

## **An introduction to the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan for the Annual Parish Meeting 2018**

We're part of a group of residents working on the Ickleford Neighbourhood Development Plan, or Neighbourhood Plan. This is an opportunity for us to influence future development in Ickleford.

The name is unfortunately far too easily confused with the North Herts 'Local' Plan. The Local Plan outlines where North Herts has allocated land to build the many new houses central Government demands of it.

Our Neighbourhood Plan cannot contradict the Local Plan, but can provide much more detail, giving us more say in any development that comes. It can also go beyond housing allocations to look at other aspects of village life.

Things it might cover include:

- The development of housing, including affordable housing
- Provision for businesses
- Transport and access
- The development of community facilities
- The design of buildings
- Protection and creation of open space, nature reserves, allotments, sports pitches, play areas, parks and gardens, and the planting of trees
- Protection of important buildings and historic assets

(These examples are from the Campaign to Protect Rural England)

The plan must demonstrate that it is genuinely based on our community's views and wishes.

If adopted, it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area and must be considered by planners and developers. This gives it much more legal weight than other initiatives, such as the Parish Plan, although it may follow a similar approach to gaining residents' opinions.

As they are relatively new, we don't yet know how much power neighbourhood plans hold. We were encouraged to read that the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan was taken into consideration when planners rejected a speculative application to build houses there.

We love Ickleford. Changes are coming, and this is an opportunity to help make these as positive as they can be.

### **How it works**

The plan can be very broad or narrow in scope. What we end up with depends on what matters to the people of Ickleford. We need to engage as many people as possible to make it as useful and credible as possible.

Our starting point is to identify the main issues that people care about. We will be asking a few questions along the lines of:

- What do you like about Ickleford?
- What could we improve?
- What would you want out of any new development that may come?

Once we've worked out what the main themes are, we'll come back to people to get their views on specific issues. This will probably involve a household survey to obtain more detail and provide evidence of the community's wishes.

The next stage is writing the plan. This must undergo consultation and be assessed by an independent examiner. A final version is then offered to residents for them to accept or reject. The process is likely to take about three years.

### **Communication with you**

We need people to give us their thoughts, and we need to share what we are doing. Some of the ways we plan to do this are through:

- a website
- Facebook
- leaflets
- talking to groups
- stalls
- workshops
- other things we haven't thought of yet!

### **How you can get involved**

- Give us your views on Ickleford
- Talk to your friends and family, and encourage them to share their views
- Help us make sure everyone has a chance to give their opinion
- Join the steering group
- Get involved in other ways, e.g. help develop parts of the plan in which you have a lot of knowledge/interest
- Help deliver leaflets, and deliver and collect questionnaires

We can be contacted at: [ideas@icklefordnp.com](mailto:ideas@icklefordnp.com)