

## Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum

Ashtead Community Vision – working towards a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)  
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# ASHTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN -THE WORK BEGINS

Ashtead Village Day 2014 not only marks the publication of the Summer edition of the Ashtead Community Vision (ACV) newsletter but it is something of a milestone in the development of the Village's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum was established to develop an NDP – a community led framework for guiding the future development and growth of Ashtead.

But since the Forum was given official authority to proceed following designation in July 2013 it has been diverted by having to deal with some outstanding business from Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) namely the Green Belt Boundary Review (GBBR) and Site Assessments – assessments of



potential development sites that landowners had put forward to MVDC.

Now that this work has drawn to a

close, the Forum's working group, ACV has turned its attention back to the NDP. This newsletter is given over to to what an NDP is all about

*Continued overleaf....*

## Forum Chairman seeks "best result" for local residents

When we started at the beginning of 2013, we expected to complete an NDP in two years. After an initial on-line survey of residents, we started to look in more detail at housing needs, health provision, schools, travel and business to build up our evidence base. However, it soon became clear that in order to meet the deadlines required by MVDC, we would need to concentrate on the GBBR and Site Assessments. For the last ten months, this is what we have done. We finalised the GBBR in February and by the time this newsletter is published, we will have issued our Site Assessments to MVDC.

There is now a hiatus while MVDC completes its draft Housing and Traveller Sites Plan which is due to be published in January 2015. At that point, we will find out which sites MVDC proposes to proceed with and where the Green Belt boundary may change in consequence. We shall

continue to channel Ashtead residents' views throughout the lengthy approval process that will extend out to 2016.

Meanwhile, we can continue where we left off last year and look at the evidence and policies that we need to create our NDP.

### Shaping the future

This plan will shape future planning policy for Ashtead, looking at the issues and needs of our village. Elsewhere in this newsletter is information about the points that we must address. We are currently in the process of planning the work yet to be done. Current priorities are to identify the major issues and to define a vision for Ashtead. The work that we have just completed provided new insights into local issues and opinions.

There are still uncertainties about the

future. The General Election in May 2015 may herald a change of government and possibly a change in housing policy.

A decision on whether there will be a new runway at

Gatwick will change housing needs in Surrey. Finally, a new plan for housing in London will affect the current pressure of outward migration of people from the suburbs into Mole Valley.

Whatever the future holds, I am confident that the Ashtead Neighbourhood Development Forum will continue to work to achieve the best result for local residents.



**Tony Tuley**  
 Chairman Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum

# Neighbourhood Development Plans in context...

and how you can play your part in influencing it.

The UK planning system is about managing the use and development of land and buildings. Its aim is to

## NDP— Plan backed by evidence

Putting together a range of policies for an NDP might sound straight forward enough but there is a great

process so the group is already ahead of the game in terms of developing the evidence base.

## Community Engagement

There is a whole range of reasons as to why the Ashted Forum has to communicate widely to local residents – the overriding one being that consultation is a fundamental requirement of planning legislation. But as importantly, the Forum has to develop a consensus and create community support as this will ensure that the plan is deliverable and avoids future conflict. The referendum on the NDP is simply a 'yes' or 'no' option, so ensuring support is important. If residents can't reach agreement on their NDP then the decision making process concerning the future of Ashted will remain with MVDC.



create better places for people to live, work and play and to strike a balance between allowing development of land and building to support economic development and provide the things we need such as homes shops, transport and jobs. It also aims to improve and conserve public spaces, built and natural heritage, amenities and the environment as well as to help tackle climate change. Planning is either about plan making – to shape how an area will develop over time - or the management of development through the process of planning permissions.

Neighbourhood Development Planning was introduced by the government in 2011 with a view to encouraging local residents to develop a vision and policies for the future development of their area. It is therefore a community led framework with a vision, aims, planning policies and proposals for improving an area and encouraging the provision of new facilities.

deal of work behind it as all the policies have to be supported by evidence and that evidence has to be compiled by ACV on behalf of the Forum either from existing resources – such as those held by MVDC - or from scratch. The policies have to be based on a proper understanding of Ashted if they are to be "relevant, realistic and to address local issues effectively"

The evidence base that ACV has to pull together includes information such as evidence underpinning the existing Local Plan as well as additional social and economic data. Technical reports and transport studies are also utilised as are conservation area appraisals or any listed building historic enforcement records or scheduled ancient monuments. Other public bodies such as utilities also provide evidence, so that too has to be considered.

New evidence will also have to be sought either because it doesn't exist at present or the existing evidence is out of date. So ACV will undertake more surveys on matters such as the local economy and possibly environmental and infrastructure studies as well. ACV has already undertaken some of this work as part of the GBBR and the Site Assessment

## Independent Examination

It's the responsibility of MVDC to organise and cover the cost of the independent examination and referendum. The examiner will be appointed by the local authority with the consent of the Ashted Neighbourhood Forum. The examination will consider the document submitted by the Forum and any comments made during the consultation period on the submitted plan proposal. The examiner will examine whether the plan meets basic conditions and other relevant legal requirements.

If the examiner is satisfied then a recommendation to progress to a referendum is made. Otherwise the inspector may suggest modifications or could even reject the plan.

If all is well then MVDC will arrange a referendum giving 28 days notice. The Forum can campaign before the referendum subject to rules over expenses. If more than 50% of those who vote say 'yes' then the council will bring the NDP into legal force.

### Other reading

"Neighbourhood Plans Roadmap Guide" and "A Quick Guide to Neighbourhood Plans" can be found at: [www.locality.org.uk](http://www.locality.org.uk)

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