



MENHENIOT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND
INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

September 2017 & Revised October 2019

Menheniot Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group



Document Control		
Version	Details & Date	Author/Checker
V1	First draft created 4 th Sept 2017, basic frame and structure. Last saved 11 th September 2017	SBF/STEERING GROUP
V2 This document	Revisions and updates 2 nd October 2019	SBF/STEERING GROUP

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MENHENIOT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION.

This strategy will guide the work of the Menheniot Neighbourhood Steering Group as it creates the Menheniot Neighbourhood Development Plan together with the community of Menheniot.

The Menheniot Neighbourhood Steering Group recognises that for a Neighbourhood Plan to reach its full potential as part of the statutory planning framework, and have real local credibility, it must be prepared by the community that lives in, works in and uses the Neighbourhood.

The Menheniot Neighbourhood Steering Group has therefore prepared a strategy for engaging with and involving all sectors of the community in the preparation and adoption of the Plan.

The strategy will be reviewed in the light of experience at the end of each stage of progress with the Neighbourhood Plan, and will be adjusted to ensure that every part of the community is being afforded a reasonable opportunity to help shape the Plan.

KEY STAGES

The key stages proposed are:

Stage 1 – Awareness raising and community engagement in the analysis of local issues, creating the vision, and scoping of the Menheniot Parish Neighbourhood Plan objectives and themes.

Stage 2 - Community engagement in the development of the policy and proposal options to be considered

Stage 3 – Formal consultation on the draft plan.

Stage 4 - Promotion of the final plan and awareness raising for the local referendum.

OBJECTIVES

Underlying the strategy are the objectives of ensuring that:

- Community engagement is ‘front-loaded’ and the results considered before work commences on the plan, and continues throughout the process of plan preparation.
- The entire community of Menheniot and adjoining Parishes, members of the Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan Team, those with a professional interest in the planning process, local schools and other organisations, are all effectively engaged.
- Engagement and consultation methods take account of the diversity of the whole community so that all members of the community inform the plan.
- When creating the plan, the Parish Council has a good understanding of the concerns and aspirations that are most important to the community and stakeholders;
- The local community becomes more aware of how planning works and understand what can and cannot be done through the different parts of the planning system;
- The local community understands the final planning policies that appear in the Menheniot Neighbourhood Plan and supports the planning decisions which follow these policies;

- Good use is made of local resources in creating the plan, including the skills, knowledge and energy of the community and other people living or working in the Parish;
- The ability and confidence of the community to participate fully in the planning and development process is enhanced.

APPROACH

The Menheniot Neighbourhood Steering Group is conscious of the difference between community engagement, which involves participation in the creation of policies and proposals, and simple consultation.

The intention is therefore to encourage an active dialogue with the community during the engagement stages.

Throughout the process effort will be made to raise community understanding of the role, value and limitations of the Neighbourhood Plan. Key themes will be raising awareness that some hard choices face the Parish; that these are best made locally through a Neighbourhood Plan process that brings people together around a common set of aims and builds consensus; and to dispel cynicism about planning and local government whilst maintaining a sensible level of expectation.

To begin, the existing Menheniot Parish Council 'visual identity' will be adopted for the Neighbourhood Plan project as this is locally recognised and will help to establish that the Plan has legitimacy and is perceived as a credible initiative.

Community interest and engagement will also be promoted through the encouragement of active participation in the work of producing

the Neighbourhood Plan. This may simply be in providing 'feet on the ground' during events, or more particularly through taking part in working groups to collect and analyse information, investigate opportunities, and work up ideas into creative new policy proposals. These working groups will be set up after the initial engagement period when the communities' priority issues have been identified.

If motivated volunteers come forward willing to serve on the Steering Group and contribute time and expertise to the tasks ahead, they will be warmly welcomed.

The Menheniot Neighbourhood Steering Group will also ensure that those that live outside the Parish boundary but work, shop or use services within the Parish are also involved.

The engagement and participation process will also include measures to ensure that local commercial businesses, voluntary and community organisations and groups, schools, faith groups and special interest groups are all involved.

Engagement and statutory consultation with official bodies will also feature at appropriate stages.

Plain language will be used as far as possible and efforts made to avoid jargon and to explain technical terms. Questionnaires will be simple and straightforward, offering the opportunity for rapid response or more thoughtful consideration by those who are willing, and provided in various formats to meet people's needs.

Councillors will have an important role to play both in expressing the concerns of residents and interested parties and in the distribution of information to their community. Summary documents and easy to

read documents will be used, especially at stages where extensive formal documentation or technical reports are involved.

Advertising and Press Releases will be issued prior to events, including local newspapers, the Parish Council Notice Board and its website.

Engagement and consultation will be designed to ensure that all groups are involved, and not simply the 'usual suspects', recognising that different groups of people need to be contacted and communicated with in different ways. To achieve this a basic community profile based on the 2011 Census will be used to identify the various strands present in Menheniot so that opportunities to be involved or comment can be offered at times and in locations and formats that are most appropriate for them. All events will be held at venues that have good access for everybody, including people with disabilities. Events will be timed to allow as wide as possible access whether working or taking into account public and school holidays.

Local organisations and partnerships representing various interests will be used as an avenue of engagement, as will a variety of general community events. Key local stakeholders and potential partners will be identified to assist with community engagement, for example the Primary School, faith groups etc.

Fullest use will be made of IT methods of engagement, including the creation of an attractive website, and the use of the Parish Council's a Facebook page and Twitter account. These will not only give information, but provide further channels for people to become involved, comment and discuss the Plan

Feedback allows people to see how their contributions have been taken into account and to maintain their confidence in the process. This feedback will be given regularly in relevant, concise, and easily understood formats such as press releases, reports on the Parish website, direct letters/emails, and social media.

Individuals, groups and organisations will also be given the option of being removed from consultation lists on request, either for the whole process or in relation to particular documents.

The Menheniot Parish Neighbourhood Steering Group will decide whether it is necessary to send full copies of documents or whether to notify parties of their availability. Groups and organisations that respond may be asked how widely they have consulted when making a response.

Analysis of engagement and consultation responses will be conducted in a way that looks at the depth and range of comments received. This may include a numerical analysis identifying key theme, gender and age group information given by respondents, related to the demographic make-up of the Menheniot population, so that further targeted engagement activity can be carried out if necessary. Such analysis of the comments received will aim to draw out any issues that qualify the respondents support for themes, the links between the themes that respondents perceive, and respondent's suggestions as to how particular themes might be tackled.

The Response Report, which records and summarises the response to the Regulation 14 formal consultation, will not include personal details of responders, such as names, addresses, phone or email information. Each responder will be assigned a discrete reference

number which will be used in the summary document, so that the NDP teams consideration of a responders comments can be identified should a request be received from that responder.

Any non-land-use issues identified by respondents will also be analysed and reported to the Parish Council, and action to deal with them may be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan as “projects”.

THEMES

To make the areas of concern for the Plan more easily understood and inclusive, the following themes are proposed, which arose from the initial scoping activity:

- Housing Needs
- Environment, Landscape and Heritage
- Community Facilities, Leisure and Lifestyle
- Open Space
- Road Access and Transport
- Business and Jobs
- Climate Change

Cross cutting these themes are the issues of overall sustainability and young people’s interests.

WEBSITE

A dedicated website – linked with the existing Parish Council website – is an essential part of the strategy. It will provide a standing resource of full and clear information about the Neighbourhood Plan

process, enhance opportunities to take part and be the repository of evidential material.

DATA PROTECTION

If the collection of personal data is necessary this will be managed in compliance with the 1998 Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act 2000

SAFEGUARDING

Anyone working directly with children or vulnerable adults in the creation of the Menheniot Neighbourhood Plan will need to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check carried out, and adequate safeguarding measures will be built into the design of events involving children, young people and vulnerable adults.

EQUALITIES

The Equalities Act 2010 makes it illegal to make decisions that adversely impact on the equality and diversity rights of groups or individuals. The creation of the Menheniot Neighbourhood Plan must therefore pay ‘due regard’ to the 9 ‘Protected Characteristics’ under the Act. These include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Steps will therefore be taken, as noted in the description of the approach to engagement above, to ensure that all residents are given the same opportunities to be involved in creating the plan.

An 'Equality Impact Assessment' of the plan making process will therefore be made at the various stages to ensure that no individuals or group has been discriminated against.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All engagement activities will be risk assessed to ensure that those arranging, supporting and visiting events or otherwise becoming involved are able to do so in reasonable safety. A standard Risk Assessment Form has been developed for this purpose.

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE AND ENGAGEMENT NEEDS

The community of Menheniot is made up of different groups and people in varying social and economic circumstances, well-illustrated in the 2011 Census. Although that census is now 6 years old, as a 100% count it gives the best picture of the make-up of the Parish's population. The absolute numbers may have changed slightly, but the percentage proportions of each category and age cohort will not have changed significantly in this time.

Approximately 324 (19%) of Menheniot's usually resident population were under 18 years old. Their views, as future adult residents and users of Menheniot, are important. In particular around 55 young people will be old enough to vote in the Menheniot Neighbourhood Plan referendum in 2018/19. This is a group that is usually quite hard to engage with as its attention is strongly drawn elsewhere – the 'adventure' of growing up, intensive school work etc – and special effort will be necessary to get these youngsters involved. The use of school activities, events within attractive youth events, or 'activist' young people to capture views as agents, may be necessary.

The number of younger adults (18 to 44) was 466, about 27% of the total. This group is made up of socially and economically very busy people, or have young and demanding families, and therefore rarely have time to engage with local government issues unless very directly affected. This group may be engaged by providing opportunities alongside other activities, for example when doing weekly food shop.

The number of more mature working age people (45-65) was around 556 (32%). This group are easier to engage with, having more time and wider interests than younger age groups, and is the likely source of volunteer effort and a great deal of experience to call upon.

The 370 older people (65+) represented 22% of the total. Likely to be very keen to become involved, but notably around 50 were 85+, likely to suffer mobility, access, and health issues that could restrict their ability to become involved in the Plan.

The nationality, national origin, religion and ethnic group information from the Census illustrates that Menheniot is a community with little diversity. There was a significantly greater proportion of white people compared to England (98.6% compared to 79.8%). This bias was reflected in the low proportions of mixed/multi ethnic, Asian, and black people (11, or 0.6% compared to 2.2% nationally). The proportions for religions such as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh was also very below average (20, 1.2% compared to 8.7%). The significance of this lack of diversity is that it's possible for minority groups to 'disappear' against the predominant background, and therefore to be un-engaged in the Plan process. For example in 2011 the proportion of people living in Menheniot with English as main language was 99% compared to 90.9% nationally. However some 0.1% of people lived in a household where no English was spoken as

the main language and so may have difficulty dealing with Plan materials delivered in English.

In terms of health, 382 of residents (22.3% compared to 17.6% nationally) said that their day-to-day activities were limited through ill-health. Of these 165 (9.6% compared to 8.3% nationally) of residents said that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot. Of these, 106 or 41.2% were of working age (compared to 43.7% nationally). So, there is a sizeable proportion of residents who through ill health or disability may find it difficult to become engaged in the Plan unless measures are taken to include them.

Some 238 people were recoded as carers, 13.9% of the usually resident, with some 62 people (or 3.6%) providing more than 50 hours caring per week. All carers are busy people, but those providing extensive care will have little opportunity to engage in the Plan without assistance.

No census data on sexual orientation and gender preference is available. The ONS Integrated Household Survey 2011 found 1.9% to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. However Stonewall says that the UK Government estimate, used for policy making, that 5% to 7% of the population is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ), is reasonable. This implies that between 70 and 100 of the usually resident population over 16 (1412) may be LGBTQ. The engagement and consultation strategy should look at ways of communicating with this strand of the community, using local channels or county-wide representative organisations.

Data on hours worked shows that around 157 people worked for 49 hours or more, a significant number of residents that may not have

time to engage easily into neighbourhood plan activity at traditional times. With economic recovery this issue may recently have grown.

In 2011 Menheniot had 373 people holding managerial, professional and administrative posts (46.6% of residents in employment compared to 52.6% nationally). A further 152 (19.0%) held skilled trades, higher than the national proportion (11.4%), and 135 (16.9%) in caring, and customer service employment (compared to 17.7% in England), with 89 (11.1% compared to 11.1% in England) in elementary occupations. In terms of qualifications some 321 (22.5%) were unqualified and the highest level qualification held by another 188 (13.2%) was Level 1. A total of 370 or 25.9% held level 4 or above qualifications, a similar proportion to that experienced in Cornwall (25%) and nationally (27.4%) The implication for engagement and consultation are that there is proportionally speaking, a reasonable pool of skills and experience to call upon.

POTENTIAL ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Taking the above factors into account, the Neighbourhood Steering Group have identified a range of techniques in which the various community elements might be engaged with (See table following).

GROUP	PUBLICITY METHODS	POTENTIAL ENGAGEMENT METHODS
Young adults 16 - 44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Satchel Mail' • Website • Local media • Posters • Door-to-door leaflet drop • Facebook • Twitter • Video updates on proposals and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in events • Interactive website and social media questionnaires and activities • School projects • Engagement events at popular venues, outside village shop. • Door-to-door leaflet and questionnaire drops.
General Public 44 - 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above but with emphasis on more traditional methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in events • Interactive website and social media questionnaires and activities • Door-to-door leaflet and questionnaire drops • Drop-in stall attendance at community and interest group meetings
General Public 65+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above but with emphasis on more traditional methods • Large print Leaflets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery to Almshouses residents.
Commuters (people living in the community but working outside and vice versa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening and weekend drop in events
Adjacent Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter • Leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community network presentation • Invitations to a closed event before/after drop-in sessions • Joint meetings
Business community (Parish and surrounding area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter • Leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings where appropriate • Involvement in working groups

Developers/landowners/agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings where appropriate • Involvement in working group
People with caring responsibilities and young parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with young adults above, plus through contact organisations such as Health Visitors, preschools, support groups, Doctors Surgeries etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful event timings and locations • Through contact organisations
People with physical and/or learning needs People with long term activity restrictions (health etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with young adults above, plus through contact organisations such as Health Visitors, preschools, support groups, Doctors Surgeries etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful event timings and locations • Dedicated sessions if requested • Use of easy read style materials
Faith groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets, posters etc. delivered to faith group locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in events • Letter to leader/Circuit Vicar • As general public above
Black and minority ethnic groups (inc travellers and gypsies, migrant workers, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with young adults above, plus through contact organisations such as Health Visitors, preschools, support groups, Doctors Surgeries etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through networking groups where they exist. • Translation of leaflets where/if needed
LGBTQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with young adults above, plus through contact organisations such as Health Visitors, preschools, support groups, Doctors Surgeries etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Cornwall L&G Christian Movement, Cornwall Pride, LGBTQ Youth Cornwall etc.
Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings if / where appropriate
Service providers and utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings if / where appropriate

<p>Local amenity groups (e.g., representing environment / conservation / heritage concerns.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter • Leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop in sessions • Individual meetings where appropriate • Involvement in working groups
<p>Agricultural community (farmers, agric workers, support businesses)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter • Leaflet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in sessions • Individual meetings where appropriate • Involvement in working groups

In preparing this table, reference was made to ‘The Community Planning Handbook’ by Nick Wates, Earthscan, 2000.

END