

Birdham Neighbourhood Plan

2014-2029

Statement of Public Consultation

October 2014

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1. Statement of Public consultation

In compliance with Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Plan (NP) regulations this statement of public consultation;

- a) Contains details of the people and bodies consulted about the proposed NP
- b) Explains how this consultation was carried out
- c) Summarises the responses received from the people and bodies consulted
- d) Describes how the responses have been considered and (where relevant) addressed in the draft NP.

1.1 Introduction to Birdham

Birdham is a small rural parish on the Manhood Peninsula, south of Chichester, with a population of 1,483 at the last census. Most of the parish, including more than 80% of its settlement area and of its residents, is located in the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The entire Manhood Peninsula is identified by Natural England as a 'distinct area' on the south coast, as it is one of the last rural areas on the coastal plain between Southampton and Brighton. Birdham Parish itself lies between four internationally or nationally designated habitat and wildlife conservation areas - Chichester Harbour, Chichester Canal, Pagham Harbour and Medmerry Nature Reserve, the first and largest open coast realignment scheme in the UK. Designations of these areas (both in and close to the parish) include Special Sites of Scientific Interest, Ramsar sites, SPAs and an AONB. Birdham also has a rich historical heritage dating back to the Romans and includes the Somerley Conservation Area, once the medieval centre of the Manhood, an 18th century tidal mill and Britain's oldest marina.

As a harbour side parish on a low-lying coastal peninsula Birdham parish has suffered significant surface water flooding in recent years. Without careful planning and water management, this situation could worsen with expected climate change scenarios such as rising sea levels and water tables.

Birdham's setting in an important harbour and coastal area together with its environmental attractions mean that green tourism (walking, cycling, camping, bird-watching etc) is an important part of the parish's (and Chichester's) economy. The parish's location also means that marine related businesses, horticulture and agriculture are also important contributors to local employment and the economy. Recent studies have shown that tourism in the Manhood represents half of the district's total tourist economy, its largest economic sector.

The parish has one major road linking it to other communities – the A286 which splits into the B2198 and B2179 in the south of the parish. This road suffers severe congestion on sunny days between April and October, and especially in school holidays, because of the attraction of the beaches to the south of the parish. Commuters from the parish also experience delays

accessing the A27 from Birdham. The village benefits from a half hourly bus service to Chichester, although this can suffer delays due to the congestion on the A286.

The village has a shop, garage, village hall, playing field, church and primary school located to the north of the A286 in the AONB.

1.2 Background to Neighbourhood Planning in Birdham

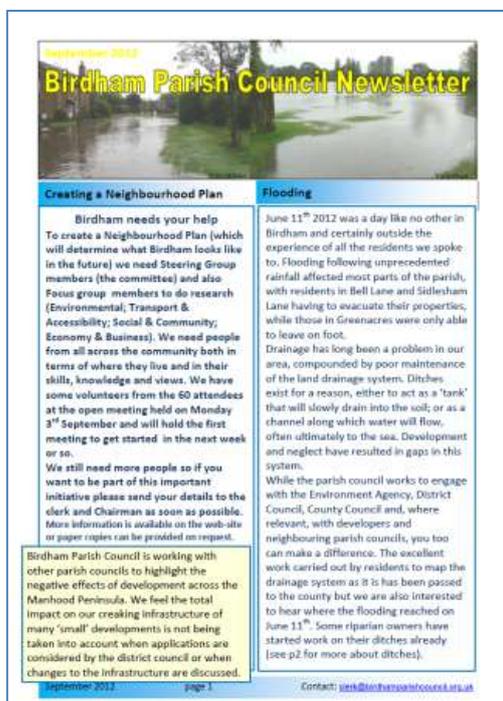
When the Local Plan drawn up by Chichester District Council was rejected by the Inspector in 2007 the LPA was left with saved general policies but no definitive policies allowing further development and no five –year housing land supply. As a consequence the District Council drew up an interim policy ‘Facilitating Appropriate Development’ (FAD) which allowed for development outside the existing Settlement Policy Areas as long as any proposals met specific criteria. At the same time a series of studies and assessments were performed which highlighted areas in the district where land was available and separately where development might be appropriate, taking into account the many constraints that exist. Housing in the district attracts a high premium and is in demand; consequently developers began to bring forward schemes which they considered met the FAD and small communities, including Birdham, began to feel under pressure. In Birdham two relatively large developments built around 2000 were still experiencing ongoing drainage problems and a third large development of unsympathetic design coupled with other proposals coming forward generated residents’ interest in planning that properly took the village concerns and priorities into consideration. The parish council was ready to work with the community to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbouring parishes had prepared Village Design statements but Birdham had not previously prepared any plans of this type and therefore the process had to start from scratch. In addition Neighbourhood Planning was very new, with no plans having been ‘made’ at this time.

1.3 Development of the Birdham Neighbourhood Plan

Setting up the steering group

With Neighbourhood Plans very new and the frontrunners still finding their feet, initial research in late 2011 had identified seminars in Hampshire but little support from Chichester District Council, who were heavily involved in developing the Local Plan at this time. Therefore the Parish Council was left very much on its own in the initial stages. It was resolved in the January 2012 meeting to commission Action in Rural Sussex (AIRS) to assist in the initial consultation and in developing and analysing a questionnaire intended for all residents in the Parish. It was clear from the experience of the front runners and that of neighbouring parishes who had prepared Village Design statements that this process would involve significant work and/or money. A number of residents were actively campaigning for a Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Council agreed that this process should be managed through a committee (subsequently referred to as the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group –NPSG) comprising Parish Councillors and residents, reporting to the Parish Council but independent of it in decision making. With AIRS assistance councillors and residents met in September 2012 to discuss how to proceed. At this meeting residents with a range of experiences and interests from across the parish volunteered for the Steering group and five focus groups. The first meeting of the NPSG took place later that month, with election of a Chairman, drafting of Terms of Reference and agreement of membership of separate Focus Groups covering the environment (including drainage and surface water management), transport, business and the community.

It was quickly agreed that consultation would take place through an Open Day in the Village



Hall followed at a later date by two questionnaires (one for residents and one for businesses). Focus Groups met and identified likely concerns and opportunities, which were fed back to the NPSG. NPSG members were also members of a range of groups in the parish (Village Hall Trustees, church, WI, residents' associations, History Group, Village Choir, etc) as well as bodies which covered the parish within a wider area (such as the Manhood Peninsula Partnership); they took the opportunities offered by these memberships to determine concerns in the wider community and continue to publicise the work of the NP teams. The Business Focus Group talked directly to a range of businesses in the parish to understand their concerns and constraints and the Community Focus Group additionally consulted with the primary school.

The First Open Day

A leaflet to advertise the first Open Day in November 2012 was delivered to every household in Birdham Parish. The purpose of this Open Day was to determine the main concerns of residents and businesses, their aspirations for Birdham and what they valued about living and/or working in the parish. More than 200 people attended this event, which was held on a Saturday morning in Birdham Village Hall.





Find out about the Birdham Neighbourhood Plan



**Saturday 17th November 2012
10am to 1pm
Birdham Village Hall**

Residents of Birdham Parish are working with the Parish Council to create a Neighbourhood Plan

Drop in to our Open Day to find out what this means, how it affects you and how you can input your ideas

Members of the Steering Group and Focus Groups will be on hand for you to talk to
Let us know what you want for Birdham

If you would like to volunteer to help or want to let us know your thoughts but can't make the Open Day please contact us via the parish clerk
(David Siggis 01243 790412)
(dedicated web-site/email coming soon)

Birdham Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbour Plan Open Day was a great success with over 200 people coming to the village hall to find out what it is all about and to find out how they can contribute to the future of Birdham. There was no holding back as hundreds of Post-Its were left giving opinions, suggestions and concerns.

Using this valuable information the Neighbourhood Plan Team is now putting together a questionnaire for the whole village making sure they ask the right questions. When this comes through your door don't miss the opportunity to have your say.

The reasons we all choose to live in Birdham were made very clear. These include the beautiful environment, tranquility in the AONB, community spirit and leisure opportunities and yet so near Chichester and its wealth of cultural attractions.

A key concern was flooding. In response, the Environment Focus Group has given priority to documenting how the drainage system currently works. The recent heavy rainfall clearly showed where some of the problems are. All of these findings will be shared with the community so that we can all understand how it should work and what the problems actually are.

The recent planning applications have highlighted the issue of where and when new houses should be built. This is a bit of a moving target as the 50-100 new houses proposed in 2006 is still the target despite Longmeadow and Meadow View.

Also we need to think very carefully about not only where any new houses should be sited but also the type, density and what they should actually look like. This is one of the key results of the whole NP process and it will take a great deal of time and effort to get to this point.

As you can see this is an ambitious project and the Team needs all of the help it can get. If you would like to get involved with the Team please contact Terry Cloughton on 01243 512902.

November 2012 page 9 Contact: np@birdhamneighbourhood.co.uk

Articles on the Open Day were published in the local paper (Chichester Observer <http://www.chichester.co.uk/news/local/birdham-village-consultation-over-neighbourhood-plan-1-4497766>) and also in the Parish Council newsletter in December 2012. The feedback from this Open day was collated in 'Open Day 2012 verbatim comments' ref www.np4birdham.co.uk.

Two main activities followed this first consultation; further work on water related problems, with a follow up Water Open Day; and the design of the questionnaires. In addition a plan specific web-site was developed in late 2012. The Water Open Day in March 2013 was intended to both educate and gather data from previous flooding to properties, roads and land in the parish including severe floods in June and the winter months of 2012. This data was needed to build on ditch mapping work carried out over the preceding three years. Surface water management was clearly going to be key to the success of any development in Birdham Parish.



Developing and using the website

While the original intention had been to use the Parish Council web-site to keep residents informed about progress of the plan it was quickly realised that a web-site under the direct control of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was a more flexible option. The web-site www.np4Birdham.co.uk was set up by a resident volunteer and became the repository for evidence as the plan progressed. Residents have been able to consult the web-site since early 2013, which proved particularly valuable during the pre-submission consultation period. Although the Resident Questionnaire had to be returned as a hard copy by post to AiRS, in contrast the pre-submission responses could be returned via the web-site, the pre-submission plan viewed on the web-site and most importantly the on-line document contains live links to the supporting evidence and references.

In addition to using the web-site as a source of information it is also contains contact details to email to the Neighbourhood Plan team, which both residents and developers have made use of.

Residents' Questionnaire

Neighbourhood Plan Update

Work is progressing on the Neighbourhood Plan for the village. After eight months at the helm Terry Cloughton stepped down as chairman last month. Terry worked very hard to drive the project forward and must be congratulated on his enormous input and ability to mediate his way through the process.

The Steering Group is keen to recruit more members and would welcome residents to help with the plan in whatever capacity and sparing whatever time they can. If you would like to take part please contact the parish clerk.

We will soon be sending out a questionnaire that we hope all residents will take the time to fill in. It is important that we receive your views about the future of Birdham Parish for inclusion into the Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning applications

Rowan Nursery delayed

An application for 27 new homes at Rowan Nursery caravan site off Bell Lane has been delayed while Chichester District Council seeks confirmation from Southern Water that it can handle the extra sewage from the development. Council officers have approved the application but District Councillors decided to seek reassurance from Southern Water after hearing from Birdham Parish council and Pipers Mead residents about the drainage problems in the area. If any Birdham residents have regular problems with foul waste or toilets backing up we recommend you contact Southern Water, Ouseval and Chichester District Council Environmental Health and ask them to log the report.

Birdham Pool

An application has been made to redevelop Birdham Pool by conversion of the office/workshop building to 4 dwellings, replacement of the large workshop with a more architecturally sympathetic building; replacing the crane with a more modern one; rearrangement of berths in the pool and of the boatyard; and relocation of the office to the existing converted barn, if you find yourself overwhelmed by the number of documents in this application the one to start on is the Design and Access Statement. This application will be considered on 17th June by the Parish Council.

June 2013 page 2 Contact: parish@birdhamparishcouncil.co.uk

Birdham Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire

YOUR chance to have YOUR say about the future of Birdham

What's happening?

The government has introduced a Localism Act to give residents more of a say in the development of their own parish. A key part of this is the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the local community and the Parish Council, which has legal status and will be used to influence future planning decisions by the parish.

What's the next step?

Please complete this questionnaire and tell us about what you think is important in planning for the future of our village.

- Would you prefer one large estate or smaller developments?
- What do you think makes Birdham special today?
- How should we develop Birdham for the future?

Please complete the questionnaire by the 21st July and return in the stamped address envelope provided

Our aim is that a questionnaire will be completed by every household but if another member of your household would like to complete a separate questionnaire we would be very pleased to hear their views. Further copies can be obtained from the Parish Clerk on 01243 764422 or from the website www.np4birdham.co.uk.

How will my information be used?

The Questionnaire is anonymous and the findings will be used to make a full plan reflecting the consensus views of the community as a whole. When the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed, final approval will be sought by holding a formal referendum within the parish. These results will be available on the website www.np4birdham.co.uk and paper copies will be available by contacting The Parish Clerk on 01243 764422.

Thank you for your support!

Birdham Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group

Return address for questionnaire: Birdham NP, Sussex House, 212 High Street, Lower, East Sussex BN9 2NH



The residents' questionnaire was distributed to all households in the parish in July 2013, with delivery volunteers charged with speaking to all householders where possible to encourage completion and return. Collation and rudimentary analysis of the returns was carried out by AiRS, with additional analysis of the anonymised data carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan members. In total 329 questionnaires were returned from 645 households (51%) and from analysis of the postcodes it was possible to see responses were received from every road. Ages of residents from the responding households were normalised against that expected (based on 2011 census data), which showed a lower proportion were received from households in the under 18s and 31-40 age groups.

Armed with the detailed responses from the questionnaire (refer to [www.np4birdham.co.uk/Consultation/ List of Conformity Reference Documents/ Birdham Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire](http://www.np4birdham.co.uk/Consultation/List%20of%20Conformity%20Reference%20Documents/Birdham%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Questionnaire) and [Birdham NP Survey Report – July 2013 – Final](#)), focus groups were tasked with drawing up policies. An additional focus group concentrating on housing was established, and the environmental group split into environment and drainage, resulting in a total of seven focus groups. The focus groups comprised several key participants but drew in expertise and involvement from a wide range of other residents. Although many members of the focus groups and steering committee remained throughout the process, membership was deliberately inclusive and flexible allowing residents to participate as and when expertise and time were needed and available.

In July 2013 we were awarded direct support from DCLG delivered via Locality and Planning Aid. The scheme appointed professional planning advisor Liz Beth to support the team to develop the plan further and to draft policies.

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Business Questionnaire



A business questionnaire was put together following advice from CDC's Economic Development team and delivered to every business in the parish. Thirty-three businesses, representing a cross-section of the business activity in the parish, responded to the survey.

Understanding the nature of local business was considered critical to the neighbourhood plan as many businesses rely on the parish's environment for revenues, particularly those related to tourism, and the marine and horticulture industries. Meanwhile, the lack of rail links and the congestion on the only road linking Birdham to the A27, Chichester and further afield constrains commuting out the village for work.

Birdham's local economy is heavily dependent on its harbour and coastal location and its rural environment, which attracts holiday makers and boat users. 22 of the 33 businesses that responded to the survey are involved in the marine trade, tourism or retail

horticulture, with 14 out of 33 stating that they benefitted from tourist income. Heavy and congested traffic is a major concern to 21 of the 33 businesses. Many businesses in Birdham are long-established with 19 of the 33 respondents having been operating in Birdham for more than 10 years. Businesses established in more recent years include those set up by entrepreneurs who chose to base their businesses in Birdham because of its coastal location and attractive environment with new businesses ranging from yacht servicing and caravan retailing to jewellery design and chocolate production.

For a more detailed analysis refer to www.np4birdham.co.uk (Consultation/Business Survey Results Review)

Third Open Day



In November 2013 a third open day was held in the Village Hall. All residents of the parish were notified of the open day through leafleting and posters. Over 170 attended the session, which was held on a Saturday morning to maximise opportunities for attendance. A children's design competition was also advertised to encourage attendance from the age groups under-represented in the Questionnaire responses. The draft vision, objectives and proposed key policies were outlined at the Open Day and comments sought. A total of 93 responses were gathered covering Environment (AONB, Chichester Marina, Rural atmosphere, views and wildlife); Community (Playing field and recreational facilities); Transport (roads, speed restrictions), Housing (Affordable, Location); and Flooding. (Ref www.np4birdham.co.uk Birdham NP Open Day 2013 – Summary Report and Verbatim Comments). Residents continued to be supportive of the process and the developing policies. The feedback from the Open Day was analysed and fed back into the relevant focus groups.

The focus groups continued to draft and evidence policies with the help of Liz Beth and outside organisations including Chichester District Council, the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group, Chichester Harbour Conservancy, Southern Water, Birdham and Earnley Flood Prevention Group, Birdham History Group, Sussex Wildlife Group, CDC Economic Department etc. The policies were then brought to the Steering Committee and subsequently forwarded to separate outside consultants who advised on both wording and the evidence base. On agreement of the policies, the pre-submission document was put together by a resident with relevant experience who had not been part of any task group and was reviewed by steering group members.

9 June – 21 July Pre-submission consultation (Reg 14)



Leaflets were distributed to all residents and businesses across the parish notifying them of the availability of the pre-submission document. A copy of the document was posted on the Neighbourhood Plan website while hard copies were distributed at key locations across the parish and made available from steering group members. In addition, a fourth Open Day was held in mid-June at which members of the public could read the plan and ask questions and provide comments. At the end of June the Parish Council newsletter, distributed to all residents, reminded them of the consultation and encouraged responses.

Relevant stakeholders and statutory consultees, including CDC and neighbouring parish councils and other interested parties (see Appendix 1 for full list) were notified by e-mail of the consultation and where to access the document.

Responses could be made by letter or e-mail directly to the Parish clerk or dedicated NP web-site. A special response form was prepared to assist people commenting. The consultation ran from 9 June to 21 July, and 43 people and organisations responded with 325 separate comments.

During July and August the steering group, advised by Liz Beth, analysed all the comments from the consultation. None of the responses warranted a major reassessment of the plan but minor amendments were made as a result of comments. (Refer to www.np4birdham.co.uk for a breakdown of all the responses and the actions taken).

We were pleased with the response we got during the consultation, which was wide-ranging and helpful. Several people praised the plan, which after a lot of hard work was greatly appreciated. We are happy that this submitted plan truly represents a consensus view from the community of the parish of Birdham.

Appendix 1

Key Stakeholder /Company	Contact name
Chichester District Council	Archaeology Officer
Chichester District Council	Sports & Leisure Officer
Chichester District Council	Parks + Green Spaces Officer
Chichester District Council	Rural Housing Enabler
Chichester District Council	Environment Officer
Chichester District Council	Planning Officer
Chichester District Council	Tree Officer
Chichester District Council	Drainage Engineer
Chichester District Council	Policy Advice on Neighbourhood Plans
Chichester District Council	Housing
Chichester District Council	Community Engagement
Chichester District Council	Economy & Business
Chichester District Council	Economy & Business
Chichester District Council	Biodiversity and Environment
Chichester District Council	Biodiversity and Environment
Chichester District Council	Built Heritage and Design
Chichester Access Group	
South East Coast Strategic Health Authority	
Scottish Power	Customer Service Team
EDF Energy	Customer Service Team
Eon	Customer Service Team
British Gas	Customer Service Team
Arun District Council	Senior Engineer (Drainage & Coastal)
Homes and Communities Agency	
English Tourist Board	
Defra	
The Camping and Caravanning Club	
West Wittering Estate PLC	
West Wittering Parish Council	Parish Clerk
East Wittering & Bracklesham Parish Council	Parish Clerk
West Itchenor Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Earnley Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Dell Quay & Appuldram Parish Meeting	Clerk to the meeting
Birdham Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Sidlesham Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Hunston Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Donnington Parish Council	Parish Clerk
Selsey Town Council	Town Clerk
Manhood Peninsula Partnership	MPP Project Officer, Environmental Strategy Unit, Health & Environmental Management
Bracklesham & Earnley Flood Forum	
Birdham Church	
Birdham Village Residents Association	Chairman
Alandale Road Residents Association	Chairman
Walwyn Close Residents Association	Chairman
Pipers Mead Management Company	
The Almodington Association,	
Chichester Society	Chairman
Cherry Lane Residents Association	Chairman
Somerley Residents Association	Chairman

Burlow Close Residents Association	Chairman
Westlands Residents Association	Chairman
1st Birdham & Wittering Scouts Group	
Birdham School	
Birdham Nursery School	The Early Years Lodge
Village Hall Trustees	
Stirlands Cricket Club	
Birdham Pool Berth Holders Association	
Chichester Yacht Club	
Chichester Ship Canal trust	
Canal Houseboat Community	
RSPB	
Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Trust	
CPRE	
West Sussex County Council	Rural Team, Community and Economic Development, Communities and Infrastructure Directorate
West Sussex County Council	Landscape
West Sussex County Council	Ecology
West Sussex County Council	Highways Commissioning Manager, Senior Team Leader
British Telecommunications	
Chichester Harbour Conservancy	
Coastal West Sussex	
English Heritage	
Environment Agency	
Hampshire County Council	
Highways Agency	
Marine Management Organisation	
National Trust	
Natural England	
NHS Sussex - Strategic Estates	
NHS West Sussex	
Portsmouth Water Ltd	
Scotia Gas Networks	
Southern Electric Power Distribution plc	
Southern Water	
Sport England South East	
Stagecoach South Head Office	
Sussex Local Nature Partnership	
Sussex Police	
Sussex Wildlife Trust	
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	
West Sussex Fire And Rescue	
West Sussex PCT	
Coastal West Sussex CCG	
Environment Agency	Senior Engineer
Russell's Garden Centre	