



Good Practice

Objective

<p>Utilisation of a Concept Statement approach to community engagement and planning</p>	<p>A mechanism to work closely with local communities in order to help identify potential development sites for affordable housing.</p>
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Detail

Derbyshire Dales works closely with [Rural Action Derbyshire](#) to produce village ‘Concept Statements’ - *“a joint vision between the community and planners for developing affordable housing.”*

The work cost £2500, funded by a small surplus in the RHE budget. The RHE spent a considerable amount of time working with the Planning Cooperative, the Parish Council and the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) to ensure everyone involved was able to commit to the work involved. We also decided to film the event so that we could learn from the process and have a record that could be used again in the future. This cost a further £500. The Planning Cooperative had the main role on the day although presentations from the PDNPA outlined planning policy. Local people and the main employer also took part. Two housing associations and the Head of Housing at the District Council also attended along with the RHE. Following the day long event, which also involved a walk round the village and sketch designs, the planning cooperative produced a draft concept statement for consultation. A further community consultation event was organised by the RHE and the film was also shown at the community hall. Through the Concept Statement process, independent facilitators help representatives of the local community to understand the planning process, consider potential sites and identify the sort of building features which any new scheme should adhere to.

Outcomes

The Concept Statement approach was partly used to gain village support and buy in from the main local employer. It was also used to ensure positive joint working practice with the Peak District National Park Authority.

Through the production of the Concept Statements, delivery challenges were identified concerning certain sites relating to highway access, design and loss of views etc.

Update – 2012 The Hartington Cheese factory closed in 2010 and will be redeveloped to provide a range of local community facilities including affordable homes. The work around the concept statement has not been lost and has helped to inform the affordable housing proposals. Another site in the Derbyshire Dales, this time in Darley Dale, has been chosen to undergo the Concept Statement process. The site in question will be brought forward by a registered provider in 2012/13. The Town Council, housing and planning staff, the registered provider and ward councillors will start the concept statement process on the 12th January 2012.

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