

## **How Many New Homes for Maresfield Parish ?**

Wealden District Council hopes to publish its new draft Local Plan in Spring 2022 and it will almost certainly include a number for the new homes to be built in Maresfield Parish over the plan period. We do not know what that number is; in the last Plan (2013) it was fifty.

But circumstances are now very different.

Firstly, Wealden District will be required to plan for at least 1,200 homes per year whereas in 2013 the number was about 450.

Secondly, the protection against development afforded by our Parish's proximity to the Ashdown Forest has significantly reduced. We still understand that no new development will be allowed within the Forest nor within the 400m Exclusion Zone around the Forest Boundary; however, development elsewhere will not be restricted but will merely require a small financial contribution as mitigation for any adverse effect on the Forest attributable to the development.

Thirdly, Wealden's recent requests to landowners/developers to put forward sites for an initial assessment of their suitability for development has yielded over 30 sites in our Parish which if deemed suitable would encourage Wealden in their new Plan to allocate a number of new homes to our Parish which could be delivered from those sites.

My personal conclusion is that our Parish could be allocated as many as 250 new homes, or even more and these could be built on sites in Nutley as well as in Maresfield.

If we think 250 is too many we need to have very good reasons and feed these into Wealden as soon as we can while their draft plan is being prepared. Your views please.

Where the houses would go in the Parish is an essential part of the valuable work currently being undertaken by our NDP Steering Group who are objectively and impartially assessing the sites which have been put forward and will produce a prioritised list of their recommended sites when the number of homes to be allocated is known.

I wrote a piece about the local planning background for the November parish magazines and this is still available on the Parish Council website. I'm sure you would find it interesting.

## **Parish Survey**

Please look out for the General Survey we are going to ask every household in the Parish to complete. This is to update our evidence base for our latest draft of our Neighbourhood Development Plan and also to inform our ongoing discussions with Wealden District Council as they consult the Parishes during the preparation of their new Local Plan. As I indicated above this will affect our Parish and especially Maresfield Village so your input is important and the Parish Council needs to understand the views of parishioners so we can fully represent them to Wealden and reflect them in our NDP.

## **Useful links are:**

<https://my.wealden.gov.uk/>

<http://www.maresfieldparish.org.uk/>

<http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/>    <https://www.ashdownforest.org/>

And you can also follow the Parish Council on Twitter and Facebook.

**Martin Craddock** – Chairman Maresfield Parish Council