

Background information

What is a Parish Plan?

Parish Plans are local, action-based plans which address a range of problems and opportunities affecting rural communities. They are statements of how the community sees itself developing over the next few years. They:

- Reflect the views of all sections of the community
- Identify which features and local characteristics people value
- Identify local problems and opportunities
- Spell out how residents want the community to develop in the future

The whole community should be involved in producing the Parish Plan, with the parish council taking lead responsibility.

In Broadway, the parish council has handed responsibility to a group of volunteers and stepped back to ensure that it's genuinely a community project, not a political one.

A Parish Plan is a statement of intent. It does not demand or assume change unless that's what the community identifies.

What's it for?

Parish Plans should identify actions which can be taken forward by the community: by the parish council, by individuals, by clubs and societies or other groups within the community, or by other service providers and statutory bodies. Parish Plans:

- Set the agenda for the parish council and validate its work
- Attract new candidates and revive local democracy
- Stimulate communication across the community
- Identify potential for new income for the parish
- Identify potential for improved facilities and community buildings
- Raise the parish's profile with local authorities and others

Put simply, it's an opportunity to have our say – before someone else decides for us.

Who's behind it?

- The plan is being written by a group of local volunteers (the people in this hall today!). We are doing it because we want to make a difference to our village.
- Funding is mainly coming from the Countryside Agency and Awards for All (the National Lottery) along with some money from local traders. It's not your council tax.

What happens next?

- We create "working groups" of interested people to tackle specific problems and to identify what can be done. These groups take ownership of the issues and the actions, where needed
- We will gather the working groups' plans and bring them together to form the overall Parish Plan
- The Plan will be put out for consultation for a reasonable period, and then published and adopted by the parish council as policy
- The working groups will then work through their action plans, gathering more details, getting grants, lobbying, identifying, making things happen; Wychavon and Worcestershire will be encouraged to work on their action points
- The leaders of the working groups will come back together regularly to publicise and celebrate successes, to monitor and review progress, and to keep the process alive

This is our opportunity to decide how we want our community to be.