

FENITON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a procedure whereby local communities could have a greater say in the future development of their area by creating a 'Neighbourhood Plan' to guide development. This plan will sit alongside National Planning policies and the Local Plan prepared by the District Council as a statutory guide to development in the area.

WHAT DOES IT COVER?

Neighbourhood Plans are about local communities expressing their wishes on local development and can cover a range of subjects such as where new homes and commercial developments should be located, community facilities, environment and conservation issues, infrastructure etc.

HOW DOES IT SIT WITH OTHER STATUTORY PLANS?

Neighbourhood Plans are about **guiding** development – not stopping it – and must not conflict with, or contradict, National Planning Policies or the District Local Plan currently being prepared by EDDC. For example, the local plan for East Devon will determine how many new houses are required in East Devon over the next 15 years, and in which areas they should be developed. A Neighbourhood Plan will allow local communities to determine what type of accommodation is required (starter homes, single or family accommodation, sheltered housing, etc.) and to allocate specific sites for this purpose. It cannot reduce the numbers set out in the Local Plan.

WHAT IS FENITON DOING?

In East Devon, Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by Town and Parish Councils in consultation with the local community. Feniton Parish Council is a designated 'Qualifying Body' and has started work on producing the Plan which covers the whole parish of Feniton. A steering group of parish councillors and other representatives of the community has been established, which will guide the preparation of the plan. Public consultation meetings are being held, evidence gathered, and the views of all residents and businesses sought. In due course a questionnaire will be distributed to all residents and businesses in the parish and details will be made available on the Parish Council website and Twitter account (see details below). It is possible that a planning consultant will be employed to help prepare the plan.

WHAT DO LOCAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES DO?

Local opinion and support is what drives the Neighbourhood Plan. It is a statutory document, and the Parish Council is required to show that it has the support of the community. The views of Fenitonians and opinions on anything considered important to future development in the village are actively sought. **Let the Parish Council and the steering group know what is important to you!**

WHAT IS THE TIMETABLE?

Much depends on the response of the local community, but it is hoped that, following public consultation and evidence collation, a questionnaire will be sent to all residents and businesses by early summer – a draft plan will then be prepared for further public consultation and amendment (if required) with a final plan to be completed by the autumn of 2015.

Following completion of the plan, it has to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (EDDC) for validation. An independent examiner is then appointed by EDDC to ensure that the plan meets all criteria and legal requirements. If approved, the plan is then submitted to the residents of Feniton in a referendum and if a majority approves, it can then be adopted as a recognised statutory planning document which guides EDDC in its consideration of planning applications.

FAQs

- **Who pays for this?**
The preparation of the plan is the responsibility of the Parish Council and costs will be met from the Parish Council precepts, grants and other income. The referendum will be financed by EDDC.
- **Who decides the outcome of individual planning applications?**
This remains the responsibility of EDDC which will be required to take account of the provisions of an approved Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Can the Neighbourhood Plan override the Local Plan?**
No – it must conform to Local Plan policies, but implementation and timetable may be decided by the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **What if the Local Plan is delayed?**
If the Local Plan is not in place by the time any Neighbourhood Plan is approved, the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan will be a relevant factor in deciding any planning application.
- **Have other localities in East Devon got a Neighbourhood Plan?**
Yes – some are approved, and others are in the course of preparation; details can be found on the EDDC Planning website (see below).
- **There is already a Parish Plan – why have another one?**
The Parish Plan published in 2007 is not a statutory document, and needed updating. It has no 'official' status when considering planning applications. The evidence it contains when updated can form a sound basis for development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

1. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan, its progress and examples of what can be achieved are available on the Parish Council website (www.fenitonparishcouncil.wordpress.com) and Twitter account (@Fenitonplan).
2. East Devon District Council has further information on its planning website: (www.new.eastdevon.gov.uk/planningservices).
3. Comments can be made to the Parish Council by returning comment slips to the Parish Council or the Spar shop, and/or by e-mail (fenitonneighbourhoodplan@gmail.com).