

**SSJ Neighbourhood Plan**  
**Bimonthly Report to SSJ Parish Council**  
**16<sup>th</sup> May – SSJ Parish Council AGM**

1. Introduction.

It is difficult to know how to make this sound interesting – but to those of us who have spent time grappling with the issues and putting the Neighbourhood Plan together it has a certain charm!

N Plans require a lot of data gathering, putting that data into order and then circulating this data amongst local residents - so that they are informed and can provide feedback and, where necessary, vote on key issues. The process is always a balance between annoying residents with too many information handouts - versus too infrequent contact, so that residents feel they have been left in the dark. No doubt we have got it wrong somewhere.

2. General

The Launch Event was held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and since then we have consulted with different groups in the Village:

Local Business

Young Residents

Senior Residents

In addition, we asked Action Hampshire to carry out a Housing Needs Survey.

3. Questionnaire / Feedback. The events most residents will recall are the N Plan Questionnaire which recorded a ~ 45% return – an outstanding achievement that indicated, amongst other things, that residents of SSJPC are proud of their Parish/ Village. This was followed by the Consultation and Feedback Event on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Comprehensive feedback of the questionnaire results was combined with the so-called ‘Call for Sites’ – an exercise designed to find the most acceptable development site in SSJ. The BDBC Local Plan was (and still is) in progress, the Draft Plan indicated that villages such as SSJ should between them find locations for 250 new houses in the period 2015-2029. SSJ is one of approximately 10 such villages – the approximate total we needed to provide can be calculated.

4. Call for Sites. The call for sites provided a very limited number of acceptable sites. The Parish had an outstanding preference - residents voted overwhelmingly for a scheme of ~ 16 houses at Bob’s Farm. Brilliant – we had a clear winner, a brownfield site in all but name, and a site owner happy to promote a suitable scheme with mixed private market and affordable housing. However, when the developer met with BDBC Planning Officers, they provided little support for the scheme – *it was an over-development of the site, there were landscape and environmental issues*. The developer pulled the scheme and replaced it with a four-house scheme. They would not be dissuaded.

A second ‘call for sites’ revealed only a single acceptable site – on agricultural land adjacent to Cranes Rd and A340 Aldermaston Rd. Whilst this was not as popular as Bob’s Farm, the vote was in favour of accepting this new site - whether or not it came with a new Village Shop ready for fit-out. In fact the developer has offered a new shop ready for fit-out as a gift to the Parish, and this remains the case to date.

5. BDBC issued its updated Screening Report dated January 2016, following consultation with Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, which concluded that neither a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment nor a Habitats Regulation Assessment is required for the proposed development site.

6. Draft N Plan. The draft N Plan was published, and circulated on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 for what is called Regulation 14 Consultation – this is the first step in the formal vetting process. All residents were advised via the Villager, and email where possible, all key authorities were

