

## ***Neighbourhood Plan Frequently Asked Questions***

Q. If we produce a Neighbourhood Plan will housing development in the Parish be reduced?

A. This is unlikely. Widford has to build a minimum of 18 new homes between 2016 and 2031 land to accommodate this was identified by a 'Call for Sites' which has identified a number of sites.

Q. Can the Neighbourhood Plan suggest different sites for development?

A. The Call for Sites has recently been reviewed and some of the proposed locations are outside the current village boundary. If these sites are to be built on the village boundary would have to be changed. This is done as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. Adding a completely new site could be done as part of the Neighbourhood Plan but would be a very expensive exercise for a small Parish Council.

Q. Will our current village boundary protect us?

A. No, a number of developments have been approved which are outside the current village boundary and this creates a dangerous precedent. Developers will argue that others have been allowed to develop outside of the current boundary so why shouldn't they be treated in the same way.

Q. Who would produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

A. Normally a Steering Group is set up to undertake the task. This would include one or two members of the Parish Council plus a number of local residents representing interest groups such as the school, the church, local landowners and possibly developers.

Q. The Draft District Plan will be published well before a Widford Neighbourhood Plan, won't all the planning decisions have been made?

A. The final version of the East Herts District Plan went to the Executive on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and is now being printed prior to public consultation and external review. We expect it to come into force during March 2017. We suspect that in the final version of the Draft District Plan:-

1. We will remain a Group 2 village but some development will be expected.
2. The village boundary remain the same but will carry little weight in planning terms.

Our Neighbourhood Plan of little use for the next two or three years but once it has been legally adopted we may be in a better position to control future development and any further enlargement of the village boundary.

Q. Does a Neighbourhood Plan only cover planning issues?

A. No it can focus on anything which is important to the area. This could include; character and style issues, the environment, traffic and highways, employment, shops and services. There are limits, Widford is very small and a Neighbourhood Plan focussing solely on traffic and transport may be of little practical use as the resources would not be forthcoming. A Neighbourhood Plan dealing only with housing design style may be a real benefit and may help to retain the character of the village.

Q. How much does it cost to produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

A. For a small village such as Widford a Neighbourhood Plan would cost in the region of £15,000, however, a grant of up to £9,000 is available from Locality. These costs assume that the work is carried out by a Steering Group of about 8-10 local people with support from the Parish Council

and some input from a consultant with experience in this area. If there is a heavy reliance on external consultants to do the work these costs could be doubled.

Q. How long would it take to produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

A. It is not possible to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and get it adopted in less than 2 years. Most Parishes are taking 3 years or more. A quicker result of course costs more money.

Q. Are all small parishes producing a Neighbourhood Plan?

A. List of villages currently not producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Albury	Hunsdon
Anstey	Little Berkhamsted
Ardeley	Little Hadham
Aston	Little Munden
Bayford	Stanstead Abbots
Bengeo Rural	Stanstead St Margarets
Benington	Stapleford
Bramfield	Stocking Pelham
Brent Pelham and Meesden	Tewin
Datchworth	Thorley
Furneux Pelham	Thundridge
Great Amwell	Wareside
Great Munden	Watton at Stone
Hertford	Westmill
Hertingfordbury	Widford
High Wych	