

Have a say in the future of your village

A message from your Parish Council

EARLS Colne has the opportunity to create and submit a Neighbourhood Plan covering the village. Such a plan sets out policies relating to the development of land and services in a defined neighbourhood area.



A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) can be as comprehensive as the villagers want to make it. It can cover where you believe it would be most appropriate for new development to take place. (New houses will be built in the village but the NP gives us an opportunity to say where we'd like them to be built rather than having it imposed on us.) It can also cover the quantity and style of new houses to be built; how we think new growth will affect the life of the village – including requirements for education (more children might mean a bigger school); requirements for health services (will the village need more doctors to cope with an increasing population?) and better transport links to neighbouring towns – both for residents and businesses moving into the area. It could also cover making new provisions for the elderly, for children and young people and protecting our precious environment from over-development.



Provision for the creation of an NP is a product of the Government's Localism Act, designed to give local people a greater say in the future development of the place where they live. The Parish Council has to be the instigating body for an NP and it must supervise the work – but it needs input from the whole village and, ideally, a working party from a cross-section of all residents to drive things forward.

There need to be representatives from many different walks of life – business owners, land owners, farmers, residents, parents with school-age children, schoolchildren themselves, people who work in the village and those who commute to work, professionals and manual workers, community groups, youth organisations – everyone, in fact, from every walk of life, who enjoys living in Earls Colne and wants to help maintain it as a great place to live. The project to create a Neighbourhood Plan will take time and energy – and without your active





involvement, it may well prove impossible to achieve. So, we're writing to you to find out if you would be willing to help with this really important body of work. We'll get a lot of help and support from Braintree District Council (who are obliged by law to do all they can to encourage the creation of such plans.) We'll need to get the views of everyone who lives in the village and to produce a written plan that will go to the planning department at BDC for approval

and then onto a Government inspector for ratification. When that has been achieved, the whole village can vote on whether or not to adopt the NP. Once approved, the District Council is obliged to consider adherence to the Neighbourhood Plan in all future planning applications for our village so it can really allow us to influence the way Earls Colne evolves.

Producing an NP will not be a quick job and it will take time to produce a valuable, balanced, relevant and empowering document which will reflect the wants, needs and views of the people of Earls Colne. But the effort we put in will be balanced by the benefits we will get out of the work – more control over our own destiny.

If you'd like more information about how a Neighbourhood Plan is created, visit Braintree District Council's website at the following address:

www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200230/planning_policy/458/neighbourhood_planning/1.



Right now, all we need you to do is to let our Parish Clerk, Angela Emerson, know whether you would be willing to attend a public meeting to decide whether to proceed with an NP or not. You can do so by emailing her at clerk@earlscolne.org, by calling her on 01787 224370 or simply by dropping into the Parish Council offices at the Village Hall in York Road and leaving your name and contact details.



This is your chance to help shape the future of Earls Colne

