



Strategic Development Plans:
A Community Guide



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Strategic Development Plans: A Community Guide

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Strategic Development Plans: A Community Guide

Written by Planning Aid Wales with funding from Welsh Government

What is this document?

This guide is about 'Strategic Development Plans', a new form of plan in Wales that will be produced in four regions (North Wales, Mid Wales, Southwest Wales and Southeast Wales).

This guide is designed for community and town councils, community groups and individuals wanting to understand and respond to Strategic Development Plan consultations.

As well as giving an overview of how Strategic Development Plans are prepared, this document explores the underlying principles of policy development to help focus community responses on where they can have most impact.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the *Development Plans Community Guide*, available at:

<https://planningaidwales.org.uk/development-plans-community-guide/>

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1. Introduction

What is planning?

Planning manages development and the use of land in the public interest.

Planning helps us decide where new homes, businesses, and infrastructure should be built and what areas should be protected.

Planning is about delivering sustainable development, or development that meets our current needs without hindering future generations' ability to meet theirs.

Planning balances economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity to ensure long-term health and well-being for people and the planet.

In Wales, planning is built on the priorities of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (such as the 5 Ways of Working) and incorporates placemaking principles into its practices.

Placemaking is a collaborative approach to creating vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive spaces that integrate community needs and values for better social, economic, and cultural well-being.



Planning is guided by planning policy and development plans prepared by different levels of government. These plans and policies guide decisions on planning applications.

Who's who in planning?

Different groups have distinct roles and responsibilities in planning:

1. **Welsh Government:** Oversees and supports the planning system in Wales by setting out legislation, national planning policy and providing guidance on all aspects of planning.
2. **Local Planning Authorities (LPAs):** Includes the 22 Unitary Authorities (City and County Borough Councils) and 3 National Park Authorities. They are responsible for creating and implementing Local Development Plans (LDPs) and making decisions on planning applications within their areas.
3. **Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs):** Regional groups of Local Authorities, these four regional bodies prepare Strategic Development Plans (SDPs).

4. **Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW):** The body of Planning Inspectors who handle planning appeals and conduct examinations of development plans to ensure they can be adopted.
5. **Statutory Consultees:** Organisations that must be consulted on planning matters, such as Natural Resources Wales, Cadw, and utility companies.
6. **Developers:** Individuals or organisations who propose development projects, seek planning permissions, and ultimately build and deliver development.
7. **Consultants and Specialists:** Represent and advise other parties, providing expertise in areas like urban design, environmental impact, and heritage preservation.
8. **Communities / The Public:** Feed local knowledge into the planning process through planning consultations and community involvement exercises. This can be done via local Town and Community Councils.

What is planning policy?

Planning policy guides decision making and ultimately ensures that development and the use of land is managed in the public interest.

At a national level, Welsh Government sets out guiding principles and priorities for the planning system through *Planning Policy Wales* and *Technical Advice Notes*.

Planning policy is also expressed through three tiers of development plans in Wales:

- **National - *Future Wales: The National Plan 2040*.** Published by Welsh Government in February 2021, this plan focuses on solutions to issues and challenges at a national level – it is a development plan for the whole of Wales.
- **Regional – *Strategic Development Plans*.** These regional plans are prepared by Corporate Joint Committees and focus on issues that cross the boundaries of Local Planning Authorities. There are 4 regions and there will be 4 SDPs in Wales.
- **Local – *Local Development Plans and Local Development Plan Lites*.** Local Development Plans (LDPs) are created by Local Planning Authorities in Wales to address local issues, vision and objectives through policies, and proposals for new development. Local Development Plan 'Lites' (LDPLs) will be shorter, more focused plans prepared after the adoption of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). They build on regional strategies outlined in the SDP to implement them at a local level.

All of these various Plans need to be consistent or in 'general conformity' with each layer above.

Why are Development Plans important?

Development plans set out detailed policies, proposals, and land allocations across a local authority area/s. Once a development plan is adopted, decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with it, unless other issues indicate otherwise.

Development plans are important because they:

- Identify growth levels for an area (e.g. housing and jobs)
- Set spatial strategies and locations for future development
- Allocate land for new development
- Plan for new infrastructure like roads and schools
- Identify land for protection from development
- Ensure good design and placemaking

Development plans normally cover an extended period of time (e.g. up to 15 years) and offer clarity and certainty over where development is likely to take place during that time and ensure there is sufficient infrastructure to support it.

Key topics a development plan covers include:

- Design & placemaking
- Climate Change
- Transport
- Housing
- Community Infrastructure
- Employment
- Flooding
- Shopping
- Renewable Energy
- Minerals
- Waste management
- Tourism
- Environmental conservation
- Heritage
- Gypsy and Travellers

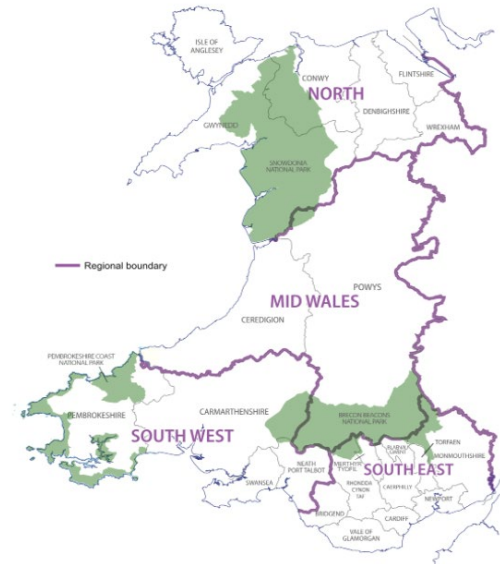
2. Strategic Development Plans Overview

What are Strategic Development Plans?

A Strategic Development Plan (SDP) is a regional plan that focuses on planning issues that cross local authority boundaries.

SDPs guide development and infrastructure provision over a broader geographical area than individual Local Development Plan. They will ensure that growth and change are managed in a coordinated way across the region.

There will be four SDPs: South East Wales, South West Wales, Mid Wales and North Wales. All four plans could be different, reflecting regional issues.



It is important that you engage in the SDP, even if it does not directly affect you, as the plan will influence the form, thrust and location of development in your region and the content of Local Development Plan Lites (LDPL) in your authority area.

Who prepares Strategic Development Plans?

Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) are prepared by Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs), which are regional groups made up of multiple Local Planning Authorities in each region:

<p>South West Wales: Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Pembrokeshire Carmarthenshire Swansea Neath Port Talbot Bannau Brycheiniog</p>	<p>North Wales: Gwynedd Eryri National Park Isle of Anglesey Conwy Denbighshire Flintshire Wrexham</p>	<p>Mid Wales: Ceredigion Powys Bannau Brycheiniog National Park (NP)</p>	<p>South East Wales: Bannau Brycheiniog NP Bridgend Vale of Glamorgan Rhondda Cynon Taf Merthyr Tydfil Cardiff Caerphilly Blaenau Gwent Newport Torfaen Monmouthshire</p>
<p>Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) and their member authorities</p>			

A well as preparing SDPs, CJs will be responsible for preparing Regional Transport Plans and for promoting and improving the economic well-being of their areas. CJs will comprise elected council leaders of each local authority in the region as well as representatives of national parks in the area. Each CJC is funded by its member authorities and will appoint staff that must include a Chief Executive, Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer. More detailed information about CJs and their powers is available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/corporate-joint-committees.pdf>

More information about each of the four CJs is available at:

- South East Wales ('Cardiff Capital Region'):
<https://www.cardiffcapitalregion.wales/sewcjc/>
- South West Wales ('Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales'):
<http://www.cjcsouthwest.wales/>
- Mid Wales ('Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee'):
<https://powys.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=920>
- North Wales ('North Wales Corporate Joint Committee'):
<https://democracy.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=433>

What issues do SDPs Cover?

Strategic Development Plans in Wales cover the following matters, where the issues are important across boundaries or to the region as a whole:

- **Housing and Employment Growth:** Determining the scale and location of future housing and employment growth across the region.
- **Strategic Development Sites:** Identifying strategic sites for housing and employment development and other mixed uses and establishing placemaking principles for these sites.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Planning for strategic green infrastructure routes to connect natural and green spaces.
- **Transport Infrastructure:** Addressing transportation needs, such as road networks, public transport, and sustainable travel options.
- **Environmental designations:** Coordinating environmental protection such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, and balancing them with development needs.

- **Energy, Minerals, and Waste:** Considering the region's needs for energy, mineral resources, and waste management in a sustainable manner.
- **Local Authority Strategies:** Providing a framework for Local Planning Authorities to create Local Development Plan Lites (LDPLs) after the SDP is adopted.

How are SDPs prepared?

The SDP preparation process is similar to the current Local Development Plan preparation process. Each of the key stages of the process comes with opportunities for public engagement:

1. **Delivery Agreement:** This initial stage involves preparing a timetable for SDP preparation and a Community Involvement Scheme (CIS). **You can engage by familiarising yourself with the Delivery Agreement and registering your interest with the CJC to stay updated.**
2. **Preferred Strategy Consultation:** At this stage, you can provide feedback on the initial plan, which includes strategic policies and development areas. This feedback is crucial to help shape the plan moving forward in the preparation process.
3. **Deposit Plan Consultation:** This is the full draft of the SDP. You can submit representations during the consultation period, which will be considered in the plan's development.
4. **Public Examination:** An independent examination conducted by Planning and Environment Decisions Wales ensures the plan is sound and underpinned by robust evidence. You may participate in oral hearings or submit written statements if you've previously provided input during the Deposit Plan consultation.
5. **Inspector's Report and Adoption:** After the public examination, the inspector will prepare a report on the soundness of the submitted plan. This report may include recommended changes, which are binding. The CJC will then vote to adopt the plan within 8 weeks of receiving the inspector's report.



- 6. Monitoring and Review:** After adoption, the CJC monitors the plan's effects and prepares an Annual Monitoring Report. A review takes place every six years or sooner if needed. You can engage by providing input on how effective the plan is and staying informed through the monitoring and review reports.

For more detail on each preparation stage see pages 18-22 of the following guide: <https://planningaidwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Community-Development-Plans-Guide-English.pdf>

Will SDPs change Local Development Plans?

Yes, SDPs will have an impact on Local Development Plans (LDPs). Once an SDP is adopted, subsequent plans that each Local Authority will prepare will be known as Local Development Plan 'Lites' (LDPLs).

The LDPL will be a simpler, shorter, and more focused development plan covering a minimum ten-year period. The plan will identify smaller and more localised allocations in your authority area that will be set within the framework of the SDP. The LDPL will also contain policies used in the determination of local planning applications.

These plans can be prepared on an individual basis or jointly by two or more authorities within the same region. It is expected that they will take around 2 years to prepare; a much shorter period than current LDP preparation.



The SDP will set out the strategic framework for the region, including the spatial strategy and the scale and location of housing and employment growth for each of the LPAs, as well as other land uses as appropriate. **Since this information is already defined in the SDP, there is no need for it to be reassessed during the preparation of LDPLs.**

The LDPL preparation process is very similar to the LDP preparation process, with one key difference: there will be no Preferred Strategy consultation during the LDPL preparation process. So, you will need to make your views known on key issues affecting your community as part of the SDP process - the Preferred Strategy for your local area will be set by the SDP. The remaining plan preparation stages in the LDPL process will mirror the LDP process.

This is why it is important for you to engage fully in the SDP process, as the SDP will directly impact the content of the LDPL.

What do SDPs look like?

The structure of SDP documents will broadly mirror the form of existing LDPs and should follow the following format:

- **Title, Plan Period and Introduction**, including the 25-year plan period and an explanation of context, issues, strategies and well-being objectives informing the plan.
- **Regional Strategy/Policies**, including an overarching vision, aims and objectives, the regional settlement hierarchy and key strategic policies for housing, employment, retail, infrastructure and Welsh Language. This will include proposed levels and spatial distribution of growth and will be supported by key diagrams / maps. Alignment with the Regional Transport Plan.
- **Sub-Regional Strategies and Policies (where relevant)**, presented in the same way as above, but only for matters appropriate to that sub-region.
- **LDPL (Local Development Plan Light) Framework Policies**, they will include spatial strategies for key settlements, housing, employment and other land use requirements and Gypsy/Traveller provision numbers for each LPA area.
- **Regional Development Management Policies**. Succinct policies on common regional issues (e.g. affordable housing, design, transport) for issues common across the region.
- **Reasoned Justification**. Statements to justify and explain how policies will be implemented.
- **Strategic Site(s)/Area of Search Allocations** – specific sites / areas where specific types of development should take place, including policies, masterplanning principles and infrastructure requirements for those developments.
- **Monitoring Framework** which explains how the strategy, policies and proposals will be monitored.
- **Proposals Map(s)** Maps either as an appendix or inset throughout the document, clearly illustrating the locations and boundaries of policies and areas of protection.

SDPs will also include a Housing Trajectory, a summary of implementation and delivery issues, and other technical details and glossaries to help clarify matters in the main plan.

What do SDPs mean for communities?

The production of SDPs will allow for more coordinated approaches to challenges such as infrastructure provision and will allow for the pooling of skills and resources that might not be able to be addressed at a local level. SDPs will take into account how people live their day-to-day lives in terms of movement in and around the region connecting where they live, work, shop and play.

Whilst SDPs are a new layer in the planning process, they will ultimately serve to streamline the planning process by making Local Development Plans lighter and quicker to prepare – ultimately allowing authorities to be more responsive to local issues.

This new layer will add extra consultations into the planning process, although there may be different priorities at a regional level than may be encountered at a local level, there will be more opportunities to be involved in the planning process.

Consultations at SDP level will be by their nature more ‘strategic’, complex and will have to take into account large volumes of detailed evidence that cover large geographic areas.

Considering this and the fact that SDPs will remove the ‘Preferred Strategy’ stage from future Local Development Plan Lites, early engagement with SDP preparation should be considered essential for communities – see part 4 for more information.

3. Strategic Development Plans – Important Principles

This section will explore some of the underlying principles of regional planning and SDP preparation to provide better context for engaging in SDPs, as will be discussed in part 4. The core principles for SDP development are:

1. SDPs must be in **general conformity** with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales and cover at least a 25-year period.
2. SDPs must set out an overall **vision and strategy** for their plan area and articulate **region-wide** policies, and sub-regional policies where relevant. An SDP should set out a Preferred Strategy for LDP Lites for each LPA within the region, identify a clear *settlement hierarchy* (a way of prioritising places in order of their sustainability for new development) and strategic locations for growth and development and provide policies for Local Planning Authorities to prepare Local Development Plan Lites (LDPL).
3. SDPs should gather and analyse **evidence** to identify the key drivers of change, the ability to accommodate change, and test different spatial growth concepts/options.
4. SDPs should focus on regionally significant issues, topics or places that are key to delivering wider than local issues beyond an individual LPA. SDPs should set thresholds below which places, allocations and spatial issues are not referenced, as **not everywhere needs to be included** at the strategic scale.

The main principles above are explored further in the remaining parts of this chapter.

What is 'general conformity'?

General conformity is a requirement that ensures lower tier plans, such as Local Development Plan Lites (LDPLs), align with the general principles of higher tier plans, such as SDPs and Future Wales: the National Plan 2040.

This concept ensures that planning decisions are consistent and support the overarching strategies and goals outlined in the upper tier plans.

General conformity means that a lower tier plan must support and uphold the overall strategy, policies, and proposals of the most up-to-date higher tier plan(s).



What about timing?

In theory, adoption of a new upper tier plan could trigger reviews of plans below them. Until lower tier changes are adopted, the upper tier plan would take precedence as a consideration for decision making.

What is a 'strategy' and what does it mean in planning?

In general terms, a strategy is a comprehensive plan or approach designed to achieve a specific goal or set of goals. It typically involves analysing a situation, setting objectives, and outlining the steps or actions needed to reach those objectives. Key elements of a strategy include research, analysis, setting goals, and evaluating results. A well-defined strategy helps guide decision-making and provides a roadmap for achieving desired outcomes.

Given that the purpose of the planning system is to manage development and the use of land, a planning strategy is 'spatial' – it considers the challenges, organisation and potential future development of a geographical area. It should consider how land use and resources should be allocated and managed to achieve certain goals, such as economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social well-being.

A spatial strategy considers various factors to determine the scale and location of growth, including population growth, transportation infrastructure, housing needs, settlement hierarchy

Planning Strategy – A Simplified Example:

This plan will deliver 10,000 homes by 2050 .

Development should be prioritised...

... in existing urban areas / town centres first.

... on previously developed (brownfield) land.

and environmental concerns; in other words, a plans strategy is one that seeks to address relevant planning matters in a specified area over a set period of time.

In the context of an SDP, preparation of strategies will involve:

- **Creating a Vision:** Establishing a clear, long-term plan for the region's growth and development.
- **Identifying Key Drivers for Change:** Understanding important factors like economic growth, population change, housing needs, infrastructure, and local development initiatives.
- **Assessing the Region's Capacity for Change:** Evaluating the region's ability to manage new development and growth, including the role of places, their development potential, environmental protection, relationships between areas, and transportation access.
- **Considering Different Development Strategies:** Exploring various options for how the region could grow.

Why is evidence important?

Making strategic decisions on the basis of 'robust' evidence is a cornerstone of planning policy development. 'Robust' means that the evidence should be able to withstand independent testing and scrutiny at examination.

The suite of evidence reports gathered during the production of any planning policy document is known as the **evidence base**, and a strong evidence base is critical for SDPs.

The evidence should justify the SDP's policies, proposals and strategic site allocations and provide local planning authorities, community groups and stakeholders with confidence that the plan sets out the right approach for the region. The strength of the evidence that led to the strategic decisions in the document will be tested at the examination stage.

While existing LDP evidence can provide a foundation, SDPs will require new studies and evidence gathering to fill gaps and obtain strategic-level data across the whole region. An appropriately scoped, relevant and proportionate evidence base focused on regional issues is vital for ensuring an SDP's strategy, policies and proposals are effective, integrated and sound.

Example SDP evidence:

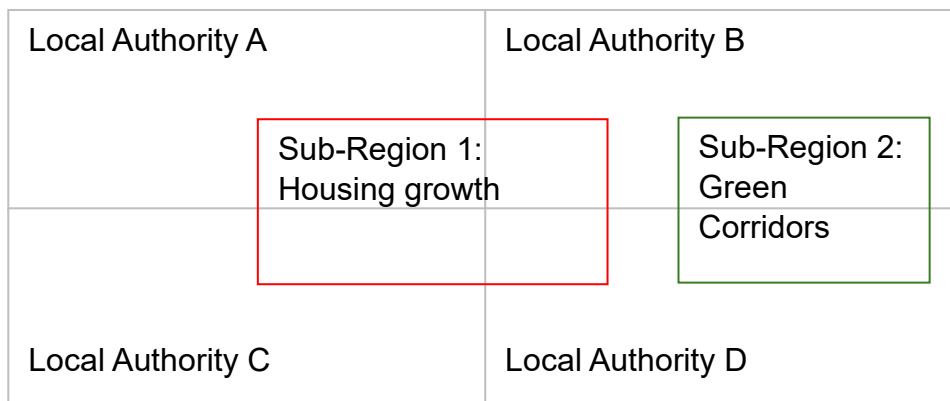
- *Existing evidence from adopted Local Development Plans in the region.*
- *Population/household projections*
- *Economic forecasts*
- *Assessments of infrastructure capacity*
- *Assessments of connectivity between settlements*
- *Environmental Studies*
- *Green Infrastructure Studies*
- *Urban Capacity Studies*

Rather than simply combining existing LDP strategies, the evidence base should allow the SDP to articulate a new comprehensive vision that accounts for regional circumstances, national policy changes, growth deals, infrastructure needs and more.

Aren't the regions too big?

It is recognised that the regions will cover large areas. Whilst an SDP will specify region-wide policies, it is also recognised that there are diverse places within each region ranging from rural areas to large cities which have different needs and priorities.

This distinctiveness will not be lost – Local Authorities will continue to exist and produce Local Development Plan Lites; the purpose of the regional approach is to allow better planning for cross-boundary issues. As part of SDP preparation, 'Sub-regions' can be specified for geographic areas that span one or more local authority boundary and sub-regional policies can be specified according to the issue of importance to that area:



Sub-regions may be defined by shared geographic, economic, cultural or other traits that distinguish them from the rest of the region. The SDP Strategy and policy framework should make it clear as to what is a region, what is a sub-region and what is required in preparing individual LDLs.

Will my town / village be referenced in the SDP?

It is unlikely that many villages or towns will be referenced by name in the plan unless they relate to priority areas for development within a sub-regional or regional policy. These priority areas will still likely be familiar to you even if the village or town where you live is not referenced. The propose of the SDP is to focus on key areas of change. However, given that the SDP will set the preferred strategy for future LDPLs (the documents that are more likely to reference your village / town), then it is essential to engage with SDPs as they are being prepared.

4. Engaging in Strategic Development Plans

How will communities be engaged?

One of the key outcomes of SDP preparation will be to develop an evidence base that is based on early, effective and meaningful community involvement. This will allow CJsCs to understand and consider a wide range of views and aim to build a consensus on the spatial strategy, policies and proposals in an SDP.

This of course will be challenging given the scale of the plan, and it should be noted that 'consensus' and 'unanimous agreement' are not the same thing - **not everyone will agree that the selected approach is the right approach** - ultimately it is crucial that SDPs consider and respond to evidence, and the detail will need to be considered against the overall direction of travel for the region.

A Community Involvement Scheme will be prepared as part of the Delivery Agreement stage (the earliest stage of the preparation process). This will set out how, where and when the CJC will engage with stakeholders and community representatives, which will include Community and Town Councils.

Like LDP preparation, each statutory stage will be required to complete a minimum 6-week consultation and the Welsh Government strongly recommends that this happens on the Delivery Agreement itself also.

Each CJC must consider the most appropriate and efficient ways to engage with all sectors of the community in their regions and as such there are no prescribed methods for engagement and there cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach. However, whatever methods, approaches and timings are selected, they will be explained in the Community Involvement Scheme.

Why engage? Aren't SDPs too far removed from us?

In general terms, community involvement in policy preparation makes for stronger policy, builds trust and accountability between stakeholders and allows for broad cross-sections of our communities to be heard.

Whilst there will be local and cross boundary matters that will be different within different parts of a region, matters you have encountered locally are not necessarily unique to your town or village and are often similar in other locations.

For example, the decline of town centres, lack of affordable housing and the need for more sustainable transport are issues that are being faced by many towns and villages across Wales.

As discussed in the previous chapter, even though your town / village might not be specifically referenced, SDPs will have a substantial influence on future Local Development Plan Lites (LDPLs) – crucially, the ‘Preferred Strategy’ that used to be part of LDPs are now part of SDPs – it is therefore essential to have your say on SDP approaches as they will be implemented through future Local Development Plan Lites.

How can communities add value?

Building on the above, it is important to remember that local knowledge and experience can be of value when it comes to regional planning. Communities possess valuable insights into local needs, challenges, and opportunities and how people live their day-to-day life. Your input can help planners better understand the unique characteristics of different areas; similar experiences in different locations across the region may help identify and refine issues that are relevant to the region as a whole.

As well as highlighting issues, local knowledge can be useful in scrutinising evidence to ensure that all relevant background information has been taken into account in preparing the plan. Ultimately, local knowledge can help refine policies and proposals and identify areas of improvement to shape and influence the SDP moving forward in the preparation process. Community involvement, where it is conducted in a meaningful way, can add depth, relevance and legitimacy to an SDP.

Where do we start?

Each consultation will be clearly set out in the Delivery Agreement (DA), there will be a main consultation document and likely a series of background papers (either as annexes or separate reports) that will explore the detail around the topic in question – these papers often provide the evidence and justification for what is being proposed and will be a useful area to focus on.

But there is so much information...

Given the scale and the complexity of planning issues to be dealt with as part of an SDP, there will be large amounts of technical information associated with consultations.

It is important to remember that you are not expected to be a technical expert, but at the same time, may be able to identify oversights or inaccuracies in the information used.

Practical tips for navigating information

If reviewing electronic documents, use CTRL + F and enter a search term to quickly navigate to uses of that term within a document.

Likewise, using contents pages and indexes can help focus on the most important sections of physical documents. Longer reports should also include an executive summary at the start to pull out key points in the document.

Ultimately, working together to establish **community priorities** will help focus your priority in responding to these consultations – if the availability of housing is most important to you or your community, this should be your focus in reviewing SDP documents. Focusing on one or a few priority issues may help reduce information overload.

Still, there is a lot to do for one individual / group / community council

As an individual or community group it may be worth contacting your local community council to see if they are preparing a response and whether you could feed into that process.

If you are part of a smaller community council, it may be worth working with your neighbouring councils to pool your time and resources – this aligns with the principles of collaboration set out by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

How should we approach responding?

The nature and form of the community involvement may vary depending on the CJC and exactly where in the preparation process you are. At earlier stages, it is more likely that engagement exercises will be in-person and involve structured discussions, whereas the formal consultation stages will be subject to written consultation exercises (contact Planning Aid Wales if you require assistance to respond). It is important to participate early and at the defined stages, in whatever form is specified – this will be clarified in the Delivery Agreement.

Focusing on the underlying principles in chapter 3 may help focus community participation in SDP preparation; for example, questions like ‘Does it conform with *Future Wales?*’ and ‘Does it address the evidence?’ will be asked when the plan is being examined and may be useful for you as a community to consider.

Some further questions that may be useful when considering your response include:

- **What is important to our community?** You might be aware of this from past community exercises or have them articulated from the production of a Place Plan or a Placemaking Plan. Ultimately, community priorities can help inform and focus the priorities within your response.
- **What will it mean for us?** What will the impact of a particular strategy be? If the approach involves delivering new development in your area, is there appropriate infrastructure in place? In contrast, would there be negative effects in your area and wider from a lack of development?

- **What are the alternatives?** As with all planning policies, the SDP will have considered a range of options before selecting its preferred strategy – what are those alternatives and what would they mean for your community?
- **What would make it better?** It is possible that planned change in your part of the region might be controversial but may bring benefits to the area or wider region as a whole with some adjustment – it may be beneficial to raise such matters as part of consultation responses even if you don't agree with what is being proposed.
- **Where is the evidence?** Is the evidence presented to justify the proposal accurate or robust? Are there any oversights in this evidence or are you aware of alternative evidence that may challenge the findings?

How do we respond?

Each consultation will set out its requirements for the form and nature of the response required as well as the date by which a response should be submitted. It is likely that electronic submission of a consultation form could be required, although written representations should also be accepted. But contact the relevant CJC if you are unable to do so. Make sure responses are submitted by the specified deadline in order to ensure your response is able to be considered.

Could Place Plans add value?

Place Plans can be a great expression of a community's land use priorities and as such can be used to help formulate your responses to SDP preparation, particularly where they have been prepared in collaboration with the Local Planning Authority, have involved good community engagement and have drawn evidence based conclusions.

For more information about Place Plans, visit www.placeplans.org.uk

Where can I get further information?

This guide is an accompaniment to a *Development Plans Community Guide*, also prepared by Planning Aid Wales, see: <https://planningaidwales.org.uk/development-plans-community-guide/>

Planning Aid Wales provides advice and support to individuals, community groups and community and town councils on planning matters – visit www.planningaidwales.org.uk or call 02920 625 000 for more information.