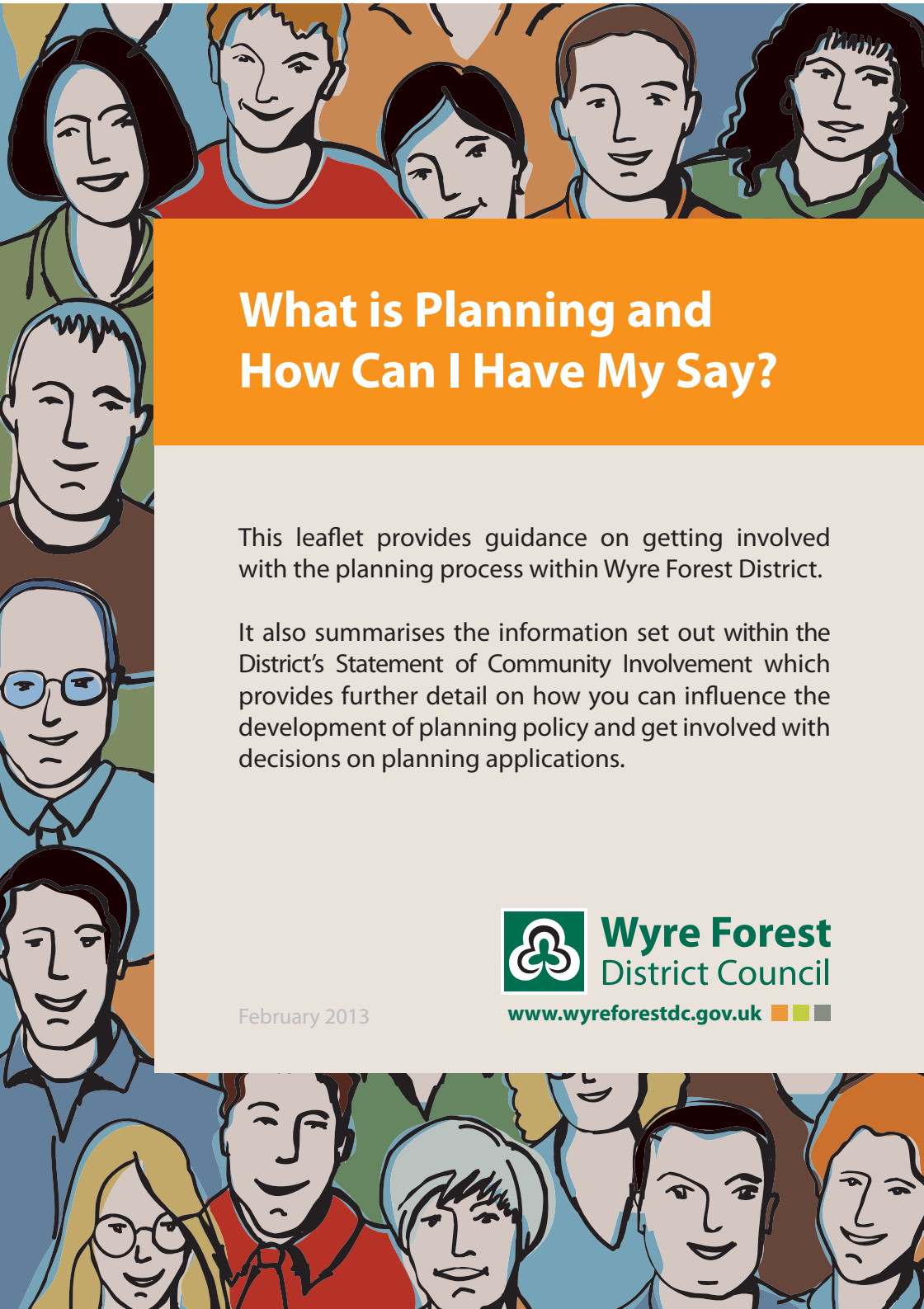

What is Planning and How Can I Have My Say?

This leaflet provides guidance on getting involved with the planning process within Wyre Forest District.

It also summarises the information set out within the District's Statement of Community Involvement which provides further detail on how you can influence the development of planning policy and get involved with decisions on planning applications.

Wyre Forest District Council

www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk

February 2013

Getting Involved with the Planning Process

Wyre Forest District Council understands the importance of listening to the views of local people when preparing plans for the future development of the area. When it comes to planning, local communities and individuals have vital local knowledge which can help us to make the right decisions. This leaflet will help you to understand what the Council does in relation to planning and how you can get involved with the decisions that affect the future development of your area.

Planning Policy

The Council has to produce a plan setting out where new development will be located over the next 20 years, this is called the Local Plan. All decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the policies and land allocations set out within the Local Plan. The Council also produces other planning policy documents which support the Local Plan by providing more detail on specific topics.

When the Council produces new planning policy documents there is always a period of consultation so that you can have your say. The Council consults with official organisations, community groups and individual members of the community to gather a variety of views. Copies of consultation documents are always available on the Council's website, in the Worcestershire Hub at Kidderminster Town Hall and in the district libraries. Loan copies are also available on request.

The way in which the Council gathers people's views will vary depending on the type of document we are producing. Formal views must always be submitted in writing, through the Council's consultation portal, by letter, or by e-mail. In some instances, exhibitions or public meetings will be held and these will always be advertised on the Council's website and through other appropriate channels.

The production of planning policy documents is also overseen by elected Members. A Review Panel considers all new planning policy in detail. Planning policies can only be adopted by a vote at Full Council.

Planning Applications

Many types of development need planning permission from the District Council before they can go ahead. Wyre Forest District Council encourages applicants to discuss their proposed development before they apply for planning permission. This may mean people talking to their neighbours about alterations they may wish to make to their home, or in the case of larger developments, developers holding exhibitions or public meetings discuss development proposals with the local community. A planning application is then made to the Council, setting out all details of the proposed development and its location.

When the Council receives a planning application it will notify all of those people who share a boundary with the site to which the application relates and will place a site notice at the site which sets out the proposed development and the deadline for sending the Council your views on the application. Additionally, larger applications will be advertised in the local newspaper. All planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website and at the Worcestershire Hub in Kidderminster. A weekly list of all planning applications received and determined are also on the Council's website.

All Councils are required to seek the views of local people and certain bodies on all the planning applications they receive. Anyone can comment on a planning application either supporting or objecting to the proposals. When deciding whether to approve or refuse an application, a planning officer will look at all of the comments received, as well as national planning policies and those in the Local Plan. Some applications are determined by the Planning (Development Control) Committee which is a group of local councillors.

Members of the public can speak at these committee meetings, to do this you would need to register, please see our leaflet 'Public Speaking at Planning (Development Control) Committee' which outlines the necessary procedures adopted by the Council.

Giving Your Views...

The views of local people are important to the District Council. A database is kept of those organisations and individuals who want to be notified of opportunities to comment on new planning policies. These people are then automatically contacted when consultations are undertaken.

If you would like your details to be added to the database or would like further information on Planning Policy or Development Control let us know by:

email at **Planning.policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk**
or **dev.control@wyreforestdc.gov.uk**

Telephone **01562 732928** and ask to speak to the Planning Policy Team or the Development Control Team.

Or write to either, the Planning Policy Team or the Development Control Team at Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY11 7WF

You can read the District Council's full Statement of Community Involvement at **www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk**

Look out for opportunities to get involved in planning and have your say!