

Neighbourhood Plan Newsletter Summer 2018

The Neighbourhood Plan for East Hoathly and Halland has made good progress since the last Parish Newsletter. With the help of our Consultant, Richard Eastham and his team at FERIA, we have held two consultative events in the Parish. Both of these events, the Visioning event in February and the Design Forum in March were intended to provide a forum for residents in the Parish to express their ideas and hopes for the future of the villages.

Suggestions were numerous (better playing fields, a new community centre, improved infrastructure, better broadband and mobile phone facilities etc) but the overriding concern expressed was that large scale development in either East Hoathly or Halland should not take place and our woodland and green spaces should also be protected from development. Nobody wanted either village to expand significantly.

The embargo which had been placed on development to counter the effect of vehicle emissions in Ashdown Forest has also prevented development in the villages for the present.

Our Consultant advised throughout that our villages cannot expect no changes to occur over the next 10 -20 years. The Steering Group therefore looked at several suggestions which could allow for some development in the villages but not detract from their pleasant rural environment.

The Interim Report from FERIA based on the two events was published in June and can now be read on the Parish Council website. Please remember that the Interim Report is full of ideas NOT firm proposals of where development might occur. It is also important to remember that none of the ideas if accepted will occur at once but will be spaced over at least 15 years.

The Draft Wealden Local Plan has now been published and has gone a long way towards clarifying the housing numbers we might expect within the Parish over the next 10 – 15 years. Housing numbers are given as 48 homes in East Hoathly (from Windfall Allowance) and 30 homes in Halland within its core area. There are still many questions to be answered such as what is the fate of the Hesmonds Stud application which is still before Wealden District Council. Should permission be granted for this development it would be contrary to the policies set out in the Draft Local Plan. Answers to this question and many more will be actively pursued by the Steering Group at meetings with Wealden District Council over the next months.

The Draft Local Plan has given more robust support to Neighbourhood Plans which now can have some control on small developments outside of the development boundary or core area. Previously this important control was denied to the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Steering Group of the Neighbourhood Plan is now embarking on a very important phase of the progress towards submitting a draft document for consultation. We are once more engaging the services of FERIA and during the autumn and New Year there will be two public consultative events so that hopefully by spring 2019 the first full draft of the Neighbourhood Plan will emerge.

To assist with developing policy themes and to engage public opinion the Steering Group have formed Working Parties who will discuss, consider and draft policies for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. Would you like to contribute to this process by joining a Working Party? Further details of the Working Parties can be found on the web site and you can register your interest on ehwhnp@gmail.com or by contacting one of the Steering Group.

