

A Neighbourhood Plan for Felsham ? YOU DECIDE.....

Everywhere you look development is increasing, speculative applications in our neighbouring villages, 10 here, 20 there, 50+ in Cockfield!!! do we want or need new development here in Felsham? of course we do, all communities need a future and to thrive they do need some new development to save shops, PO's, pubs, churches, but how much, where, and what it looks like? do we want a say in that?

Currently National Planning policy together with our Conservation Area designation and the Mid Suffolk Local Plan determine decisions on which planning applications are granted. The prevalence of speculative planning applications at the current time is caused in the main by the fact that Mid Suffolk District Council DO NOT have the required 5 year plan for new homes. They have not specified and allocated the amount of land in the district needed for the Governments requirements and developers are using this to justify their large scale applications that might otherwise have been refused. How long before that happens here in Felsham?

If you feel the needs of our community are not reflected in the MSDC Local Plan or it does not really address what you would like to happen in Felsham or you would like more things to happen that aren't in the Local Plan, or you would like things to happen more quickly - then you should seriously consider supporting the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Felsham.

A Neighbourhood Plan created by our community can set out a positive vision for how Felsham can develop in ways that meet our identified local needs. A plan once 'made' becomes part of the formal planning policy framework for Babergh and Mid Suffolk. It MUST be a community-led plan which can be used to guide the future development, regeneration and conservation of this village so has to be weighted towards growth and development with specific site allocations, it cannot be used as a tool to stop growth.. Unless we identify specific sites for development it CANNOT override the districts lack of a 5yr land supply. So it has to be a positive plan, but use it to choose where you want new houses, what they look like and how many is the right amount.

The process of producing a Neighbourhood plan can also be used to advance non-planning projects. The plan could guide the provision of infrastructure, for example, setting out priorities for new development such as improving pedestrian links, upgrading paths and open space maybe.

CAN WE DO IT HERE

- **Do we have the resources?** The preparation of a neighbourhood development plan is time and resource intensive.
- **Can we carry out all the various stages needed to reach a "made" plan?**
- **Can we maintain the momentum right to the end?**
- **Can the community reach a broad consensus** on the objectives, key issues and desired outcomes? if we can then the ultimate result could be very rewarding.

CAN YOU HELP - Do you have the skills we will need

- leadership
- project management and organisational skills
- an ability to engage a diverse range of members of the public and to listen
- communication and negotiation
- analytical skills
- ability to work in a team.

Specialist skills required will depend on the nature of the area in question but could include;

- reading maps or plans and data analysis.
- knowledge of specific topic areas, such as retail, heritage-led regeneration, housing, transport or other planning issues.
- environmental assessment.
- Organising and running community engagement.

If you have the skills, passion, drive and determination that will be needed to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and you want to get involved please contact the Parish Clerk or any of your councillors.

A Neighbourhood Plan will help our community come together, be stronger and more united and will give us more control over what happens in our village and the tools to fight speculative development.

We need to know whether the community want to start down this path or not? so please get in touch
For more information please take a look at the recent parish council presentation available on the website.