

Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Communications and consultation plan

for the development of an enhanced version of the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan scheduled to be adopted in early 2022

Communications and consultation plan objectives

1. To ensure the public (residents of Ledbury Town and the Parish) are fully informed of progress as far as reasonably possible during all stages of enhancing the current Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Ledbury NDP - which was adopted in January 2019)
2. To achieve this (especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the possible need to use virtual, digital and printed media as a primary means of communication to support social distancing) through a variety of media platforms so the public can comment or ask questions at any point and in particular during specific consultation meetings, discussions and organised events
3. To demonstrate that consultation has been adequately sought with all relevant stakeholders, including community groups and organisations, landowners and businesses likely to have an interest in or be affected by the development issues covered by the NDP
4. To carry out the number of specific consultation meetings and events necessary to substantiate sufficient public reach and volume of responses have been achieved to fully support, with adequate evidence, the resulting policies advanced in the draft enhanced NDP
5. To demonstrate that all feedback during the whole exercise has been fully considered in policy formulation and when necessary, reflected in changes to the draft NDP before a final version is produced
6. To ensure the evidence base and resulting policy formulation process has been formally documented, collated, filed and referenced in a structured format sufficient for easy and informed public access and ultimate formal examination before the plan can be put forward for an adoption referendum.
7. This document will be updated regularly with up-to-date versions showing actual timescales achieved, activities to be conducted and budget figures.

Communications plan

1. **Media to be used to advise the public, businesses and community organisations of the NDP development stages and to promote the related specific consultation rounds will include:**

For the 1st Public consultation round (under Plan A options shown below and assuming COVID secure conditions):

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- Letters and/or emails to businesses, community groups and organisations from council held and other accessible permission-based lists as identified in the Consultation Plan section below
- Public consultation leaflet and questionnaire delivered to all residences in Ledbury and the Parish
- Use of existing networks such as the U3A, Ledbury Civic Society, Ledbury Traders Association and the WEA (Workers' Educational Association) to help get the consultation messages disseminated (a full list of some 70+ Ledbury community groups is held by the annual Ledbury Community Day organisers)
- Social media – Facebook including the various different Ledbury based Facebook sites*, Nextdoor, Town Council website and especially the NDP pages of the website. Use of twitter and Instagram will also be considered if deemed relevant to reach significant numbers of Ledbury people.
- Local press – mix of news release information and possible paid adverts in:
 - Ledbury Focus – free monthly magazine with 6,000 copies distributed free to all households in the Ledbury area and copy deadline one month ahead; we need to provide a pre-set page copy
 - All About West of the Hills – free bi-monthly magazine with 7,000 copies distributed free to all households in the Ledbury and surrounding areas and copy deadline one month ahead
 - Ledbury Reporter – weekly newspaper with a deadline of Tuesday for the Friday issue of the same week; also with online news content
 - Hereford Times – weekly newspaper with the same copy deadline and also with online news content
 - BBC Hereford and Worcester

* Including:

- Voice of Ledbury: 9,378 members
- Ledbury Community Action: 190 members
- Ledbury Noticeboard: 12,206 members
- Loving Ledders: 955 members
- Town Talk: Ledbury Politics: 497 members
- What's On Ledbury Area: 1,467 members
- The Shops of Ledbury: 900 like the page
- Old Ledbury: 4,331 members
- Ledbury COVID-19 Support Group: 1,465 members
- Next Door: 7% of Ledbury households = approx. 300
- Ledbury Town Council twitter site: 209 followers

Member numbers quoted as at 18/03/21 - Note these are substantial increases over the last few years demonstrating the much wider reach that can now be achieved through the use of social media (no doubt influenced by social isolation during the lockdowns and people finding other means to keep in contact) justifying this being included as a key element of the first round of

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public consultation as being viable and valid to achieve a representative response sample despite lockdown conditions.

For the Reg 14 round of consultation (under Plan B options shown below and assuming COVID restrictions lifted):

- All the above plus posters on public notice boards, shop windows and in the library and at physical meetings with a combination of venues and presentations by different consultation groups

2. Preparation lead times

To complete the 1st Public round of consultation in June-July:

- Prior to March 2021 - Preparation, gathering the baseline evidence and producing the topic guide papers on which to base the consultation programme
- March 2021 - First news release on progress and seeking stakeholder requests to provide input, help with evidence gathering and any policy ideas/formulation input
- March to early April 2021 - Start advertising public consultation programme to be held (original plan was April-May 2021 but with time taken to produce the consulted-upon leaflets and get the Royal Mail delivery programme in place this eventually became June-July 2021), including booking any adverts/mag space, social media and websites and email to all local organisations and groups. Design and set up online survey and post consultation documents on the NDP website
- Late March to mid-April 2021 - Design and organise production and distribution of consultation leaflet and questionnaire to all households and be available from mid-June with a returned deadline by 16th July 2021.

To complete the Reg 14 round of consultation in August-September:

- July 2021 - Book venues and dates for public consultation events, recruit volunteers for events
- July 2021 - Design and set up online and paper questionnaire on policy proposals to be used at events
- July 2021 – Advertise/promote using media indicated, organise and produce display materials including exhibition-type policy description posters and posters for notice boards and shop windows, arrange refreshments, produce volunteer rota from the NDP WP to explain policies and encourage/collect completed questionnaires at events
- August to September 2021 - Hold public consultation events including business breakfast and evening consultation events such as for the Ledbury Traders Association, all other town centre traders and businesses in and around Ledbury

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3. Hard to reach groups

- These will be reached in particular by posters and questionnaires delivered to where they could be expected to be read and seen - such as to the care homes, schools, food bank, library (full list below) - and with consultation visits where appropriate and/or requested

4. Resources available:

- See table in the Consultation statement and plan

5. Approval timescales:

- 1st Public consultation round: All communication materials to be ready for ED&P committee recommendation for approval at the March 2021 meeting with full Council approval at the April 2021 meeting
- Reg 14 consultation: All communication materials to be ready for ED&P committee recommendation for approval at an early to mid-July 2021 meeting with full Council approval at a late July meeting

Consultation statement and plan

1. Overview

This consultation statement sets out how the Ledbury Neighbourhood Plan WP intends to consult on the contribution to the evidence base and then formal public review and feedback stages of the NDP process leading up to Reg 16 and ultimate adoption.

Since this exercise is to amend and update the current adopted version and not to produce a totally new version of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan, four consultation stages are planned, including two rounds of full public consultation

- An initial invitation to participate in the Working Party and baseline evidence gathering
- A first round of evidence based public consultation to inform the development of a proposed settlement boundary and policy amendments/additions to produce a first draft of the new version of the NDP leading up to a Reg 14 submission version. The purpose of this consultation is to gain an understanding of the how the community and other stakeholders view different options suggested by the evidence base in order to draft the Reg 14 version
- A second round of stakeholder and public consultation on this draft to inform editing to produce a final version to be approved to go to Reg 16 for formal examination by the inspector

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- There will be a final consultation stage on the final version of the plan incorporating any necessary or suggested inspector edits/amendments to the plan, which once confirmed as being adequately incorporated in the final plan, will go on to a referendum for adoption.

The size of the Ledbury NDP area (the whole parish, which includes the town itself and surrounding countryside encompassed within the formal Ledbury parish borders) creates a significant challenge to consulting on neighbourhood plan documents. The population of the plan area is close to 10,000. Ensuring adequate consultant opportunities for the rural areas of the parish in particular is addressed in this plan.

In summary, the first round of public consultation, once the outcomes have been analysed, will form the evidence to produce the proposed settlement boundary and policy revisions into a Reg 14 draft of the NDP. The second public consultation round on this draft will lead to changes to the policies based on the outcomes from the analysis and in line with the agreed NDP update objectives – which may have also been refined as a result of the consultations.

2. How the consultation will be set up

We are currently very limited on conducting face to face research within current Covid-19 restrictions. Currently (June 2021) running face to face sessions is still problematic until lockdown is fully lifted, which is not scheduled to be fully removed until at least 21st June and even then it depends on what restrictions are put in place following the end to lockdown. Our plan would be to ensure as much consultation takes place virtually or with little or no contact as possible whilst ensuring the breadth and depth of the consultation originally planned is maintained.

This is anticipated to apply to the first round of public consultation, so we will work towards Plan A (virtual) for that stage. As lockdown restrictions are removed, we can supplement with Plan B (face to face) should restrictions allow – which is expected to be the case for the second/Reg 14 round of public consultation. Subject to lockdown easing timescales, it may also be possible to include some Plan B events in the latter part of the first round of consultation – options for this are included in the consultation budget for activities below.

- **Plan A**
 - Consultation material drafted with information in an Issues leaflet on each of the policy areas with key areas for decisions highlighted. This information with a questionnaire to be delivered to all households in the wider Ledbury parish. It is proposed to use Royal Mail for delivery to the 6,601 households according to their data to all the residential postcodes in the area. These will also be accessible electronically on the NDP/TC website and also available to email or print and post out on request.

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- The aim will also be to place a recorded Zoom presentation on the website which will enable people to access a presentation at a time to suit them, and a series of Zoom sessions is planned (a combination of day/evening/ weekday/weekend), either targeting particular groups such as businesses, recreation groups, through schools, retailers and traders or open sessions. This will follow a presentation style session to participants, where questions can be asked to gather some qualitative and quantitative data to help develop policy proposals. Sessions can either be recorded or a note taker nominated (otherwise it is a lot to facilitate and note take for one person).
 - **Plan B Event types**
 - 2-day consultation event
 - Business Breakfast
 - Parent's evenings
 - Retailers and traders evening consultation event
 - Possible consultation venues
 - The Recreation Ground
 - Community Hall
 - St Katherine's Hall
 - The Masters House and library
 - The Market House
 - Town Council offices
 - The Burgage Hall
- 3. Consultation groups to be contacted/actually contacted (using COVID secure means as appropriate) with approximate numbers**
- When setting up the Working Party
 - A leaflet asking for any NDP suggestions and for volunteers was produced and distributed by Ledbury Town Council at the Ledbury Community Day in August 2019
 - A letter was sent out to 76 local groups and organisations in October 2019 asking for any NDP suggestions and for volunteers to help with the NDP
 - Consequently, a core Working Party of some four Town Councillors/Ward Councillors, a regular dozen or more community volunteers and support from Herefordshire Council planning and funding officers have been working closely together on the NDP with the two engaged consultants (with a third associate consultant of one of these also engaged specifically on the consultation process) and Town Council office staff since early 2019
 - **Target evidence base consultation by key issues and by community groups**
 - **Employment**
 - Heineken/UBL

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- Pugh's Auctioneers and estate agents
- John Goodwin Estate Agents
- Mr Bruce Gilbert – farmer and landowner of a proposed employment land off Little Marcle Road
- Other landowners of land being allocated/included in the settlement boundary
- Tri-services - police, fire and ambulance
- Potential budget hotel operators
- Business outside the town centre in trading estates and elsewhere – a list of 76 business will have had individual business letters sent to the Chief Executive inviting input and comment
- **Town centre**
 - Tesco
 - Coop
 - Police – Insp James Ashton
 - Ledbury Traders Association - all 48 members will have individually received an email with the same business letter
 - All other town centre retailers and business including services such as hotels, dentists, estate agents, banks, solicitors and accountants will have had a hand delivered copy of the same business letter through their letter box to approximately 165 businesses (Traders Association duplicated)
- **Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust**
 - Representative of the trust
- **Medical facilities**
 - Ledbury Health Partnership
 - Ledbury Health Group
- **Neighbouring NDP parishes**
 - Dymock Parish Council
 - Wellington Heath Parish Council
 - Colwall Parish Council
 - Pixley and District Parish Council
 - Eastnor and Donnington Parish Council
 - Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council
- **Railway station**
 - The Kennels (Wilce family-owned land north of the railway station)
 - Network Rail
 - West Midlands Train Network
- **Sport and fitness**
 - Ledbury and District Sports Federation
 - Ledbury Swifts Football club
 - Ledbury Town Football Club
 - Ledbury Rugby Football Club
 - Ledbury Cricket Club
 - Mr Arthur Hindmarsh – owner of Property Solutions; owns LFC land

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- Mr Alistair Young – farmer and landowner of a proposed site for a new combined Ledbury football facility
- John Masefield Secondary High School (sports facilities)
- Ledbury Harriers Running Club
- Ledbury Tennis Club
- **Design issues**
 - Paul Neep, Architect
- **Community gardens**
 - Haygrove Community Gardens
 - Ledbury Allotments
 - Underdown walled garden
- **Footpaths and cycleways**
 - Hereford Local Access Forum (HLAC)
 - Ledbury Area Cycle Forum
 - Ledbury Walker's Club
 - Ledbury Ramblers
 - Footpaths Officer – Ian Fountaine
- **Public green spaces**
 - Children's Play Groups/parent groups
 - Herefordshire Green Network
 - Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
 - Ledbury Naturalists' Field Club
 - Tree Warden
 - Sustainable Ledbury
- **Other green spaces and recreation areas**
 - Malvern Hills AONB Partnership
 - Local camping, caravanning and chalet holiday sites
 - Ledbury Park
 - Hellens
 - Eastnor Castle
 - Westons Cider
- **Other principal community groups and organisations** (using the Ledbury Community Day list of approximately 70 community organisations including the key ones listing below)
 - Ledbury Town Council
 - Ledbury Town Councillors
 - Ledbury Places
 - Ledbury Civic Society
 - Ledbury Poetry Festival
 - Community Action Ledbury
 - Community Voluntary Action Ledbury & District (CVA)
 - U3A
 - St Michael & All Angels Church
 - Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity

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- Ledbury Methodist Church
- Ledbury Primary School
- Ledbury Market Theatre
- Bill Wiggin MP
- Local Deputy Lord Lieutenants
- **Youth groups**
 - Ledbury Scouts
 - Ledbury Air Corps
 - LYAS (Ledbury Youth Activities Support)
 - Busy Bees Pre-school
 - Market Theatre Youth Group
- **Hard to reach**
 - Elderly people at care homes
 - Leadon Bank
 - Shaw Health Care
 - Harling Court
 - Disabled people
 - via CVA and Age Concern
 - Young people not necessarily in formal groups via the LYAS (Ledbury Youth Activity Service) drop-in centre and John Masefield High School
 - Users of the Food Bank
 - Local fruit farms
 - Salter's Hill Home Care and Support
 - Traveller groups
 - Rural populations in the villages and hamlets of the parish hinterland

4. Advertising and promotion

- As per the communications plan media platforms to be used

5. Format

- The second public consultation events will feature display story boards of the process from the beginning to the position/story so far.

6. Staffing

- Plan A
 - Max Bassett (Consultant) to help set up and facilitate Zoom sessions and polls.
 - Steering group and WP member(s) to assist in taking notes of any key points raised and be available to answer questions.
 - Max Bassett to design online survey (and print version) for sharing online or via email, collate and analyse responses alongside Zoom poll results.

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- Present results back to the Steering group in report and executive summary formats.

- Plan B (for each event)
 - Set up and dismantle will require 6 people
 - During the event the requirement will be 2 people each to take contact details/issue questionnaires and to provide refreshments, and 5 people to represent each of the key issues being consulted upon

7. Questionnaires/surveys

- Same format for all consultations
 - Agree Strongly, Agree, Don't Know, Disagree, Disagree Strongly and No opinion
 - Easy layout with tick boxes and then a comment box for each objective or policy

8. Budget/resources

- See the NDP budget for overall budget estimates. We have initially allowed for up to £5,000 per public consultation round, although in practice we anticipate a cost somewhat less per event as indicated in the tables below.

Draft plan consultations timescales and costs

- After the 1st public consultation round in June and July 2021, analysis of the data during July and early August will lead to the production of a Reg 14 draft plan which will be written taking into account all the public, local authority and stakeholder suggestions and comments.
- Assuming agreement from HC that this is appropriate as a Reg 14 document, a second public round of consultation will take place in September and October 2021 on the now completed plan to produce a Reg 16 document.
- Assuming again, acceptance that this document is suitable to be seen as a Reg 16 version, a final round of consultation on this final draft is scheduled for December 2021, with any final edits as a result incorporated with the aim of going to referendum for the revised plan adoption in January 2022.

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Actual costs		
1st Public consultation round leading to a Reg 14 draft plan	£	£
		Total
Leaflet and questionnaire		
Produce copy (actual)	0	
Print 6,700 of each (actual)	1,438	
Free post licence (actual)	240	
6,700 envelopes (actual)	253	
Delivery to Royal Mail Swindon (actual)	165	
Distribution by the Royal Mail (actual)	627.82	
Postage return costs of quest (actual)	11	2,734.82
Events in May if allowed		
Room hire and refreshments	0	
Presentation card/posters – A3 (actual)	72.50	72.50
Consultant support		
Questionnaire design - actual	500	
Consultant's time to set up data analysis including keying in any manual surveys, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report (actual)	1,440	1,940.00
Actual	Total	£4,747.32

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Actual costs Reg 14 draft public consultation	£	£
		Total
Advertising and promotion:		
Expected Ledbury Focus and All About West of the Hills mags will publish at no cost as a community communication as in the past (actual)	104.06	104.06
Rooms & refreshments at events:		
Room hire: 3 @ £50 and 1 @ £100 For: 1 x 2-days event and 3 other half day events (actual – Zoom)	50	
Refreshments 2-days event @ £30 per day	0	
Business event @ £30	0	
Two other events @ £30	0	50.00
Consultation materials and support:		
Maps (actual)	589	589.00
Printing estimated 100 hard copies of the plan to handout @ £2.50 each (actual)	60.94	
Presentation card/posters - Print A3 x 50 @ £2.50 each (actual)	96	
Questionnaire production and print 250 @ £0.50 each (inc in printing costs)	0	156.94
Consultant's time to help with producing story board content and questionnaires time to set up data analysis including keying in any manual surveys, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report (actual)	1,614	1,614.00
Actual	Total	£2,514.00

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Estimated costs Reg 16 consultation	£	£
		Total
Consultation support:		
Consultant's time to help set up data analysis including keying in any manual feedback, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and producing a report to assist with final editing	1,450	1,450
	Total	£1,450