

ALMELEY PARISH
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Update June 2018

GOOD NEWS FOR THE PARISH AND THOSE WHO LIVE HERE

Following on from our updates in November 2017 and February 2018, we are pleased to report that our Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan has successfully completed its consultation stage with the overwhelming majority of responses being enthusiastic and supportive. All responses were considered and can be viewed on the Parish Council website. Below are some examples of responses:-

Parishioners said:-

"The policy which aims to maintain and protect landscapes and features, character and natural environments within the parish is much needed and a welcome inclusion in this policy document."

"This plan sensitively balances the need for housing with conserving the rural and historic areas of the parish. I consider the two sites identified and approved by Almeley Parish Council to be ideal."

"The Draft Almeley Development Plan is comprehensive, wide ranging and has taken into account residents' wishes."

"We are delighted to support the Parish Council's determination to sustain the present beauty and integrity of the parish with its unique landscape and lovely natural features."

"The NDP is well constructed and has the best interests of the Almeley area at heart. It is very positive in championing the rural qualities and characteristics of this charming village and surrounds."

Statutory Consultees:-

Historic England said *"Historic England is supportive of both the content of the document and the vision and objectives set out in it. The emphasis on the conservation of local distinctiveness and variations in local character through good design and the protection of locally significant green space, buildings, historic farmsteads and landscape character, including key views and archaeological remains is to be applauded. The plan reads as a very comprehensive, well considered document, which is eminently fit for purpose. The plan takes an exemplary approach to the historic environment of the parish and constitutes a very good example of community led planning."*

Herefordshire Council said *"Overall the plan is well written and researched. It is clear to see that the policies have taken into account the views of the local community."*

At its meeting on the 9th May, Almeley Parish Council approved the resubmission of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) following comments from the consultation exercise. The plan will shortly proceed to the next phase of the approval and adoption process and be formally presented to Herefordshire Council for examination. **A special Parish Council Meeting will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on 11th June in order to facilitate its progress. You are invited to attend.**

It is sadly necessary to report that during the consultation period an anonymous and mischievous letter, mistaken for an official document, was circulated to some parishioners. The letter contained inaccurate and misleading statements which unfortunately did confuse and concern some recipients. It is possible that whoever made this malicious attempt to derail our Parish Plan may try again. If you do receive any further NDP fake mail please disregard it. It is just one person's distorted opinion. If in doubt or you have concerns about anything you receive, contact the Parish Clerk, Emma Thomas tel: 01885 490414 or email at apcclerk@gmail.com. The Draft NDP document is still available to members of the public on the Almeley Parish Council website – almeleypc.org.

The importance of achieving a successful outcome to the NDP project can not be over emphasised. As a sparsely populated parish we were given a modest minimum housing target to achieve, 15 additional houses over and above the 18 already approved or built since 2011. In line with parishioners' views two small sites of five were chosen from those presented by landowners for consideration, one of which now has planning approval. The other will be supported by the Parish Council when eventually a planning application is made. The remaining 5 houses will come from natural development of individual small sites over the next thirteen years.

We know that a number of parishes which do not have the protection of their own plan are being subject to applications for extensive housing developments. An example of this is Stoke Lacey where according to the Core Strategy they needed 24 houses but so far 40 homes have been approved - they have no NDP. Your Parish Council, supported by the NDP Working Party and parishioners is determined to safeguard our quality of life and our precious rural environment through the production and implementation of a plan enshrining your wishes and aspirations.

Please remember that our plan covers much more than just our housing allocation, it is also about minimising the impact on the parish. The principal aim of the plan is to protect our quality of life and environment whilst managing change to achieve best outcomes.

Once the plan has been through the examination process any suggested amendments will have to be considered and queries resolved. Thereafter, the final document will be put to the parishioners in a referendum in which you will be able to vote to adopt, or decline, your plan. We will advise you further once this stage is reached.

Almeley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party