

Local Development Framework

The new development planning system known as the Local Development Framework (LDF) has been brought in by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It will result in the replacement of the old system of Local Plans, Structure Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance with a new local level system of Local Development Documents comprising of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and Statement of Community Involvement.

The current Local Plan is under review and has recently gone through the Public Local Inquiry, which officially closed on 14th December 2004. Following this, the Inspector will produce a report stating his recommendations to the Local Authority and we anticipate the Local Plan for the District will be adopted in July 2006 and policies will be saved until 2009. Beyond 2009 Local Plan policies will be transferred into the new planning system and will become the LDF.

The focus of the new system is:

- A folder of documents rather than one large document to produce shorter and a more concise plan;
- to speed up the preparation of plans, ensure that plans are monitored and reviewed in response to changing circumstances;
- programme rather than project management;
- more involvement with the community and interested parties at an early stage of the plan process;
- comprehensive and robust evidence based documents that integrate with the plan;
- requirement of a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- provide a wider spatial planning approach;

A document known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS) has to be adopted and published by March 2005. The LDS serves the following purposes:

- the status of current documents and the new documents intended to be produced;
- the subject matter and geographical area for each document;
- timetables for the preparation and the review of documents (these are only estimated timescales)

The Local Development Scheme represents a program for the next three years with the aim of having the new planning policy framework adopted by 2007. Throughout this period the Council will fully engage with the district's community through greater public participation and the creation of a Statement of Community Involvement to explain how this will be achieved.

We have produced a LDS, although the document is only in draft form and was presented to the Government Office for West Midlands for comments in December 2004. The Government Office responded to the Draft LDS in January 2005 and we are in the process of updating the LDS as a result of the comments made.

More detailed information about the new system can be viewed at the ODPM website:
http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_control/documents/contentservertemplated/odpm_index.hcst?n=5382&l=3