

Press release

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Ethical Property Foundation launches 7 point plan for community involvement in planning obligations

Leading property charity, the Ethical Property Foundation[1], is calling for communities to become equal partners in the planning obligations process. It is local people who feel the impact of development, yet there is no formal mechanism for communities to see their needs and concerns reflected in the planning obligations (or Section 106) contributions made by developers.

Published today, the Foundation's 'No Pain Guide to Gain: A Community Guide to Planning Obligations' sets out a seven point manifesto for community involvement[2]. Key of these is the inclusion of local people in pre-applications discussions between the council and developers to ensure that community needs are taken into consideration 'up front'.

Foundation Director Jo Taylor said "The Foundation's new guide shows that a genuine community role in the planning obligations process can deliver wins for the community, council and developer. It is key that the Government incorporates clear guidance on the role of local people in the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which is planned to partially replace Section 106 agreements.'

Community activist in town planning David Farnsworth, Co-founder of the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network [3] described the new guide – which arms local people with the information they need to make planning obligations work for communities - as 'essential reading and a vital reference for communities'.

The Foundation's new guide is part of the Future Planning[4] project - a collaboration between the Ethical Property Foundation, the Rayne Foundation[5], and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)[6].

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Notes to Editors

1. The **Ethical Property Foundation** is a charity committed to empowering charities and community groups to make the most of property, and to improving the social and environmental performance of the commercial property sector. Established in 2004, the Foundation is the sister organisation of the Ethical Property Company, a leading social enterprise that provides

affordable office space to charities, co-operatives and campaign groups.

2. To download a pdf or request a hard copy of the **No Pain Guide to Gain: A Community Guide to Planning Obligations** please see: www.ethicalproperty.org.uk/PlanningActivism.php or call the Ethical Property Foundation on 020 7065 0760.

3. The **Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network** was set up in 2006 to promote community involvement in planning. The self-help Network aims to increase the confidence and ability of over 50 voluntary neighbourhood groups across Bristol to be effectively involved in town planning decisions in both plan making and development control, by the exchange of information, experience, skills and expertise through seminars, project teams, practice guides, email newsletters and web site. For more information please visit the website www.bristolnnpn.net

4. This publication has been produced as part of the **Future Planning** project, a collaboration between the Ethical Property Foundation, the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and the Rayne Foundation. The main aim of the Future Planning project is to ensure that Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups, planning professionals, government and developers have the information, tools and best practice knowledge to deliver community benefits effectively, in particular via s.106 agreements. This study has two main objectives: (i) To provide guidance on how to maximize, and evaluate the effectiveness of Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs); and (ii) To explore ways in which planning practitioners and developers can work together with local communities to deliver community benefits via negotiated conditional consent agreements.

The study complements other elements of the Future Planning Project. In particular, the TCPA has prepared a guide, **Planning Community Needs – A guide to effective Section 106 agreements & Statements of Community Involvement**, to help planning practitioners and developers deliver better quality development that meets the needs of the voluntary and community sector. The guide is available from the TCPA website: <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/publications.asp>

5. The **Rayne Foundation** was founded by Lord Rayne in 1962 and aims to engage with the needs of UK and Israeli society and help address them. Its focus is on arts, education, health and medicine, and social welfare and development work which is nationally important or which has potential for wider than local and immediate application. It never works alone – always in partnership with organisations and individuals which share its objectives.

6. The **Town and Country Planning Association** (TCPA) is an independent campaigning charity calling for more integrated planning based on the principles of accessibility, sustainability, diversity, and community cohesion. The TCPA puts social justice and the environment at the heart of the debate about planning policy, housing and energy supply. We inspire government, industry and campaigners to take a fresh perspective on major issues including climate change and regeneration. www.tcpa.org.uk