

Fawkham Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation Statement November 2023



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Consultation Process for Fawkham Parish's Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 in respect of the Fawkham Parish Neighbourhood Plan (FP NP).

The legal basis of this Consultation Statement is provided by Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, which requires that a consultation statement should:

- Contain the details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan
- Explain how they were consulted
- Summarise the main issues and concerns raised and
- Describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The vision, objectives and policies contained in the FP NP are as a result of considerable interaction and consultation with the community and businesses within the Parishes over the last 4-5 years. This has included:

- A survey sent to all households in 2019
- A visioning workshop in July 2022 looking at what is important to residents and how they wish to see the Parish in the future
- A workshop seeking input to the report on the local landscape in spring 2022
- A business survey sent to all houses and all businesses in spring 2022
- A Local Housing Needs Survey conducted in November 2021
- A survey seeking views on the countryside in autumn 2021
- A survey for children at Fawkham School in autumn 2021
- A picnic at Small Grains looking at site-specific issues in 2021
- Stalls at the church fetes in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Views and interactions from this process, alongside the collection and interpretation of data and evidence, led to the overarching Vision in Section 3 of the FP NP and a set of objectives which, in turn, form the basis for the key policies set out in Section 5 of the Plan.

While Fawkham Parish Council (FPC) is the qualifying body for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, a Steering Group was established to project manage its development. The Steering Group is made up of volunteers from the community, including two Parish Councillors. All consultation and community engagement activities were undertaken by or on behalf of the Parish Council.

To support the Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Group researched evidence papers on a number of topics. Thirteen meetings of the Steering Group were held to develop the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan, together with site visits and informal working group meetings. A formal Regulation 14 consultation was held for a six week period in the summer of 2023. Further informal working group meetings and discussions were held to discuss the responses received during the Regulation 14 consultation, together with further clarification and discussion with some respondents, additional site visits and further research. On this basis the Neighbourhood Plan was revised and the resultant Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to Sevenoaks District Council to enable further formal consultation.

A Short Overview of Fawkham Parish

Fawkham Parish is in north west Kent, at the northern boundary of Sevenoaks District Council. It is a rural parish entirely within the Green Belt, with around 230 homes and a population of around 550 people. There is no “village centre”, rather there are three small clusters of development dispersed along the valley floor and a number of dispersed farmsteads and houses.

The Parish’s main lane winds some three miles down a picturesque dry chalk valley. The landscape has much woodland, with many areas of Ancient Woodland.

Fawkham has a green with an inn, a 12th century church, a village hall, farms, a primary school, livery yards, a golf course and a large hotel with a spa. There are a number of business units on former farms, and much of the land remains in agricultural use. The principal owners of land within the Parish are also residents of it.

Consultation and Communication Methods

The Steering Group had limited resources but was concerned to ensure residents and businesses had the opportunity to express their views throughout the process, and to be kept abreast of progress. A variety of methods were used during the process, which are briefly summarised below:

- **Website** - a new Neighbourhood Plan section was created on Fawkham Parish Council’s (FPC) website in February 2021, containing information about the Neighbourhood Plan process and progress, with sub-pages for news, steering group information and documents. This was a principal way that information to interested parties was made available and it was used to keep people informed and up to date as the plan progressed. The website can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>.
- **Leaflets** - produced and delivered to all houses in the Parish at key points during the preparation process, as set out in detail below, to keep the community up to date with progress. Using this communication method enabled those who do not use the internet to be kept informed and involved. It also meant communication was provided directly to all, rather than relying on people to visit the website.
- **Surveys and questionnaires** - these were designed for specific purposes, and sometimes for specific audiences, with the aim of developing a greater understanding of information and opinions. Examples include a survey for children at Fawkham Primary School and a survey for businesses within the Parish.



- **Workshops** - these were designed for specific purposes, such as defining a vision for Fawkham.
- A **picnic for residents** was hosted at Small Grains amenity open space in August 2021 to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan and to discuss site-specific issues. For full details, please see Appendix 1.

- **Banners and posterboards** - these were used to raise awareness at specific points during the process, for example, to publicise the Regulation 14 consultation. The banners and poster used the same branding as the leaflets, to aid recognition. For more details please see Appendix 2.



- **Facebook** - news on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan, information about surveys, etc. was published to the Fawkham Community Facebook Group, a private group with around 1000 members.

- **Email updates** - residents could sign up via the website to receive news updates from FPC, including news on the Neighbourhood Plan. People could also sign up at the various consultation events to receive emails from FPC with updates on the LPA's Local Plan and our Neighbourhood Plan, and around 50 email addresses are on this circulation list.

- **Church fete stalls** - FPC had a stall at the Parish church fetes in 2021, 2022 and 2023. These were used to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan and any specific consultation events occurring at that time. For example, the 2023 fete stall was used to publicise the Regulation 14 consultation which commenced the following week. For further details of each year's stalls, please see Appendices 3a-c.



Public events & consultation activities

There has been much consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, and each activity is summarised below.

Fawkham Parish Survey and Open Day - 2019

Fawkham Parish Council conducted a survey of households within the Parish in January and February 2019. This followed publication of SDC's draft Local Plan (later withdrawn) identifying a number of potential sites for development within the Parish, which caused great concern amongst residents. The survey aimed to enable the Parish Council to build a better understanding of the community's views on living in Fawkham, give residents the opportunity to express their views, and enable the Parish Council to represent the needs of residents more effectively.

The survey was delivered to 211 households in Fawkham by a small team of Councillors and volunteers, who offered to complete the survey face-to-face at the time. If that was not convenient, or residents were not at home, a survey was left for completion, along with a stamped-addressed return envelope. Residents were also offered the option of telephoning a member of the survey team to complete a survey over the telephone, or arranging a suitable time for face-to-face completion.

A total of 130 surveys were returned, which represents a very good response rate of 62% of households. The key findings were:

- The most popular words to describe Fawkham were peaceful, rural and quiet, followed by friendly, beautiful, countryside, green and picturesque.
- Many people had lived in Fawkham for a long time, with the average length of residence just under 24 years.
- People living in Fawkham really valued the fact that they live in the rural countryside with natural surroundings and yet in an accessible location.
- The main drawbacks to living in Fawkham Parish were seen as transport issues, particularly the traffic along, and condition of, the main lane through the Parish, along with the lack of public transport and difficulties for pedestrians.
- When asked what would improve living in Fawkham, many wished to see it unchanged, other than for suggested changes to the main lane and a desire for public transport.
- An Open Day to share the results of the survey, along with the actions being taken as a result, was held at the Village Hall in October 2019. An invitation - *shown right* - was distributed to all houses in the Parish. A1 flip charts were used to display the results of the survey and to seek input into the PC's plans to take action as a result of the findings. Members of the PC were on hand to talk people through the results and to answer any questions.

Whilst ahead of formal designation, this early engagement survey provided a good understanding and consensus of local needs, preference and priorities and ultimately helped shape the Neighbourhood Plan by identifying key areas for the Steering



Group to focus on. At this stage, several of the issues raised were outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan, in particular traffic issues, and were addressed by FPC in other ways. For example, working with Kent County Council to extend the 30mph speed limit to include the lane in the area of the primary school, to improve the weight restriction signage at the southern end of the Parish, and to introduce a lorry watch scheme.

Further information on the survey can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Fawkham-Parish-Survey-2019.pdf>, and the survey document used is here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Fawkham-Parish-Survey-2019-Appendix-1.pdf>.

Initial Consultation on Preparing a Plan - November 2020

Following the Parish Survey, Fawkham Parish Council began to consider preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The survey findings fed into decisions around the potential scope and focus of the Neighbourhood Plan.

FPC was aware that this would be a lengthy process and would impact the Parish as a whole and so, before a decision was made, the PC wanted to hear residents' views on whether a Plan should be prepared. A leaflet was delivered to all houses which outlined the main purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan and the implications of preparing one, and let people know how to contact FPC to provide their views, which were required by December 14th 2020. This first leaflet can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/A-NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN-FOR-FAWKHAM-.pdf>.

In addition, two meetings were held on 3rd and 10th December 2020 at 7.30pm to discuss the idea and answer queries and questions. These meetings were held online via Zoom, given the pandemic restrictions in place at the time. If people were unable to join one of the Zoom meetings, they were advised that they could contact FPC by email, letter or phone.

At the meetings, a short presentation was given by two Parish Councillors which outlined why FPC was considering creating a Plan, and potential obstacles, including cost, time and resources. Residents were then invited to ask questions and make comments. Further details of these meetings can be found at Appendix 4. Fifteen people attended the meetings. In addition, 12 letters/emails of support were received, alongside four letters/emails raising objections or concerns over preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

At the December 2020 PC meeting, FPC discussed the idea of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Fawkham, considered the benefits and implications, and took into account the feedback received from residents, with feedback showing three times as many residents in favour of preparing a plan than not. FPC voted unanimously to proceed with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The Minutes of this meeting can be seen here: https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Minutes-FPC-15th-Dec.final_.pdf.

Subsequently, the Parish Council made an application to the Local Planning Authority in January 2021 for a Neighbourhood Area to be designated (see regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)). This corresponds to the designated area covered by Fawkham Parish Council, and can be seen here: <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/downloads/file/3182/fawkham>. The Neighbourhood Plan designation was approved by Sevenoaks District Council in May 2021.

In February 2021, the first meeting was held of the volunteer Steering Group which has project managed the development of the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan and

subsequently the Regulation 15 Plan. Details of the Steering Group and its Terms of Reference can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/steering-group/>.

Children's Survey for Fawkham Primary School - September 2021

The headteacher agreed that pupils would complete a Children's Survey to find out what they think about Fawkham. This was completed in school time by all pupils from Years 1 to 6 individually, with reception class having a discussion and the output noted by their teacher. A total of 82 forms were completed.

The survey asked the following questions:

1. What do you like about Fawkham?

The survey shows the children really like the rural setting of the school, with the words fields (10) greenery (10), views (10) hills (3) countryside (3) mentioned 27 times.

The natural surroundings were also much liked, with the words nature, wildlife, trees, woods and flowers mentioned 21 times. Sheep and cows were also specifically mentioned 21 times. Horses and stables were mentioned 12 times.

The school itself was mentioned on 17 surveys. The community was mentioned 14 times, and nice people twice. The village pub received 12 mentions.

2. Is there something you don't like about Fawkham?

The overwhelming dislike was the lane through the village, which passes in front of the school. Busy /noisy /traffic/ road/lane was mentioned 18 times, and narrow/ bumpy/ bad conditions were cited 24 times. Lorries were mentioned 8 times, and tractors twice.

The lack of certain facilities was the next most mentioned dislike, with 9 saying they did not like that there is no park, 8 saying there is no shop/post office/cafe, and 3 saying they did not like the lack of a swimming pool.

However, 12 children said there was nothing they did not like.

3. What three adjectives (describing words) would you use to describe Fawkham?

The two most frequently used words were quiet and peaceful, used 22 and 18 times respectively. The next most popular words were green, calm and nice, each used 15 times. These were followed by friendly (12), pretty (10) and fun (10).

4. Please draw a picture of how you would like Fawkham to look in ten years time.

The drawings reflect the themes above with 17 drawings of countryside, wildlife or farming, 15 showing a shop, 12 a park and 12 showing the road either wider, with a zebra crossing and/or separate lanes for bikes, cars and lorries. It is notable that many of the drawings include trees and animals. One child would like to see a castle in Fawkham in 10 years time, and another a waterfall!

Further details, including quotes and drawings, can be found here:

<https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Fawkham-School-survey.pdf>

Countryside Survey - Autumn 2021

A survey was undertaken to gather perceptions of the countryside within Fawkham Parish from residents of Fawkham Parish and people from other areas who visit the parish.

The survey comprised eight questions and was available both in paper format and online via SurveyMonkey.com; completion via the telephone was also made available.

The survey was publicised on the Parish Council's website as a News item on 3rd September and 17th September 2021: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/news/>, and via posts on the Fawkham Community Facebook Group five times during September 2021. It was also shared to other local community Facebook groups. The survey was further publicised via inclusion in the church's weekly newsletter and by flyers in the two parish noticeboards.

A paper flyer was distributed to many houses in the parish with a paper copy of the survey, particularly to those known not be active online. Six members of the Steering Group/ working groups/ Parish Council offered to complete the survey on the doorstep if the resident wished to do that. Ten paper surveys were completed in this way.

Paper copies of the survey were available to complete at the Neighbourhood Plan stall at the church fete on 18th September 2021, and the flyer was handed out to people who visited the stall. Sixteen paper surveys were completed at the fete.

In total, 163 surveys were completed between 27th August and 22nd October 2021. Ninety residents of Fawkham Parish completed the survey.

The survey helped shape the Neighbourhood Plan by providing information about what the community like about the countryside within the Parish, and what they feel detracts from it, plus what might improve it. The survey also identified favourite views and places where people "feel away from it all", and provided information about outdoor leisure activities. This information was helpful in developing a number of objectives and policies within the Neighbourhood Plan, including those on landscape, important public views, public rights of way and open spaces, sport and recreation facilities.

Full details, including the survey form, can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Countryside-Survey-Results-final.pdf>.

Local Housing Needs Survey - November 2021

A survey was carried out in November 2021 to assess whether there might be a need in Fawkham Parish for local needs housing, so that residents who cannot afford to buy or rent locally, are not forced to move away. Such housing may also help those who have already had to move away to make a return to their family support networks. The survey also aimed to find out if there are older people or people with disabilities in the parish who would like to downsize and/or move to housing more suitable for their needs. This includes people who are owner-occupiers, as well as those with other current living arrangements. If a need is demonstrated, it can allow for affordable rural exceptions housing to be built, which would otherwise not be permitted in the Green Belt.

The survey was conducted on behalf of SDC by the Rural Housing Enabler from Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) and was delivered by post to all houses in the Parish, with 236 surveys distributed. Forty eight surveys were returned, representing a 20%

response rate, which ACRK advise is at the upper end of average. Analysis of the returned survey forms identified that 81% of respondents were owner occupiers. 71% of respondents had lived in the parish for over 10 years.

The survey identified a low level of need of three affordable homes: 2 x 2 bed first homes and 1 x 2 bed shared ownership homes. In addition, a need for seven open market properties were identified, including one for an older household wanting to downsize (with no need for level access) and four who were interested in self-build only.

Fawkham Parish Council considered the results of the Housing Need Survey and requested that a local lettings plan be pursued for some of the affordable housing at Salts Farm depot to meet this need. FPC considered the need for four self-build open market houses may be possible through redevelopment of existing sites. FPC considered that the other three open market needs, including that of the one older household looking to downsize, can be met through market churn. The survey's findings were also considered when developing the housing objective and strategy within the Neighbourhood Plan.

The survey document can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Evidence-Report-Housing-Appendix-4b-Local-Housing-Needs-Survey.pdf> along with the covering letter: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Evidence-Report-Housing-Appendix-4a-Survey-Covering-Letter.pdf>. The full report on the survey can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Evidence-Report-Housing-Appendix-5-Housing-Needs-Report-.pdf>.

Second Neighbourhood Plan leaflet delivered to all houses - January 2022

A leaflet giving an update on progress with the Plan's preparation was delivered to all houses in late January 2022, to bring residents up to date with what had been happening, provide an overview of the next steps and to invite people to join the Steering Group. A copy of the leaflet can be found here: [Second leaflet delivered to all houses in January 2022](#).

Landscape Character Workshop - February 2022

As part of the development of the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), Fiona Fyfe Associates, the appointed landscape consultant, held a residents' workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to enable residents to comment on the draft Local Landscape Character Areas and to contribute their local knowledge to the report.

The workshop was held on 9th February 2022 from 7.30-9pm, via Zoom. The workshop was held jointly with Hartley Parish, who were also undertaking a LCA with the same consultant. In total, 27 people attended the workshop.

An invitation to the workshop, describing its purpose and how to attend, was delivered to all houses alongside the second leaflet about the Neighbourhood Plan. This is shown at Appendix 5.

The workshop comprised a general introduction to LCA, then a presentation on the draft Local Landscape Character Areas, followed by an opportunity for people to ask questions. At the end of the presentation a link was provided to a Google Docs form, which attendees were asked to complete in the second half of the workshop. This asked residents three questions about the Local Landscape Character Areas:

- What is important to you about this LLCA?
- What are the key forces for change and their landscape impacts within this LLCA?
- What is your vision for this LLCA - how would you like it to look in 10 years time?

Residents were also given the opportunity to comment on the names and locations of the LLCAs. The consultant reviewed the attendees' completed forms, and reflected their content appropriately within the final LCA report, which was used as evidence to formulate a number of Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies, including those covering landscape character, woodland, trees and hedgerows, public views, rural lanes and public rights of way.

Business Survey - Spring 2022

A survey was designed for businesses operating within the Parish. This included those in business premises and those running a business from their home in a spare room, garden studio, etc. It did not cover those who have their main place of work elsewhere and work at/from home a few days a week.

The survey was made available in both paper format and online via SurveyMonkey. The survey was delivered, generally by hand, during March 2022 to all houses in the Parish and to all known business premises, including those within clusters of business units.

Forty three responses were received by the end of May 2022, of which 67% were from businesses located within five business clusters.

Analysis of results showed a variety of businesses completed the survey, with manufacturing stated as the most common sector (14.0% of responses), followed by animal-related businesses (11.6%), construction and building (9.3%) and agriculture (6.9%). Most respondents carried out their business from a converted farm building.

Over a fifth of respondents had operated their business in Fawkham for more than 20 years; 14.0% had been operating in the Parish for less than two years. Those here for less than five years say they chose to move here primarily due to affordable premises or proximity to home/family, or a combination of the two.

The business survey also sought to understand the current and potential future needs of the local business community, and over 70% of respondents felt their current premises will suit their future needs for the next five years, with 44% also feeling they will continue to suit them after five years. Of those who felt their current premises will not meet their future needs, over 70% are already, or intend to, take steps to improve their current premises, rather than relocate, and of those looking to relocate, none are looking to move away from Fawkham Parish.

Transport issues were mentioned by around one third of respondents, with issues including narrow lanes, road closures, poor road maintenance and no public transport. In terms of services, over 50% felt both broadband and mobile signal need improving, over a quarter felt both surface water drainage and water supply/pressure need improving and just under a quarter felt the electricity supply needs improving.

72% felt there were no constraints on operating a business in Fawkham Parish, with over a third of respondents rating Fawkham Parish as a very good place to operate a business from, and the same proportion rating it as good, with no respondents rating Fawkham Parish as a poor or very poor place from which to operate.

The results of the business survey were carefully considered when developing the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies on business development and infrastructure.

The local business survey can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NP-Business-Survey-FINAL-pdf.pdf> and further information on the results can be found within the Local Economy Evidence Report here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Evidence-Report-Local-Economy.pdf>.

Residents' Visioning Workshop - July 2022



A residents' workshop was held to draw on local knowledge and help develop a deeper understanding of what is important to residents, building on the village survey from 2019.

The Steering Group wanted to have residents' input to help develop a vision for the future of Fawkham, and to contribute to a set of key objectives for our Neighbourhood Plan, to ensure it reflects what the community wants and needs.

The workshop was held at the village hall from 7:30-9:30pm on Thursday 7th July, 2022.

An invitation to attend was delivered to all houses in the Parish between 11 and 14th June - a copy is shown in Appendix 6.

In addition, the workshop was further publicised as follows:

- On the Parish Council noticeboards by the village green and in the church car park
- On the noticeboard of the public house
- On the window of the village hall, visible from the car park
- On 'pop up' temporary noticeboards in four locations: two in the Fawkham Green area, one on the verge outside the village hall, and one on Baldwins Green
- A News post made to the Parish Council's website
- A post made to the Fawkham Community Facebook Group, which was followed by a reminder of the workshop posted the day before the event
- An email sent to the database of addresses of those who have agreed to receive updates about the Neighbourhood Plan (c.50 email addresses)
- The workshop featured prominently in the exhibition materials used at the Church fete stand on 26th June.

A copy of the poster is included within Appendix 6.

Twenty six residents attended the workshop, with a range of ages and length of residency, broadly reflecting those found in the Parish. Eight further attendees reported being unable to attend due to being Covid-positive on the day of the workshop.

An exhibition of information from the evidence base was presented on display boards. Attendees were invited to review the display boards for the first 15-20 minutes after arrival. A copy of the materials is included in Appendix 6. The Chair of the Steering Group, and Tony Fullwood, Planning Consultant, then gave a short presentation, covering the workshop's purpose and format, information about the Neighbourhood Planning process and how the workshop fitted within that process.

This was followed by round-table discussions in four groups, with each group looking at a particular topic for around 10 minutes. The four topics were:

- Fawkham's character and heritage
- Community facilities & transport
- Built environment: housing and business
- Natural environment.

After 10 minutes or so, each group moved to the next table to discuss the next topic, and so on, until all groups had visited each table. Each theme had a host who remained at that table. The hosts were provided with guidance notes, including the following prompts to help focus the discussions:

- What are the key features of [your theme, eg built environment: housing and business, natural environment] in the Parish that you value?
- What opportunities are there to safeguard these or to improve these?
- What should the Neighbourhood Plan aim to say about these?

Each host provided a summary to the room of what they heard from all four groups. Tony Fullwood then summarised the common themes and the consensus around how residents see the Parish in the future.

This workshop was an important step in developing a deeper understanding of what is important to residents and how they wish to see the Parish in the future. The information gathered from the workshop was key to developing the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan, which form the framework of the Plan and so helped ensure it reflects what the community wants and needs.

Third Neighbourhood Plan leaflet delivered to all houses - June 2023

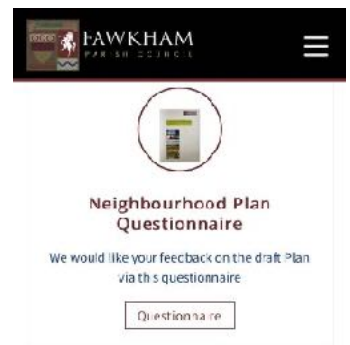
A leaflet giving an update on progress with the Plan's preparation and publicising the Regulation 14 consultation questionnaire and exhibition sessions was delivered to all houses in late June 2023. A copy of the leaflet can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FAWKHAMS-NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN-third-leaflet.pdf>.

Regulation 14 Pre-submission Consultation – July/August 2023

As part of the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, the Parish Council undertook a six week Pre-Submission Consultation on the draft Fawkham Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation period ran from 3rd July to 15th August 2023. A hard copy of the draft Plan was available from the Parish Clerk. The consultation was publicised in various ways, and two drop-in exhibitions were held providing detailed information on the draft FP NP.

Detailed below are the various ways in which consultation was publicised before and during the six week consultation period:

- Via a leaflet delivered to all houses in the Parish just before the consultation began, which can be seen here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FAWKHAMS-NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN-third-leaflet.pdf>.
- On FPC's website, with seven News items: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/news/> (which are also emailed to those who sign up for News), an announcement on the Neighbourhood Plan page: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>, and a featured item on the home page. The website was thoroughly updated with all key documents, including the thirteen evidence reports, made available: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/key-documents/>.
- Via four posts on FPC's Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/FawkhamPC>.
- Via eight posts on the Fawkham Community Facebook Group (this is a private group and so no link is provided). The first post read as shown below; two further posts are shown in the photos below:



We are pleased to advise you that the draft Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan is now undergoing a six week public consultation, which closes on 14th August 2023. We have been talking to residents and businesses in the Parish since 2019, asking what they think about Fawkham Parish now and how they would like to see it in the future. This has enabled us put together a draft Neighbourhood Plan for Fawkham Parish - and we would now like to know what you think.

We would very much like your feedback on this draft Plan, and have a questionnaire for your response and comments. To see the draft Neighbourhood Plan document, its supporting evidence reports, and to complete the questionnaire, please click here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/key-documents/>

The questionnaire can be completed online or printed and completed on paper (please let us know if you require a paper copy and are unable to print it). You will need to read the Draft Neighbourhood Plan or its summary to complete it.

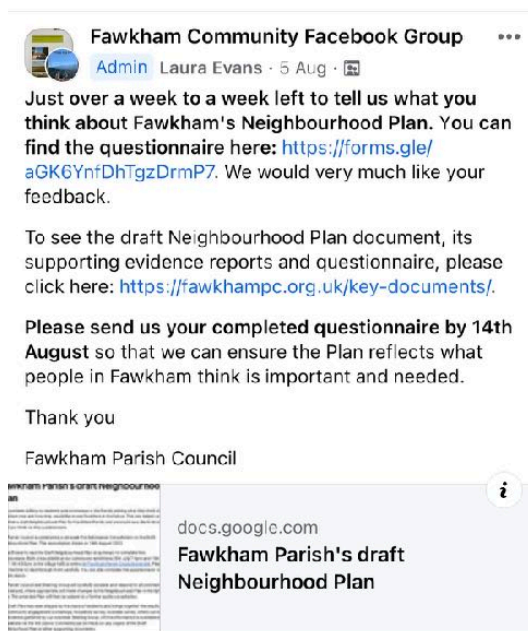
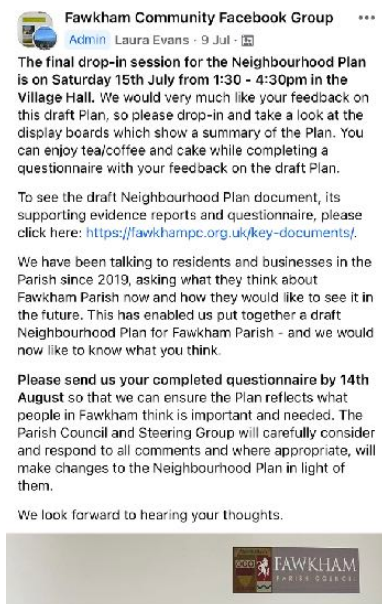
We are holding two drop-in sessions in the village hall, at which you will be able to view a summary of the Plan on display boards, and complete the questionnaire (with tea, coffee and cake). These are being held on:

Wednesday 5th July from 7 - 9 pm

Saturday 15th July from 1.30 - 4.30 pm

Please send us your completed questionnaire by 14th August so that we can ensure the Plan reflects what people in Fawkham think is important and needed. The Parish Council and Steering Group will carefully consider and respond to all comments and where appropriate, will make changes to the Neighbourhood Plan in light of them. We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Fawkham Parish Council



- By two emails to those who signed up for updates on the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Large vinyl banners on the village green and Baldwin's Green.
- Six A3 poster boards at various locations around the Parish (for full detail of the banners and poster boards, please see Appendix 2).
- At the stall at 2023's Church fete (for full details, please see Appendices 3a-c).



Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan's Steering Group hosted a drop in exhibition at Fawkham Village Hall during the six week consultation period for the Regulation 14 draft Plan, on:

- Wednesday 5th July between 7 and 9 pm
- Saturday 15th July between 1.30 - 4.30 pm

The exhibition was advertised by the third leaflet delivered to all houses in the Parish between 29th June and 1st July, and by six posterboards, two display banners, an email to

those signed up for updates, and online via FPC's website and the Fawkham Community Facebook page.

The aim of the exhibition was to:

- Let attendees know about neighbourhood planning and what it can do
- Share some key information about our Parish which influences what can be done in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Bring attendees up to date on the work we have been doing, which is based on what residents told us in the Parish survey in 2019 and in consultation activities since then
- Ask what attendees think of the policies prepared so far
- Find out if attendees have other ideas and proposals to include
- Allow attendees to ask questions/raise any issues or concerns.

A series of 22 display boards was used to provide information about:

- What a neighbourhood plan is
- How it was put together
- How the community has been involved to date
- The timeline and key steps in the process
- The vision and objectives of the draft Plan
- Each policy within the draft Plan together with a summary of the evidence supporting it.

A paper copy of each Evidence Report was available to read alongside the display board for the primary Policy to which is related. These were also available online at FPC's website: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/key-documents/>.

A questionnaire was available in paper format to complete, seeking attendees' feedback on the draft Plan, and attendees were encouraged to complete this at the exhibition. This was also available to complete online: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSexFT8DEu64eDelcONsHZs1BPRHImoilpFqt2oQCLvQzALWMQ/viewform>

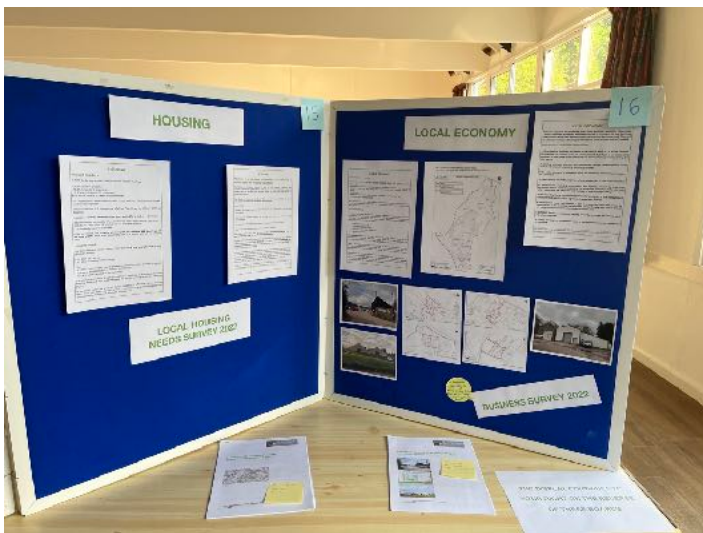
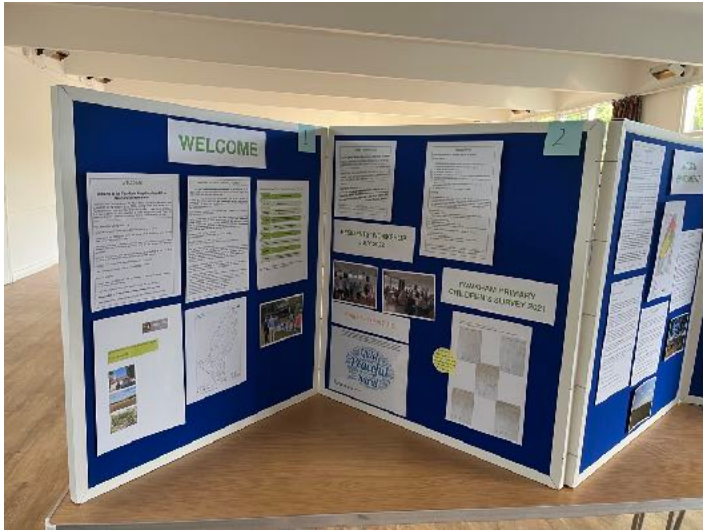
It was also possible to print the questionnaire via an online link.

The content of the exhibition boards was also available online, on FPC's website, as a summary version of the Plan: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/key-documents/>

Members of the Steering Group were in attendance to answer people's questions. Forty two members of the local community attended the exhibition: 24 on 5th July and 18 on 15th July. All attendees appeared interested and engaged with the content of the exhibition, most completed a questionnaire while at the exhibition, many asked questions of the steering group members in attendance - and enjoyed the free tea and cake provided. *"It was well worth dropping in today, very informative, well done all"; "Really comprehensive display and great to see photos of our lovely area"; "Very comprehensive"* - some of the feedback received about the exhibition.



Photographs of some of the exhibition boards are shown below.



The engagement exercise influenced the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan by:

- Inviting residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan through giving their feedback on the draft Plan and its policies, via the questionnaire. A total of 73 questionnaires were submitted: 68 from residents, of which 34 were as a direct result of attendance at one of the exhibition sessions.
- Providing an opportunity for the local community to engage face-to-face with members of the Steering Group to ask questions/raise issues or concerns.

In conclusion, it is felt that the exhibition achieved its aims.

As mentioned above, a questionnaire was prepared to seek feedback from residents, landowners and local businesses on the draft Plan. The questionnaire can be found here: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Fawkham-Parishes-draft-Neighbourhood-Plan-23.pdf>. This was available in both paper form and online.

- The paper form was handed to attendees at the two drop in exhibitions, and attendees were encouraged to complete it at the exhibition
- The online version can be found here: <https://forms.gle/x4RVc3CvA45MZDwp7>, and a link was included in all the online posts and emails mentioned above. The online version remained open until 22nd August

- The paper form was also available on request from the Parish Clerk
- It was also possible to print the questionnaire via an online link.

A total of 73 questionnaires were submitted, 68 of which were from Parish residents. The questionnaire provided feedback on the draft Plan and its individual policies, showing the PC whether each policy was supported, whether any amendments were sought and whether any other issues should be included within it.

All comments made via the questionnaire are included in the document *Responses to the Consultation* at Appendix 7. The Parish Council's response, together with the proposed changes to the Regulation 14 Plan, are set alongside each comment. Overall there was strong support for the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives as well as each of the plan policies. As a result of the comments received, a number of changes have been made to the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in Appendix 7.

Consultation with statutory consultees and other bodies

Throughout the process of developing the Neighbourhood Plan, the Steering Group has held meetings and been in correspondence with officers at Sevenoaks District Council. To date, we have been in contact informally regarding assistance with various matters, in particular with mapping requests and technical advice, and have held meetings with Planning Policy Officers regarding Landscape Character, the local Green Belt and Local Housing Need.

Sevenoaks District Council has advised they will continue to work with and support Fawkham Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in the continued development and adoption of our Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish Council submitted a formal screening request regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the draft FP NP in May 2023. SDC provided a screening report in June 2023, stating that neither a SEA nor HRA was required. A copy of this Screening Report is included as part of the supporting evidence base: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Fawkham-Neighbourhood-Plan-SEA-Screening-Assessment-June-2023.pdf> alongside the responses of [Historic England](#), [Natural England](#) and the [Environment Agency](#). This exercise will be repeated for the Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan.

The draft Plan and a request for feedback and comments was emailed by the Parish Clerk to all the statutory bodies recommended by SDC on 29th June 2023. A full list of these consultees, together with comments received, can be found in the document *Responses to the Consultation* at Appendix 7.

In addition, a range of parties that the Parish Council considered were likely to have an interest in the Draft Plan were also written to at the same time. These included The Woodland Trust, CPRE Kent and Sport England. The text of the email was as follows:

We are pleased to advise you that the draft Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan is undergoing a six week Regulation 14 consultation from 3rd July. Please find a copy attached, which can also be found online, along with accompanying evidence reports, on our website: <https://fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>.

Please send us your response by 14th August.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Many thanks
Fawkham Parish Council*

Comments made on the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan from statutory consultees and other stakeholders, via the questionnaire and emailed responses, are set out in full in Appendix 7, alongside those of residents. The Parish Council's response, together with the proposed changes to the Regulation 14 Plan, are set alongside each comment. Overall there was strong support for the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives as well as each of the plan policies. As a result of the comments received, a number of changes have been made to the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan, particularly in response to comments by Sevenoaks District Council.

Fawkham Parish Council Steering Group

November 2023

Small Grains Picnic held on 27th August 2021

Residents were invited to attend an informal picnic held on the grass area at Small Grains from 6-8pm on Friday 27th August 2021. The invitation is shown in Appendix 1a.

Around 20 residents attended, along with a number of children, plus members of the Steering Group.

A series of eight flip charts was used to provide information on the Neighbourhood Plan in general, including promotion of the Fawkham Countryside Survey, and to specifically gather ideas of what the community would like to see happen with the green space area at Small Grains, especially from those who live around it.

Attendees were invited to add their thoughts and suggestions by writing on post-it notes in response to the questions asked below. Comments were also received from four households who were unable to attend the picnic, and these have been included below. The flip charts used are shown in Appendix 1b.

Question 1: What do you see as the key issues facing Fawkham?

- Overgrown hedges along the roads
- Litter along roads
- Poor road maintenance/road surface/road quality along Fawkham Green Road x 2

The road issues are well known, however, they cannot be addressed via the N Plan process.

Question 2: What do you use this area for?

- We don't use it at the moment but I would love to
- Walking, sometimes football
- It's a nice peaceful place at the moment
- Use it to park cars
- Use it as a play area
- Don't use it much as the grass is too long
- For children to learn to ride bikes as it is flat

Question 3: What would you like to see?

Responses have been grouped into similar ideas, with the most popular ideas listed first:

- Grass being cut regularly and the area being well maintained for local families to enjoy x 6; some mown more often so kids can play football x 3; clippings to be removed x 1; most have garden for swings etc but suitable area for ball games is in short supply x 1.

- Car park spaces/extend parking tarmac for houses without (nos 1-4) x 7; stop people parking on the pavement and the grass x 1; stop people driving over the grass to park outside their houses x 1; resident only parking bays x 1; proper surface for the existing car park x 1
- Benches and/or picnic table x 6
- Kids' play equipment x 5; children's play area behind No11 x 1. Comments were also received from residents who would not be in favour of this: no play area x 1, no structures x 1, with a further comment made that "a play area may bring in crowds of people".
- Some of the area left a bit wilder with native flowers/wild flower bed x 4; meadow with walk way x 1
- Cycle circle with bump/mound x 3
- A couple of mini apple trees x 2; tree planting but leave a clear area for ball games x1
- Vegetable planter for community x 2
- Replacement of the broken bollards x 2; bollards to be installed around both areas to stop driving/parking across them x 1
- Replacement of the missing road name sign x 2
- No houses x 1
- Boundary hedge to be reduced in height by half as entrance concealed x 1; hedge to be cut back more regularly to avoid blocking view of road or replaced with small fence/railing to avoid need maintenance so regularly x1
- Garden waste stop being dumped x 1
- No changes x 1
- Housing Association to tidy up their properties x 1

Analysis of comments and actions taken as a result:

This area currently is not designated by SDC as an open space, nor as an amenity grass area. Appropriate designation is sought via the Neighbourhood Plan.

The above comments show that more regular cutting of the grass, to allow the area to be more used, would be the most popular option. The information provided on the flip charts gave an initial estimate of the cost of around £10 per house in Fawkham, so residents were aware there would be a cost associated with this. FPC are awaiting the outcome of SDC's Asset Review to find out if SDC has any plans for this site and/or whether they would be willing to let Fawkham take over its management. FPC would then decide whether it wished to do so and the costs of so doing. Meanwhile, FPC has agreed with SDC that FPC will fund additional grass cuts and has installed a picnic table, two benches and a litter bin.

Car parking is a key issue: provision of further spaces/parking area was suggested seven times. Car parking is currently difficult for houses numbered 1-3 and 8-10 as the road of Small Grains does not extend in front of those houses. Consequently, cars are driven over the grass to be parked on the grass at the front of those houses. This would be an expensive option both in terms of installation and maintenance, although use of CIL funds may be possible. This issue has been taken forward within the FP NP - see Policy FNP16 - Provision of Small Grains Residents Parking.

A children's play area/equipment had mixed views, with six suggesting this and around half that number specifically saying "no play area". This would be an expensive option both in terms of installation and maintenance, although use of CIL funds may be possible. This option was not pursued.

A "wilder" area with native flowers was also popular, mentioned five times. Given the size of the area, this may be possible to achieve at low cost, for example along the eastern boundary, while having the majority of the area mown more regularly. However, this option was not pursued, due to plans for a Platinum Jubilee celebration on the open space,

The double yellow lines along Small Grains needed repainting, and FPC requested this of KCC Highways. The road name sign needed replacing, along with some missing bollards, and FPC requested this of SDC. These have been undertaken.

West Kent Housing Association was contacted via a District Councillor regarding maintenance of some fencing.

How did the engagement exercise influence the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan?

- By obtaining residents' views on the future use of this green space
- By obtaining residents' views on the countryside through encouraging the completion of a survey
- By providing an opportunity for residents who have moved into the Parish since the first Neighbourhood Plan leaflet was distributed to be made aware of it and to engage with the process
- By providing an opportunity for residents to engage with the Steering Group in an informal, easy-to-access format which is likely to have encouraged participants who may not have engaged with the process before.

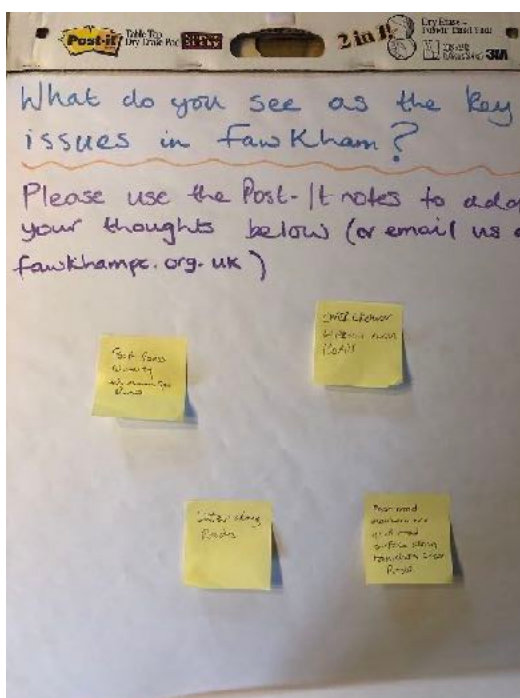
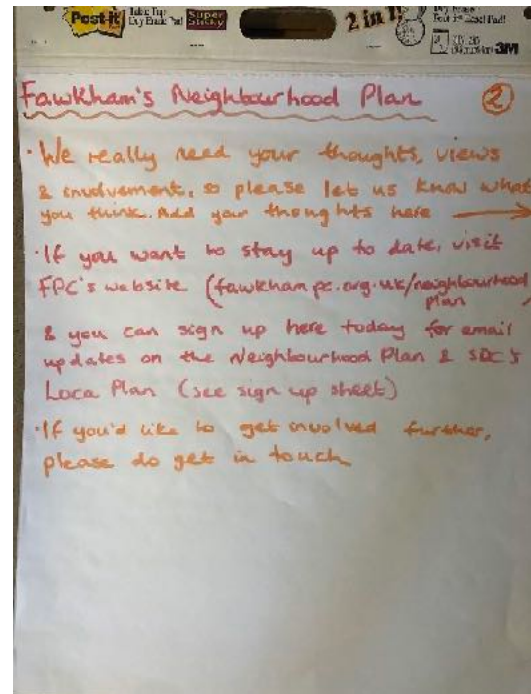
Appendix 1a: Invitation to Small Grains Picnic - Friday August 27th 2021

This was delivered to c.55 houses in the immediate vicinity of Small Grains around three weeks before the picnic, and posted to the Fawkham Community Facebook Group on 20th August.

"There's going to be a picnic on the grass at Small Grains on Friday 27th August from 6 to 8pm. We're going to be gathering ideas of what the community would like to see happen with this area, especially those who live around it. We will also be seeking your feedback, knowledge and ideas for the Neighbourhood Plan more generally and we want to let people know where we've got to with its preparation.

Please feel free to pop by with your picnic and share your thoughts any time between 6 and 8pm. Cakes and cold drinks will be available. Please bring children along as we'll have some and cakes for them too. And an ice cream van is due to visit!"

Appendix 1b: Flip charts used:



Banners and Poster Boards

The banner shown below was displayed on the village green to raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan at various times during the process:

- End January 2022
- July to September 2022 - to coincide with the residents workshop in July
- End June to mid August 2023 - to publicise the Reg 14 consultation and drop in exhibition sessions.

This location was chosen as it is within the largest cluster of development and close to the public house.



A second banner was displayed on Baldwins Green from the end of June to mid August 2023 to publicise the Reg 14 consultation and drop in exhibition sessions. This location was chosen as it is within the second largest cluster of development in the Parish.

A banner was also displayed at the three church fetes between 2021 and 2023.

Between 4 and 6 “pop up” poster boards were also used in the summers of 2022 and 2023 in various locations around the Parish, some of which are shown below



At the northern edge of the Parish



At the entrance to the village hall



On Baldwins Green



At the crossroads by the village green



At the crossroads of Three Gates Road, Speedgate Hill and Mussenden Lane



At Small Grains

Community Consultation and Engagement Event: Church Fete, 18th September 2021

Background

The Steering Group presented a stand at St. Mary's Church fete on 18th September 2021. This fete held annually and is well attended by residents of Fawkham and those of other nearby villages. The fete was advertised by signboards, banners and notices in both Fawkham and Hartley, as well as online, and posts specifically related to the Neighbourhood Plan stand were made to the Fawkham Community Facebook Group and to FPC's website.

Content

A series of eight display boards was used to provide information and to allow feedback from the community on:

- An overview of what a neighbourhood plan is and what has happened to date with its preparation
- asking for feedback on what people see as the key issues facing the Parish
- an overview of what is happening next in the preparation of the Plan, and encouragement to get involved
- asking attendees to sign up for email updates on progress
- information from the 2019 village survey - what three words were used to describe Fawkham
- asking attendees what their favourite view is, by annotating a map of the Parish
- publicising the Fawkham Countryside Survey and asking people to complete it at the fete. A total of 16 were completed during the fete, with around twice this number taking a flyer with details of how to complete it online later
- an overview of housing developments in the Parish - sites with planning permission and sites assigned within the emerging Local Plan
- information about the extent of Natural Assets (woodland and Local Wildlife Sites) and Heritage Assets within the Parish
- signposting was also given to the Neighbourhood Plan being prepared by Hartley Parish Council to residents of that Parish

Information was also displayed about the Fawkham Nature Spotters group, with photos of sightings around the parish and a request for further sightings to be submitted for the biological records being compiled.

The display boards used are shown in Appendix 3a (i).

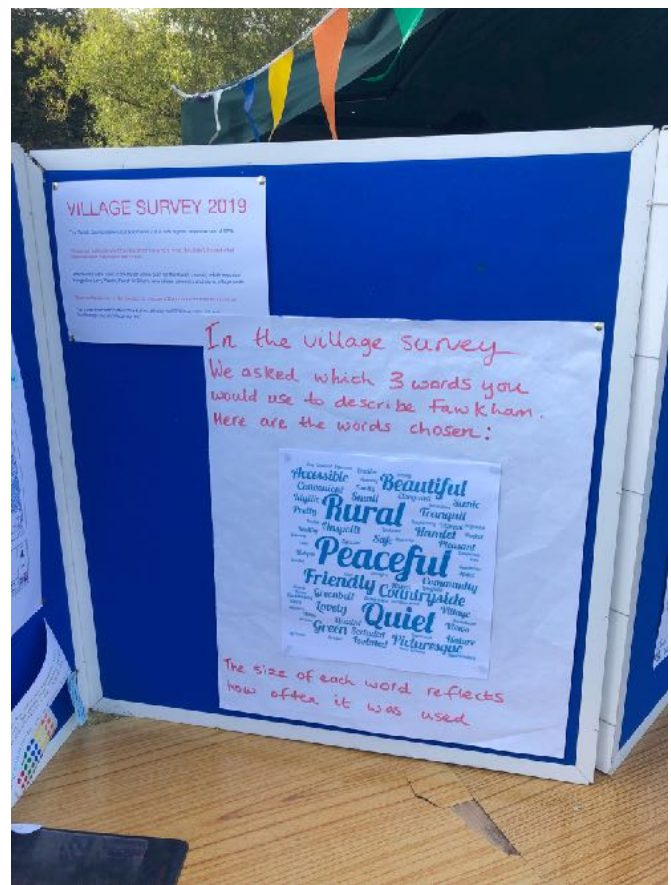
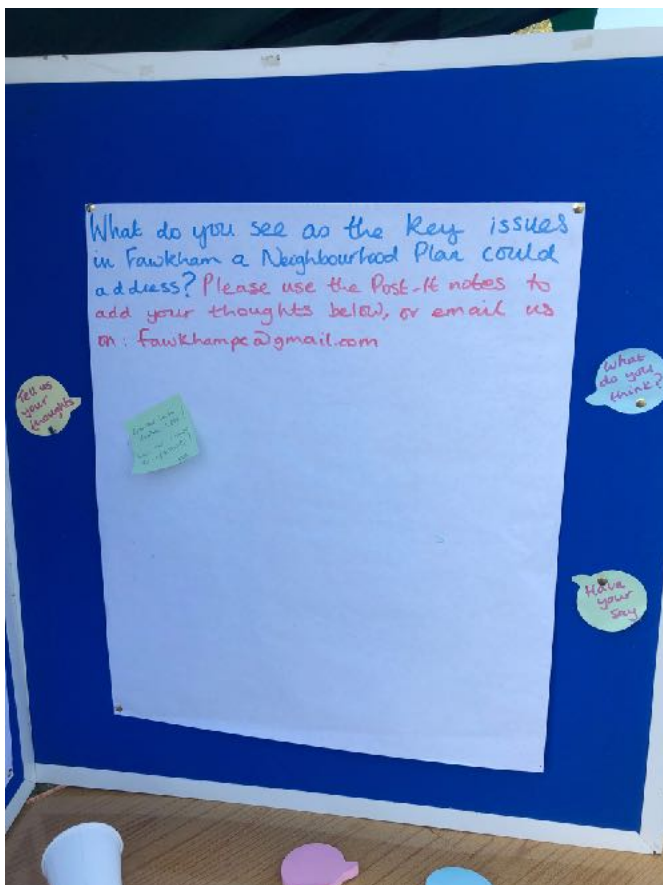
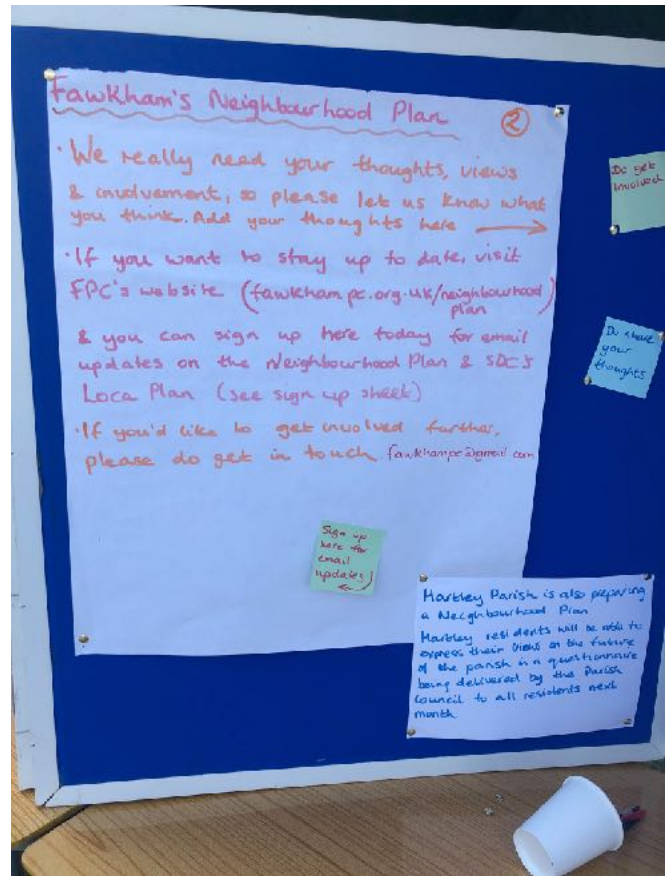
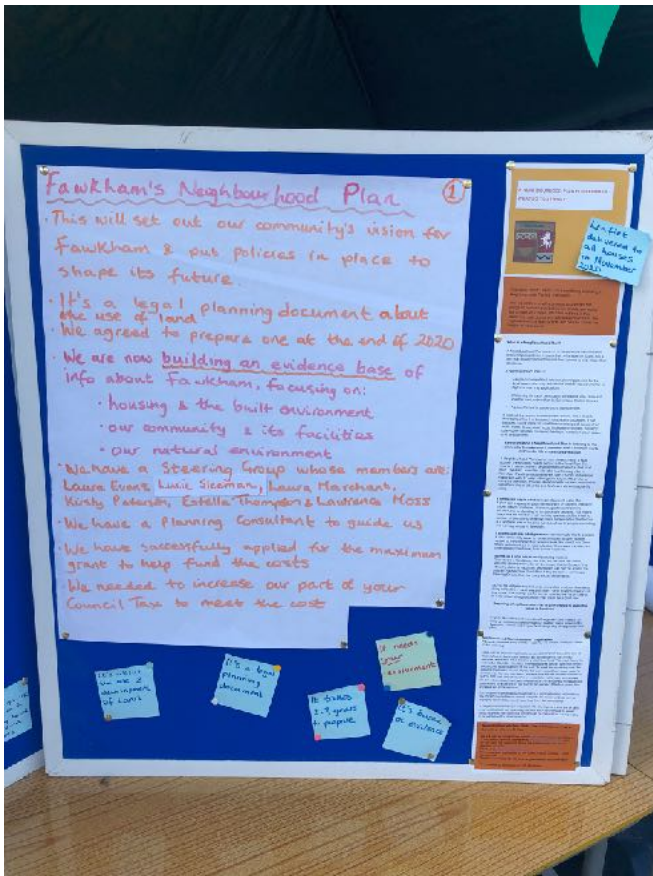
An estimated 55-60 people visited the stall. Some visitors asked questions on a particular point and others read all the information on display.

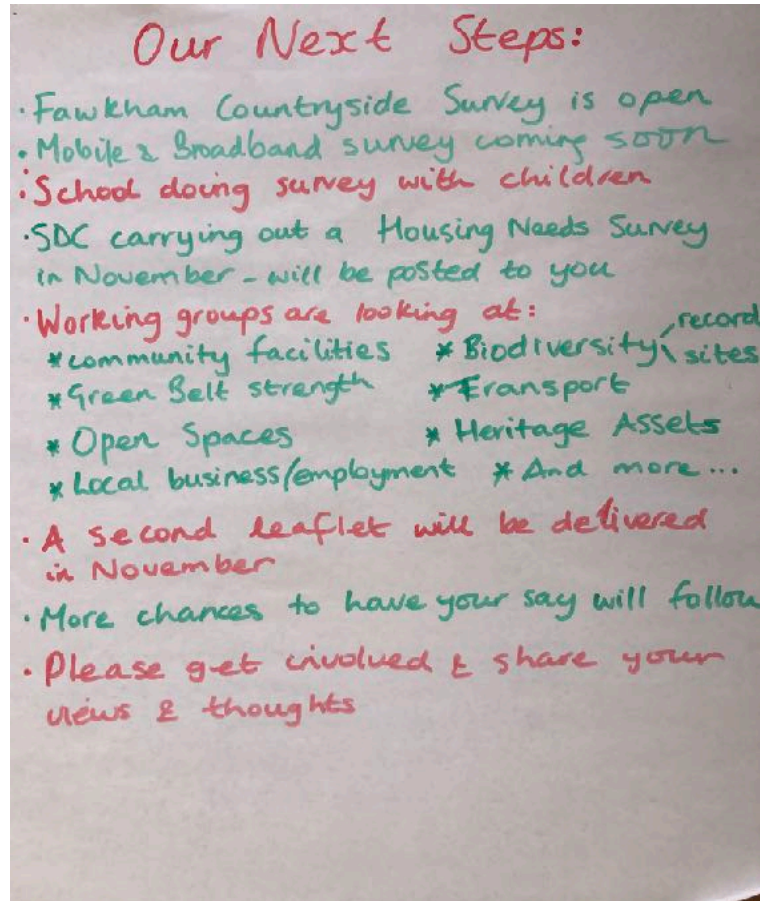
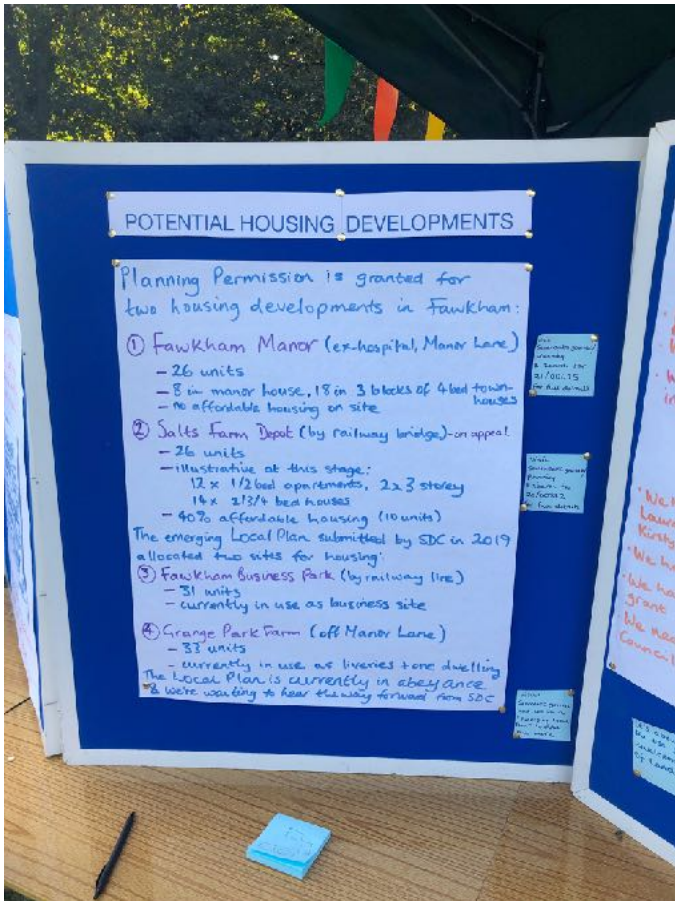
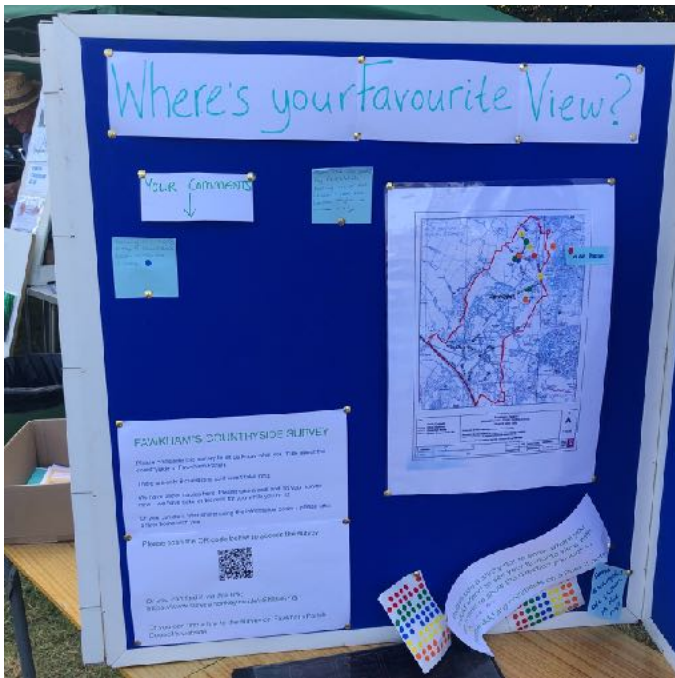
How did the engagement event influence the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan?

- By providing an opportunity for the local community to engage with members of the Steering Group in an easy-to-access format.

- By sense-checking that the issues being addressed by the Plan continue to be those that matter to the community.
- By obtaining residents' views on the countryside through encouraging the completion of the Fawkham Countryside Survey. The information thus gathered will feed into the evidence base on Landscape Character.
- By helping to identify valued views which could be looked to be protected. The information gathered will feed into the evidence base on Landscape Character.
- By providing an opportunity for residents who moved into the Parish since the first Neighbourhood Plan leaflet was distributed to be made aware of it and to engage with the process.
- By increasing awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst residents of Fawkham.
- By raising awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst the wider local community.
- By inviting residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan by joining a working group and/or by joining the Steering Group and/or by taking part in future community consultation exercises.

Appendix 3a (I) - Display Boards Used





Community Consultation and Engagement Programme Event: Church Fete, Saturday 25th June 2022

Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan's Steering Group hosted a stand, jointly with Hartley Neighbourhood Plan, at the Fawkham and Hartley Church fete on 25th June 2022. The fete is held annually and is well-attended by residents of Fawkham and those of nearby villages, particularly Hartley and Longfield. The fete was advertised by signboards, banners and notices in both Fawkham and Hartley, as well as online via the Fawkham Community Facebook page.

The aim was to:

- raise awareness of both Neighbourhood Plans
- give an update of progress to date in their preparation
- encourage Fawkham residents to attend the workshop being held on 7th July.

A series of display boards was used to provide information on Fawkham's Plan:

- an overview of what a Neighbourhood Plan is
- a copy of the second leaflet giving a detailed update on progress
- some facts and figures from the evidence base, including some maps
- information about the workshop for residents in July to help develop a vision and aims for the Neighbourhood Plan, to encourage residents to sign up to attend it
- asking people to sign up for email updates
- providing information about how to get in contact and to encourage involvement and signposting of the information on FPC's website
- an overview of development within the Parish
- SDC's Local Plan

Photos of the stand are shown below: Fawkham-specific boards are the four shown in the first photograph below.



The weather was good, which attracted many people to the fete and the stand was well-attended over the four hours of the fete. An estimated 50-60 people visited the stand.

Members of the Steering Group were in attendance to answer people's questions, and most visitors appeared to read all the information on display.

How did the engagement exercise influence the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan?

- By providing an opportunity for the local community to engage with members of the Steering Group in an easy-to-access format.
- By providing an opportunity for residents who moved into the Parish since the second Neighbourhood Plan leaflet was distributed to be made aware of the Plan and to engage with the process.
- By increasing awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst residents of Fawkham.
- By raising awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst the wider local community.
- By inviting residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan by joining a working group and/or by joining the Steering Group and/or by taking part in future community consultation exercises, specifically the vision workshop being held on 7th July.

Community Consultation and Engagement Programme Event: Church Fete, Saturday 24th June 2023

Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan's Steering Group hosted a stand at the Fawkham and Hartley Church fete on 24th June 2023. The fete is held annually and is well-attended by residents of Fawkham and those of nearby villages, particularly Hartley and Longfield. The fete was advertised by signboards, banners and notices in both Fawkham and Hartley, as well as online, including via the Fawkham Community Facebook page.

The aim was to:

- raise awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan
- advertise the upcoming six week Regulation 14 consultation period, which started the following week
- advertise the two drop in draft Plan exhibition sessions being held in July during the consultation period, and encourage Fawkham residents to attend one of them.

A series of display boards was used to provide information:

- an overview of what a Neighbourhood Plan is
- a copy of the second leaflet giving a detailed update on progress
- dates of the two drop in exhibition sessions being held in July asking people to sign up for email updates
- information about how to get in contact and to encourage involvement; signposting of the information on FPC's website
- on progress with SDC's Local Plan

The stand was situated alongside that of Hartley Neighbourhood's Plan. A photo of the stand is shown below. The weather was very hot and this, coupled with a neighbouring Parish's fete being on the same day, led to lower attendance at the fete than in previous years. An estimated 20-25 people visited the stand, however, all seemed interested and engaged. Members of the Steering Group were in attendance to answer people's questions and explain the process further.



How did the engagement exercise influence the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan?

- By inviting residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan through advertising the Regulation 14 public consultation process, which started the following week.
- By inviting residents to become involved in the preparation of the Plan attending one of the two drop in exhibition sessions being held in July during the Regulation 14 consultation period.
- By providing an opportunity for the local community to engage with members of the Steering Group in an easy-to-access format.
- By providing an opportunity for residents who moved into the Parish since the last Neighbourhood Plan leaflet was distributed to be made aware of the Plan and to engage with the process.
- By increasing awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst residents of Fawkham.
- By raising awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan amongst the wider local community.

Summary of Meetings held with Residents on 3rd and 10th December 2020

The purpose of the meetings was to discuss to whether residents of Fawkham think it would be a good idea to create a Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) for Fawkham. As this would require a temporary increase in the parish portion of Council tax, we feel it is important to seek the views of those who will pay that.

Before we hear your views we first want to outline why we are considering creating a NHP and the potential obstacles to creating one.

So, why create a NHP?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a legal document that gives a community a say in what new development looks like, what green spaces it would like to protect, and a legal say in local planning matters. It can be a powerful tool to guide future development.

The Local Plan consultations showed us the power of community engagement and what we can achieve if we work together. It also demonstrated that there is a real desire in the community to protect the Green Belt and our natural surroundings. We also realised that the responsibility to look after our village lies with us rather than Sevenoaks District Council or our then MP. This is why we think creating a NP would be a good idea.

We also carried out a village survey last year, when we asked you what you liked about living in Fawkham and what you didn't, and we think a NHP would be a good way of trying to keep what you do like about Fawkham and helping to prevent or trying to fix what you don't. The survey also gave some suggestions for improvements, and if these were popular, then a NHP may be a good way to take them forward.

After the end of local plan consultation we started to think what we could do to protect our village. Along with Hartley PC we investigated the possibility of asking to extend the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to include the Fawkham valley, but after investigation we came to conclusion that this would take 10-20 years, if it was successful, and that the only way to have a proactive impact on the future of our village was to investigate creating a NHP.

As you may be aware, the Government is proposing to change the planning legislation. The white paper proposes land is put into one of three zones: for growth, for renewal or for protection. There would be agreed design codes and requirements and if a development met those it would go ahead. It means Local Planning Authorities (such as Sevenoaks District Council) would have little say in individual planning applications. It also means local residents would not be able to make comments on an application in same the way they can now. However, NHPs are mentioned in the white paper on these proposals, and so these would enable local communities to continue to have a say.

Given all this we feel this is the time to look at implementing a NHP, otherwise we will be too late. Due to the budget timetable set by Sevenoaks DC we need to decide now so

that we could start work in the new year. If we do not decide now we will have to wait another year.

So, what are the potential obstacles to preparing a NHP?

Cost - creating a NHP is a large undertaking and it is costly. Although grants are available, we will need to raise some of this cost by increasing the Parish Council portion of the council tax. All 5 Fawkham parish councillors live in Fawkham and we understand that due to the global pandemic money is tight, and it is not the best time to be increasing council tax. We would like to hear your thoughts on this. We have erred on the side of over-estimating the cost rather than under-estimating. We hope that the increase in Council tax in the second year would not be as large as in the first year.

Time - Making a NHP is a long process. It's likely to take 12-18 months to do the bulk of the work in pulling the plan together, and then similar amount of time to go through the processes required to finalise it, which include an independent examination and a formal referendum vote by those on the electoral roll for Fawkham, with 50% saying yes required to "make" the Plan.

Resource - A NHP is most successful if all of the community engages with it. Whenever we ask for help and engagement from residents we are always pleased with the response. If we go ahead with a plan, we intend to hold workshops, drop in sessions etc with residents to develop the content of the plan so it reflects what the community wants and needs. Hopefully conditions will be such that we can hold these in person at the village hall over the next year.

To develop an effective Plan we will also need help from people in the village to join various work streams. However this is a large undertaking on people's commitment and time. We have already been talking to a couple of people who have the skills, experience, time and, most importantly, the willingness to help, though we would love it if a few more residents could join us. If you feel this is something you'd be interested in finding out more about, please do let us know, either in this meeting or afterwards.

Questions and Comments from Residents during the meetings

Financial implications - Why does it look as though ours would cost £36k when other larger ones are £30-35k? Unfortunately, the size of the Parish does not change many of the costs involved with creating a plan, although some such as printing costs, for example, would be cheaper. The grant is "up to" £10,000, and until we apply with a fully detailed cost breakdown, we will not know how much we will receive. £10,000 grant plus £24,000 gives a total of £34,000, which is within the range. This budget includes some contingency cost, and we have erred on the side of over-estimating, rather than under-estimating. We would budget for a £12,000 increase in council tax in the first year and hope that the second year increase would be less. We estimate the first year increase would be £41 a year for Band D, or £3.42 a month.

How is it decided whether to prepare a Plan? It is the Parish Council's decision, and we will review and assess the feedback we have received, with a deadline for views of 13th December. We need to decide and submit our council tax figure to Sevenoaks for a January deadline.

Could we fund some of the money from some other means e.g. crowd funding?

This could be a good idea and would reduce the amount needed to be raised from council tax in the second year. It is something that could be explored, allowing those who can and want to contribute more financially to do so.

What sort of things would be in the plan? That would be community-led and agreed by the steering group, with the survey results suggesting it would be likely to include: community facilities and infrastructure, housing (stock, needs, urban design), natural environment and local employment.

Would there be no Local Plan under the new white paper planning proposals? The proposals would appear to very much reduce the role of a Local Planning Authority such as Sevenoaks District Council, and it would seem that Local Plans will not have as big a role in the proposed zoning system.

Are we a bit early developing this before the Local Plan? Spending money too soon? Given the white paper proposals, we feel the time is right to start work on a NP now. As it takes time to prepare, we would not want to delay. The first year's costs will be mostly on gathering evidence for the plan, and the evidence will not change even if the emerging Local Plan does. It is possible to develop a NP before a Local Plan, with discussions between the PC and SDC on the relationship between the policies in each.

Will Fawkham PC decide on Planning Applications if there is a Neighbourhood Plan? No, that decision would continue to be made by Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) as the Local Planning Authority. However, their decision would need to take into account the policies in a NP, as it forms part of the statutory decision making process. Developers can only go against the policies in a NP if they can convince a Planning Enquiry that the policy should be set aside. If the changes currently proposed by the Government go ahead, however, it seems SDC would have little say in individual planning decisions.

Which trumps which plan? Local or Neighbourhood? In the same way that a Local Plan needs to conform with national planning guidance, a NP needs to conform with a Local Plan. A NP for Fawkham would go to a more granular level of detail than the Sevenoaks-wide Local Plan; it would be more specific to the circumstances of Fawkham.

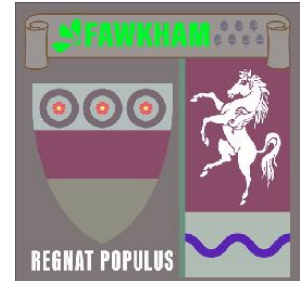
How does the referendum vote work? People on the electoral roll for Fawkham parish would be entitled to vote on the plan once it was prepared: one person, one vote. If more than 50% vote 'yes', then the plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for Sevenoaks District.

Is there a risk that the vote would be 'no'? There is that risk, however as the plan would be developed with community input it should reflect what the community wants. Only three NHPs have received an overall 'no' vote in a referendum, and 1,000 have been voted on.

Comments made by residents during the meetings:

- In principle, a good idea, but is it premature?
- There is a cost to inaction
- The issues that a NP would address will still come up - they won't go away
- Some residents on low incomes may find it difficult to pay the increase in council tax
- The process itself has value • A Neighbourhood Plan is a way for a community to come together and work on a positive action, rather than negatively objecting to proposals.
- The community would be in a much better position whatever the final format of a plan.

Invitation to the Landscape Character Workshop
Delivered late January 2022



Landscape Character Workshop

As part of the work needed to support the Neighbourhood Plans for both Fawkham and Hartley, Landscape Character Assessments are being undertaken for both Parishes. Landscape Character Assessments are tools to help understand what the landscape is like today, how it came to be like that, and how it may change in the future. Their role is to help ensure that change and development does not undermine what is characteristic or valued about any particular landscape, and that ways of improving the character of a place can be considered.

The Landscape Character Assessments for both Fawkham and Hartley are being prepared at the same time, as this will give benefits in time and costs. Both Councils have each commissioned Fiona Fyfe Associates, who were appointed following a tender process. Fiona Fyfe is a Chartered Landscape Architect with extensive experience in Landscape Character Assessment, including involvement on local projects for Kent Downs AONB and the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership.

You are invited to attend a consultation workshop with Fiona on Zoom (an online video conference meeting) to find out more about the process, and to contribute your own thoughts to the Landscape Character Assessments. This event will take place on Wednesday 9th February, from 7.30 - 9pm.

If you would like to attend, please contact the Parish Clerk on 07503 651138 or via email: Fawkhampc@gmail.com and you will be provided with the joining details ahead of the meeting.

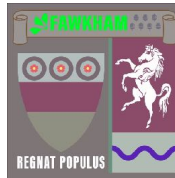
Thank you,

Fawkham Parish Council



Residents' Visioning Workshop - 7th July 2002 - Materials Used

Invitation text:



Help Develop Our Neighbourhood Plan - Thursday 7th July, 7pm at the Village Hall

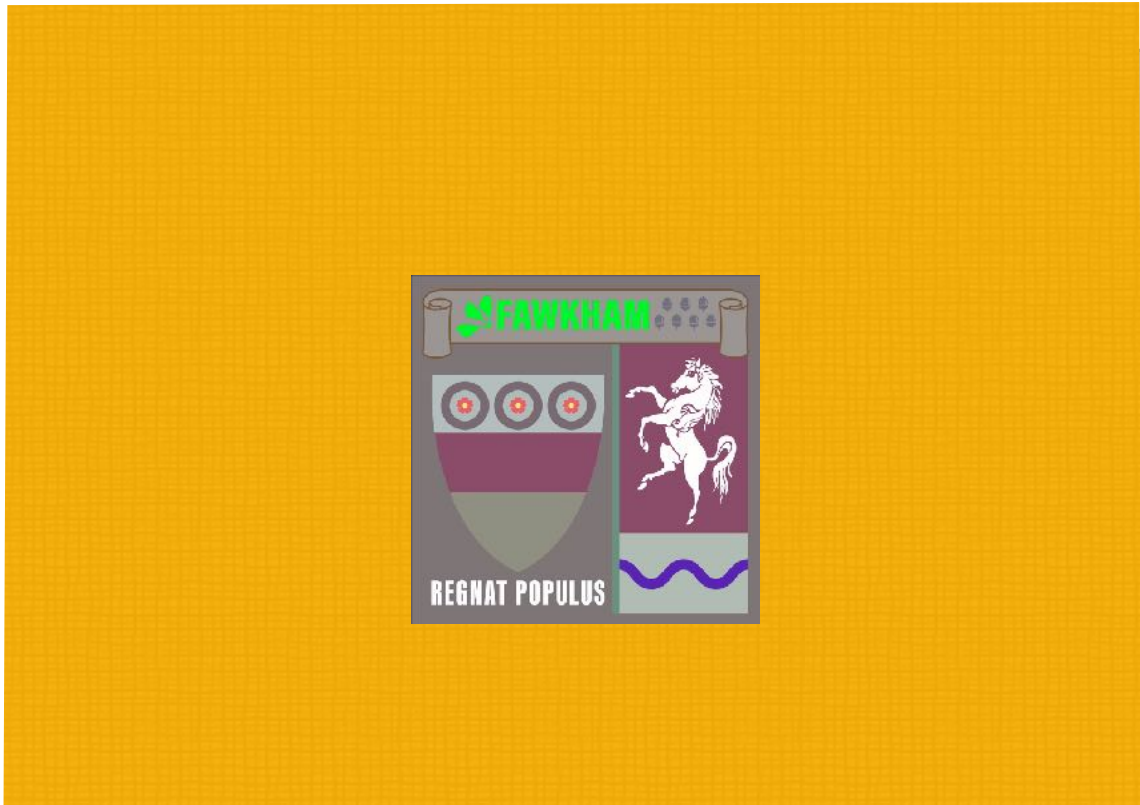
We would like the residents of Fawkham to help develop a 'vision' for the future of Fawkham and to contribute to a set of key aims for our Neighbourhood Plan. We are holding a workshop to draw on local knowledge and to develop a deeper understanding of what is important to residents, building on the village survey from 2019. The vision and aims will set the framework for our Neighbourhood Plan which is being prepared by the Parish Council, and ensure it reflects what the community wants and needs.

The workshop is being held on Thursday 7th July, from 7 - 9 pm at the village hall, and will be run by Tony Fullwood, the planning consultant we have helping us with the Plan. The workshop will involve discussions in small groups, looking at a number of themes and issues including community facilities, housing, business, heritage and the natural environment (landscape, biodiversity, etc).

Clearly the more people who can attend from across the Parish, the more representative the Neighbourhood Plan will be. Please let us know by 24th June if you are able to join us, either by emailing fawkhampc@gmail.com or by leaving a message on 07503 651138 - we very much hope you can.

Many thanks, Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group & Fawkham Parish Council

Poster used for publicity:



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The more people who can attend from across the Parish, the more representative the Neighbourhood Plan will be, so please let us know by 27th June if you are able to join us, either by emailing fawkhampc@gmail.com or by leaving a message on 07503 651138 - we very much hope you can.

Fawkham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Fawkham Parish Council

Workshop Exhibition Boards Content:

Fawkham's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group began developing an "evidence base" of information about the Parish last summer. This work is nearly complete. The information here shows some key information from this work.

Fawkham: Character and Heritage

Fawkham Parish is about 3 miles north to south and 1 mile wide

Fawkham Parish is covered entirely by the Green Belt

The Parish has a strongly rural character with the countryside dominating the presence of buildings except for small clusters

The combination of landform, vegetation and historic buildings means Fawkham Parish contains some outstanding views

The Parish has thirteen Listed Buildings, shown on the map

The Parish has a Conservation Area called Baldwin's Green, which includes St. Mary's church

There is no "centre", rather there are three small clusters of development: at Fawkham Green; around the school/ village hall; and at Baldwin's Green/Castle Hill, as well as dispersed properties along the lanes

Fawkham Parish has areas of publicly accessible Open Space: natural/semi-natural open space, including woodland; amenity green space, e.g. the village green and land at Small Grains; the churchyard; and outdoor sports facilities (football pitches and golf courses)

The Parish is bordered by larger settlements: Longfield, Hartley and New Ash Green which have their own needs

Built Environment: Housing and Business

There are around 230 dwellings in the Parish, an increase of 5% since 2011

Planning consent has been granted for a further 52 dwellings (an increase of 22%)

A low level of housing need within the Parish was identified by the Local Housing Needs survey in 2021:

- a need for three affordable homes
- and seven open market homes

Employment is provided at business units on current and former farms; at the hotel and pub; primary schools; farms; kennels and animal rehoming centres; sports club and at other business premises

In addition, a number of residents operate businesses from their home, ranging from honey production to photography, and building services to training provision

There are around 79 business units on farms, or former farms, around the Parish, mostly converted from agricultural buildings

Natural Environment

There are four Local Wildlife Sites in Fawkham, which can be seen on the map. These cover nearly 10% of the area of the Parish

Ancient Woodland is any area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. Ancient Woodland covers 12.7% of the Parish, and is found in 16 separate patches

In total nearly a quarter of the Parish is covered by woodlands of some form

There are four small areas of traditional orchard and four areas of calcareous grassland which have been designated as UK Priority Habitats

Fawkham has a network of hedges, many of which are believed to be ancient. The hedgerows add to the amenity and aesthetic value of the area, contribute to its rural character, and provide connections for wildlife between blocks of woodland

The landscape has areas of different character, with twin dry valley heads at the southern end and the further dry valley (the Pennis Valley) which feeds in to the main valley on the eastern side, and the higher Horton Wood ridge area to the west

Community Facilities and Transport

Fawkham has the following community facilities:

Fawkham CE Primary School: total capacity 105 pupils, 0.5 form entry, c.30% of pupils live in Fawkham Parish

Fawkham Pre-School (Scudders Hill)

Fawkham Montessori (at Corinthians)

The Rising Sun Inn: public house with bar and restaurant

Fawkham Village Hall: registered charity, in use every week day

Mobile library: outside the pub, once a fortnight for 30 minutes

St Mary's Church: ecclesiastical Parish is combined with Hartley

Recycling facilities: bottles and clothes, within Corinthians Sports Club car park

Outdoor Sports Facilities: football pitches at Corinthians Sports Club, Corinthian (Fawkham Valley) Golf Course, Redlibbets Golf Course (part of which is in the Parish)

None of the facilities is safely accessible and within a reasonable walking distance of the majority of dwellings due to the nature of the roads and the lack of footways or cycle paths

Sevenoaks District Council identifies seven services and facilities as key to settlement sustainability, and having four or more of these indicates a more sustainable location which may be able to support future development

Fawkham Parish has only two of these key facilities: a village hall and a primary school

The other facilities considered by SDC as key to settlement sustainability are: doctors' surgery; Post Office; small convenience store; bus or rail transport

The Parish is not well served by sustainable modes of transport. Residents are reliant on cars, even for short journeys.

- Levels of car availability in Fawkham are far higher than across Sevenoaks District as a whole
- The main lane runs north to south along the bottom of the valley for some 5 km (3.2 miles). It is a narrow, rural C-class road, mostly lined with hedgerows. Other lanes are even narrower
- The width of the lanes allows no segregation between cars and other road users; there is only a footway for 800m (0.5 miles) along one side of the main lane, and no verge
- The absence of footways, the apparent and actual speed of traffic, and absence of lighting means the lanes represent an unsafe walking environment; they are also dangerous for cyclists, with many blind bends

There are 17 public footpaths within the Parish, covering 5.87 miles or 9.44kms

- These are well used for recreational walks
- Most are contained within the Parish, with only three leading to other settlements where facilities can be found: SD212 to Longfield from Valley Road north of the church, SD163 to the edge of New Ash Green and SD221 to the Ash Road in Hartley

Present and future forces for change affecting Fawkham's landscape

There are many different forces for change acting on the landscape of Fawkham Parish. Some are natural processes whilst others are man-made. Some are single, large-scale changes whilst others are smaller incremental changes which can have a strong cumulative impact on the landscape. Some changes may be sudden, whilst others may occur gradually. Many of the changes will be exacerbated by climate change. As well as visual impacts, these changes may impact on the local economy, and on the health, safety and wellbeing of local people.

Climate change

- Increased high intensity rainfall events leading to more frequent flooding along the valley floor and soil loss from the valley sides.
- Increased likelihood of summer drought affecting which tree species can thrive, and increasing stress on trees.
- Stronger and more frequent storms making trees vulnerable to wind damage.
- Increased risk of pests and diseases (e.g. tree disease spreading from warmer climates).
- Changes in choices of crops (e.g. vines) affecting the appearance of the landscape.

Changes in land use, and in agricultural and woodland management practices

- Intensive farming methods leading to loss of habitats/ biodiversity
- Lack of management of hedges, including replacement of some sections with barbed wire.
- Increase in use of land for horses or recreation, affecting the appearance of the landscape and the vegetation present.
- Erosion of footpaths, especially in the winter months.

- Pollution from fertilizer and agricultural runoff.
- Soil loss through water and wind erosion (this problem is exacerbated by the removal of some field boundary hedges in the second half the 20th Century).
- Lack of traditional woodland management (e.g. coppicing).
- Tree disease (e.g. ash dieback).
- New grant schemes offer opportunities for more environmentally-friendly farming methods.

Development and infrastructure

- Large-scale development.
- Small-scale development and property extensions, potentially out of character and lacking local distinctiveness, and increasing the visibility of buildings within the landscape.
- Conversion/ replacement of agricultural/ industrial buildings with residential development.
- Loss of open space and large gardens to development.
- Gradual suburbanisation through road schemes, insensitive property boundary treatments and lighting.
- Renewable energy projects.
- Agricultural development (e.g. new barns).
- Telecommunications masts.

Loss of rural character

- Increased traffic resulting in highways changes, increased signage, and damage to verges, banks and hedges.
- Presence of motorway impacting on tranquillity, with sudden increases in traffic on rural lanes as satnavs redirect people.
- Fly tipping and littering.
- Changing character of footpaths from rural to urban where they run between high close-boarded fences which restrict views and make the paths very narrow.

Get Involved, and Have Your Say...

We really want your thoughts, views and involvement so please let us know what you think

If you'd like to get involved further, do get in touch: fawkhampc@gmail.com

If you want to stay up to date, visit FPC's website:
fawkhampc.org.uk/neighbourhoodplan

And you can sign up here today for email updates on our Neighbourhood Plan and SDC's Local Plan - please add your details to the sign up sheet

Summary of key themes from table discussions:

Character and Heritage

- The church, its setting (Baldwins Green conservation area), the village green, other green areas and woodland are particularly valued
- The parish is seen as rural and in the countryside - a rural hamlet; the Green Belt should be protected
- Community events and activities will help preserve a rural village “feel”; the dispersed nature of the houses does not help with this
- Residents wish to conserve what we have
- Comments were made regarding increased traffic and litter.

Built Environment: Housing and Business

- The overriding theme was that everything should remain as it is
- Any new housing should include houses suitable for Parishioners who wish to downsize and remain in the Parish, and an element of affordable housing. The Fawkham Manor development, for example, was not seen as meeting a need in Fawkham
- Developments of 3 or 4 houses, rather than 20 plus
- The Green Belt should be protected
- It was felt that further buildings could be Listed
- Business sites should be retained to support local employment; no need for new buildings as redundant farm buildings can be used; any loss of business premises would not be welcome.

Community Facilities

- The common theme was that existing facilities are appreciated and should be retained
- It is accepted that the population size makes the provision of further facilities (and public transport) unviable, although a small shop/Post Office would be welcome
- It was also recognised that further facilities exist in Longfield and New Ash Green
- Some existing facilities could be better signposted/publicised, for example the mobile library and village hall
- One group highlighted that a play area or meeting space for young families would be welcomed.

Natural Environment

- The natural landscape of the valley is valued, especially the woodlands, which were described as providing a “unique characteristic”, and should therefore be protected, especially where development abuts woodland, which in turn will affect wildlife.
- The purchase of land to protect it, as happened previously, was raised
- As were local public rights of way, with the condition of these generally being regarded as acceptable, although linkage, signage, maintenance could be improved in some cases
- Hedgerows and field margins were seen as valuable for biodiversity, with some concerns raised over maintenance and access, with a recent example discussed
- Some small, sympathetic development was recognised as unavoidable, although people would like to see Fawkham stay as it is. “Estate”-type development would not be popular
- Some residents have extreme amounts of external lighting (not time/motion sensitive) and perhaps consideration in the plan could be made to making the valley darker.
- Biodiversity enhancements such as owl boxes, rather than blue tit boxes, to reflect the species found in the Parish, would be welcome, and one resident suggested that perhaps working in partnership with local landowners and the RSPB more bird boxes could be placed in woodland.

Responses to the Regulation 14 Consultation, Summer 2023

Provided as a separate document