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# PARISH PLAN NEWS

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## Parish Plans and Village Design Statements

Many of you have been asking questions about the difference between a Parish Plan and a Village Design Statement. You have also asked us which would be right for your parish to do. You also wanted to know, if you took the decision to do both, in which order they should be done and what difference will either make to your parish.

What we should like to do here is to help you find the answers to such questions and signpost you to people and other agencies who can assist you with your community planning.

### A Village Design Statement

Village Design Statements are produced by communities to identify local character and set out design guidance to help guide new development.

Many people feel that they have no say over what development takes place in their community; but Village Design Statements (VDS's) offer a constructive solution to this dilemma. A Village Design Statement sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a village, based on its character. It is an advisory document produced by the village community, not by the planning authority. It will not stop change from happening, but it can

**Do you know the difference between a Parish Plan and a Village Design Statement? Why should you do a Parish Plan? If you do a Parish Plan do you know who can help you?**

help effect how any new building fits in to the village. VDS's are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system, so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment.

Local communities have an unique appreciation and understanding of their own place, and a VDS is based on this knowledge. It describes the qualities that residents value in their village and its surroundings.

Taken from "An Introduction to Village Design Statements"

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### Parish Plans

A Parish Plan is a document that sets out how a community sees itself developing over the next ten or more years – often described as a 'shared vision' for the future. A good Plan should include and reflect the views of the whole community and detail the steps needed to achieve this

'vision'. It will have used a variety of consultation methods to find out the views of residents and once these are known, gone back to the community to identify the most important actions to be taken and who should be involved to ensure their successful outcome.

A Parish Plan is an holistic document. It is as much if not more about the quality of life of the people living within a community than about buildings and open spaces. There is much that a community can do for itself although some elements of a Plan will need the help and guidance of your Local Authority or other relevant organisation to be achievable. It is worth bearing this in mind when you reach the stage of putting together your Action Plan and you should involve as wide a variety of organisations as possible, taking advice on solutions to issues that your consultations may have identified. Local Councils for Voluntary Service are a great source of help, with advice on putting projects together and in funding applications.

For a comprehensive definition of a Parish Plan please look at the extract from the ACRE Parish and Community Planning Toolkit featured on our web site.

Go to [www.action.hants.org.uk/ParishPlans/html](http://www.action.hants.org.uk/ParishPlans/html)