<td>• Able to explain questions fully and use ‘show cards’ to illustrate issues, or capture strength of feeling.</td>
<td>• If measuring satisfaction, results may be higher using this method.</td>
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<td>• Prompts can be used to help uncover new issues which can then be considered through wider consultation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone survey</td>
<td>• Structured/semi structured survey on simple issues and relatively short in length.</td>
<td>• Useful for relatively short surveys, tends to achieve a better response rate to postal survey.</td>
<td>• Relies upon access to valid telephone numbers and may result in negative impact by residents who do not wish to receive ‘cold-calling’.</td>
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<td>• Surveys can be carried out on an evening/weekends to capture views from some hard to reach groups.</td>
<td>• Length and complexity of the issue will determine likelihood of success.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Resource intensive.</td>
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