

DIVISION REPORT St. HELENS & SILVERHILL - OCTOBER 2015

COUNCILLOR JOHN HODGES (cllr.john.hodges@hastings.gov.uk or 445540)

General Issues

After several years of preparation and a formal examination by an Independent Inspector, the Development Management Plan has now been adopted. This Plan sets out in detail where the new houses, offices and shops will go, and provides development management policies to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment. All planning proposals for development will now take the policies of the Development Management Plan fully into account, together with those in the already adopted Planning Strategy. Combined, these documents form the new Local Plan for Hastings, superseding policies in the Hastings Local Plan 2004 entirely. The Council formally adopted the Development Management Plan at a Full Council meeting on 23 September 2015. The Plan and associated Policies Map is available on our website at www.hastings.gov.uk/dmpsiteallocations, copies will shortly be available to view at the Community Contact Centre or Hastings Library. Hard copies will also be available to purchase from our office, using the contact details below. Any person aggrieved by the Development Management Plan may make an application to the High Court to challenge its adoption. Any such application should be made promptly, and before the end of the challenge period, which ends on 4 November 2015.

Hastings Town Centre and White Rock Area Action Plan

Following the adoption of the Development Management Plan, work has now begun on the preparation of the next key planning document for Hastings. This is an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Town Centre and White Rock Area. An important part of this work involves assessing existing capacity and future need for retail growth and regeneration within the Town Centre. In addition to providing for retail growth the Council wishes to continue its broad objective of exploring the potential for related cultural, tourism and leisure opportunities in securing wider regeneration benefits for the Borough. We have now appointed specialist consultants Bilfinger GVA to carry out a number of key studies that will inform the preparation of our Area Action Plan. Bilfinger GVA have extensive experience in delivering regeneration strategies for Town Centres placing significant emphasis on changes

and policy recommendations that help meet local needs. The findings of this work is expected to be completed early next year and will form an important basis for the early stages of the plan preparation and subsequent public consultation. It is expected that an Issues and Options paper on the AAP will be published for public consultation in spring 2016. Information regarding progress of the AAP will be posted on our website as and when available. Keep an eye out at www.hastings.gov.uk/areaactionplan.

Revised and updated Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide additional detail and support to adopted planning policies, and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. We will shortly be consulting on revised and updated versions of the following:

- Retention of Employment Land and Premises SPD
- Retention of Visitor Accommodation SPD

Formal public consultation on the draft SPDs will run for 4 weeks, from 5 October, until 2 November 2015. We would be grateful to receive any comments you may have on these draft documents, which you can submit either online via our online consultation system, or by completing a response form. The response form is available on request using the details below, or can be downloaded from our website. For further information about this consultation, and for full details about how to get involved, please look at our website at www.hastings.gov.uk/spd.

Local Listing of Heritage Assets

The Council will soon be starting work on maintaining a local list of heritage assets. The town already has a number of designated heritage assets with statutory protection. The town also has numerous non-designated heritage assets that are locally significant and play an essential role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment. We therefore encourage local groups with an interest in heritage matters to nominate buildings and sites of local heritage significance to be added to the list. Local lists are however non-statutory (i.e. they are a voluntary agreement between Council and local groups), and placing such

buildings and sites on the list does not exclude them from development or demolition either. However, it does provide a better understanding and acknowledgement of the contribution they make to the local historic environment. Further detail on listing process, criteria for selection and the process of determination is available at www.hastings.gov.uk/heritageassets.

For further information, please call our Planning Policy Team on 01424 451098 or email fplanning@hastings.gov.uk Hastings Borough Council, Planning Policy Team, Aquila House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3UY Follow 'ShapingHastings' on twitter or find us on facebook

Active Hastings gets Sport England Boost

Hastings Borough Council's Active Hastings team have been awarded £117,574 by Sport England for a new project called Opening Doors for Sport.

The project will start in January 2016 and will be run for 3 years by Active Hastings in partnership with Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA), The Links Project, NHS and Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group, who are supporting this project as part of the Healthy Hastings and Rother programme

We are absolutely delighted to receive this Sport England funding. Being active is really important for a healthy mind and body, as well as being lots of fun, thanks to this funding more locals can reap the rewards. The aim of the Opening Doors for Sport project is to increase opportunities for sport in non-traditional settings, such as community centres, parks and open spaces, in key areas of the town where access to traditional sports facilities is limited. It will focus on key areas of the town and the least active people living within those areas. Year one will focus on Central St Leonards, year two on Hollington and Wishing Tree and year three on North East Hastings.

The project will also be supported by HVA's Team Well Fit project, providing opportunities for volunteers to get involved.

This project is one of over 40 projects to secure a share in £8.2 million of National Lottery funding from Sport England. Encouraging people to give sport

a go, the fund empowers local communities to reach out to people who for one reason or another don't exercise.

Announcing the funding, Sport England Director of Community Sport, Mike Diaper, said:

“It's great to be working with innovative projects like Opening Doors for Sport which offer more people the chance to get active in a way that suits them best. Given the overwhelming benefits of being active, it's important that age, gender, or income never prevents anyone from taking part.”

Find out more about getting active visit www.activehastings.org.uk

Changes to Policing

There are significant changes taking place in local policing. The Hastings and Rother districts are to be combined, effectively returning to the old 'Senlac' division. As well as other internal restructuring, designed to accommodate the big cuts in government funding imposed on the police, there has been a recruitment freeze for PCSOs. Many PCSO posts are vacant, but Sussex Police are changing the way they carry out local policing. Neighbourhoods will be assessed against 'threat, risk and harm', which will mean rural areas, and suburban fringes, will probably lose all police patrols. However, town centres and areas of higher crime could get more PCSOs, and more foot patrols.

The way the police respond to non-emergency calls will change too, with the police not responding to all calls - for example, cycling on pavements, minor anti-social behaviour, or dogs not on a lead, will no longer get any response or investigation by a police officer.

Festivals

The HBC-funded Coastal Currents visual arts festival was on for two weeks in September, now in its 16th year. There were exhibitions, installations, theatre performances, and of course, the Open Studios, with more studios participating this year than in most previous years. Some exhibitions are still on (like the amazing 'Geo' installation at Hastings Museum, pictured, there till 4th October). From the opening night in Bottle Alley, where 2,000 attended, to the final premiere of a film by local film maker Nicola Bruce, turning Priory Meadow into a cinema for the evening, it was a successful festival, offering entertainment to local people as well as bringing visitors to Hastings.

Next year, Coastal Currents is being 'rested', because a much bigger, international arts festival will take place in Hastings, called 'Root 1066', to mark the 950th Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. Details will follow soon.

The Seafood and Wine Festival was also held over the weekend of 19th-20th September, the 12th one the council has put on. This was also very successful, with more stalls than ever, and a couple of thousand more visitors than last year. With food and music, and perfect weather, it proved to be very popular, attracting more people each year from outside of Hastings as the reputation of the festival grows.

This month, there was all the Hastings Week events, the Classic Car Show on the Stade Open Space on 10th and 11th, the Bonfire Procession and Firework display on 17th, and the 'Sprat and Winkle Run' , a classic commercial vehicle show on the Stade Open Space on 18th. To see the everything that happened during Hastings Week the programme is here:

<http://www.1066.net/hastings-week/events15.php>

Then, in November, the Herring Fair is back on the Stade Open Space, funded by Hastings Fisheries Local Action Group, for the weekend of 31st October- 1st November.

So still plenty to see and do - the summer might be over, but the show goes on! Can any other town in the UK rival the magnificence and longevity of the Hastings Annual Cycle of Events.....I doubt it.

Protecting Public Spaces

With changes to the law, the police no longer have powers to disperse groups of people who are behaving anti-socially, and the powers they have to tackle street drinking across the borough will eventually lapse too. These have been replaced by new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), which will be set up by the council, and enforced by the police. The new PSPOs are much more targeted than previous anti-social behaviour laws, and will allow councils to 'outlaw' particular kinds of actions and behaviours in particular areas. So they could be used to outlaw street drinking in our town centres, or can provide very precise, prescribed actions - allowing buskers only on specific pitches, for example. However, in other towns where PSPOs have been introduced too quickly without thinking them through, as a knee-jerk response to an immediate problem, they have often received local opposition. One council introduced a PSPO to stop people sitting on a wall. So they have already been derided in the press as too draconian and used for trivial purposes. We are talking to the police about the best way to use them in Hastings, in particular to tackle street drinking, but potentially for other purposes. It would be

necessary to ensure public support for any proposed orders, and to make sure they could be properly enforced.

Selective Licensing Scheme

On 26th October, the scheme to license private landlords will begin, and landlords will be required to apply for a license for every property they rent to a tenant. It's a 'selective' scheme because it only operates in the wards where there is most private rented housing: Braybrooke, Castle, Gensing, Ore, Old Hastings, Tressell and Central St Leonards.

There will be a reduced rate available for the first six months (£180 for a five year licence), so landlords are encouraged to register quickly. After registration, properties will be inspected to make sure they're up to a decent standard,

Get flu jab' warning to at-risk groups

People at risk of flu and its complications are being urged to protect themselves by getting vaccinated against the infectious disease.

East Sussex County Council's public health team is backing a national drive to encourage people to get the flu jab before the onset of winter.

Older people, young children, pregnant women and people with serious long-term health conditions are entitled to free flu vaccinations on the NHS.

However, while 72 per cent of over-65s in East Sussex took up the offer of a free flu jab last year, just 40 per cent of pregnant women were vaccinated – well short of the national target of 75 per cent.

Frontline health and social care workers are also urged to get the flu jab to protect themselves, their colleagues and those they care for.

Cynthia Lyons, East Sussex acting director of public health, said: "For most otherwise healthy people, flu is an unpleasant illness but one which usually clears up by itself within a week.

"However, people in at-risk groups who contract flu are far more vulnerable to developing potentially serious complications such as pneumonia.

“In particular groups, such as pregnant women, the uptake rates are far below the level we’d like to see, so we’d strongly encourage people in an at-risk group to get themselves vaccinated.”

In 2014-15, 72 per cent of over-65s in East Sussex received the flu jab, roughly in line with the national average for England.

Among pregnant women, 40 per cent were vaccinated, an increase from the previous year's figure of 34 per cent but below the national average of 44 per cent.

Last year, the flu vaccine was available as a painless nasal spray to four-year-olds for the first time – a service available to two and three-year-olds since 2013.

However, just 35 per cent of two-year-olds, 39 per cent of three year-olds and 30 per cent of four-year-olds in East Sussex received the vaccine.

People in the at-risk groups eligible for a free flu jab can arrange to receive the vaccination by talking to their GP or practice nurse. Frontline health and social care staff should arrange to get their jab through the system available to them.

More information about flu is available online at www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu

Further information on the Hastings Herring Fair Returns

Now in its fourth year, the Hastings Herring Fair will take place on Saturday 31 October 11am – 4pm and Sunday 1 November 11am – 4.30pm at the Stade Open Space, Hastings.

Organised by Hastings Borough Council and funded by FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group) the fair will showcase the herring otherwise known as the ‘silver darling of the sea’ and the many ways it can be prepared.

We are pleased to be able to fund the Herring Fair for another year. The aim is to promote the local herring industry and showcase the herring which is so versatile and abundant at this time of year.

In true Hastings Festival style there will be lots on offer including cooking demonstrations at the Classroom on the Coast, fish smoking demos in the marquee and of course a great live music line up. Join Radiator Arts at their flag making workshop and have your say about food by taking part in Brighton University's food research project.

This FREE event will combine food stalls, local beers, wines and ciders all under cover at the Stade so the festival will not be affected by wet weather!

For more information about the festival and events over the weekend visit www.hastingsfestivals.com

Refugees for Hastings

It is always very difficult to predict exactly, both in terms of timing and numbers, when and how many refugees we will receive in Hastings. This also applies to other towns, as you realise there are so many other factors that can and will affect our hoped for predictions.

As you know, we volunteered to take 20 refugees a year, so 100 in total. Our argument that taking that number would lead to a more self-sustaining community was well-received by ESCC apparently, although I suppose that could be used as an excuse by other districts not take any at all.

The first wave of refugees will arrive before Christmas, but they won't be coming to us. In the South East, they will go to Southampton, Brighton and Ashford. Brighton (twice the size of Hastings) have offered to accept only five a year. Ashford, on the other hand, are accepting fifty a year (I think - not certain of those numbers, but in that region). We're not sure why Ashford are taking so many, but it may be as temporary residents, before they're moved on elsewhere. Many other districts have volunteered too, although some have refused - the Tory-UKIP coalition in Portsmouth, for example, has refused to take any (in contrast to neighbouring Labour-controlled Southampton).

We still don't know exactly how the funding will work, or how much we'll get. But it will probably be paid to district councils, who will have to pass it on to the county, health and schools. It will cover costs for 'meeting and greeting', money and rent payments for the refugees until their benefits starts, social services support, education and healthcare, and some kind of admin payments. The first refugees will arrive in Hastings in the New Year.

Fracking in East Sussex

You may be interested in the following two brief reports on the latest status of any fracking activity in East Sussex.

Following a number of questions on fracking, I can confirm we do not have any applications lodged with us in East Sussex for unconventional oil and gas extraction or exploration. This includes fracking. As you know applications are required to have a planning permission, environmental permits and an HSE permission to carry out these operations.

I am also not aware of any likely applications in the foreseeable future. Of course should this change I will let you and the wider community know.

I have attached a link to our website giving answers to some frequently asked questions. I hope you find this helpful.

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/fracking>

Stop Press on Fracking Licenses

You may have heard and seen press reports yesterday about the grant of further licences for oil and gas exploration. The Government's announcement relates to the 14th Round of Onshore Oil and Gas Licensing. No new Licences were actually issued yesterday. The Government has informed bidders for 27 blocks that they will be awarded a licence once the Habitat Regulation Assessment has been completed for a further 132 blocks. The 27 blocks mostly relate to Bowland Shale deposits in Northern England from Lancashire through to Lincolnshire. The 132 Blocks subject to further Appropriate Assessment are more widespread and include parts of West Sussex / South Downs National Park and Surrey. The Government has commenced a consultation on the Habitat Regulation Assessment findings for the 132 blocks. The consultation will close at the end of September. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, the Government will then announce the additional areas to have Licences. The Licences for all the offered blocks will then be granted after the terms and conditions have been finalised.

I can confirm therefore that there are no new Licence areas proposed for East Sussex. There is only one existing Licence within East Sussex covering 20 square kilometres around North Chailey. There are no current planning applications for any oil and gas exploration in East Sussex.

We will shortly update the FAQs information on Fracking on our East Sussex website to reflect the current situation.

Hastings and Rother Playing Pitch Strategy

Both Rother District Council (RDC) and Hastings Borough Council (HBC) intend to update their Playing Pitch Strategies (PPS). RDC's existing PPS was published in 2012 and covers the period from 2012 to 2018. HBC's PPS was last updated in 2003. Both Councils are keen to ensure a collaborative approach and have agreed to develop a joint PPS covering Hastings and Rother.

The strategy will establish principles to help inform where future resources should be focussed. It should ensure that playing pitch provision will meet future demand and reflect sustainable development objectives.

The need for the Update stems from the following principal drivers:

- The need to provide a basis of evidence and information which will help to inform how **access** to playing pitches can be enhanced, helping to raise local participation rates in sport and physical activity.
- The need to provide a basis of evidence and information to inform our approach to the management and maintenance of playing pitch provision, including identifying issues and opportunities.
- The need to develop a realistic action plan which helps to deal with any current deficiencies and enables solutions to provide for future need.
- The need to provide evidence which will help to secure funding.
- The need to provide a basis of evidence and information; for any future Supplementary Planning Document that deals with directing contributions from S106 agreements to informal pitch provision. (NB: the imminent adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy is a key driver for RDC's work).
- The need to inform the assessment of planning applications or wider planning work.

The aim of the project is to provide the Councils with an updated PPS. The PPS will contain refreshed supply and demand assessments, these will include assessments regarding the quality of pitches.

The draft version PPS will be ready for March 2016.

For further information, contact Keith Duly, Leisure Development Manager on 01424 451189 or kduly@hastings.gov.uk

New Street Naming and Numbering

'Campkin Gardens'.

The new road was formerly the driveway to Croft Lodge, Bornholm, The Haven and Beech View which were addressed to The Ridge West. These properties have now also been formally addressed to Campkin Gardens. A new street being developed off The Ridge West has now been officially named

A new street being developed on the site of 55 Collinswood Drive has now been officially named 'Seaview Close'.

The name was chosen by the developer and approved following consultation with the ward councillors.

For further information, please contact Sarah Stapley, LLPG & Local Land Charges Manager ([sstapley@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:ss Stapley@hastings.gov.uk)) 01424 783260.

Council to Consider Developing Old Bathing Pool Site

Hastings Borough Council is expected to agree at its meeting on Monday 2nd November that the former bathing pool site in West St Leonards should be developed, and to appoint agents to market the site. The site has lain empty for over 30 years. This is the last large vacant seafront site in Hastings, and we've been keen to regenerate this area for some time. We want to develop the site for mixed housing and leisure uses, with the housing paying for development of the rest of the site. Because of the large surface water holding tank in the centre of the site, and flood risk, there are constraints on how the site can be developed. Housing would have to go at the eastern end, and the centre part left as open space, but we are determined to improve this area, making it a place that people will want to visit, to help improve the local economy.

We do understand that the site is important, and sensitive, and will ensure that any development is appropriate, and built to the quality and standard of design that such a prominent and sensitive site deserves. So we won't just be

selling the site to a developer. Rather, we will be working with a developer to make sure we have control over what gets built there, and what it looks like.

That will mean involving the local community in developing detailed proposals, but meaningful consultation can really only take place as plans are developed and brought forward. So, if Cabinet agrees, we will be marketing the site to look for a developer who can work with us in the way we want, and come up with proposals for how the site could be developed to achieve our plans.

Clearly we are only at the very start of the process at the moment. It may take two or three years before development begins, but by starting now, we can take advantage of a grant provided by East Sussex County Council which will help to reduce our cost and risk, and ensure that this long-empty site is developed to the benefit of the local community, and to visitors.

Habitat Restoration in Country Park

Hastings Country Park is an internationally designated site for coastal grassland and eroding cliffs.

As part of the Higher Level Countryside Stewardship Agreement with Natural England, Hastings Borough Council is required to reduce the amount of single age mature gorse on the Firehills area. Our aim, on recommendation from Natural England, is to develop a more diverse coastal habitat. This is a long term plan and will take many years to develop. Reducing overgrown gorse scrub and managing those areas into the future is the first step in this long process of habitat restoration.

The first stage of these works is now nearing completion and walkers will notice that although we are not removing all the gorse, large sections have been cleared. We have been mindful of residents in the area and despite recommendations to burn the residue scrub our contractors have been advised to chip the scrub which will then be removed from site for composting.

As the habitat will take a while to recover there will be areas that look open and bare for a while; this is completely normal with this type of restoration process.

Our contractors, who have carried out similar work across the County, will sow heather seeds collected from Ashdown Forest on some of the cleared areas to guarantee future bio-diversity.

Local Businesses and The Community Pull Together to Help Our African Twin Town's Recovery

A forty foot container crammed with equipment and materials for schools, the health centre and the African community will soon be on its way to Hastings' twin town, Hastings, Sierra Leone. The equipment and materials donated by local health services and schools and purchased with funds raised by the Hastings Sierra Leone Friendship Link had been assembled and stored at local container storage company, Hastings Self Storage in Bulverhythe Road. It was transported to London last week by local haulier ABC Transport ready for shipping to Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Richard Homewood, Chair of the Friendship Link said:- "We are delighted with the response of the local community who have helped us raise much needed funds and with the schools and local health providers who have donated vital equipment and materials to aid the recovery of our twin town.

Hastings, Sierra Leone was hit hard by the Ebola outbreak and had two of the Ebola Treatment Centres on its doorstep. Our friends there are facing real challenges as they try to re-establish normal life, get the children back to school and support the numerous orphaned children within the community.

We have been hard at work raising funds and collecting equipment and materials for the schools and the Health Centre. We have sent food aid, protective equipment and other goods during the crisis and this container of goods is the culmination of several months of hard fundraising work.

We are also grateful for the assistance of the container storage company, Hastings Self Storage and ABC Transport have provided their services at reduced cost to help us get the goods on their way. This means that even more of the money raised will reach the Hastings community where it will do most good.

Our fund raising efforts will continue as there is still an awful lot to do to help our twin town recover from the devastating impact of the Ebola outbreak. Our next event is the charity ball at Bannatynes on October 31st where Liane Carroll and local band The Kytes will be performing free of charge so that we can raise even more money to help the community"

Donations can be made online through our website www.hastingshastings.org.uk or by cheque to Hastings Sierra Leone Friendship Link or HSLFL at HSLFL Treasurer, 33 Senlac Way, St. Leonards on Sea, TN37 7JG.

Travel Disruption by Rail over Christmas

Southern

Because of engineering works, there will be no train service on the Brighton main line between East Croydon and Redhill between Boxing Day and Sunday 3rd January inclusive; this will affect trains that normally run between Hastings and London Victoria.

A replacement bus service will operate between East Croydon and Redhill. Additional train services will run between London and East Grinstead connecting into replacement bus services to/from Gatwick Airport and Three Bridges. Journey times are expected to be increased by over 60 minutes.

More details are at <http://www.southernrailway.com/your-journey/plan-your-journey/improvement-works/>

but I understand that these changes are not yet in National Rail Enquiries Journey Planner.

South Eastern

Because of the Thameslink work involving the complete rebuilding of London Bridge station, London Bridge, Cannon Street, Waterloo East and Charing Cross stations will all be closed, and Hastings line trains will run to/from Blackfriars [very unusual indeed!]

Full details are at <http://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/your-journey/engineering-work/christmas-new-year/>

Please do not hesitate to contact myself with any concerns that you might have with regards to the division, and are within my gift to resolve.

Kind Regards John Hodges