



Dear Residents,

This is a further update regarding Newick's Neighbourhood Plan, adoption of which will be put to the vote in the **referendum** of the **26th of February** to be held at the **Community Centre**.

The Plan's Steering Group has completed the three question and answer sessions for Newick residents concerning the Independent Examiner's comments and the resulting changes to the Plan. The Council hopes that these events have addressed any final concerns and left you happy with the Plan.

Many of you will be aware that no decision has been taken by Lewes District Council on a planning application lodged last autumn for a site in Newick that is **not** proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The decision has been deferred while the result of the referendum is awaited. This was done because the Neighbourhood Plan already "carried weight". Some of you will also know that a planning application was submitted to Lewes District Council in December for the site off Newick Hill, which **is** one of those proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council would have preferred that this application be deferred until after the referendum, so has deliberated carefully about how it should respond. The fact is, however, that because the Neighbourhood Plan "carries weight" already and the proposal meets the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, Lewes District Council is not able to either defer or refuse planning permission. As a result, The Parish Council has supported the application and made a few comments on it.

Whilst writing, may I advise you on behalf of the Parish Council that in December, the Council made submissions to the examiner of Lewes District's Core Strategy, which is the first part of the overall plan for the district, and that over the last two weeks, Councillors have been attending the examination hearing sessions. By these means the Council has sought to monitor and influence the development of the Core Strategy and combat some submissions made by other parties. In doing this the Council has taken into account your views given during development of the Neighbourhood Plan, and in particular your concerns regarding the potential impact on Newick of possible developments in North Chailey. Resolution of the Ashdown Forest / SANGS issue is understood to be imminent, but the Council is also pressing for that to be speeded up.

On **February 26th** the referendum on the Plan will be held at the **Community Centre**. If you are on the Register of Electors (Electoral Roll) you should have received your official poll card by now. The card gives details of how to arrange for a postal vote or a proxy vote if you will not be able to vote in person.

The Neighbourhood Plan is known to have strong support but, unless its supporters do turn out and vote, the NO voters could predominate. If that happens, Newick will have no Neighbourhood Plan and consequently, relatively little protection against the speculative planning applications likely to follow for various sites around Newick. Lewes District Council may not be able to refuse such applications if there is no Neighbourhood Plan.

Please do make the effort to vote and please vote **YES**, in order that the Neighbourhood Plan, your Plan which you have done so much to shape and develop, is formally adopted. If it is, the village of Newick and its rural surroundings will be given the best protection available.

Sue Berry, Clerk (on behalf of the Parish Council)