

Planning Aid in Action: Are You Fit for Neighbourhood Planning? Interim Workshop

Background

Hartlepool Borough Councils Regeneration section have been tasked with supporting and co-ordinating activity with a Neighbourhood Plan Frontrunner in Elwick and Greatham, a semi rural Parish in Hartlepool.

The regeneration team were keen to run a Hartlepool wide event in November to introduce both the frontrunner community and any other groups who might be interested in Neighbourhood Planning to the concept, the process and the potential areas for discussion that people felt were needed.

Planning Aid was seen as the best group with its independence and knowledge of current Neighbourhood Planning Information to facilitate the discussion workshop.

The workshop itself was held at Hartlepool Centre for Independent Living based in the town centre. The venue was chosen to attract a wide mix of the Hartlepool Community and be easy for all to get to and from.

The session was run in partnership with the Local Authority, with participants invited from a range of local community groups.

Planning Aid's support included:-

- Planning Aid delivered an interactive morning workshop to discuss the concept and process of making a neighbourhood plan. Participants from the local area were given the opportunity to talk about issues and questions that they wanted to raise around the topic which helped to identify how to become ready for Neighbourhood Plans.
- Two volunteers from Newcastle University Planning School were available to help at this event as scribes and Mike Dando another Community Planning Outreach Coordinator was able to support. Due to short notice and a change of agenda some volunteers were unable to attend.

What was the outcome of the project?

The workshop in Hartlepool was seen as an interim measure and a full workshop to explore Neighbourhood Plans in more detail will be held in 2012 after consultation on the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations has ended. The interim workshop was ideal for setting the scene and beginning the discussion around neighbourhood plans in the local community.

Hartlepool Council was very pleased with the end event as were all of the delegates who attended. The group are keen to work with Planning Aid again to let the local community understand more about neighbourhood plans. We hope to hold an event in early 2012.