

Local Place Plans

Information Note for Community Bodies February 2023

What is a Local Place Plan?

Local Place Plans (LPPs) were introduced to increase community involvement in the planning and spatial design process. LPPs are a way for communities to highlight issues, gather ideas and express aspirations for the future of their places.

LPPs were introduced by Section 14 of the [Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#). LPPs are community-led and set out a community's proposals for the development and use of land. They can also identify land and buildings that the Community Body considers to be of particular significance to the area. Once registered by the Planning Authority, they are to be taken into account in the preparation of the [Local Development Plan](#).

It is for the Community Body preparing the LPP to determine the scope of their LPP. There are a range of issues/ development proposals that might be included such as:

- identification of sites which support climate change adaptation/ renewable energy/ flood mitigation
- local initiatives for the promotion of active travel and community food growing
- identification of sites for specific uses, including housing (including affordable), local employment or tourism/community facilities
- retaining and improving/ expanding open space, play facilities and other green/blue infrastructure, this includes identification of spaces that are of particular value to the community
- conservation of the natural and built environment
- improvements to civic centres
- support for a national development (as featured in the [National Planning Framework](#)).

Examples of what would not normally be considered as development include:

- litter management and dog fouling
- improvements to public transport (routes and timetables)
- proposals which do not fundamentally impact on the long-term use of land, such as occasional activities/events using existing facilities, spaces and places.

Whilst LPPs are generally focused on spatial elements, ultimately it is up to the Community Body to identify the scope of their LPP.

Who can prepare a Local Place Plan?

A LPP can only be prepared by certain groups. Schedule 19 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 defines what a Community Body is in relation to the preparation of a LPP. This means groups preparing a LPP must either be:

- a) a community-controlled body within the definition given in Section 19 of the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#); or
- b) a community council established in accordance with Part 4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Why might a community want to create a Local Place Plan?

There are many reasons why a community might wish to prepare a LPP, and each community may choose to focus on different issues that are relevant to their area. No two LPPs are likely to be the same.

LPPs provide communities with the ability to shape the appearance, form and function of the places in which they live. The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2028 will consider any registered LPPs, to allow communities to have a more direct role in the decisions that influence their place. LPPs can also help Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners and funding organisations to better understand local issues and where to target investment and services.

The Scottish Government has developed a website, [Our Place](#), to be used as a source of “information, tools and resources to help support the development of places and services that improve our health, our prosperity, our quality of life and protect our environment.”

When should a community seek to prepare a Local Place Plan?

Planning authorities are required to issue an invitation to communities to prepare LPPs. Sections 14(2) of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 relating to the Planning Authority’s invitation to prepare LPPs, plus Sections 14(4) and (6) relating to the taking into account of registered LPPs in the Local Development Plan, are to be brought into force in due course as part of new Local Development Plan regulations and associated guidance. These are currently expected later in 2023 following adoption of National Planning Framework 4. Aberdeenshire Council formally commenced work on its next LDP (the 2028 LDP) in early 2023; however, Community Bodies do not necessarily need to wait for the formal invitation to prepare their LPP.

While Local Place Plans can be produced at any time their integration with the Local Development Plan will be greatly facilitated if they are prepared and consulted upon for submission in late 2024. This would provide efficiencies for local communities as formal appraisals such as Strategic Environmental Assessment and Strategic Transport Assessment could be undertaken by Planning Officers as part of the preparation of the Local Development Plan.

What boundaries should a Local Place Plan use?

The area to be covered by a LPP must be identified and a map included in the LPP. LPPs should relate to a recognisable area such as:

- Community Council boundaries
- Settlement boundaries
- Town centre boundaries
- Individual neighbourhoods or building(s) within settlements
- Any other geography a community self-defines itself by.

What weight will Local Place Plans have in planning decisions?

LPPs will be taken into account when preparing the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2028.

The content of a registered LPP may also form a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Where a LPP is relevant to any particular application it will need to be weighed in the final decision process according to their seriousness and relative importance. Community Bodies may wish to consider whether the proposals contained within the LPP may reasonably form a part of representations on individual planning applications.

What is the relationship between Local Place Plans and other forms of community plan?

In Aberdeenshire, there are 2 to 3 tiers of community plans depending on where a community is located.

1. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP).

A LOIP is a 10-year plan that outlines how Community Planning Partners will work with communities to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities. Preparation of a LOIP is a requirement of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. The [Aberdeenshire LOIP](#) covers the period 2017 to 2027. The LOIP Priorities for Aberdeenshire are:

- Reducing Poverty
- Connected and Cohesive Communities
- Health and Wellbeing

2. Locality Plans

A Locality Plan under Section 10(1) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act is a plan to improve outcomes in that locality. [Locality Plans](#) have been prepared for Peterhead, Banff and Macduff, and Fraserburgh.

Community Bodies within the Peterhead, Banff and Macduff and Fraserburgh areas must have cognisance to the relevant Locality Plan in preparing a LPP.

3. Community Action Plans (Including Town Strategies)

Community Action Plans (CAPs) are developed by communities following a community engagement exercise. CAPs detail a particular communities' priorities for the years ahead. These priorities can then be reflected in the wider administrative Area's Local Community Plan. Many communities in Aberdeenshire have existing CAPs. Existing CAPs can provide a good basis from which a LPP can be prepared.

CAPs and LPPs share many of the same defining characteristics. LPPs will continue to have a similar role to CAPs, they will set out a vision for sustainable, quality places to live, work and visit. They provide evidence that can be used by communities, public agencies, or others to understand local priorities, attract funding and deliver services and spatial developments. Whilst LPPs are generally focused on spatial elements, it is up to the Community Body to identify the scope of their LPP.

We understand that for communities looking to engage in improving their local area, there may be a confusion about which plans they need to engage with and the relationship between plans. There may also be appetite to use existing CAPs as the basis for a community's LPP to avoid unnecessary duplication and effort. If your community has produced a recent plan which meets the criteria for LPPs, it may be possible to use this as a basis for submission. It is important to ensure that the Community Body can demonstrate compliance with the legal requirements when seeking to register a LPP. Communities should contact their local Area Team to discuss.

What other plans must a Local Place Plan have regard to?

The legislation clearly sets out a list of a plans that a Community Body must have regard to when preparing a LPP. These are:

- The Local Development Plan – This would be the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2023 or the [Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021](#), depending on where the Community Body is located and the area to be covered by the LPP.
- The National Planning Framework.
- Any Locality Plan published for the area – In Aberdeenshire this extends to Peterhead, Banff and Macduff and Fraserburgh.

What level of consultation will be expected for Local Place Plans?

On submission of a LPP, Community Bodies will need to provide a statement setting out the level and nature of support for the LPP, with evidence to demonstrate this.

There are specific legal requirements for consultation with Community Councils and local Councillors.

Aberdeenshire Council would expect community engagement to inform LPPs to be as inclusive as possible, ensuring that everyone has a meaningful opportunity to be involved. The good-practice principles set out in the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) should be applied.

The LPP should be developed through a series of well promoted events and online engagement. The aim should be to encourage as many people as possible to participate and should try to include lesser engaged or hard to reach groups as well as those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act. Careful thought should be given to the sequence and format of events – welcoming and more informal ‘drop in’ events are often the most successful. The use of social media can also be a very effective form of engagement although care should be taken around digital inclusion.

How is a Local Place Plan prepared?

For a LPP to be considered valid, the Community Body must comply with requirements relating to the steps which must be taken before preparing and submitting the LPP. There is certain information which must be submitted alongside a LPP. These details are set out in the Planning Circular 1/2022.

LPPs are guided by a legislative framework. Relevant legislation include:

- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019; and
- [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Place Plans\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2021](#).
- Detailed guidance on the legislative requirements is set out in the Scottish Government’s [Planning Circular 1/2022: Local Place Plans](#).

The Scottish Community Development Centre and Nick Wright Planning have developed a [‘How to’ Guide](#) aimed at supporting communities to prepare LPPs. An updated version is expected to be published sometime in 2023.

The following is a summary of the stages involved in the LPP-making process:

Stage 1 – Getting Ready

At this stage, the Community Body should:

- Ensure that they are properly constituted as a Community Body;
- Familiarise themselves with the legislative framework, particularly the Planning Circular and national guidance, to ensure they are aware of the requirements and to decide whether a LPP is indeed right for their community;
- Meet to discuss the community body’s aspirations and intentions and who needs to be involved in the preparation of the LPP (local residents, other local community groups; schools, local businesses, politicians, landowners and developers, Council Officers, local Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Grampian and/ or national agencies such as SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, Scottish Water, Transport Scotland, NESTRANS, amongst many others);

- Establish a Steering Group to drive preparation of the LPP and set up regular/ monthly meetings. The Steering Group membership is likely to involve partners mentioned above;
- Decide on the boundary of the LPP area, the broad purpose and scope of the plan;
- Agree timescales and schedule for preparing the LPP. First-time plans are likely to take 6 months to a year to prepare; and
- Consider the cost implications and agree a budget for preparation of the LPP. Consider whether there is a need to bring in specialised support, for example to facilitate community/stakeholder engagement; provide technical expertise and assist with fundraising, etc. Opportunities to apply for funding should also be explored.

Stage 2 – Preparing a Local Place Plan

This stage involves the Community Body gathering facts, and engaging early with the community and other stakeholders, to inform the proposals for the LPP. The Scottish Government’s draft ‘How to guide’ includes a local information checklist that can help Community Bodies identify what evidence they need and where they could find it. Engagement is really important as this will help gain a good understanding of the challenges, views and aspirations of the people who live, work and visit the area.

A useful starting point is to determine whether previous consultation exercises have been undertaken within the area in recent years. This can provide helpful information on active local community groups, any existing or historical issues and future aspirations.

Existing Community Action Plans can provide a good basis from which to create a LPP.

Community Bodies should ensure that they have had regard to the Local Development Plan, National Planning Framework and any Locality Plan published for the area. When submitting the LPP, the Community Body will be required to set out in a statement how it has had regard to these documents.

A LPP should contain the following as a minimum:

- Basic information to identify the Community Body by whom the LPP has been prepared;
- Detailed map clearly defining the boundaries of the LPP area;
- A statement of the Community Body’s proposals as to the development or use of land;
- Identification of any land or buildings which are considered to be of particular significance to the local area; and
- A map which identifies the locations of the LPP’s proposals and the significant land or buildings.

There is no one approach on the look of a LPP. Generally, LPPs will share similar elements including an overall vision which reflects local context and captures community aspirations for the future. LPPs should be written in a way which avoids

jargon and be as short and succinct as possible ensuring focus is maintained on priority projects/ proposals and delivery. LPPs that are highly visual, using graphics, maps and diagrams can be effective in communicating main points.

The Community Body must consult each ward Councillor and Community Council within, or adjoins, the area covered by the LPP by sending them a copy of the proposed LPP with an information notice. This notice should provide the following information as a minimum:

- A brief description of the content and purpose of the proposed LPP; and
- Information as to how and to whom any representations (or comments) on the content of the proposed LPP should be made and the date by which they should be made.

The minimum period required by legislation for representations is 28 days but the Community Body can choose to have a longer period and also invite other people and organisations to respond. Although not legally required, it is strongly recommended that the Community Body again consults the local community and other relevant stakeholders at this stage.

Stage 3 – Submitting a Local Place Plan

Taking into account the consultation feedback, the Community Body finalises the LPP before submitting it and all required accompanying information to the relevant Planning Authority – Aberdeenshire Council or the Cairngorms National Park Authority, for validation and registration. The required accompanying information is listed below:

- A copy of the written constitution of the Community Body that prepared the LPP;
- Contact details, including an email address, of where the Community Body wants correspondence from Aberdeenshire Council to be sent;
- Evidence of compliance with the consultation requirements set out in Regulation 4 of the 2021 Regulations. The evidence should include a list of the councillors and community councils consulted, a copy of the Proposed LPP and a copy of the information notice;
- A statement explaining how the Community Body has, in preparing the LPP, had regard to the National Planning Framework, the existing Local Development Plan, and, if applicable, the locality plan(s) for the LPP area;
- A statement setting out why the Community Body considers the relevant Local Development Plan should be amended;
- A statement setting out (a) the Community Body's view of the level and nature of support for the LPP and (b) the basis on which the Community Body has reached that view, including a description of any consultation by the Community Body in respect of the Proposed LPP; and
- A copy of any document which is referred to in the LPP, unless it is a publication by Aberdeenshire Council. As an alternative to hard copies, Aberdeenshire Council will accept electronic copies, or hyperlinks to documents on the web.

A Checklist for Community Bodies Submitting a Local Place Plan for Registration has been prepared to assist Community Bodies and ensure that all relevant information is submitted to the Council. This has been appended at the end of this Information Note. Aberdeenshire Council recommends that this is followed when a Community Body is ready to submit their LPP for registration in order to avoid any unnecessary delays or refusal by the Planning Authority to the registration of a LPP.

Stage 4 – Validation and Registration

Aberdeenshire Council will assess LPP submissions to check that they meet all the relevant requirements set out in the planning legislation. The Community Body submitting the LPP will then be notified as to whether or not it has been validated. Validated LPPs will be placed in a [public register](#) and a copy published on the Council's website.

Stage 5 – Delivery and Monitoring

It is largely for the Community Body to co-ordinate the implementation of the LPP which can take many forms from influencing other plans and actions of agencies, such as Aberdeenshire Council, to more direct community-led delivery, involving funding bids for proposals or acquiring land/ buildings through community right to buy or asset transfer provisions. Some proposals may be quick to complete within a few months while others might take many years of planning and hard work to become a reality.

Monitoring of the LPP is important, helping the Community Body understand what impacts the proposals in the LPP are having on the ground and whether there are new or evolved issues that need to be explored through an updated LPP. Community Bodies may wish to consider whether to prepare an action plan to assist with the delivery of their LPP and review this on a regular basis to ensure delivery remains on track. It can be helpful to focus on specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timetabled (SMART) actions where possible.

Can a Local Place Plan be removed from the Register?

There are only two circumstances which trigger removal of a LPP from the register. Once registered a LPP will remain until such time as:

- a) the Community Body which prepared the LPP requests that it be removed from the register, or
- b) if the Community Body which prepared the local place plan submits a subsequent local place plan which the Community Body state is to replace or supersede the LPP.

Additional Resources

Scottish Government [Our Place website](#), and [Planning Circular](#).

Scottish Community Development Centre and Nick Wright Planning [How to Guide \(external link\)](#) to creating Local Place Plans

Planning Aid Scotland (PAS) [guide to Community-led Plans](#) (external link)

Resources which may help your community build a Local Place Plan:

Open data published by Aberdeenshire Council [Open data](#)

Community Map Scotland (by Parish Online) [mapping tools and advice \(external link\)](#)

[Felt \(external link\)](#) - a tool for making and sharing maps.

Scottish living locally [data Portal](#) (external link) to help inform the development of a Local Place Plan

The [planning reform update and Local Place Plans presentation \(PDF 412KB\)](#) can be viewed here containing a general update on the planning reform which has resulted in the emergence of Local Place Plans and some advice for anyone who may be considering preparing a Local Place Plan.

Checklist for Community Bodies Submitting a Local Place Plan for Registration with Aberdeenshire Council

What needs to be submitted?	Accompanying Notes	For Official Use Only
<p>A copy of the Local Place Plan the Community Body wishes to have formally registered and taken into account in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2027, or whichever plan is current at that time.</p>	<p>The LPP should be submitted in an electronic format.</p> <p>It is helpful when submitting the LPP to indicate whether you are seeking first time registration or to replace or supersede an existing LPP that is already on the register.</p> <p>The LPP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement of the Community Body's proposals as to the development or use land or particular building(s) within the Local Place Plan area; and • A map identifying a suitably detailed boundary; specific land or buildings that are contained in the proposal statement; and any land or building that the Community Body considers to be of particular significance. 	
<p>Details of any pre-submission meeting undertaken place with the Planning Authority?</p>	<p>Details should include a note of the date(s) of any meeting(s) and officer(s) present.</p>	
<p>Confirmation of the Community Body's status</p>	<p>For example, a copy of the Community Body's written constitution</p> <p>In the case of Community Councils, no information is required.</p>	

Contact details for correspondence from the Planning Authority	Contact name and address and/or email address.	
A list of the Councillors contacted	Details should include the name and means of contact e.g. email/ letter.	
A list of the Community Councils contacted	Details should include the name and means of contact e.g. email/ letter.	
A copy of the Proposed Local Place Plan		
A copy of the information notice issued to Councillors and Community Councils including evidence showing how information notice was issued and confirmation of engagement period (minimum 28 days)	Examples include providing copies of correspondence issued/ received.	
A statement outlining how the Community Body has, in preparing the LPP, had regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the Local Development Plan for the LPP area; ii. the National Planning Framework; and iii. (if applicable) any Locality Plan for the LPP area 		
A statement setting out why the Community Body considers	If the community body considers that the Local Development Plan should be amended	

that the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan should be amended	as a result of the LPP, the statement should clearly set out the reasons of the Community Body for the amendments it suggests.	
<p>A statement setting out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the Community Body's view of the level and nature of support for the LPP; and ii. the basis on which it has reached that view, including a description of any consultation in respect of the Proposed LPP 	The minimum period during which representations can be made on the Proposed LPP is 28 days.	
A copy of any document which is referred to in the LPP	<p>This excludes any document which is prepared or published by Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p>Hyperlinks to documents will be accepted. Hyperlinks will be checked to ensure they are live at time of registration. Aberdeenshire Council will have no control over the links contained within the LPP and will not be able to resolve any broken or unknown links while a LPP is registered.</p>	

Upon receipt of a Local Place Plan registration request Aberdeenshire Council will check the LPP and accompanying information submitted to ensure it contains all the required information, and that the organisation qualifies as a Community Body.

Aberdeenshire Council will seek to undertake validation checks within 4-weeks of receiving the LPP.

Where a Community Body has complied with the legal requirements, then Aberdeenshire Council will proceed to register it.

If the organisation is deemed not to constitute a Community Body under the terms of the legislation, or if the information provided is incomplete, Aberdeenshire Council will be unable to register the LPP. In such cases, Aberdeenshire Council will write to advise that it is not valid, using the contact details provided, providing reasons for reaching that view. There may be scope for an amended LPP to be resubmitted for further consideration. Where a Community Body has any questions or doubts about whether to resubmit their LPP, we recommend that you discuss this with us prior to resubmitting.

Upon successful registration, Aberdeenshire Council will notify the Community Body of such and provide direction as to where the public register can be viewed on the Council's website. A copy of the validated LPP will be published on the Council's website.

Once on the register the LPP will remain registered until such time as:

- a) the Community Body which prepared the LPP requests that it be removed from the register, or
- b) if the Community Body which prepared the local place plan submits a subsequent LPP which the Community Body state is to replace or supersede the LPP.