

**Suffolk Coastal District Council
Local Development Framework Workshops**

June & July 2005

In June and July 2005 the District Council undertook a series of Workshops intended to increase the amount of community engagement within the Local Development Framework (LDF)

At each workshop Town and Parish Councillors from across the District along with a number of elected Suffolk Coastal members were invited to discuss a number of important topics and issues that the LDF will have to cover. In total the District Council organised and facilitated three workshops which over seventy people attended.

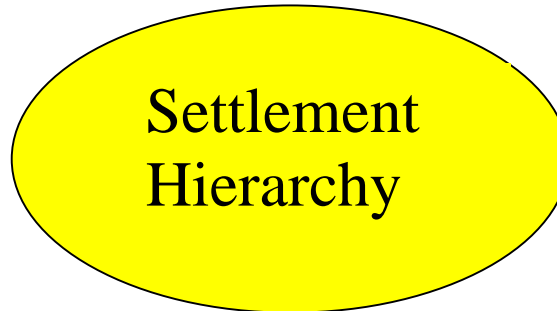
At each of the workshop, those who attended were given the opportunity to discuss each topic in detail. The topics that were discussed at the workshops were Affordable Housing, Settlement Hierarchy and Community Engagement. People who attended were also encouraged to put any further issues they think the LDF should address onto a Graffiti Board. The comments made on each table and each night have been merged together to form this event record.

The comments made at the recent round of workshops will be used to inform the decision-making process the District Council has to undertake as it produces the LDF. The next stage that needs to be undertaken is the publication of an Options Report which will set out a number of alternative options the District Council can choose for the future of the District.

- Concern at loss of Village Envelopes for category 5 Settlements
- Can a settlement go up the hierarchy if more facilities are provided?
- Second Home owners contribute little to village life
- Concerns over number of second homes and holiday accommodation
- Need a good social mix in villages – young people need opportunity to live within villages
- Community spirit is more important than new housing development in keeping communities alive.
- Need for employment in villages
- Use redundant farm buildings for employment and housing
- Need to be flexible in policy wording “no development” is too restrictive
- Assertion that villages with no growth will die – all villages must be allowed to grow
- Availability of infrastructure should be the highest priority because some areas are already struggling as density increases were not anticipated
- Adequate roads are needed to support development. Road infrastructure

particularly around Ipswich can not cope much longer

- Category 5 and 6 should be Countryside
- Aldeburgh should remain a Town with a policy of constraint
- Wickham Market should remain category 3 service centre
- Only affordable housing in category 5



- Policies need to be subject to regular review and reflect to changes in circumstances
- Lack of co-ordination between service providers discourages public transport usage
- Even brownfield development can create problems due to inadequate infrastructure

- Health services needs to keep pace with housing developments
- Large estates may not be the most appropriate solution, smaller estates may be more appropriate.
- Concern over the future of green buffer areas or playing fields in Kesgrave
- Where will people in new developments go for employment?
- Need to be aware of seasonal visitor numbers adding pressure to facilities
- Trimley St Martin should not be a key service centre
- Loss of village facilities is still an issue
- An extra exit from Grange Farm onto Foxhall Rd is needed (left turn only)
- More opportunities to access the wider countryside is needed
- Concern about development north of A1214
- Concern that being in Ipswich Eastern Fringe implies development
- Does affordable housing count towards total housing requirement in District?
- Concerns relating to cumulative impact of infilling
- Lack of synergy with school catchments

- Should parishes with good access to Ipswich be upgraded?
- Bawdsey, Shottisham, Alderton should be removed from category 4, no employment and roads already very busy
- A flexible approach to settlement policy is required
- Peasenhall should be a service centre – employment, shops and primary school
- Some villages have not been allowed to grow “Dennington could have grown

Settlement Hierarchy

to the size of Felixstowe!”

- If villages have no facilities it should not be allowed to develop
- Consider groups of villages to achieve sustainability
- Sibton (Poys Street) should have equal status as Peasenhall
- Earl Soham has business centre and therefore potential to grow

- The environment must be safeguarded
- Concerns about chalet development
- Greyfriars are of Dunwich has justification for village envelope
- SCDC is not encouraging affordable housing
- Views and aspirations of communities should be a high priority in the hierarchy
- Many small villages do not want development
- Future primary school closures are likely to have impact on hierarchy
- Climate change has impact on coastal settlements.

- Definition and extent of “local” needed
- Low cost market housing might still mean detached housing, thereby expensive
- Council should use CPO powers to back up allocation of exception sites
- Exception sites often “marginalised” from community

Affordable Housing

- A stock of small dwellings should be retained
- Too many second homes put up prices
- Definition of key workers to be extended to “local” workers
- Extensions should be restricted
- Better mix of houses (affordable and open market) is required on new developments
- Local landowners to develop exception sites

- Try to make people feel like their view will have an impact
- Not everybody is interested
- In order to get a educated response the timing of the community engagement must be right – public need to feel that no decisions have been made already
- People only interested if affected by the plan
- Key difficulty is parishes actually engaging with their own communities
- Longer lead in times are needed for consultation periods
- District Council ought to have dates of when each Town and Parish Council meet
- Briefing sessions held by SCDC for parish chairs and clerks to inform them further of LDF process and timetable
- Lack of confidence in the system
- Those with loud voices can sway decisions
- Feedback from SCDC is essential
- SCDC should talk to residents and developers at the same time
- Encourage communities to be self-sufficient and help themselves.

Hard-to-reach groups

- “If it doesn’t affect me I’m not interested”
- People who don’t have an opinion nor directly affected by proposals – those with lack of time
- The Elderly
- The Young
- Small communities



- Residents who are not interested in community life
- Those of none English culture (migrants/tourists) – provide translation service?

Methods of Engagement

- Websites
- District Council needs to use parish magazines as these are produced locally and well received
- District Council needs to “piggy back” successful events
- Officers need to get out there – road shows and exhibitions etc
- Highlight worse case scenario
- Need to advertise the reality of people’s choices – stark headlines!!
- Notice boards are very valuable in rural communities, each parish should be provided with a weather proof one
- Single issue public meetings to focus and filter viewpoints
- Targeted questionnaires to specific sections of community
- Area forums where officers are present to discuss issues specific to a parish or group of parishes
- District Council to run a youth council to get more youngsters involved
- Provide incentives for completing consultations

The final section of the event record is a list of the comments made as to what else the District Council needs to consider and research as it produces the LDF. The following comments are a mixture of those received at facilitated workshops and also on stand alone boards.

Second Homes

- Put house prices up
- Cause the loss of small units
- Have no benefit to local services

Employment

- Need to consider the nature and type of jobs needed
- Need to consider diversification

Roads and Transport

- More thought to be given to traffic management, notably in rural areas
- Condition and capacity of roads is not given enough thought
- Hedges need cutting back more often
- Traffic is getting faster
- Rural public transport needs to be enhanced
- More use of rail is essential

- Community bus services should be promoted
- Lorry/HGV movements are a major problem to rural communities
- Operators' licenses could be issued by Town and Parish Councils
- There is no joined up thinking between District and County Councils



For LDF Consideration

- There is insufficient consultation/liaison with Town and Parish Councils
- Cycling should be promoted more
- More green travel plans are required
- The road/travel patterns should determine the locations of new development
- The primary route network should be a major detriment of development

The Countryside

- Retention is essential

- Balance between conservation / preservation and meeting social needs

Renewable energy

Water usage

- Use libraries as a way of sharing information
- Artists impressions of schemes would be more beneficial as some Parish Councils struggle to interpret plans
- How can we increase recycling, especially of plastics?

**List of Parishes represented at 2005
Workshops**

Aldeburgh
Bawdsey
Benhall & Sternfield
Brightwell, Foxhall & Purdis Farm
Clopton
Dennington
Dunwich
Farnham
Framlingham
Great Glemham
Grundisburgh
Hemley
Hollesley
Kelsale-cum-Carlton
Kesgrave
Kettleburgh
Kirton & Falkenham
Letheringham
Levington
Little Bealings
Little Glemham

Martlesham
Nacton
Otley
Parham
Pettistree
Playford
Rendham
Rendlesham
Rushmere St Andrew
Saxmundham
Sibton
Sutton
Sweffling
Trimley St Martin
Trimley St Mary
Tuddenham
Tunstall
Ufford
Walberswick
Waldringfield
Wenhaston
Wickham Market
Woodbridge