



eynsham futures

Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan 2031 in progress!

We currently face many challenges in Eynsham - massive regional and local pressure for housing development in this area, lots of piecemeal applications being made at the moment by developers, no coordination, no overall plan for infrastructure, existing facilities already at bursting point – such as schools, medical facilities, sewage system, gridlocked traffic morning and evening etc- as highlighted by many Eynsham residents who have had their say, so far. There is also an increasing elderly population in the village, for whom there is inadequate special provision. There is a need for the community to come together to face these challenges, and to press for a sensible, balanced and coordinated approach to future development. An integrated strategy is urgently needed, covering housing, employment, education, infrastructure, travel, leisure and the broader environment. This is where the Neighbourhood Plan comes in. The Parish Council has formed a Steering Group made up of concerned local residents, councillors and business representatives to prepare one for Eynsham.

Neighbourhood Plans allow communities to shape the future of their areas. This could include, amongst other things, determining the location of houses, businesses, local green spaces and schools and setting standards of design for new housing. They are instigated and prepared by local communities with the support of the local authority. They include extensive community engagement and will be looked at by an independent examiner to consider how the plan fits in with local and national planning policies. If successful at a referendum the Eynsham NP will form part of the local development plan for West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) and be used for determining planning applications.

How does the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) relate to the Draft WODC Local Plan and the current spate of applications for development in the village?

The NP must support and enhance Local Plan policies and cannot seek to oppose or undermine them. The draft WODC Local Plan has identified possible sites which **might** be suitable and available for 250+ new homes between 2019 and 2024. However the draft Local Plan is not yet in force so WODC currently has to determine applications on national and, out of date, local planning policies. This means that the owners of proposed sites are trying to get permission to develop them now instead of waiting 4 years. There is a danger that this will lead to unplanned piecemeal developments without the best possible provision of infrastructure and without people here having a positive influence.

What have we done so far?

Many people responded to our introductory leaflet and more came to our Launch in March and the Community Day in June and gave us their views. We had displays in the Library and at the Primary School to publicise what we are doing. Another 127 visitors talked to us at our Carnival Stall and had their say. We

are talking to local businesses and the school Partnership Academy as well as prospective developers. In the Autumn we hope to get the Bartholomew School Council involved.

The Key issues that concern people are emerging as-

- The strength of the community spirit and the friendliness here together with concern that new development should be managed so as not to undermine that.
- A love of our green and historic spaces and our close links to surrounding countryside. People- old and young- want these protected.
- People recognise the need to provide homes both nationally and locally but some fear that too many will alter the things that make Eynsham special, such as our thriving local shops and services.
- Similarly they fear development will over stretch our infrastructure- such as schools, roads, sewers and the medical centre.
- Traffic congestion and parking in the village annoy and worry people. This is mostly due to factors beyond our control such as congestion on the routes towards Oxford, but joined-up planning of new housing might mitigate problems or at least not make them worse.
- Many would welcome increased employment opportunities locally

These concerns and aspirations will help form our Vision for the plan and be incorporated in the Scoping Report which we are currently drafting and which will set out what the NP hopes to achieve.

What happens next?

Over the next few months we will collect more evidence from the community, particularly how many people share the same vision- probably through a questionnaire setting out the choices we face and options available. We will also gather evidence of what type of homes and businesses are needed and find out the possible impact on schools, leisure, medical facilities, traffic and other practical matters which have to be taken into account in preparing a plan for the next 15 years.

Find out more!

You can follow progress at <http://eynshamfutures.org.uk/> where there is a link to our Facebook page. The NP Steering Group meets monthly and all are welcome.

We need more help - from people to deliver and collect questionnaires to people to help with finances or writing policies. All that is needed is a love of Eynsham, enthusiasm and a desire to get the best from living/working in the village.

Please contact Posy Parrinder at eynsham.futures@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

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