

The following article appeared in the May edition of the Parish Magazine 'Ad Vincula' which was delivered to all households in the village at the end of April.

## Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan update



The offers of potential sites for housing development had to be submitted by 31st March. The sites will now be assessed systematically to ensure that they meet a set of criteria. The process will be reviewed by an independent planning consultant to confirm that the sites identified to go forward to a **public consultation on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>**

**June** meet the requirements. Please make a note of these dates – more details will follow next month.

Identifying sites to accommodate the required housing is just one part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is also undertaking a great deal of research to ensure that the policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan meet the village's needs and protect our precious environment. Like a set of Russian dolls the policies and its current emerging update, need to fit in i.e. "conform" to the existing international and national UK legislation as well as Local Plans. Both the Chichester and South Downs Local Plans are currently being consulted on and, until they have gone right through the process, we need to use the current versions.

For example, with respect to the environment and wildlife, these considerations include the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981; the European Habitats Directives of 1992 transposed into the UK as the "Habitats Regulations" in 1994; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which confers a Duty on public bodies to take biodiversity into account; the UK Climate Change Act 2008; the Paris agreement on climate 2015; and the latest Environment statement by the UK government in 2018. The government wants to see the environment in better condition and with any development leading to biodiversity "gain" rather than loss.

Much evidence demonstrates that, in spite of these policies and plans, the environment is still under pressure such that a wide range of reports continue to be published citing adverse impacts on bumble bees, insects, farmland birds and the whole fabric of life as commented on by Sir David Attenborough. In our rural area it is important that our Neighbourhood Plan policies support this legislation and the environment.

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