

Help shape the future of our village - your voice counts!



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February 2013 Newsletter

Welcome to all of you who have recently signed up to receive the newsletter. We are delighted that everyone is so positive about Ashtead Community Vision, the list of people joining both the Working Group and the Forum is growing. We still need more people on the Forum so that we have a broad cross section of the community. We particularly need more younger people, women and those in the rented housing sector so please keep telling everyone you know and encourage them to get involved. Even if people do not want to take an active role it's really important that everyone in Ashtead knows about the initiative because we will be consulting with the community in due course.

SURVEY

There is a sub-group busily working on designing the first questionnaire. The sort of questions we will ask are your opinions on what you like about Ashtead and what you think are the village's most important visual attributes, your opinions on the greenbelt as we are undertaking a Green Belt Boundary review, and brownfield development. There is more information about the green belt review and a map of Ashtead's green belt boundary on the website

<http://ashteadcommunityvision.org.uk/>. We will also be asking about you, although don't worry this is anonymous but it is important so we know the demographics of the people taking part (eg, ward - [click here to find your ward on the map](#), age, gender, how long you have lived in Ashtead etc), We are aiming to have the survey live on-line sometime later this month. We will notify everyone by email and on the website. For those people without access to the internet we will have some drop in sessions (probably at the library, St Georges etc) where we can collect information. It is really important to remember these key points about the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP):

- It is not a way of opposing development, it is a way of having our say in what and where the development will go.
- The NDP must be deliverable, eg feasible and practical.
- The NDP has to go to a referendum in Ashtead and more than 50% of those voting must vote Yes for it to be agreed.

It is this last point which is the reason why we need everyone to get involved and have their say. ACV and the Forum's role is to raise awareness of the issues, canvas and collate the opinions of

people working and living in Ashtead so that when the NDP is produced we do achieve a consensus and hopefully a Yes vote.

ACV WORKING GROUP

The Work group meets every month, the next meeting is Monday 4th March.

FORUM

The Forum now has about 44 members. We had the first meeting on Saturday 9th February.

There is a report and the minutes are on the website <http://ashteadcommunityvision.org.uk/meetings/>

REPORT ON PUBLIC MEETING, 15TH JANUARY 2015

Over 200 people packed into the APMH main hall for Ashtead Community Vision's (ACV) first public meeting. Jack Straw, Head of Planning Policy for MVDC outlined what Ashtead community will need to do to produce their own Neighbourhood Development Plan. He said this is not about opposing development but it is a way for the community to have their say about the type and where new housing could be built.

Andy Ellis, founder of ACV, said "The response has been amazing. So far we have a Working Group of over 20 people and have recruited 38 for the Forum which includes 3 councillors (Mary Cooper, Paula Hancock and Chris Hunt), and a major land owner, but we still need more women and young people to join." David Harper from ACV illustrated the difficult decisions that MVDC planners have been faced with in the last few years by showing maps of potential development sites in Ashtead including many on green belt and in back gardens. He pointed out that these issues are the type of challenges that the community will have to look at over the next few months. He also showed a series of photographs of developments built in the last couple of years and asked people to name where they were. This provoked a lively debate and some surprise when many people didn't know them. He said: "This shows that often building has taken place but unless it's near 'your back yard' it is not so much of a concern to you or noticeable."

Councillor Chris Hunt explained what affordable housing means, how this works in the present planning system, and how this can be included in the NDP.

There were many questions asked, particularly about the number of dwellings that have to be built (Ans, roughly 30 houses per year through to 2026), why in Ashtead rather than elsewhere in Mole Valley (Ans: this is something ACV wish to take up with Mole Valley), and will ACV be addressing the needs of the 65-90 age group? (Ans: Most certainly. According to current statistics, 27% of the Ashtead population is over age 65). ACV will publish a list of questions and answers from the evening on their website.

A major aspect of the NDP will be seeking the community's views. David Harper gave a demonstration of how the on-line survey will work and urged everyone to get involved and tell their neighbours and friends, the first survey will be on-line at the end of February. There was great interest from Ashtead residents and more people came forward to volunteer for the Forum and offering to help. Andy Ellis rounded up the evening by thanking everyone involved who got the initiative off the ground and to all the people who had helped deliver nearly 6000 leaflets to every house in Ashtead.

WEBSITE

The website has been recently updated. We have added a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page and a [Useful Documents & Information](#) page which should help you to find out anything you want to know. We will be keeping this up to date, so it's worth checking the website regularly, or better still find us [on Facebook](#) as we make regular posts about anything new.



Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum Members

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