

ORWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

What progress has been made with this?

The collection of data to help develop the Neighbourhood Plan has been making very good progress in the last few months. We have been allocated sufficient funding to allow us to commission the production of two very important documents which provide evidence to support the development of the plan. These reports, the Housing Needs Assessment and The Design Guidance and Codes, have been formulated by a professional consultancy group, AECOM, on behalf of Locality, who actively support local community organisations such as ours. They provide us with expert consultancy, analysis and interpretation of policies affecting future planning considerations for our village. The Steering Group is evaluating these draft documents and preparing comments for AECOM to inform the next draft which we hope to be available by the end of the year.



The Housing Needs Assessment, as the name suggests, analyses trends and provides estimates of the demands, constraints and requirements for housing in the future, in the context of the village's current housing stock and general trends in the wider area. It looks at the character of Orwell, the people who currently live here, the nature of existing dwellings, and suggests the type and size of housing that Orwell residents might need or expect in the future. It also looks at how Orwell matches the planning policies for the various types of housing in the community, from affordable housing suitable for first time buyers, to the larger detached properties of those moving up the housing ladder. From all this it provides indications of how our housing stock might expect to develop and grow in the future.

Some weeks back, Steven and Emma accompanied two representatives of AECOM to tour the village looking at and characterising the type and look of the housing we have today. Further to this visit, a proposal has been drawn up to show homes in the village grouped to show a number of areas which are defined by their character, their age and development history. From this we can be clear what sort of housing we have now and we can use this information to draw up a local policy which will help to ensure that future developments can be in keeping with the existing housing stock.

Both of these documents will provide evidence to support the local policies which will be developed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan, but before writing up these policies, we will be engaging in our next consultation to seek feedback and comments from everyone in Orwell on these proposals. Both documents are long and will take some time to go through in detail, so we intend to produce summaries to share with you so you don't have to read them in full.

We will also be inviting you to an open meeting in the Village Hall in the New Year, when we will present summaries of these documents and seek your feedback. This activity will be vitally important as the essential feature of the Neighbourhood Plan is that it reflects the views of the residents and it is therefore important that all residents are consulted on the plan with the intention of ensuring the plan belongs to everyone in the village.

We are working on preparing comments on the first drafts of these documents and we will feed them back to AECOM so they can produce the second drafts which we will share with you as and when available. We urge you to keep in touch with progress on the Neighbourhood plan to date through the web site: orwellneighbourhoodplan.co.uk.

Thank you in anticipation of your input to Orwell's Neighbourhood Plan.

Mark Collins, Chair of the Steering Group

Other members of the group: Maggie Gould, Emma Tabor, Steven Thain, Philip Hodgson, Mark Ridler, Sam Cottrill, Emily Peach.