



NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Planning Service

Parishes Bulletin 05

February 2014

Parish Council Satisfaction Survey

The Planning Service is committed to listening to customer feedback to help us to identify any positives or negatives or areas for service improvement.

A big thank you to those Parishes who have responded to the survey so far! We've had some very useful feedback and we are keen to have a response from every Parish. So, we have kept the survey open to give you extra time to complete. Please provide any relevant feedback to us so that where workable, we can refine our procedures accordingly. **Please complete the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PDNPAPCSatisfaction>**

Parish Council Day 2013 – Feedback

Each year the National Park Authority holds a Parishes' Day, an opportunity for Parish representatives to consider with Members and Officers of the Authority some of the future issues facing the Peak District and its communities. All Parishes in, or partly in, the National Park are invited to send representatives.

The main event at Parishes' Day 2013, held in October, was a workshop on the development of detailed planning policies for a number of significant topics in the National Park affecting resident communities, including community facilities, affordable housing, local economy, heritage, transport, and tourism. This gave Parishes an opportunity to influence the development of these future policies. The notes from those workshops are attached, showing the full range of discussions that took place on the day.

The discussions held at Parishes' Day were part of engagement during 2013 with a range of stakeholders, including communities, land owners, statutory bodies and individuals. Since then officers have been drafting sections of the future policies document, using the outcome from Parishes' Day and other work. They are now consulting a number of Authority members, including some Parish members, on particular topics, with the intention of bringing a proposed plan to the National Park Authority Meeting in May 2014. A six-week period of public consultation should then follow, giving all stakeholders an opportunity to make formal representations. The plan and the public representations will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government (in practice to the Planning Inspectorate), probably around end 2014. The following timetable for 2015 is provisional and depends on the progress made in the remainder of 2014:

- A Planning Inspector would hold a public inquiry, probably by March 2015, to consider the Authority's plan and the representations received.
- The Inspector's report is likely to be received during summer 2015.
- If the plan is found to be sound the Authority would then be asked to adopt the plan, autumn 2015.

Look out for further information from the Authority as this work progresses during 2014. If you have any comments on this note about this policy work please contact the Policy Planning Manager Brian Taylor, email brian.taylor@peakdistrict.gov.uk or at the National Park Office.

Cycle Strategy Consultation

As you may be aware, the Authority is currently developing a cycle strategy for the Greater Peak District. We will be consulting on this strategy from 17th February to 21st March, and we would be interested to know Parish Council views. The consultation will be on the internet, and as such, all the documents related to the strategy will be on the National Park Authority's website, along with an online survey. The Authority will make contact with all parish councils soon to make you aware of the web link, and remind you of the timescales.

If you have any queries or require further details, please contact Emily Fox, Transport Policy Manager at Emily.fox@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

Farewell

A note from John Lomas, Director of Land Use Policy:

I wish to advise you that I am retiring from the Authority at the end of March this year. I have enjoyed working closely with Parishes over many years and would like to wish you all, and the National Park and its communities, the very best for the future. I am grateful to the way in which the Peak Park Parishes Forum has channelled parish matters to me, currently through the Forum Committee Chair Brian Long and Secretary Philip Thompson. The Forum contributes significantly to Authority work, and challenges us when needed. When I retire the Authority's new Director contact for the Peak Park Parishes Forum will be John Scott, Director of Planning. Day-to-day contact will continue to be with Diane Jackson, Planning Liaison Officer, email diane.jackson@peakdistrict.gov.uk. I wish to record my thanks to Diane and to her predecessor Wendy Ruddick who many of you may well remember, for their support to me and the Parishes Forum.

If you have any queries please contact the Planning Liaison officer
[**diane.jackson@peakdistrict.gov.uk**](mailto:diane.jackson@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

Summaries of Workshop Discussions:

Topic 1. Affordable Housing

Group A:

- People can't stay local because there isn't the affordable housing available.
- We need to recognise that other planning authorities have different criteria to determine local need.
- We need to consider how 'housing needs' should be defined.
- Policies need to be aware of the changing economic background to housing provision.
- There is a definition of affordable rent and it is up to 80% of the open market rents charged for same size property in the area.

Group B:

- There was mixed views on length of time someone in housing need should have been in the village before becoming eligible for any affordable homes built. Some support 10 year connection and some support 5 years connection especially if that is restricted to people in the Parish where the houses are built.
- Some support a limited number of open market houses to subsidise affordable housing and provide a better mix of houses. Capacity studies might give a clue as to the potential for new development (adopted policy prevents cross subsidy and this wasn't up for debate and isn't up for review at this time).

Group C:

- Authority must consider individuals and the community as a whole to get a feel for need.
- The purpose of providing for local need is to keep kids close by and keep communities together.
- There are too many retired and wealthy owner occupiers. It isn't good to have communities dominated by open market housing and we need more affordable houses for people who work locally. That's the way to get balanced communities.
- There is a need for young and old in a community so there is a good mix.
- There is a need for continuity through the generations, more so in a rural managed landscape than is the case for urban communities. This allows for farm succession for example.
- Local work is often poorly paid and this needs to be recognised through housing need surveys.
- Looking at policy LH2 the important things are family connection so that people are able to care for the family. People should be helped to downsize.
- The current criteria work to an extent.
- The cross boundary criteria is questionable. Isn't it fair that someone from within the parish but outside the National Park should be eligible for an affordable home in that Parish in the Park?
- The criteria are necessarily tough and the reasons are understood and mostly accepted.
- The criteria about forming a household for the first time needs to be clarified.
- The ability to return after a period away must be retained so that social networks don't get permanently broken.
- The requirement to prove need is tough. Would reasonable need or immediate need be better?
- Would recognised need work? i.e. make a case but don't have to prove it.
- The terms reasonable/recognised are harder to define than proven need. Too much flexibility will leave no policy base to be sure people are in housing need.
- Is there anything broader that can help social networks?
- Downsizing doesn't really represent a need that can't be sorted by the individual themselves so have to be careful this isn't about satisfying a personal desire to live elsewhere rather than an absolute need that someone is unable to meet by their own means.
- The 10 year connection can cause problems.

- Can there be a time limit on how long a property can be empty?
- The issue of housing need should involve the parish councils more.
- Some flexibility to reduce to 5 years should be kept possibly using restricted search i.e. to parish only if a reduced number of years connection requirement is agreed.
- Could the words families and children be worked into the policy/text somehow?

Group D:

- Concern was expressed that people who had worked in the Park for many years were unable to live in the area, and that perhaps they ought to be able to.
- On the theme of work, it was questioned whether affordable houses without jobs is a sustainable approach.
- The importance of accurate needs surveys was highlighted because people don't like to accept housing and then see it occupied by people with needs but hailing from other areas. The 10 year connection was questioned. Could it be variable across the Park depending on the needs of that community at that time?
- The mix of houses is very important because it is often the next rung on the ladder that is missing. On sites that could accommodate more than one dwelling we must be prepared to question the developer's first offer.
- Policy must tough. It is OK to give yourself (the Authority) wriggle room and flexibility but that is exactly what developers exploit.
- There is some frustration over numbers of empty properties. Could the housing authorities take action to make better use of housing stock, reducing the need to build new?

Summaries of Group Discussions:

Topic 2. Barn Conversions

Group A:

- We need to get local people into converted buildings and resist tourism use.
- We need to compare what happens inside and outside the National Park.
- We need to pay attention to detail when it is proposed to convert barns to other uses. Avoid too much glazing – policy to influence what architects propose, policy could be more location specific and consider how different uses can be accommodated in different locations.
- It is sometimes appropriate to allow conversions to open market housing in specific cases.
- The community strategy should give a lead on all housing topics such as what is needed in terms of supply to meet demand in order to sustain village life.
- Field barns are part of the landscape but there is a risk of them falling into disrepair and they have to be saved. There are grants from the likes of Defra and NE to keep barns in use, although not easily or widely available.
- We must avoid conversions to holiday lets which end up as open market houses. It is obvious what developers may be after and we must guard against this.

Group B:

- Audit of barns needed so we know what's valuable and valued by a community.
- We need to consider what should happen when a building is not valued (demolish or re-build?)
- We need to avoid changing the character simply so we can say we've saved it.
- We need to decide which is more important – holiday homes or local need accommodation - because in terms of park purposes holiday homes are a legitimate use, whilst affordable homes are legitimate for community reasons but don't fulfil purposes unless they too conserve the building properly.

Group C:

- More permanent homes should be permitted, as opposed to emphasis on holiday homes but not sure they all need to be permanent homes.
- The new permitted development rights would reduce ability to control occupation, and take away ability to protect species such as bats so these rights could severely limit the extent to which the Authority can influence outcome of barn conversions.
- The local need for housing should take priority in villages and there should be less constraint on people wanting to change use of buildings (including listed buildings).
- Why do single barns have to be open market houses as opposed to affordables?
- There is scope for neighbourhood plans to suggest a settlement specific approach.
- There was acceptance of a the need for more constraint outside settlements.

Group D:

- The Authority is a bit too strict. We need to protect barns, but the use should be of secondary importance to the issue of ensuring the buildings conservation.
- There is however a difference between what can be achieved in and round villages and next to roads compared with what can be achieved when barns are in the middle of fields.
- There is no problem with barns going to holiday accommodation provided it's not being done as a backdoor route to an open market house.
- In light of the value the Authority places on barns, it was suggested that community's themselves could fill a gap in knowledge base (if the farmsteads work doesn't go that far).

Summaries of Group Discussions:

Topic 3. Replacement Dwellings

Group A:

- In settlements there are issues of access and neighbour amenity. Some issues relate to civil law and not just planning law.
- Should the guideline be on size or suitability (size or soundness of original building)?
- Authority needs to analyse the outcome of its replacement dwelling policy.
- Policies need to have different considerations for these three different circumstances:
 1. Houses within settlements
 2. Houses on edge of settlements affecting open countryside
 3. Houses in the open countryside
- Should always remove permitted development rights when allowing replacement dwellings.
- A replacement dwelling application should cover all eventual development e.g. garage provision.
- There is an issue with bungalows and whether we should retain the existing stock or provide more for older people.
- Need a range of housing stock so policies must enable that.
- Need to decide what policies are needed to cope with the top end of the market.

Group B:

- Height of replacement dwellings and the size of the plot is very important.
- Plans of before and after should be easily comparable.
- The policy tends to lead to loss of bungalows and smaller houses.
- Some agreement that impact of the proposed development is the key issue.
- The policy for extensions has a guide on what is appropriate by way of extension in % terms but is it appropriate to have such a figure for replacement dwellings?
- Parishes must work proactively with NPA to identify key local issues and establish priorities.

Group C:

- There is a sequence which runs from original house to original house plus extensions to replacement on a bigger footprint (and often higher) than the original with the extensions.
- This means we are losing a level of smaller housing stock, which whilst not important at a strategic level of housing numbers, is having an impact in some communities.
- Such sites could be included in a site search for affordable housing schemes.
- Can criteria recognise the role of smaller houses to the community, and prevent their loss?
- Reasonable flexibility should be retained to extend properties to respond to people's changing needs and desire to improve their lives.
- This policy provision shouldn't just be about maximising profit.
- Neighbourhood plans could define a locally appropriate response.
- There is a feeling that the gap in the housing stock is widening.
- What is the Authority's attitude to bungalows?
- Could the resident survey ask questions about social balance and quality of life?
- To find out the social balance of the population across the park would require a strategic level study but on a village by village level the parish council view can help.

Group D:

- Views were mixed, but all felt there was a need for decisions to be made in the context of the built environment. To this end, there was some doubt that this in itself was directive enough.
- In the absence of good planning reasons to automatically restrict replacement dwellings to similar size, a suggestion was made that perhaps replacements up to a maximum of 100% bigger by mass would be a fairer guideline. This allows the Authority to protect small houses where a small house is best fit to the site, but allow a bigger house where the site can accept that. The choice of volume would allow people to build on a bigger footprint but lower elevations, or build higher on a smaller footprint. However the problem seems to be the height of many of the buildings as opposed to the footprint.
- There was no strong view that buildings ought to be kept simply because they were in good state of repair, and no view to say that a building had to be old and run down before it was OK to replace it.
- The issue of mis-use of the policy by officers was explored openly, as much to illustrate the point that criteria can block good development as well as prevent bad development.
- In terms of the scope for development on large sites containing small houses, there was some dislike for the trend for developers to consider the sites as development plots. However, there was no in principle objection to considering them as enhancement sites provided a mix of housing suited to the community's needs was the end result.
- There was recognition that this might be more appropriate than big statement houses.
- The extent to which affordable homes could be required was again raised, and an appeal to test viability thoroughly before giving way.
- There is a nervousness at losing a size and type of house that has a place amongst the rest of the housing stock.
- We need to understand what communities need by way of housing before making decisions.

<p>Workshop Group A</p> <p>Sue Beckett, Sarah Bawden, Dave Ashton - Bamford with Thornhill Brian Wardle and Eric Goodwin – Youlgrave Siobhan Spencer – Beeley Georgina Tanner – Sheldon Brian Swindells – Onecote Martin Jones – Hayfield PPP Forum member - Guy Martin Lead member – Paul Ancell Lead Officer – John Lomas PDNPA members – Geoff Nickolds, Kath Potter</p>	<p>Workshop Group B</p> <p>Clrs Skidmore and Buckingham – Taddington Peter Leppard and Jane Marsden – Outseats Julie Warne – Baslow and Bubnell Peter O'Brien – Grindleford Michael Ellis – Thorpe Dr Martin Beer – Great Hucklow and District PPP Forum – Brian Long Lead member – Lesley Roberts Lead officer – John Scott with Diane Jackson PDNPA members – Zahid Hamid</p>
<p>Workshop Group C</p> <p>Peter and Mavis Butler – Bradfield Alysson Jones – Hathersage Chris Thirtle- Litton Alan Taylor and Geoff Cooper – Rainow Paul Morris – Stanton in Peak Barrie Taylor – Whaley Bridge PPP Forum – Trevor Bellamy Lead member – Patrick Brady Lead Officer – Brian Taylor PDNPA members – Chris Furness Guest – Alison Clamp, Peak District Rural Housing Association</p>	<p>Workshop group D</p> <p>Mave Morrison and Stewart Young – Chapel en le Frith Sue Bettney and Wayne Marriott – Stoney Middleton John Charles Fearn and Peter Harvey – Heathlee Professor Charles Marsden – Chelmsorton PPPF member - Reg Davies – Bradwell PPPF secretary – Philip Thompson Lead member – Andrew Mc. Cloy Lead officer – Ian Fullilove PDNPA members - Chris Carr and Tony Favell</p>