

# NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN NEWS

We have been working on a Neighbourhood Plan since mid 2017 and this time last year held consultation events to get your views. Wealden then published their Local Plan with a significantly changed package for our Parish. This gave an allowance of 48 new homes from 2017 to 2028. Permissions have already been granted for 27 leaving an allowance of 21 until 2028. Wealden's Local Plan is now with the Planning Inspectorate and should be approved, amended or rejected later this Summer.

Protecting the Ashdown Forest is the cornerstone of the Wealden Local Plan that has indirectly protected our Parish by pushing the bulk of the planned housing to the South. Natural England have challenged the risk to the Forest and this conflict will be settled by the Planning Inspector.

There are also large planning applications for our Parish submitted to Wealden amounting to potentially 350 + homes. The developers are trying to get these approved on the basis that Wealden's Plan is not yet approved or will be amended by the Inspector.

So, you may well ask, why are we bothering to continue with a Neighbourhood Plan ? It would provide the following benefits irrespective of the amount of housing that we eventually have to deal with:

**Enhanced Protection** - many of our treasured assets are already protected by being Listed, part of the Conservation Area or designated as things such as Ancient Woodland. A Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to review these assets and begin the process to enhance these protections. It will enable us to review how we make use of these assets and how they might be improved. It also allows us to identify Green Spaces that will be given significant protection from future development.

**Shape the future of our Parish** - to have the opportunity to get the right type of development in the right place.

**Community Led Housing** - a Neighbourhood Plan allows us to support a project for a Community Land Trust that will provide low rent houses for local families that will remain outside the private sector.

**More Cash for the Parish** - any development that takes place in the Parish provides a cash levy to Wealden to help fund infrastructure projects (mostly outside our Parish). The Parish gets 15% of this cash. With a Neighbourhood Plan in place the Parish would get 25% to help improve Parish infrastructure.

## What's Next

Wealden have just approved the draft of the first part of our Plan and we will be presenting this for public consultation in the next few weeks. Watch this space for details of the events and get involved.