



Neighbourhood Plan

Burstow & Smallfield



Parish Council Comments to Tandridge DC

Extracts of issues raised as part of the preparation of the **Local Plan**

(1) Housing

Tandridge DC suggests more than 9,500 homes are required in Tandridge District over the next 20 years. We believe that such an approach is inherently flawed, will not meet the current housing crisis for local people, and will only serve to further inflate house prices because it will encourage immigration into the area, without addressing the need for low cost homes for young local people and others.

Should any additional housing be introduced it is essential the scale, type, tenure and stock be determined by what the current community is likely to require over the next 20 years, and not be led by developers trying to maximise their profits providing 'executive' homes, or by what would be needed by an incoming population.

Smallfield has a high number of single occupancy larger homes. Residents may stay in a property that is larger than they need, often because there is lack of suitable property in the area for them to downsize. Young people also need low cost smaller starter homes.

Tandridge DC could more rigorously enforce a 'small homes' rule, with permissions refused to extend small homes, thus ensuring a ready stock is available. This would also encourage people to sell when they need/want more room, and thus help the economy.

Burstow has a number of sites for members of the travelling and showman communities, and local services are already stretched trying to meet their specific needs. Any additional accommodation should be carefully considered and a difference made between need and want. Should a 'need' be determined then new accommodation should be in an area in the District that does not have much existing accommodation to avoid further adverse impacts upon areas already struggling to cope.

(2) Infrastructure

■ **Roadways** - The roads are congested and operating at or very close to capacity. Additional housing would have serious capacity implications. In addition many road users, in particular HGVs use the smaller roads and lanes to avoid congestion, exacerbating existing problems and causing damage to the road surfaces. Speeding traffic is also a major concern. There are also several waste processing sites in the area that have the potential to cause dust, rubbish, and create more HGV traffic.

■ **Bus Links** - Bus services are limited leaving residents isolated and increasingly dependent on cars. Non-drivers do not have sufficient access to public transport during evenings and weekends.

■ **Health Care** - The Surgery is operating at or near capacity for patients' treatment. Parking is limited and any development restricted.

■ **Drainage** - Surface water and sewage systems struggle to cope with existing volumes. An overloaded system represents major health issues. If there is a sudden rain downpour residents in Wheelers Lane, Kingsmead, Plough Road and Orchard Road report overflowing toilets, being unable to use showers, baths, toilets etc. for fear of causing an internal flood, and overflowing effluent covers the streets and gardens.

Due to under investment the old sewerage system struggles to cope with existing demands and could not cope with any increases. Pumps are inadequate and aging with no monitored alarms to alert Thames Water when they fail. Compounding this, inadequate maintenance of highway drains for surface water was responsible for at least 67, including the Doctor's Surgery, internal floods in the Burstow area during the 2013-14 rains.

■ **Education** - The Primary School has been enlarged several times and still is unable to meet capacity. Staff parking has been built over, causing stress on surrounding streets. In addition twice daily the village is at gridlock when parents drop / collect children. Traffic dangers are a constant concern.

(3) Surface Water Flooding

There is an underground river that flows through Smallfield fed through a 3 x 6 ft culvert. Burstow Parish has many flood risk areas. It is crossed by brooks and streams, which all feed into the River Mole. These watercourses are fed by the surface water that rises out of the land during heavy rainfall and these all flow to the west under the motorway.

Blockages to drains are a major concern. Also lack of maintenance to ditches, drainage and the balance ponds, created to protect the area and the motorway, are a major issue.

Any new building in the Parish requires flood management/awareness to be a major factor in looking at any planning applications. Considering the effect of further houses on flood risk, the implications of concreting over of the land which increases the runoff speed and flow of surface water. The future maintenance of defences, and existing water courses is another major issue that must be considered when development plans are reviewed.

(4) Health & Wellbeing and the Natural Environment

Open space, nature and natural beauty are all directly linked to a general positive wellbeing. Green belt in the District must be protected and indiscriminate development of green belt is damaging. The presence of trees provides the best natural defence against many problems. Forestry should be encouraged and developed in the green belt rather than allowing planning applications to reduce vegetation and increase emissions.