



HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT





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INTRODUCTION

Everyone who lives, works, runs businesses and studies in a place is affected by the planning system. The Council is committed to involving local communities and other stakeholders in plan-making, so they can help shape the environment in our district.

This document explains how to become involved in decisions about plan-making and planning applications. It replaces our previous Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted in 2006.

For information about Local Development Documents, and to register for email alerts of consultations, contact
Regeneration Delivery:
regenerationdelivery@dover.gov.uk
01304 872477
Or visit the Council's area offices.

For information about planning applications contact
Development Management:
developmentcontrol@dover.gov.uk
developmentmanagement@dover.gov.uk
01304 821199 Or visit the Council's area offices



GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

By '**involvement**' we mean any interaction between our planning team and the community, which can occur on a number of different levels:

Participation – active involvement in identifying needs and priorities, such as workshops.

Consultation – consulting you on your views, such as through on-line consultation processes and surveys.

Information – providing data, such as advertisements in newspapers and publishing reports.

We will apply the following general principles to community involvement in planning. These are very similar to consultation commitments set out within The Dover District Compact*. Other organisations that involve the community in planning processes could also use these principles. For example, town and parish councils consult when producing Neighbourhood Plans and developers provide a statement of community involvement with major planning applications.

**The Compact established an approach for the way public sector organisations and voluntary or community organisations could work together to benefit the community in the Dover District.*

*** <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/Equality-and-Access-to-Services.aspx>*

****Details of the Council's Data Protection Act Policy and its approach to Freedom of Information can be inspected at www.dover.gov.uk*

We will:

- Seek views as early as possible
- Ensure involvement is open to all
- Take into account our duties under the Equality Act 2010**
- Choose consultation processes that are proportionate in type and scale to the potential impacts of the proposed plan
- Target consultation to include people whom we consider would be most affected by the particular proposals or plans, and where possible we will include known interest groups
- Provide sufficient information for people to comment effectively
- Create concise consultation documents, without understating the complexities of any issues or decisions
- Avoid unnecessary jargon
- State clearly how to respond and by when
- Aim to make all representations publicly available
- Tell people who participate in the consultation how to access the results
- Ensure that information received through consultation processes complies with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000***

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLAN MAKING

A wide range of locally prepared planning documents are considered when planning decisions are made. Opportunities for community involvement in preparing these documents vary, depending on their status and purpose. Levels of community involvement in the main types of document are as follows;

Type of Document		Produced by	Purpose	Level of Community Involvement
THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN	The Local Plan	Dover District Council	A suite of planning documents that sets out a vision and framework for the future development of a district over 20 year period	Participation, Information and Consultation
	Kent Minerals and Waste Local plan	Kent County Council		
	Supplementary Planning Documents	Dover District Council		
	Neighbourhood Plans	Town and Parish Councils		
			Expand upon policies in the local plan and provide more detail about the way the policies should be used	Participation, Information and Consultation
	Strategies and other supporting documents	Dover District Council	Set out objectives and implementation scheme to achieve planning objectives	Participation (usually), Information and Consultation
	Statement of Community Involvement	Dover District Council	Defines the Council's approach to consultation	Information and Consultation
	Community Infrastructure Levy	Dover District Council	Sets a charge on new development to help fund infrastructure	Information and Consultation
	Local Development Scheme	Dover District Council	Programme for preparing new development plan documents	Information
	Authority Monitoring Report	Dover District Council	Reports progress on implementing the adopted Local Plan	Information

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Local Plans and some Supplementary Planning Documents are subject to Sustainability Appraisal during their development. SAs are subject to consultation.



WHO WE WILL INVOLVE IN PLAN MAKING

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the need to involve all sections of the community in plan-making. The Council also has a legal duty to consult residents and businesses when appropriate. In addition, legislation* sets out who must be consulted at prescribed stages of the document preparation.

Many individuals and organisations contribute to the preparation of planning documents. For clarity the Council has divided consultees into four groups. This may alter over time due to changes in legislation or re-organisations of public bodies, so the lists are reviewed regularly.

STATUTORY CONSULTEES – SPECIFIC BODIES

- Local planning authorities that adjoin the District
- Kent County Council
- Parish Councils within and adjoining the District
- A local policing body
- The Coal Authority
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England
- The Marine Management Organisation
- The Port Authority
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- Highways England
- Mobile Phone Operators Association
- Mobile Phone Operators with apparatus situated in any part of the District
- Primary Care Trust
- Utilities and service providers; and
- Homes and Communities Agency.

**Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012)*

STATUTORY CONSULTEES – GENERAL BODIES

- Voluntary bodies, some or all of whose activities benefits any part of the area
- Bodies which represent the interest of:
 - Different ethnic or national groups in the area
 - Different religious groups in the area
 - Disabled people in the area; and
 - Persons carrying on businesses in the area

OTHER CONSULTATION BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS

- Environmental groups
- Groups representing users, and the providers, of leisure, sport and recreation
- Health, education, social service and community based service providers
- Civic societies, cultural, historical and archaeological groups or bodies
- Citizens' / district / tenants panels
- Associations of local residents and communities
- Registered social landlords
- House builders and developers
- Landowners and land agents
- Public transport users and providers
- Groups representing retired and elderly persons
- Groups representing young people and
- The local strategic partnership.

THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Members of the public who would like to be notified about planning consultations and the progress of documents can add their details to the Council's database of consultees. These people are alerted by email when opportunities arise to make representations on proposed planning documents. The list is not fixed and anyone can ask for their details to be added. Others who no longer wish to be involved will be removed from the list on request.

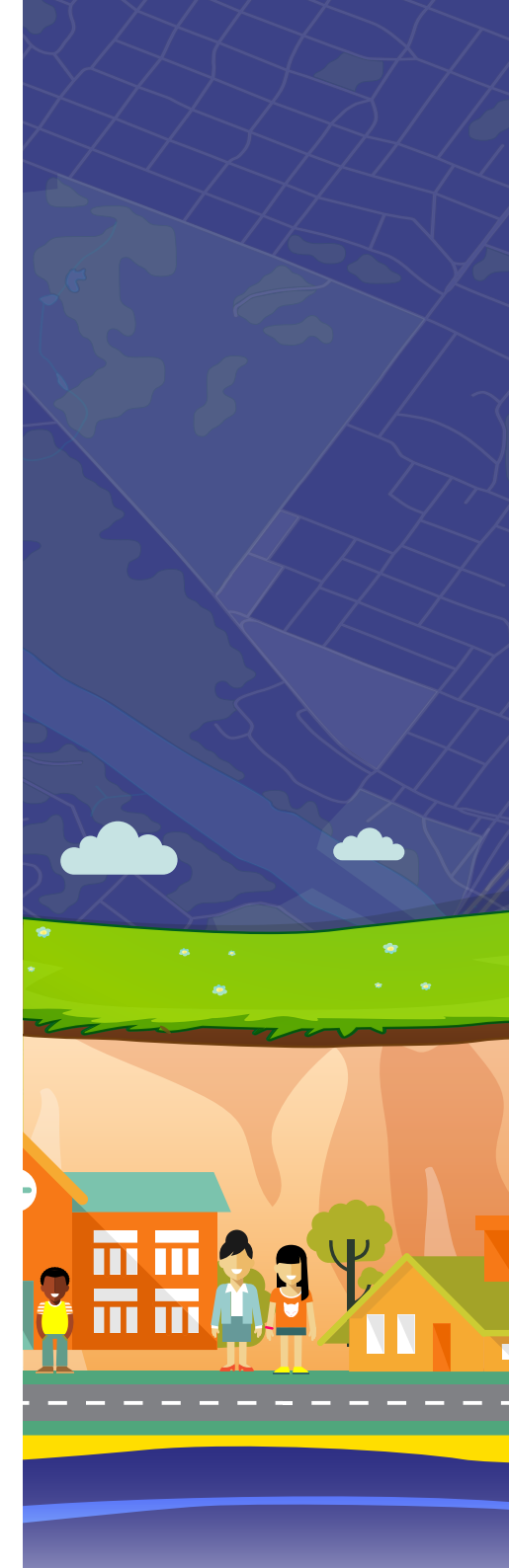
We will usually also publicise consultations through local media and our social media options.

DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

Dover District Council is required to work with neighbouring authorities and other public bodies involved in planning when it comes to tackling issues at a larger than local scale*. The bodies that we are bound to work together with by the duty include:

- Local planning authorities
- Kent County Council
- The Kent Local Enterprise Partnership
- The Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Highways England
- Natural England
- The Office of Rail Regulation
- The Primary Care Trusts
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Port Authority
- Homes and Community Agency and
- In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to work collaboratively with Local Nature Partnerships.

**Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework*





HOW WE WILL INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN PLAN MAKING

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

STAGE 1 - PREPARE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

At the initial stages of producing a plan it is important that the community has an opportunity to identify local issues, influence the options for future development and examine the evidence.

WHAT WILL WE DO

- As a minimum, we will ensure that we comply with the relevant current planning regulations
- Consult more widely where it is relevant and appropriate to do so
- Advertise any consultation and make it clear where material can be viewed by the community
- When possible, summary documents, maps and diagrams explaining the key issues and proposals will be published
- Maintain and add people to our planning database of consultees at any time
- Comments received at this stage will be acknowledged and taken into account, together with any available technical evidence as well as national policies and guidance.

WHO WILL WE CONSULT

- We will notify specific consultation bodies that may have an interest in the document.

HOW WILL WE CONSULT

- We will engage with general consultation bodies, and other consultation bodies as appropriate
- We will consult with the wider community at least once during this stage in the production of the document
- We will publish consultation documents on-line and the preferred route for comments is via the website, because this helps make the process as efficient as possible
- We will make all the comments received publicly available
- The council will also consider using one or more of the following methods:
 - Correspondence through letters or email
 - Workshops or focus groups
 - Presentations at community events
 - Joint consultations
 - Drop-in events, displays or exhibitions
 - Meetings (one to one or group)
 - Make plans available on our website and at public inspection points
 - Targeted measures for hard to reach groups.



STAGE 2 - PUBLISH PROPOSED SUBMISSION

The council will prepare and consult on the final draft of the plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. Representations submitted at this stage are forwarded to the Planning Inspector.

WHAT WILL WE DO

- As a minimum, the council will comply with the relevant planning regulations
- We will consult on the plan for at least six weeks
- The submission documents and other relevant documents must be available for inspection on the website and at the council's office and other public inspection points
- When possible, summary documents, maps and diagrams explaining the key issues and proposals will be published
- We will notify consultees
- The council will publicise where and when the documents may be inspected
- Make printed copies of the plan available at a reasonable charge if requested
- Where appropriate, the council will make changes to the document before it is submitted to the Secretary of State
- All representations received at this stage will be forwarded to the Secretary of State.

WHO WILL WE CONSULT

- We will notify those specific, general and other Consultation bodies that were invited to make representations at an earlier stage
- The wider community (as appropriate to the document) will also be consulted.

HOW WILL WE CONSULT

- We will contact everyone on our planning consultation database by letter or email and where appropriate we will use targeted measures for hard to reach groups
- To explain the preferred plan we will consider using one or more of the following methods: events, displays, exhibitions or meetings.





STAGE 3 - EXAMINATION

The council is required to submit the plan and supporting information for public examination. The Inspector in charge of the examination will take into account written comments on the plan and, if invited by the Inspector, people can also appear at the examination to speak in support of, or against, the plan. The Inspector will consider whether the Development Plan Document has complied with the requirements of this Statement of Community Involvement.

WHAT WILL WE DO

- We will comply with all the relevant planning regulations for the submission and examination of the plan
- We will ensure that all the relevant submission documents are available for inspection on our website and at the council's office and other inspection points
- We will publish full details of the submission
- We will appoint a Programme Officer to assist the Inspector with the examination
- The Programme Officer will publish full details of the examination of the plan on the website.

WHO WILL WE NOTIFY

- We will notify all those specific, general consultation bodies, and other bodies who have previously been invited to make representations on the plan, about the submission of the plan to the Secretary of State
- We will also notify anyone else who requested to be notified of the submission of the plan to the Secretary of State
- The Programme Officer will notify all those who commented on the plan at stage 2 with details of the examination.

HOW WILL WE NOTIFY

- Consultees will be informed by email or letter.

STAGE 4 - ADOPT

Following the Examination, the Inspector will produce a report. The council will consider the Inspector's report, make changes to the plan where appropriate and adopt the final plan.

WHAT WILL WE DO

- We will publish the Inspector's report and notify anyone who requested to be notified
- We will make the adopted document, a sustainability appraisal report, relevant information and adoption statement available for inspection at the council's main office and on the website.

WHO WILL WE NOTIFY

- We will send the adoption statement to the Secretary of State and any person who asked to be notified.

Kent County Council is responsible for the **Minerals and Waste Local Plan**. Anyone who wishes to participate in the preparation of this document can register on the Kent County Council consultee list.

Town and Parish Councils lead on the preparation of **Neighbourhood Plans***. They are responsible for undertaking consultation during the preparation stage** and may decide who to consult, according to the scope and nature of the proposals being developed.

The plan is then submitted to Dover District Council and we are responsible for undertaking consultation upon the completed document prior to independent examination.

* *The Localism Act (2011)*

***Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012)*



SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

STAGE 1 – PREPARE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Evidence and ideas are gathered, and alternative approaches are considered.

WHAT WILL WE DO AND WHO WILL WE CONSULT

- We will consult with those individuals and bodies who are relevant to the successful implementation of the SPD
- We may consult more widely if it is considered relevant and appropriate to do so.

HOW WILL WE CONSULT

- This will depend on the type of SPD. The council will consider using one or more of the following methods:
 - Correspondence by letter or email
 - Workshops or focus groups
 - Meetings
 - Drop in events.

STAGE 2 – PUBLISH DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The council is required to consult on the SPD. Publishing a draft provides opportunity to get comments on the document before it is finalised.

WHAT WILL WE DO AND WHO WILL WE CONSULT

- As a minimum, the council will comply with the relevant planning regulations
- We will consult for at least 4 weeks and make copies of the draft SPD available for inspection on the website and at the council's main office and other locations as appropriate to the type of SPD

- We will consult the specific, general and other bodies who are relevant to the topic of the SP being prepared
- We will consult residents or persons carrying on business in the area where it is appropriate to
- We will make all the comments received publicly available
- We will consider all representations received.

HOW WILL WE CONSULT

- This will depend on the type of SPD. Here the council will consider using one or more of the following methods:
 - Making documents available on the council's website and at inspection points
 - Workshops or drop in events
 - Correspondence through letters or emails
 - Leaflets/Newsletters
 - Targeted measures for hard to reach groups relevant to the topic of the SPD.

STAGE 3 – ADOPT

Once the council has taken into account comments and made any changes to the document, it will be adopted by the council's Cabinet. An independent examination is not required.

WHAT WILL WE DO

- We will prepare a consultation statement
- We will adopt the SPD
- We will publish the SPD, consultation statement and an adoption statement on the website
- These documents will also be available for inspection at the council offices and other locations as appropriate to the type of SPD.

WHO WILL WE NOTIFY

- We will send a copy of the adoption statement to any person who has asked to be notified of the adoption.

THE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

is prepared in the same way as Supplementary planning documents.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

Specific consultation requirements are set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010, and amendments), and the Council will meet those requirements when it introduces the Levy in the Dover District.



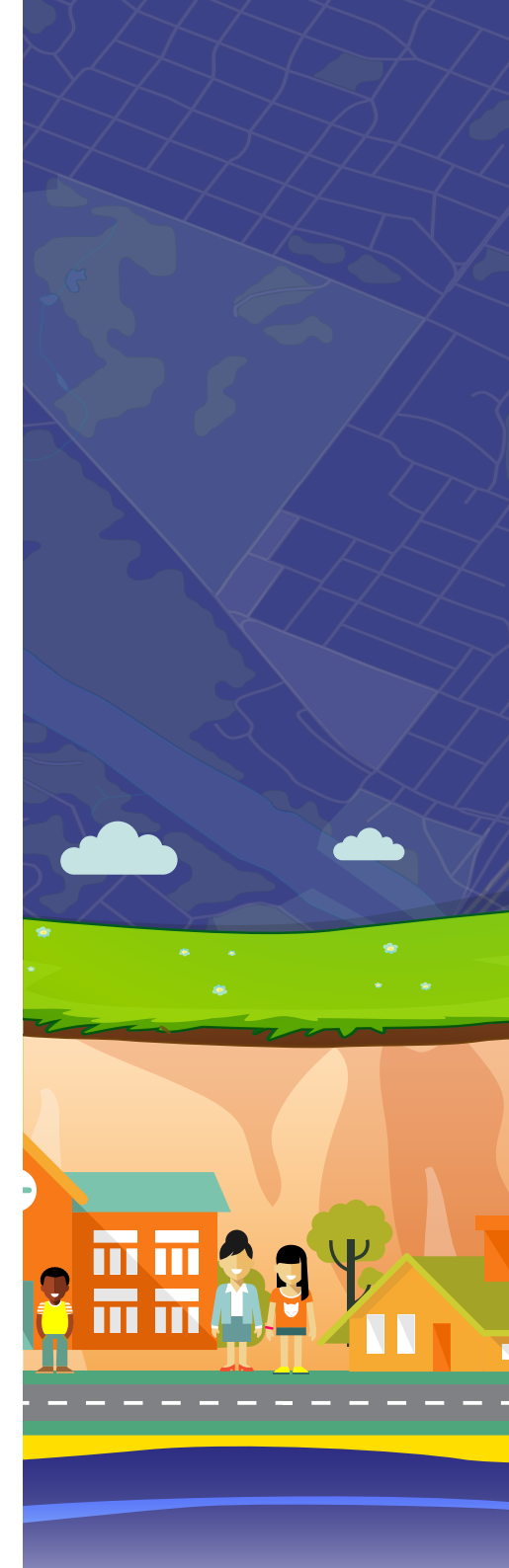
PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PREPARING AND PUBLICISING PLANNING APPLICATIONS

We strongly encourage applicants to discuss their proposals with the local community, the relevant town or parish council and their ward councillor at an early stage. The greater the likely impact of a proposed development, the greater the need for community involvement.

When planning applications are received by the Council we first check to ensure that all the necessary information has been provided, as set out in the document 'Dover Validation Requirements'. Larger and more complex applications tend to require more supporting data.

TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT	WHAT APPLICANTS NEED TO DO	WHAT WE WILL DO
MAJOR Residential development of 10 or more dwellings (or if no number is given a site of more than 0.5 ha) Non-residential development with floor space of 1,000 sq m.(or a site of more than 1 ha directly involved in development)	<p>Choose appropriate methods to involve the community, e.g. public meetings /exhibitions, workshops, consultation website</p> <p>Provide a statement with the application, describing how the community was involved with the application</p> <p>Consider local planning documents and national guidance</p> <p>Consider seeking pre-application advice from the Council and appropriate statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>	<p>Provide pre-application advice on request (we charge for this service)</p> <p>Include the application in our weekly list of valid applications</p> <p>Publish the application documents on our website</p> <p>Post site notices on, or near the proposed development site</p> <p>Advertise in the local press</p> <p>Consult statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>
MINOR Smaller in scale than major development and outside the definition for Change of use or Householder	<p>May need to consider methods of community involvement appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the proposed development</p> <p>May need to provide a statement describing the actions taken to involve the community with the application</p> <p>Consider local planning documents and national guidance</p> <p>Consider seeking pre-application advice from the Council and appropriate statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>	<p>Provide pre-application advice on request (we charge for this service)</p> <p>Include the application in our weekly list of valid applications</p> <p>Publish application details on our website</p> <p>Post site notices on or near the development site</p> <p>Advertise in the local press if the application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is for a listed building • is in a conservation area • is near or affects a public right of way • is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment • departs from the development plan • affects the setting of a listed building/ conservation area <p>Consult statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>
OTHER Includes the categories of: Change of Use; which does not involve building or engineering work Householder; within the curtilage of a dwelling that requires permission and is not change of use	<p>It is good practice to consult with neighbours before submitting a planning application and any consultation actions could be reported within the planning application</p> <p>Consider local planning documents and national guidance</p> <p>Consider seeking pre-application advice from the Council and appropriate statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>	<p>Consult statutory and non-statutory consultees</p>





HAVE YOUR SAY ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There is a consultation period of 21 working days following publication in the local newspapers. Anyone can submit comments during that time. All comments are read and taken into account, but they can only be given weight when making our decision if they are made on valid planning grounds (also known as “material planning considerations”). A list of common material considerations is available on the national Planning Portal website.

We may consider comments that are received after the consultation period has ended, but cannot guarantee to do so. We do not accept responsibility for, and cannot take into account, comments that fail to reach us in time because they have been delayed or lost in the postal system. For these reasons, the best way to add your comments is to submit them via our website before the consultation deadline expires. We will not reply individually to comments received about applications.

Public comments are placed on our website. It is important to remember this when submitting comments as you will be legally responsible for their content. You must not submit any comments which are offensive or which might give rise to legal proceedings against you, for example, if they are racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory, or discriminatory in any way.

We are working towards implementing a system that will automatically remove public comments from our website after the period for appeals to be made has passed. This will occur seven months after the application is decided.

Submit comments on planning applications at
<http://www.dover.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-Applications/View-Applications--Decisions/Submitting-Comments.aspx>

CONSULTEE COMMENTS ON APPLICATIONS

Planning legislation and guidance specifies that various organisations must be consulted when a Local Planning Authority is considering applications; these are known as statutory consultees. We always consult the relevant town or parish council, but the other statutory consultees vary according to the type of application. For example with a Listed Building Consent application for works to a Grade I listed building, Historic England must be consulted.

Internal professional advice may also be sought from our own officers within the council who have expertise in construction, conservation/heritage, design, trees, landscape design, biodiversity, open space, noise, pollution, licensing, drainage, transport, and legal matters.

Comments received from statutory consultees and internal consultations are available to view via our website.

AMENDMENTS TO APPLICATIONS

It is common for submitted applications to be altered during the process of determination. These changes usually come about through negotiation between the applicant and the case officer, for example following receipt of comments from consultees, or local residents.

We may reconsult for 21 working days when amended details are received. For example, we would re-consult if we consider that the new proposals are likely to cause a significantly greater detrimental impact on the occupants of adjoining properties.



**Keep Me
Posted**
News and alerts by email

The weekly list of validated planning applications is available from dover.gov.uk/weeklyplanninglist or register for regular updates by signing up to **Keep Me Posted**.



PUBLIC SPEAKING

Where an application is to be determined by the Planning Committee, members of the public can request to speak at the committee meeting. This is limited to one person speaking in favour of the application and one person against. The speakers are allowed up to three minutes each. District Councillors may also speak.

Details of how to request to speak at a Planning Committee meeting, and the associated rules, can be found on our website.

AFTER THE DECISION IS REACHED

We notify the applicant of our decision. A copy of the decision notice is placed on our website along, with a copy of the committee or officer's report. Also, anyone who has commented upon a planning application will be notified.

APPEALS

Only applicants have the right of appeal; there are no third party rights of appeal. The appeal process is managed by the independent Planning Inspectorate. Details of all appeal rules and procedures can be found by visiting the national Planning Portal website.

IS IT WORKING?

We aim to make our consultations easy to understand and participate in, and to carry them out in a fair and open way.

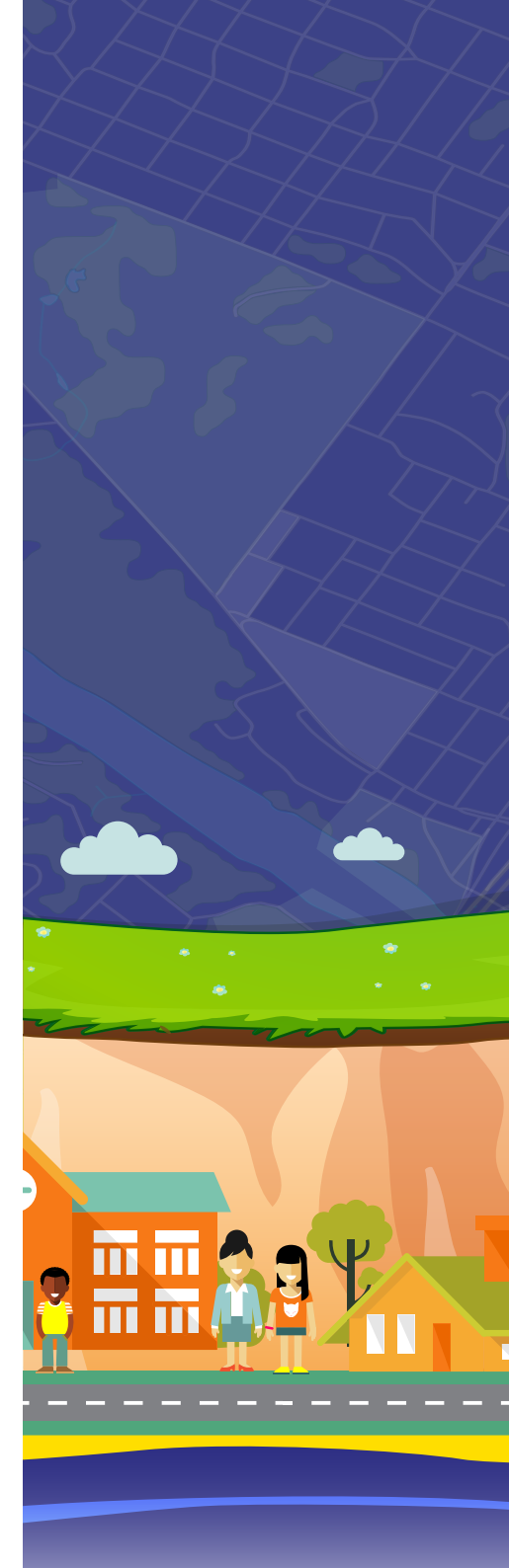
We will review feedback obtained through planning consultations to check whether our methods are working effectively. We will do this when consultation statements are prepared as part of Plan Making. The effectiveness of consultations will be also be reviewed annually in the council's Authority Monitoring Reports.

The Statement of Community Involvement now recognises that a great deal of communication occurs by electronic means. This edition of the SCI also takes into account recent changes to legislation and national guidance relevant to consultation. It meets legal requirements set out in:

Plan-making: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 18; Town and Country Planning (Local Development) England Regulations 2012; Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Planning applications: Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

We intend to continue improving our consultation practices. We will revise the SCI again if our monitoring shows that we could improve our approach to consultation, or if the government requires us to change the way in which consultation takes place.





GLOSSARY

Authority Monitoring Report: A report produced each year by local authorities, which assesses progress with, and the effectiveness of, its plan-making documents.

Consultation Statement: A summary of the main issues raised by the consultation

Curtilage: the land immediately surrounding a dwelling, including any closely associated buildings and structures.

Environmental Impact Assessment: An analytical process that systematically examines the possible environmental consequences

Infrastructure: Facilities that are needed for the operation of a society. The Community Infrastructure Levy regulations cover particular types of facility including roads and schools.

Inspection Point: Locations across the district where consultation documents can be viewed. As a minimum this means the main council offices at Whitfield and area offices in Dover, Deal, Sandwich and Aylesham.

Local Development Scheme: This public statement sets out the programme for the preparation of the Local Plan and Local Development Documents.

Local Enterprise Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.
Local Nature Partnership: help their local area to manage the natural environment as a system and to embed its value in local decisions for the benefit of nature, people and the economy.

Local Plan: May consist of a single document or a set of documents such as a Core Strategy, Site Allocations, Development Management Policies and Area Action Plans. These are formal plans for a geographical area which are key points of reference when deciding planning applications.

Local Strategic Partnership: Bring together representatives from the local statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors to address local problems, allocate funding and discuss strategies and initiatives.

Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Produced by Kent County Council, these documents set out plans relating to mineral and waste developments in Kent.

National Planning Policy Framework: Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Neighbourhood Plan: Prepared by local communities, these set out policies and proposals for the future development of a neighbourhood but they must conform to the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

Programme Officer: Person appointed to assist with all administrative matters related to Examinations of Local Plan documents.

Representation: A formal statement submitted by a consultee at the submission stage of a development plan document.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): These documents, including issue-based documents, design guidance and masterplans, provide more detail to how policies in the Local Plan should be used.

Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment): A systematic and iterative appraisal process, incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Its purpose is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a local development document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development.



For information about:
Local Development Documents and
to register for email alerts
of consultations, contact
Regeneration Delivery:
regenerationdelivery@dover.gov.uk
01304 872477
or visit the Council's area offices.

For information about:
Planning applications contact
Development Management:
developmentcontrol@dover.gov.uk
developmentmanagement@dover.gov.uk
01304 821199
or visit the Council's area offices.

