

EGERTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – briefing note for Egerton PC 7 August 2018

All landowners who submitted ideas for potential development sites have been contacted and told that their proposals will be given full consideration, but this will take time. They have been advised not to expect a response until some time in September about the next steps.

As a reminder - the Neighbourhood Plan is all about the need to head off unsuitable development by speculative developers, so that the village is ahead of the game. This means identifying the most suitable sites for development to keep abreast of changing population needs (and pressure on or from Ashford Borough Council to increase housing stock) rather than being bounced by development that is not of a suitable size or type in unsuitable locations! The Plan will also identify areas that need protection from development because of their sensitivity and the views they enable us to enjoy. ***The Neighbourhood Plan's aspirations and its content will be decided by the village, for the village.*** The voluntary NP Group members make up the vehicle by which this will be achieved and is its administrative hub.

In the meantime we are in the process of engaging consultants from the South Downs National Park Authority – a body with even higher status than an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – AONB*. They have highly relevant experience and expertise. We have been sent a draft contract and we are agreeing terms of reference. The consultants will support the NP Group with identifying any gaps in what we are doing or have done to date within the main objectives of the NP and under the themes of Protect, Sustain and Develop.

The consultants will help us work out a process and/or projects for identifying the evidence needed to support us in drafting policies for the Plan. They will also study the draft criteria for development we have already published and ensure it provides clear and objective means of assessing the proposals that have been submitted to us for potential development. The actual assessment of sites will also be carried out with their input and guidance.

A housing needs survey will be conducted by ACRK in September. This will provide the evidence needed for the type and quantity of housing that Egerton's residents seek. We are suggesting a tailor-made letter to go to all households in Egerton to accompany the survey to make it easy to understand and complete effectively, taking account of the whole household.

The NP team would like to have regular opportunities to engage with EPC and suggest a meeting for a presentation (separate from the EPC meeting) in September. We would like EPC to become - and be seen as - ambassadors for the Neighbourhood Plan.

**National parks are areas of countryside designated through legislation by a Government body (Natural England) that include villages and towns. They have an authority to help look after them, including planning controls.*

AONBs are areas of countryside also designated through a similar process that include villages and towns. They have the same legal protection for their landscapes as national parks, but don't have their own authorities for planning control and other services like national parks do. Instead they are looked after by partnerships between local communities and local authorities.