

What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

The planning system is a 'plan-led system', which means that applications for development should be determined in accordance with the plans and policies for the area. It is important that local people have the opportunity to get involved. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out when and how Lewes District Council will consult the community on planning matters.



To get involved in planning matters it is useful to understand how the planning system works. The first two sections of the Statement of Community Involvement set out the different stages in the plan-making process and in making decisions on planning applications.

At the final stage of preparing the plan, an independent planning inspector will consider all public comments received and make recommendations about whether the plan should be adopted by the Council.

You can participate in the consultation on the revised Statement of Community Involvement. Please let us know how we can improve the way to involve the residents of the District in decisions about their surroundings.

Question for the consultation:

- Section 2 describes Plan Making, Neighbourhood Planning and Development Management. Does it help you to understand the planning system?

Link to the consultation portal: <http://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk>.

Involvement in Local Plans

The national planning regulations describe at which stages of the plan-making process the Council should consult the community. The Statement of Community Involvement must conform to these regulations.

Local plan	
Evidence gathering	No minimum
Issues and Options	8 weeks
Proposed submission	6 weeks
Main modification required by examiner	6 weeks

Supplementary Planning Documents	
Draft SPD	8 weeks
Statement of Community Involvement	
Draft SCI	8 weeks
Community Investment Levy – Charging Schedule	
Draft Charging Schedule	8 weeks

The Council would like to engage everyone who may have a role or interest in the development of the district. In addition to local residents this includes businesses, community groups, landowners, developers, public sector organisations and national agencies.

The Council maintains a database of people and organisations who want to be kept informed. If you would like to be added to the consultation database, you can register at <http://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk>.

All consultations will be published on the Council's website. Everyone on the 'consultation database' will be notified. In addition paper copies of public documents will be available to consult at the Councils offices in Southover House and it will be possible to send comments by email or on paper.

Depending on the type of planning document or the stage of the planning process the Council may employ other methods to engage the community, for example:

- The use of social media, local media or District News to promote the consultation.
- The use of surveys and questionnaires to gather information.
- Summarise the planning document in plain English.
- Engage community organisations.
- Organise presentations, forums or public exhibitions.
- Make available paper copies of the documents at the libraries in the District.

Question for consultation:

Section 3 of the SCI describes how the Council wants to involve the community in plan making. Do you think this is sufficient? Do you have any suggestions how this can be improved?

Involvement in Neighbourhood Planning

Lewes District Council must give advice and assistance to Town or Parish Councils who are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan several consultations are carried out. The table below shows who is responsible for these consultations.

Neighbourhood plan / order Community Right of Build Order	Council	Parish or Town Council
Designation of the area	6 weeks consultation	
Production of Neighbourhood Plan or order	Support and advice	
Pre-submission consultation		Carried out by P or T Council
Submission (after examination)	6 weeks consultation	
Referendum		Carried out by P or T Council
Adoption	Council 'makes' the plan	

COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- Designating the area for a Neighbourhood Plan/Order
- Designating Neighbourhood Forums
- Advising and/or assisting communities in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan/Order
- Formally considering Neighbourhood Plan/Order proposals when submitted
- Arranging for and covering the costs of the independent examination
- Determining whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirements following recommendations made by the independent examiner
- Arranging and covering the costs of the relevant referendum/s
- If successful at referendum, bringing the plan legally into force
- Providing advice on and duly considering proposals to modify 'made' Neighbourhood Plans/Orders

Question for consultation:

- Section 4 of the SCI describes how the Council will support Neighbourhood Planning. Do you think this is sufficient?

Link to the consultation portal: <http://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk>.

Involvement in Development Management

Pre-application consultation

This is a stage before the planning application is submitted. For very large-scale development, consultation is a requirement. For other developments the Council encourages engagement with the local community.

Planning application stage

You can comment on a planning application. Which arguments will be considered relevant?

- National, local planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans, Government Guidance, case law.
- Highway safety, traffic, parking.
- Noise disturbance, smells.
- Design, appearance, layout, materials, character.
- Overshadowing, loss of privacy, residential amenities.
- Effect on listed buildings, Conservation Areas, trees.

You can find information on planning applications on the Council's website. There you can find the deadline for submitting comments. A deadline will not be less than 21 days,

How will the Council publicise a planning application?

- ✓ With a letter to the neighbours.
- ✓ With a site notice.
- ✓ With a publication on the Council's website.

A publication in the Local Newspaper will only be done in certain cases, for instance when it is a mayor development.

Appeals

Only the person who proposes the development can appeal against a planning decision. Other persons who disagree do not have this right, but they can challenge the decision in court.

Question for consultation:

- Section 5 of the SCI describes how the community can get involved into decisions on developments.
Do you think the Council should do more to involve the community?

Link to the consultation portal: <http://planningpolicyconsult.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk>.

Link to the Council's website: <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/>