

## **PITSTONE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



Here we set out some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) generally, and about the Pitstone NDP in particular. We will update these FAQs as further 'themes' come to light, both before and after our **Community Engagement Days** on **22 and 28 March**.

### **What is an NDP?**

An NDP is a formal plan, drawn up by a community, about how it will develop over the next 15 years.

### **How long does an NDP take to put in place?**

In theory, anywhere between six months and three years. We started work on the Pitstone NDP in November 2014 and we currently anticipate that it will be in place by the end of this year.

### **What are the benefits of having an NDP?**

An NDP is the way in which we as a community can manage future housing development holistically, and prevent aggressive or poorly thought-out schemes. (Without an NDP in place, any application for planning permission has to be approved by a District Council unless there are very good reasons to reject it.)

### **So how does that work?**

Aylesbury Vale District Council will have to consider our NDP when deciding whether to approve or reject any applications for planning permission in Pitstone. Once there is a Vale of Aylesbury Plan (VAP) in place, anticipated to be Spring 2016, our NDP will have to be given the same weight as the VAP.

### **Do NDPs encourage housing development?**

No! NDPs do have to recognise that new houses are inevitable. (Any NDP that failed to do so would be rejected by the District Council's 'examiners' long before it took effect.) But NDPs are all about managing development, in line with what a community wants, rather than encouraging it or just letting it happen.

### **Why are new houses inevitable?**

The UK is suffering from a chronic housing shortage, and District Councils are under severe pressure to meet stringent quotas for new housing. These envisage, at the very least, 15% housing growth in any District. But this is not a ceiling – if more development is proposed, more new houses are inevitable.

### **How will our NDP be guaranteed to reflect the wishes of the Pitstone community?**

We are holding two Community Engagement Days (22 and 28 March). Once our proposed NDP has been written, six weeks formal consultation will take place. Then, once our NDP (revised if necessary) has been approved by AVDC, a referendum will take place so that the entire community can approve it.

### **What if I don't want any new houses in Pitstone?**

Many of us might prefer to see no new houses built in a rural environment such as ours. Unfortunately, however, that is not an option. Central Government is requiring every District Council in the entire country to meet stringent quotas for new houses. Far better, surely, to have an NDP to manage the process?

### **What if I don't like the proposed Pitstone NDP?**

You could vote against it in the referendum. However, we are working very hard to ensure that – to the maximum possible extent – the NDP reflects the wishes of the entire village. The Community Engagement Days are your chance to tell us what you want, so it can be taken into account when our NDP is written.

**Have your say at a Community Engagement Day!**

**22 and 28 March – Pitstone Memorial Hall – 11am to 3pm – bar open...**