

An Opportunity to Talk to the Developers

It appears generally accepted that the nation needs more homes and, particularly, more affordable homes. How often, however, have you heard or read in recent times about protests from local communities and neighbourhoods that proposed developments are too big, not in the right place or do not contain the right mix of dwellings to suit that community's future housing needs. This is one of the issues that motivated the nationwide support, now evident, for Neighbourhood Plans (designed by the community for the community).

Against the backcloth of a developing new County Council Local Plan (a statutory requirement) Uppingham is now in the process of updating its current Neighbourhood Plan, a document that was a government front runner and is regularly referenced both locally and from around the UK. It can still be read online at www.uppinghamneighbourhoodplan.info The task group that prepared the plan, together with the town council, received much praise for its collaborative work and community consultation.

Now a new UTC Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group led by local wool shop owner Jane Lang is hoping to repeat the very successful approach adopted first time round. A special weekend briefing and consultation event has been organised at which residents will be able to meet with local landowners and developer representatives to explore their ideas for the future development of Uppingham.

The initiative is being led by Housing Task Group Chair and Uppingham First Vice Chair Cllr David Ainslie, who has secured acceptances from all the major players to an invitation to participate and display outline plans of what they have to contribute to the town's future. Exhibitors have also been asked to listen carefully to visiting residents own thoughts on what is required to ensure Uppingham remains an outstanding place to live, trade, work and play.

The event is to be held on the morning of Saturday December 7th 2019 between 10am and 12noon upstairs (a lift is available) in the council chamber of Uppingham Town Council and downstairs in its Members Room. It will take the form of a 'drop in' exhibition and information exchange. New sites for housing will feature together with an updated masterplan for Uppingham Gate and the additional employment and services it can bring to the town.

A special feature of the event that should appeal to those local families who are interested in the new homes for younger people (under 35) to rent is the display planned by local community land trust, Uppingham Homes. An important feature of planning approval for such homes is hard evidence of actual local need. Uppingham Homes representatives there will be pleased to register the contact details, and advise on the eligibility, of prospective tenants wishing to participate in a detailed housing needs survey to be carried out in collaboration with the Rutland branch of the countryside charity CPRE.

Stylish, high quality homes of various sizes, bungalows, homes with shared ownership, market led affordable housing and income related affordable housing (where young tenants may receive back a proportion of the rent they have paid as capital towards a home purchase) are all on show for consideration. So too, is an update on the possibility of a cinema, a care home, a second supermarket and business start-up workshops at Uppingham Gate.

This is an event not be missed! Town Councillors and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group will also be present to share information and listen. So why not come into town on Saturday December 7th and enjoy all the high street has to offer, perhaps having coffee or lunch after your visit to the town hall. This is your opportunity to influence the town's future direction of travel.