



Plumpton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

We had an amazing turnout for our consultation meeting in September on the Neighbourhood Plan. So far a total of 174 residents have contributed their views about what makes Plumpton a special place to live and what kinds of development you want that would sustain Plumpton as a thriving rural community.

We analysed the many post-it notes you left on the displays. You told us what you treasured about Plumpton now – the quiet/peace and landscape and the strong sense of community.

You also told us what you wanted for the future: retain natural countryside and wildlife (22%); local groups and facilities (15%); retain dark skies (12%); transport and infrastructure problems solved (12%). You also said you were willing to accept small, discreet, affordable development (15%). What matters most to you is that any development retains the character of the village (21%). Only two per cent opposed any development at all.

Taken with all the other comments (which you can find on the Parish Council website – details below), we feel we now have a very clear message from Plumpton residents about your priorities and preferences.

Our next step will be to agree an overall vision for our Neighbourhood Plan and the policies governing future development that we think it could include. We'll also review all the land available for development in the parish so we can propose sites where we think new housing might best be built.

We'll send out a questionnaire to the whole parish in November to get your views on the policies that we think would achieve this vision. Your responses will guide the final draft Plan.

We will carry out a full consultation with the parish on the final draft early next year. The final Plan will then go to Lewes District Council (LDC) and to an independent examiner, who will check that the proper legal process has been followed and that it conforms with local strategic policy.

The final stage is a public referendum on the Plan, which LDC will conduct. This is when you will have the final say. If we've done our job well, we'll be confident that you'll approve the Plan. If it is approved, we hope it will be in place early next summer. This process is governed by the Localism Act 2011.

You'll have heard about '*windfall developments*'. We know there is some concern that some housing developments could go ahead before LDC publishes its Core Strategy. Without wishing to be alarmist, we feel you should be aware of the facts.

The wording of the Core Strategy has been changed since the earlier draft. Instead of 50 houses being allocated to Plumpton, it now reads '*a minimum of 50*' houses. We have been advised by LDC that *only housing built on sites officially allocated for development in the Core Strategy will count towards this target*. Until the Core Strategy is approved, any planning applications for new housing in the village will not count as part of the allocation set out in the Strategy as the housing will not be part of the strategy.

LDC is in a weak position to oppose any planning applications received before the Core Strategy is approved. This is because, under its existing policies, it can only demonstrate a housing supply rather less than the Government requires. In these circumstances LDC policies that might restrict developments before the Core Strategy is approved will carry little weight.

This is a situation created by government planning policy. Other villages locally are facing a similar problem. The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group will continue to express our strongest concerns to LDC.

The Core Strategy is currently being examined by a planning inspector for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. You can download the summary at http://www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_CS_Submission.pdf. The examination process includes public hearing sessions, which anyone is welcome to attend. You can find out more at www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategyexamination. LDC hopes the Core Strategy will be approved and come into force in early 2015. We hope our Neighbourhood Plan will be approved in the summer. We are working on it as fast as we can but it is a complex process.

You'll find regular updates on our progress on the Parish Council website at www.plumptonpc.co.uk and in the parish magazine. Please feel free to ask us questions. Volunteers to help us put the Plan together are always welcome too. Please contact the parish clerk Sarah Jeffers with any queries and she will make sure they get to the right person. Sarah.jeffers@plumptonpc.co.uk/01444 441 302

Plumpton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Your parish... your future