

Parish Council Update – March 2015

1. Neighbourhood Plan

Work has continued on producing the Draft Plan, with the Steering Group currently working on a final draft. There have been, however, three factors which have slowed finalisation, before the Draft Plan is formally submitted for consultation to the community. These are;-

1. As outlined below, Elections are approaching on May 7th both for the Parish and Herefordshire Council as well as the national general election. This means that it is not possible to start any formal consultations on the Plan in the period running up to the Election..
2. The Neighbourhood Plan is closely linked to Herefordshire Council Local Strategic Plan, which has recently reached the external Inspection stage. The Inspector has indicated a number of issues which she has suggested need further work, including the basis on which future rural housing numbers have been developed. This has implications for our Neighbourhood Plan which uses the Herefordshire Plan's numbers in assessing the future number of houses in the Parish. In effect this means that we have to wait until the Planners have looked again at the basis on which they have worked out their future plans and had further consultations with the Inspector.
3. There are also two outstanding issues which need to be considered, and further consultations carried out, before finalising our Plan.
 - a. Views on the suitability or otherwise of locating intensive livestock installations in Dorstone Parish.
 - b. Granting permission for a new house to be built within the boundary of an existing site outside the main village settlement. There are clear rules governing the building of new houses in open countryside but we have been considering a more restricted possibility of a new house within an existing site, subject to various conditions. Our Planning Advisors have indicated that this may be outside both national and local planning rules.

The approaching election also means that we cannot carry out any further consultations, for example through another short questionnaire, on the two outstanding issues, in the period before May 7th 2015.

Hopefully, the new Parish Council will be able to progress these outstanding matters after the Election and that a draft Plan will be completed by Mid Summer.

2. Bage Court Broiler Units

The proposal for two Broiler Units at Bage Court has been held in abeyance for some weeks whilst the Applicant and his Agent prepare Environmental Statements. These have now been finalised and appear on the Council's Planning web site and the period for further representations has been re-opened with a closing date of April 9th.

The Parish Council will be discussing these additional statements at our normal meeting on March 25th at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Everyone interested in the Bage Court development is welcome to attend. Parishioners will be aware that the Parish Council decided, by a majority, not to support the application, at a special meeting held on January 6th 2015. The reasons for the rejection and suggested conditions, if the Planning Committee eventually decides to permit the development, are available on the Dorstone community web site and on the Herefordshire Council's web site. Anyone wishing to submit comments on the additional statements to the Parish Council should forward them to our Clerk – Chris Hendy – clerkdorstone@aol.co.uk .

3. Parish Council Elections – May 7th 2015

Parish Council Elections will take place on Thursday May 7th 2015, the same day as the General Election and elections for Ward Councillors of Herefordshire Council.

Parishioners who may wish to stand for election can obtain nomination papers from Chris Hendy – Clerk to the Council (Phone 550652) or e mail clerkdorstone@aol.co.uk. The deadline for delivery of nomination papers to the Town Hall, St Owens Street, Hereford, is 4.00pm on Thursday 9th April 2015. A nomination requires a Proposer and seconder who lives in the Parish and is a registered elector.

Anyone who wishes to find out more about what is involved can speak to any member of the existing Council, (Tony Usher, Cathy Gethin, Mary Hession, Alistair Phillips, David Phillips or myself) or the Clerk Chris Hendy.

Colin Thomas
Chairman