

Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council
(Includes parishes of Acton Beauchamp, Stanford Bishop and Evesbatch)
Consideration of a Parish Plan 2016 - Summary of Findings

1. Introduction

Following discussions at the Parish Council meetings in May and August 2016 the Parish Council agreed to investigate the viability and necessity of completing a Parish Plan in line with Herefordshire Council's Core Planning Strategy for the area. Further consultation and clarification with Herefordshire Council (HC) Planning Department was considered given that:

- Several planning decisions by HC in the area had cited the absence of a Parish Plan to guide decision making
- There had been several recent controversial planning applications which had caused disquiet in the community
- Parish Councils in other areas across Herefordshire had been involved in the completion of Parish Plans with their local communities which had promoted greater local control over planning decisions

However it was also noted that:

- Parish Plans could be unnecessary where no developments were anticipated within the Core Strategy and could lead to considerable time and effort on behalf of those undertaking to lead the process
- Parish Plans could be divisive in the community if there was no consensus
- The process did not have to be led by the Parish Council and could be undertaken by any interested individuals

It was agreed that Parish Councillor Katherine Smith would investigate further with local resident Duncan Finlyson. It was decided not to hold a local meeting to canvas views at this time in order to understand the position/need in greater detail. As local representatives and leaders within the area it was agreed the Parish Council should undertake this review and decide subsequently what actions if any were required.

2. Actions

- Contact was made with the Herefordshire Council Planning Officers with designated responsibilities for the development of Parish Plans
- Documents from the designated web pages were reviewed:
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-development-plan-guidance>

3. Review

The following advice was received from the Neighbourhood Planning Team at Herefordshire Council:

'With regards to the need to produce a neighbourhood plan, the biggest consideration will be whether the policies of the Core Strategy are sufficient for the development requirements within the parish. It should always be borne in mind that any neighbourhood plan needs to.

No settlements within the parish of Acton Beauchamp are contained within policy RA2 of the Core Strategy. This is the policy which indicates those areas where proportional housing growth should be targeted.

The whole parish area is defined within the Core Strategy as open countryside, where policy RA3 will be applied. This means that only dwellings associated with agricultural, forestry, rural enterprise, replacements, reuse or rural exceptions will be permitted.

Many parishes in a similar policy situation have opted not to produce a neighbourhood plan but rely on the policies of the Core Strategy. Most parishes undertaken a neighbourhood plan have at least one RA2 settlement within the parish. However the choice is up to each individual parishes concerned.'

4. Decisions

Following discussion and given the advice above with particular reference to that which is highlighted in yellow it was decided that currently a Parish Plan was not necessary and each planning application would be scrutinised as usual by the Parish Council at their meetings/extraordinary meetings. The likelihood of a major development or settlement was low and it was felt the Parish Council could respond adequately on an individual basis.

The individual plans and meeting dates will be accessible to local residents on the Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council website at: www.actonbeauchamp-gpc.co.uk Residents can look at any applications via the Acton Beauchamp website or via the HC website at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/development-control/planning-applications>

Residents can attend Parish Council meetings and will be able to communicate their views either during a public time at the meeting or by email to: admin@actonbeauchamp-gpc.co.uk The decision not to go ahead with a Parish Plan will be reviewed annually by the Parish Council and further consultation as necessary will be undertaken if required. Review dates will be:

- August 2017 Agenda Item: Agree a review in the light of current circumstances
- November 2017 Agenda Item: Review findings to be reported to the Parish Council and actions required

Katherine Smith: Parish Councillor
February 2017