

Stow on the Wold Town Council



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UPDATE FROM STOW & SWELLS NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING GROUP

In a recent edition of Stow Times and at the Annual Town Meeting it was explained that Stow Town Council had requested an update to the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan in the light of significant changes since its inception back in 2014. These included:-

- ❖ A growing need for affordable housing for key workers in Stow on low incomes and who mainly work in the service and care sectors. The latter is driven by the recent construction of large care complexes in the town.
- ❖ The distorted over 65 demographic exacerbated by care complex construction which will affect the very sustainability of the town in the future.
- ❖ The need for “low cost” housing to attract young families and mitigate the effect of the increasing over 65 demographic.

The Group has been working over the last few months and this is to update you on the progress so far:-

- ❖ The Group is almost there in re-determining the requirement for affordable housing in Stow. Cotswold District Council (CDC) has been extremely helpful in providing accurate statistics from which the Group can determine this. Note that under the recently revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) a developer is obliged to allow for 40% of constructed dwellings to be affordable housing. This means that for every 5 dwellings, 2 will be affordable housing.
- ❖ In the light of revised NPPF the Group has been considering whether the best way to get affordable housing, for local people, may be to permit a housing development on a suitable greenfield site, to include a proportion of affordable dwellings set aside for local people.
- ❖ To this end teams of volunteers have recently conducted a preliminary assessment of a number of sites in and around the town using an “assessment toolkit” provided by CDC. The sites were selected from a large list within the CDC Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The Group has undertaken a first review of these assessments being mindful of such major issues as access, distance to the shops, schools and amenities, impact on AONB and other key issues.

Next steps are to further refine the preferred site list until the Group arrive at a site, or sites that meet the affordable housing requirement and is/are suitable for development. This will be then included in the updated plan.

Once this part of the process has been completed there will be a **public consultation** for residents to view and comment on the proposed sites **before** the plan goes to Stow Town Council to adopt. Once adopted it will go through lengthy reviews & consultation processes. After these have been completed a referendum will take place and residents will go to the polling station and it will be them that vote YES or NO for the plan to be approved and subsequently adopted by CDC.

The Group will keep you posted and if anyone has any questions in relation to the plan or the process then do contact the clerk (details at top of this page), in the first instance and she can pass on any comments to Group who will reply directly to any questions.

Cllr Peter Day
Chairman of Stow & Swells
Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group