

So, ideally, the working group members will have an interest and/or experience relevant to their working group's activity.

### **What are other Parishes doing?**

Although there is no obligation to produce a NP, many of our neighbouring Parishes such as Goudhurst, Lamberhurst, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst, Staplehurst, Paddock Wood, Sandhurst, Benenden and Yalding have decided that it's a worthwhile. They understand that all places are either growing or declining and that nothing stays the same but a good neighbourhood plan can let them manage growth on their terms.

### **Who will decide that Horsmonden will produce a Neighbourhood Plan?**

The Parish Council will only decide to sponsor a Neighbourhood Plan for Horsmonden if it is confident that there are enough residents who are prepared to be actively involved in its development. It will make the decision at its meeting on 4th September.

### **What can you do to make it happen?**

If you think that it's a great opportunity for Horsmonden to help shape its development and you are willing to assist in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, it's important that you register your interest with the Parish Council, as soon as possible, by:

**emailing the clerk of the council:**

**clerk@horsmonden-pc.gov.uk**

**or by writing to:**

**The Parish Office, Horsmonden Village Hall, Back Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, TN12 8LL.**

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## **The Horsmonden Village Society**

### **Do you want to ensure that Horsmonden remains a great place to live and to help shape its development?**

At the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) on May 15th, Jane March, the Parish Council Chairman, clearly indicated that the Parish Council would not sponsor a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) unless there was sufficient active commitment from residents to be involved in its development. Following a groundswell of interest at the APM, the Parish Council organised a residents' meeting on July 6th to help inform residents about an NP for our Parish and to determine the local interest. There was a very impressive turnout and the Village Hall was full, with standing room only! Many were already enthusiastic for an NP to be produced but all were keen to learn more from the speakers.

**Kelvin Hinton**, TWBC, provided an overview from the Borough Council's perspective in the context of its Local Plan, which is currently under development.

**Julia Newman**, Chair of the Hawkhurst Parish Council and of its NP Group, gave an overview of the progress of its plan, which is nearing completion and has used a great deal of external consultancy.

**Colin Willis**, Chair of the Goudhurst NP Group gave an overview of their progress, which is at an early stage and they are currently analysing the residents' response to the Parish Questionnaire. They have about 40 local volunteers actively supporting the project and are thus able to minimise the requirement for consultant support. However, both NP groups believe that some consultancy input is essential for an NP to be successful.

## How will we benefit from a Neighbourhood Plan?

A neighbourhood plan will enable Horsmonden to:

- Develop a shared vision and to shape its development and growth.
- Be focused on the needs of the Horsmonden and would allow the local community to specify, in greater detail, what we expect from development than would be included in the TWBC Local Plan. For example, it could contain more detail on things like urban design, affordable housing, and preferred sites/locations for housing and other development. On current plans, TWBC will be aiming to build 13,000 dwellings over the period to 2033. A proportion of this figure will be allocated to Horsmonden. An NP will enable us to influence the location and design of these dwellings.
- Benefit from 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy from development that takes place in the area.

The NP will be part of the statutory development plan for the area, i.e. it will have legal status equal to that of the Borough Council's Local Plan (unlike a Village Plan or Vision, which has no legal status).

However, it's important to remember that an NP is about guiding and shaping development, not undermining the delivery of development in the area.

## How is a Neighbourhood Plan produced?

The scope of the plan will depend upon the requirements of the community. The amount of active and committed local voluntary support will depend upon the amount of consultancy used but in either case there will be regular public meetings and workshops that will involve the whole community.

In Goudhurst, where the consultancy input is being kept to a minimum, there are six working groups and a steering group:

### **Landscape Character Assessment Development:**

To contribute to and enhance the natural & local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

### **Business and Development:**

To identify business needs (shops, offices, farming, pubs, homeworking, broadband) and housing development needs within the Parish.

### **Social & Community:**

To examine the social fabric & wellbeing of the residents, including: recreational and community facilities, leisure facilities, healthcare, social/community-led services, pre-schools & schools – capacities and usage etc.

### **Traffic & Transport:**

To identify volumes & growth, pedestrian paths & cycleways, public transport and usage, on & off-street parking and issues with each aspect.

### **Questionnaire:**

Production of the questionnaire to obtain the views of the whole community; collection of responses; analysis of the questionnaire response data.

### **Publicity:**

To make sure everyone in the Parish has heard of the NP project, plan a multi-channel communications campaign including a dedicated web site, arrange events to inform, engage and evidence community involvement and distribute the questionnaire to every household.

### **A Steering Group:**

Responsible for the overall management of the project and is made up of the all the working group leaders, some working group members including three Parish Councillors and the Chairman and the Secretary.