



Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan – November 2019

Well it seems to be that good things come to those that wait.

Although the Town Council approved the draft Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting held on the 21st January 2019, a lot of work has been happening in the background since then in order to be able to undertake the statutory public engagement/consultation exercise early next year.

The draft plan has been sent to a designer to prepare the “polished” version, this has had to undergo several revisions so far as errors and typos were discovered following feedback received from various sources.

Meetings have taken place with Central Bedfordshire Council to allow for them to comment on the draft plan and for them to confirm whether it conforms to their emerging Local Plan. Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Council has been mainly positive, but some changes to the plan were suggested, which the group have considered and made amendments where agreed.

When a Neighbourhood Plan is ready to be submitted other supplementary documents need to accompany it. Depending on what the Plan is hoping to deliver, these could include an Environmental Impact Assessment. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). There is a process to determine if a SEA is needed and we are currently working through this process.

Once the SEA is finished (or determined to not be needed), we will be able to schedule the compulsory public consultation. In order for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members to be able to engage with as many people as possible, BRCC (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity) have been appointed to work alongside the group to support them. There will be multiple opportunities for people to attend one of the proposed workshops to ask questions and comment on the plan. Everyone who lives, visits, works or has an interest in the Town will be encouraged to attend a consultation event or visit online for information on how to engage in this stage of the process.

More information will follow in January 2020.

David Gibbons, Chair, Houghton Regis Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

19th November 2019