

bridge

Newsletter of the Sonning & Sonning Eye Society

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STOP PRESS!

A Neighbourhood Plan for Sonning

Mike Hart, Chairman

At their meeting on 10th September, Sonning Parish Council (SPC) resolved to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for Sonning with assistance from the Sonning & Sonning Eye Society. A joint working party has already carried out some exploratory work and they can now go ahead following the SPC commitment.

Briefly stated, a neighbourhood plan gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. The community can choose where it wants new homes, shops and offices to be built and have its say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided.

Wokingham Borough Council is currently updating their Local Plan that will define where development is to take place up to the year 2036. Some significant new developments within the Sonning parish area have been identified, SPC and the Society have made representations about them but a neighbourhood plan is needed to determine our own future. The neighbourhood plan will be a statutory document that will define where and what can be built.

Many local towns and villages have already created their own neighbourhood plans, the ones we have consulted unequivocally recommend that we go ahead but they stress the need for the whole



community to get behind it and the commitment in time that will be needed. Our neighbours, Eye & Dunsden are also about to embark on their own neighbourhood plan (see page 6) so this presents a great opportunity to take a coordinated approach.

The next step will be to arrange a public meeting to launch the Sonning Neighbourhood Plan at which the joint working party will explain what is involved and the need for volunteers to represent the different interests and locations within Sonning. A date and venue for this meeting will be announced shortly.

More information can be found on the government portal at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

And there is also a helpful site managed by Locality with advice on Neighbourhood Planning Support :

neighbourhoodplanning.org

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