

# David Moore: 'green lungs' need protection from developers



**G**reen spaces are very attractive to developers. The risks to our open countryside are well known with the suggested development north of Horsham but there are even bigger risks associated with the possible use of green spaces for house building within our settlements.

We saw this demonstrated not very long ago when West Sussex County Council tried to get planning permis-

sion for the construction of houses on Mugeridge Field, a site which it owns adjacent to Chesworth Farm. Fortunately, this application failed.

In the current climate, many people, be they private, business or local authorities, will be looking for ways in which to realise the value of their assets.

Where the asset is in the form of land, the attractions of selling it off for building is obvious, especially when the Government is extolling the need to build more and more houses.

For this reason, it was really good to see the publication of Horsham District Council's draft Green Space Strategy 2013-2023.

It's been well prepared and gives us some idea of the

council's views on the green spaces, which it owns, and what the future might hold.

It's a document that anyone with an interest in the town and surrounding area should be encouraged to read.

More importantly, it's out for consultation until March 5 so, if you have any views on what should happen to HDC's green spaces, now is the time to express them.

It will certainly give us all plenty of food for thought.

Though the Horsham Society will be commenting on the document in due course, we mustn't forget that there are plenty of other green spaces in the town which need protection.

Some are owned by HDC but not included within the

strategy, others by the county council or privately.

The HDC consultation is timely because the society has been updating a survey of greens first undertaken nearly 20 years ago.

Back in December 1994, the society was involved in trying to get protection for a small open space on the east side of New Street.

Such a small project turned into a major piece of work when it was realised that there was a need for an inventory to list and hopefully protect all the green spaces within the boundary of the town.

Eventually 85 sites were identified, though it was realised that there might well be others which were in need of protection.

Obviously, much has changed since then and the new survey will be an opportunity to identify additional green spaces which may have been missed, new ones that have been created and any that have been lost.

There are areas within Horsham where house building is acceptable but what we have to ensure is that this is achieved without loss to our quality of life.

The maintenance and protection of the cherished green spaces within our town is something that we have to focus on.

Let's ensure that any new home construction benefits the town without damaging it.

*The Horsham Society is*




*concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces.*

*Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone, who shares these concerns.*

*For more information, visit our website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or telephone 01403 261640.*

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