



Newhaven Neighbourhood Plan



Topic Paper 4 Facilities and Services

June 2014



Introduction

Newhaven Town Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the town and are consulting with the community, so that they can make their views known on how they would like to see Newhaven grow and change in the future, and what they would like to keep and protect. The framework for this consultation process is set out in the “Newhaven to 2030 Consultation Strategy”.

The Town Council took the first steps a while ago with the Big Planning Event in 2012 and the resulting “People’s Report” which has been used, along with the “A Profile of Newhaven”, to prepare this and the other Topic Papers. You can view these and all the other documents related to the Neighbourhood Plan, at the Town Council’s website www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk, or you can call in at the Town Council offices at 18 Fort Road or the library in the High Street.

To aid the consultation process and provide a focus for discussion, the Town Council have put together a number of Topic Papers that cover a range of themes considered relevant for the town.

This Topic Paper 4 – Facilities and Services sets out the emerging work in the Neighbourhood Plan relating to facilities and services in the town such as schools and shops and puts forward suggestions on how these could be improved through a range of objectives.

The full range of Topic Papers is as follows:

Topic Paper 1. Introduction and Background

Topic Paper 2. Vision and Objectives

Topic Paper 3. Housing (with Appendix)

Topic Paper 4. Facilities and Services

Topic Paper 5. Environment and Open Space

Topic Paper 6. Employment and Tourism

Topic Paper 7. Transport and Access

Wanted – Your Views

The Town Council would welcome your views on whether you agree with the key issues and problems relating to services and facilities in Newhaven and whether the vision and objectives suggested, are likely to deliver the improvements/change that you would like to see.

This can be done by completing the questionnaire that is being delivered to all households in the town at the beginning of July. Other ways of completing a questionnaire and getting involved are set out at the end of this Topic Paper.

Key Issues and Challenges

‘A Profile of Newhaven’ (available on the Town Council’s website) identified the following key issues and challenges for the town in respect of facilities and services:

- Predicted shortfall in early years, primary school and secondary school provision
- Decline of town centre with few multiples and a significant number of empty shop units.
- Shift of shops from west to east of the river.
- Strengthen connectivity of retail areas east and west of the river
- Predicted relocation of police and ambulance services

The above key issues contributed to the development of a 'vision' for Newhaven.

Vision

The following paragraphs have been taken from the overall draft vision set out in Topic Paper 2 and relate to aspirations and aim in the Neighbourhood Plan in respect of services and facilities.

By 2030.....

The town centre will provide an accessible focus to community life, revitalised with high quality public spaces and a greater range of uses and activity. The character of the historic assets of the town will have been enhanced and the connectivity of the retail areas west and east of the river will have been strengthened.

Educational facilities will meet the needs of the local community and also act as a hub, linked to further and higher educational establishments which train for a diverse range and scale of enterprises and businesses.

Objectives

Topic Paper 2 also lists nine draft objectives which will support delivery of the overall vision. The following objectives relate to supporting the delivery of the above vision:

Objective 3: Community Quality of Life, Health and Well-being

The Plan will protect existing community facilities and services considered important for a vibrant community and support the development of new ones, which benefit local people and visitors by encouraging:

- new facilities for families, the elderly, young people and children.
- the protection and improvement of existing open spaces and recreational facilities and assist in delivery of additional green infrastructure.
- safe and attractive cycle and walking routes, connecting all parts of the town to each other including key destinations.
- seek opportunities for providing indoor recreation space in particular for younger people

Objective 5: Facilities and Services

The plan will seek ways to maintain and improve upon the level of services and facilities to support the community through:

- an improved pedestrian focused town centre
- retaining the town centre as a community hub
- encouraging a diverse town centre with a range of uses and services
- supporting development proposals that respect the old town
- improving sustainable transport and pedestrian activity

Considerations

The provision of quality facilities and services are key to creating the character of a place, as they provide the day to day experience that the community have in their local area, which impacts on feelings of health and wellbeing.

There is already a strong sense of community in Newhaven with over 100 local groups and organisations, but much of the indoor meeting spaces are small and of relatively poor quality.

Newhaven's new library will be located in an existing building within the town centre and is scheduled to open early 2015. This will be a really positive asset to the town and it is hoped that it will draw additional visitors to the town centre.

The Policy Framework and Specific Aims of the Town Council published in 2010 included the priority of providing a new multi-function community hall to accommodate approximately 300 people. This is still an aspiration as there is a lack of a large indoor meeting space which could meet the diverse needs of the community of over 12,000 people.

Nationally, less than half of retail spending is taking place in the high street with home shopping, including internet shopping, changing the way people shop. What this means is high streets cannot be like they were.

Newhaven's high street has suffered greatly as a result of this national trend, as well as through changes that have occurred locally such as the road system. It is hoped that the objectives set out above, are a catalyst to positive change and that once again the town centre becomes vibrant, not just from retail activity, but from a range of uses.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets the government's stance on town centres stating "The aim is to provide sustainable shops whilst also ensuring other commercial, leisure, tourist, residential and community uses are supported to encourage more people into town centres for longer, multi-purpose visits".

The Lewes District Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy at Policy 7 – Infrastructure, seeks to protect, retain and enhance existing facilities and services. Also, it states that new community facilities should be located within the identified development boundary (in Lewes District Council's Local Plan 2003), but that in exceptional circumstances, they may be located outside of the boundary if this is the only practicable option.

In respect of the High Street, Lewes District Council's Proposed Submission Core Strategy states that high streets should "provide customer choice, a diverse retail offer and meet the needs of the community, but many can no longer wholly rely on retail in order to remain vibrant and vital".

Opportunities

Having an adopted Neighbourhood Plan will enable the Town Council to receive 25% (rather than 15%) of the Community Infrastructure Levy. This will ensure additional money is available for local infrastructure projects including facilities that are required as a result of new development.

In addition the Neighbourhood Plan could introduce policies that support certain kinds of development in the Town Centre that enhance the viability, vitality and character of the area

and supports its role as a community hub. More general improvements to the public areas and existing buildings could also be supported through specific policies.

How to get involved

Local communities really do have power to shape the places in which they live. As the Neighbourhood Plan will be a community led document, your views and support are **really important** to the Town Council and are essential, if we are to deliver a Plan that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of those that live and work in the town.

There are a number of ways that you can make your views known and the community can get involved.

- You can **complete the questionnaire** that will be delivered to each household in the town and return it to the Town Council. The questionnaire will also be available from the Town Council offices at 18 Fort Road, or can be posted to you, simply phone 01273 516100, email admin@newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk, or down load from the Town Council's website www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk; **We would be grateful if you would submit your comments by Friday 1st August**
- Comment on the **Profile of Newhaven** which is available to read on line at the address above or is available to view at the Town Council's offices or the local library.
- You can **sign up to the Citizens Panel**, which will be used to continue with this and the other stages of the Neighbourhood Plan's consultation and other plans of the Town Council.
A "Citizens Panel Membership Form"* is available from the Town Council offices in Fort Road, can be posted to you simply phone 01273 516100, or are available to down load from the Town Council's website www.newhaventowncouncil.gov.uk;
- You, or your group/organisation, can **be involved in one or more of the Focus Groups*** that are being established to look at the topics covered in the Neighbourhood Plan in more detail;
- You can **attend one of the exhibitions** below, which have been organised to provide information and opportunities to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan and how it might affect the community where you live;

Exhibition dates

8th July at Meeching Hall, Fort Road, 10am – 3pm

8th July at Lewes Road Hut, 5pm – 8pm

15th July at Denton and Mount Pleasant Social Centre, 10am – 2pm



