

## **Parish Council Update – July 2015**

### **The new Council**

As there were only 6 nominations for the 7 seats on the Council, there was no election on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The six Councillors, all of whom served on the previous Council, are

- Cathy Gethin
- Mary Hession
- Alistair Phillips
- David Phillips
- Colin Thomas
- Tony Usher

At the first meeting of the new Council, Colin Thomas was elected Chairman and Tony Usher becomes Vice Chairman.

The seventh seat has been filled by a co-option process, which invites candidates to submit an application for the vacancy. The Council then meets the candidates and decides who should be co-opted to the vacant seat. A meeting was held on June 29<sup>th</sup> to meet the three candidates who had applied and the Council decided to invite Keith Meredith to join the Council and he has accepted. The Council would like to express its thanks to all the candidates for their expression of interest.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Dorstone Neighbourhood Plan has now reached a final draft stage. Much of the Plan is based upon the views of Parishioners as expressed in a questionnaire completed in late 2013. There are however two issues which were not directly covered in the original Questionnaire. These were:-

1. The development of intensive livestock installations and polytunnels.  
Although the recent proposal for two Broiler Units in the Parish has been rejected by Herefordshire Council, it highlights the possibility that this might be the forerunner of other proposals for intensive livestock units in the Parish. It is important to stress that large scale intensive developments (units with more than 85000 broilers, 3000 production pigs or 900 sows), that require an Environmental Impact Assessment, cannot be part of a Neighbourhood Plan. However smaller scale developments below these thresholds can be included and can be influenced by a Neighbourhood Plan, once it is approved by a Referendum of parishioners. Your views will however help to shape our long term policy on such installations in our Plan for Dorstone. In the case of Polytunnels, whilst no plans have been submitted, to date, for farm scale polytunnels, given the Neighbourhood Plan will cover the period until 2031, it is always possible that such proposals may emerge
2. Granting planning permission for a new house to be built within the curtilage of an existing dwelling. (“Curtilage” is defined as “the open space situated within a common enclosure belonging to a dwelling

house".) The first questionnaire revealed strong support for homes for local people. One method of providing these is to allow building of a new home within the curtilage of an existing site, but in very specific following circumstances, and also potentially subject to strict conditions

- a) Where there is a need to provide inter-generational housing, i.e. for elderly grandparents or adult children.
- b) To support the development of a small business on the existing premises.

It must however be pointed out that adding this provision may be considered by the Inspector, who will examine our Plan, as non-compliant with the Herefordshire Local Plan, so there is no guarantee that it would form part of our Final Plan. Nevertheless we think it is worth checking out community opinion on this issue.

**We need your views on these topics so that we can develop an appropriate response within our final draft Plan. Anyone aged 16 and over living in the Parish is eligible to return this form.**

**The short questionnaire, consisting of 4 Yes/No questions will be delivered shortly, by members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, to every household in the Parish. The completed questionnaire should be placed in the sealed envelop provided and will be collected a week or so later. Alternatively, if it is more convenient, you can return the envelopes to a box in the Dorstone Front Room.**

Your help in completing this short questionnaire is much appreciated.

Colin Thomas - Chairman