

Progress Report on the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan

MOVING TOWARDS A REFERENDUM AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Things are moving quite quickly at the moment on progressing the Plan but because of publishing deadlines this month's article may well be out of date by the time you read it – please check www.shifnalplan.co.uk for the latest news!

During March the Independent Examiner has been reviewing the Plan. When he has completed his work he will recommend to Shropshire Council whether it should proceed to the referendum stage or whether modifications to the Plan are required before this can happen.

One thing we do know is that our referendum cannot be on the same date as the European referendum and so we will be voting in two referendums on separate Thursdays this summer. There will be a lot of publicity to alert residents to its date both locally with information from the Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and from Shropshire Council who will organise the referendum.

If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote `yes` in support of the Neighbourhood Plan then the local planning authority (Shropshire Council) will bring it into force as part of the statutory development plan for our area.

Don't underestimate the value and importance of the Neighbourhood Plan – once approved in the referendum and brought into legal force it has the same status as the Local Plan. It will become part of development plan against which future planning applications are determined.

The other important benefit to come from the Neighbourhood Plan is that there will be a list of planning and associated policies and projects that are part of the Plan that will need to be implemented. Shifnal Town Council is working with Shifnal Forward on an annual rolling development plan that will include Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The Town Council will identify the organisations and processes that will be involved in doing this. As well as the Neighbourhood Plan, the Place Plan and the Shifnal Town Council and Shropshire Council budget strategies will be key inputs into the work programme to develop the annual plan. The Town Council will lead working groups that include wider community representation and will

report back on progress on this on a regular basis. Overall, developing the annual plan is not an easy task particularly in the context of current financial constraints even with the housing developer contributions that will be available over the next few years.

Look out for further updates on the website and in the May issue of the magazine.

Chris Raine (Chair) and Tim Day (member) of the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group