

THE BACKGROUND TO PARISH PLANS

The Authority behind Parish Plans

Parish Plans came into being in 2004, following a Central Government's "Rural White Paper." They were underwritten by the Minister for Rural Affairs, Defra (at the time Alun Michael) and the Parliamentary-Under-Secretary for Local Government, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (at the time, Chris Leslie).

What is a Parish Plan?

A Parish Plan is a statement of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years and to present a shared vision for the community to use for years to come. It is produced 'by the community for the community; so everyone in the community is given an opportunity to participate in its preparation. It is based on information provided through both research and consultation.

A Parish Plan has the potential to influence a wide range of organisations and processes which affect the lives of rural communities. They should complement and help deliver local planning policies and frameworks. Part of their purpose is to influence local housing and land management strategies and to contribute to the way local services are managed and delivered.

The Plan's role is to:

- reflect the views of all sections of the community;
- identify which features and local characteristics people value;
- identify local problems and opportunities;
- spell out how residents want the community to develop in the future;
 - *Thereafter to prepare a plan of action to achieve this vision.*

Parish Plans are to be used:

- By the Parish Council as a record of what is important to the community.
- As a building block in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.
- As supplementary guidance for Shropshire Council when planning services.
- As a source of information for service providers and other bodies to ensure the needs of local people are recognised and, wherever appropriate, addressed.
- By local Community and Strategic Partnerships.
- In mapping exercises to ensure initiatives are not duplicated and that valuable resources are used prudently by service providers.
- As evidence of need for funding applications.
- As a vehicle for managing change.