- A Neighbourhood Development Plan is a government initiative to allow communities to have a say in the planning process and help shape the places where they live. Herefordshire Council have been very proactive in promoting Neighbourhood Plans and have a very high take up from parishes in the county and one of the highest in the country.

NDPs will sit alongside the county’s Core Strategy document which is the effectively the development plan for Herefordshire for the period 2011 – 2031 and the policies will have legal status that will guide and inform future local government plans for the development of the area. It will not stop housing development but may influence location, style and density.

**What has been achieved so far**

* **Agreement to go forward with an NDP**

- Members of the Parish Council had attended several earlier NDP information events held by HC. Following a presentation by a representative of Herefordshire Council’s NDP Support Team at the Parish meeting in April 2013 we decided to go forward with an NDP and an application was made in May.

* **Formal approval of the NDP Area**

- We decided to include the whole of the Parish in our Plan rather than just the core village and the designated area was formally advertised by HC in June 2013 with approval received in early August.

* **Steering Group appointed to begin the NDP process.**

- A Steering Group was also formally appointed by the PC in May 2013. This has varied slightly since the start if the project but is still is primarily made up of several members of the Parish Council and two members outside of the PC.

* **Draft a Project Plan**
* **Draft a budget and apply for funding**

- A **project plan** was drawn up with the information given us by the NDP Support Team and from this we drafted a **budget**. Funding of up to £8000 (now £9000) for NDP projects is available via an organisation called Localities c/o The Department for Communities and Local Government. Additional funding can be sourced via the Lottery Awards for All Scheme. We will have applied for nearly all the Localities funding available by and will need to apply to A4A for additional funds to complete the project.

- Much of the funding will be spent on our engagement of the invaluable services of data consultants **Data Orchard** who are helping to guide us through this process and assist with putting together the formal documents needed to ensure that our plan will be acceptable. This includes the services of a planning consultant.

**What has been achieved so far.... cont’d**

* **Community consultation:**

In order that the Plan properly represents the views of the Parish, we need to meet and consult with as many members and stakeholders of the Parish as possible.

**Consulted with individual community groups**

**and businesses**

We have held several face to face meetings with individual community groups and businesses

**Planning for Real – ‘Have Your Say’ event**

The ‘Planning for Real’ drop in event in September 2015 was a chance for all sections of the community to ‘Have their Say’ and share their own and other’s ideas about what they might like to see in Weobley in terms of housing, business and employment, community facilities and leisure opportunities, etc. and where these might be located. Those who attended will remember that this involved some large parish maps and hundreds of flags all of which were carefully removed after the event and logged.

**Community Survey – the questionnaire**

The results of the face to face and Planning for Real events were collated and used to help compile the community questionnaire which was distributed to all parish residents in February and March 2015

* **Survey results collated, analysed and published**

The survey results were collated, analysed and published by our data consultants, Data Orchard, in April 2015.

**Where we are now**

* **Produce ‘Vision’ & ‘Objectives’**

We have used the information from the questionnaire to produce a ‘Vision’ of the Parish by 2031 and to create a list of objectives which will determine how this vision is achieved.

* **Complete Site Assessments**

As part of the process, we are required to identify any development sites – these can include employment as well as housing – that could be included in the Plan and which will assist in our meeting the percentage growth target set by HC in the Core Strategy for our parish to 2031. Some of these will have been identified by the HC’s own Strategic Housing and Land Availability Assessment and others suggested through the results of the community survey.

Our growth target figure is 14% of our existing housing stock (as of 2011) and equates to 82 dwellings. However, since 2011 and during our NDP period so far we can account for a large proportion of this figure through development that has already taken place or has received outline approval – this includes 8 dwellings at Pepper Plock Ley and outline permission for 15 houses next to the Primary School and 40 houses on Gadbridge Road. We estimate that there are less than 10 dwelling remaining to be accommodated by 2031.

We are therefore not looking for any large potential development sites and it’s possible that the remaining 10 dwellings could be accommodated via windfall development i.e. single individual plots or small developments.

However, the target figure of 82 can and is likely to be exceeded by 2031 but we should be able to indicate via the support of our NDP if and where this might be accommodated should any planning proposals be submitted.

* **Begin drafting Policy options**

From the objectives we have identified we are now working with Data Orchard’s planning consultant to produce some draft policy options. These will ultimately be the policies that will be referred to by HC when considering any future planning proposals that may be submitted. Importantly, the Policies also have to be in line with those within the Core Strategy document.

* **Community Consultation - Vision & Objectives and draft Policy options**

We now need to come back to the community to ask for your views and agreement on our Vision and Objectives and also on our draft policy options. It is important that we get this right and that the policies represent your views.

**Vision**

***“Weobley Parish will support a diverse and healthy community having the village at its heart providing a range of services and facilities for all its residents while protecting its natural and historical environment and maintaining a thriving local economy.”***

**Community Consultation**

**The next stage!!**

- another chance to

‘**have your say’**

**Friday 12th May - 6 pm to 8 pm**

**Saturday 13th May - 10 am to 4 pm**

**in Weobley Village Hall**

**How can you take part?**

Come along to this community drop–in event and share your views on the next stage of our Neighbourhood Plan – our ‘**vision’** for the parish **and our objectives and draft policy options** produced from the questionnaire that YOU completed!

We still need your comments & suggestions - the **FINAL PLAN** is just around the corner, but it must represent your wishes!

**What next?**

Much of the next stages in the process will be completed with the assistance of Data Orchard and the NDP Support Team as these involve the formal documents and applications that need to be made in order to complete the process.

* Prepare 1st draft of Plan document

When we have your views on our draft policies and can be sure that they are representative we can produce our first draft of the NDP document

* Pre-submission of the Community Consultation and publicity of the draft Plan to Herefordshire Council (Regulation 14)
* Prepare the Consultation Statement and Basic Condition Statement

The first draft including evidence of our consultation with the community and stakeholders and publicity of the plan will be submitted to Herefordshire Council.

The consultation statement is our opportunity to explain and demonstrate how engagement with the community and others has shaped the development of our neighbourhood plan.

A basic condition statement explains how the neighbourhood plan meets the requirements that the legislation requires an independent examiner to consider. The Plan must be independently and externally examined

* Prepare 2nd draft of Plan document

Taking into account any changes that need to be made.

* Issue a report to the Parish Council for approval

The PC are accountable for the Plan as the formal application to proceed with completing one is made through them.

**The Final Stages**

* Forward Plan to Local Authority (Regulation 15)
* 6 week Consultation period (Regulation 16)

HC will ensure all required documents are present and will publicise the regulation consultation period of 6 weeks. The Plan will be publicised at local and county level through council channels, e.g. offices and websites.

* Independent Examination and modification

The Plan will be submitted for examination by HC. Any modifications noted by the examiner may require a further consultation period.

* Hold Parish Referendum

This will ensure that hopefully all but at least the majority of the parish are happy with the Plan. The referendum will be asking; ‘Do you want Herefordshire Council to use the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Weobley to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area?’ If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote ‘yes’ then our plan can move forward to the next stage.

* Final Plan made (adopted) by Herefordshire Council
* Delivery of the Plan

We need to develop an implementation plan to deliver and a means of monitoring how it is being delivered and communicated to the public.