

HUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

Update note by Bob Toll (Chair) 1st April 2023

Gilston Area Housing Development

East Herts Development Management Committee granted consent for the 7 villages comprising the Gilston Area Development for a total of 10,00 dwellings of which 4,700 can be built by 2033. Places for People are developing Villages 1-6 and Taylor Wimpey is in consent to build all 1500 dwellings comprising Village 7 at Brickhouse Farm. The consent is conditional upon a legal agreement being signed by EHC and both developers (Section 106 Agreement) which is being negotiated.

The DMC decisions are particularly disappointing because they have paid only lip service to the policies in the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan, have fallen far short of the promised number of affordable homes, failed to account for the impact of increased traffic on the existing network and ignored the impacts on the already over stressed NHS.

Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Parish Councils have authorised the joint Neighbourhood Plan Group (NPG) to request the Secretary of State, Michael Gove to put an immediate holding notice on the planning consents and to "Call-In" the planning consents for determination through an independent public inquiry. Other parties have also requested a Call-In. The NPG have also asked Julie Marson our MP to support this action as her direct intervention to the SoS is key to this strategy.

The action has been accompanied by a press campaign locally, on the BBC and in the national media.

County Council Initiatives

Herts County Council has undertaken traffic speed and volume surveys **outside the school** and the data shows that the criteria for a 20MPH limit during school hours have been met. County Councillor Eric Buckmaster confirmed that funding will be available to carry out the electrical and survey investigations to progress the installation.

He also warned that Harlow household **waste recycling** facility is now restricted to residents of Essex. From 1st April proof of Herts residency will be required to use the facility at Westmill.

Finance

East Herts Council has cancelled the annual grant to the Parish for litter picking and arranged for our public streets to be cleaned by their contractors. The PC will still have to organise litter picking on the recreational areas and street verges. The replacement of this grant and a general 5% uplift accounts for the increase in our Parish precept for 2023/24 now reflected in the council tax demands.

Councillor Ottolangui and our Clerk have initiated discussions with East Herts Council to obtain grants from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. They have formed a committee with residents to progress projects in the village.

Local Elections

Local Elections take place on 4th May next for both Parish Councillors and District Councillors.

The Parish Council can have 6 councillors; at present there are 5 councillors and all of them are willing to stand again. If you want to join us, please contact our Clerk Carole Page by email, clerk@hunsdonparishcouncil.org or telephone 01920 870809

The District Council elections will be very important for Hunsdon and a chance to reflect your views on current issues that affect us all, like the Gilston Housing Development and the proposals the County Council is pushing for a Quarry in our Parish.