

## Background

Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council was approached in 2001 by Tracy Critchlow, the Village Agent for Dove Holes, to explain the Village Agent scheme and to ask for permission to undertake work within Dove Holes to develop a Village Plan. Permission was given and the Village Agent made contact with the existing groups within the village to try and form a committee. An Open Day was held to explain the scheme to all the residents and invite them to become involved on the newly-formed Dove Holes Village Group. The Village Agent would work with this group to create a holistic plan for Dove Holes.

The information gathered during the consultation was comprehensive in scope and personal in its approach. The questionnaire included sections on housing, education, countryside and environment, churches, health and social services, environmental and other services, emergency services, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, social activities, transport and highways, information and communication, local government, tourism, the local economy and what people liked and disliked about Dove Holes. The questionnaire was completed by a large proportion of the population and identified some priorities for action.

The aim was to involve a wide proportion of the population in the Village Plan process so that it represented a broad cross-section of the community. As well as using a questionnaire, it was decided to consult people by visiting and talking to them at their regular meeting places in order to seek their views and opinions. All local community groups and committees were contacted directly to raise awareness of the Village Plan and to ascertain the issues that people were concerned about.

Having gained an understanding of the ideas and concerns of the people, the Dove Holes Village Group included them in the draft plan. The draft plan was presented to the people of Dove Holes, for their approval, at an open meeting. A final plan was then drawn up which identifies projects for potential development. People were kept informed of the process through regular newsletters which were delivered by the group to every household in the village.

The Dove Holes Village Group worked closely with the Derbyshire Rural Community Council and had the support of a Village Agent and a fieldworker to help develop the process.

The following organisations were involved in the preparation and planning process: the Community Association, the local Church Council, Dove Holes Primary School, Dove Holes Playgroup, the Dove Chicks, the Methodist church, Dove Holes Youth Club, the local sports clubs and Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council who were all consulted on their priorities for the plan. They were updated regularly.

The Dove Holes Village Group will work closely with the residents of Dove Holes in the development of any projects arising from the Plan. The Local Authorities (Derbyshire County Council, High Peak Borough Council, Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council and the Primary Care Trust) will be included in their discussions.