

MESSAGE FROM THE WADHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP - WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE THE SUMMER 2021 REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

After the summer 2021 Parish-wide consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, we carefully considered the large volume of comments and responses received and, where appropriate, have amended the Plan to reflect this feedback. Additional policies were added, and some were changed. Further documents and policy evidence were also prepared.

At the same time, we conducted the online mapping survey as input to the Plan's state-of-the-art Design Code tailored for Wadhurst. This Design Code will add important detail to the Plan's policy on Design and Development. Wadhurst will be one of the first rural Parishes in the country to take advantage of a new Government approach that allows us, as local people, to have a strong say in the design of any new development that takes place.

We also engaged a specialist consultant to review the Plan and its supplementary documents to ensure the Plan is robust. The Steering Group then further amended the Plan in light of the consultant's advice.

A review of the subsequent draft Plan by Wealden District Council (WDC) Planning resulted in further challenging and demanding responses by WDC. To support and reflect Wadhurst's residents' opinions and wishes from the first phase consultation, the Steering Group engaged in ongoing and often lively discussions with WDC.

WDC then required the amended Plan to undergo screenings for both a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment; both of which are lengthy processes that extended the timetable.

In view of all the changes to the Plan since the summer 2021 consultation, WDC has advised the Plan should be subject to a second phase Regulation 14 consultation. This will take place from 14 November 2022 to 3 January 2023.

Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

10th November 2022