

Heversham and Hincaster Neighbourhood Plan: 2012 to 2025

Steering Group First Progress Report – November 2012

At the beginning of 2012 South Lakeland District Council invited Heversham Parish Council and Hincaster Parish Meeting to produce a Neighbourhood Plan as one of the Government's Neighbourhood Plan "Front Runners". In May, the two Parishes set up a Steering Group to bring together a Plan that will be recognised and supported by the communities and SLDC to guide future development in the Parishes. To become a legal document the final stage will require approval by the residents of the Parishes in a referendum.

In February and March 2012 residents and organisations in Heversham and Hincaster were invited to complete a questionnaire asking what was valued in the two Parishes and the surrounding area, and what would make them better places to live. Over 100 replies were received. In April at the Heversham Parish Meeting (which was also attended by some Hincaster residents) those attending were asked to identify what needs protecting and what could be improved in the two Parishes.

The Steering Group has used this information to establish a number of objectives which it believes the Plan should satisfy. These are set out overleaf.

The Steering Group is now making sure that it understands the way a Neighbourhood Plan has to be constructed, and any restrictions on its scope. It will go on to identify and evaluate the ways by which the objectives could be delivered.

If you have any comments on the objectives, or you would like to become involved in future work, please contact any member of the Steering Group by the end of 2012.

The members of the Steering Group are :-

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Heritage, Environment and Landscape

1. The plan should recognise and conserve the rural and countryside aspects of the area and further enhance the natural environment, maintaining and developing vistas and sightlines from key points, and ensuring that sensitive areas are conserved.
2. The plan should recognise, record and value the historical and noteworthy features of the area, such as the Canal Tunnel, St Peter's Church, the Athenaeum, and the many listed farmhouses and other dwellings.
3. The plan should encourage a sense of pride, well being and ownership that will enhance the quality and visual appearance of settlements.

Domestic and Business

1. The plan should be sensitive to the agricultural and rural nature of the locality and support development that assists farmers and landowners to thrive economically whilst maintaining the character and visual amenity for the whole community.
2. The plan should strengthen economic viability of the community by promoting the development of a mix of small-scale businesses, local employment and the area's tourism potential.
3. The plan should support small-scale housing development within the footprint of the existing settlements where it is deemed to enhance them.

Community and Social

1. The plan should encourage better social inclusion and communication of information within the villages and the wider area. Examples could include broadband, websites and newsletters conveying information about events and local organisations.
2. The plan should encourage and further develop active and inclusive social, educational and cultural opportunities for the community; for instance schooling, community education, special interest groups, University of the Third Age, and distance learning.
3. The plan should encourage and further develop leisure facilities and greater use of those already existing. For example, provision for teenagers and young people, sporting facilities and community open spaces such as woodland, orchards, gardens and seating.
4. The plan should support a well maintained foot and cycle way network, both along the main routes and through the countryside as well as identifying new routes and bridle paths that are attractive in their own right but also create useful links in the parishes and beyond.
5. The plan should seek enhanced public transport facilities between neighbouring communities, as well as the wider world, and improved traffic control within the area.