

# Ron Bates: A Neighbourhood Plan for Horsham



But as Horsham town does not have one it has been necessary to create a new organisation – Horsham Blueprint - which is non-political and fully inclusive. The three Neighbourhood Councils – Denne, Forest and Trafalgar - have come together with the Horsham Society and others to form a steering group.

Horsham Blueprint embraces everyone, young and old, who resides, works, studies in Horsham. All are eligible to put forward their views so have your say about the development of Horsham.

Individuals, businesses, local representative groups, organisations and societies are all invited to join as members of Horsham Blueprint. It is the only organisation in Horsham town that can produce a neighbourhood plan recognised by Government.

The process has just started and Horsham Blueprint wants everyone to get in touch and express their



Plans on show for the West End of Horsham

wishes for Horsham. These wishes will help identify objectives that will promote and improve social, economic and environmental well-being and create the policies needed to guide future development.

Once completed the neighbourhood plan will become part of Horsham District Council's planning policy and be used to guide and determine planning

decisions. It will have real teeth. As a first step Horsham businesses are already being contacted and some have post boxes with postcards for people to express their wishes.

The Blueprint Steering Group will synthesise all these views and aspirations to produce the neighbourhood plan, which will complement the Horsham District Council

Planning Framework by setting out detailed policies for the town. It will, for example, identify locations for potential development; include policies for the preservation and improvement of open spaces; set out plans for traffic and transport, including safe cycle and pedestrian routes through the area; and include other policies required to deliver the objectives

The process for creating a neighbourhood plan has to follow some laid down procedures including full consultation with our residential and business communities. Eventually, the plan has to go through an examination by an independent inspector and must be approved in a referendum to be held next year. As the plan develops it will need active participation by all parts of the community, local authority, developers and other key organisations.

This will be a hugely democratic exercise requiring

lots of involvement by people in the town all along the way. The process of consultation has just begun and a marketing campaign starting now will give further momentum to bring the plan into force during 2016.

Neighbourhood planning is a new concept designed to put real power to control change in our communities into the hands of those who live and work there. We know our communities and our town and we are best placed to plan our future. Everyone who lives or works in Horsham town can sign up to become a member or join the mailing list. If you care about our town, do play your part, do get in touch! - horshamblueprint@gmail.com. Watch for the publicity flyers this autumn and help to influence the future of Horsham

*Membership of the Horsham Society is open to all. For more information, visit the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 272814.*

**T**he Horsham Society welcomes and supports this unique opportunity to shape the future of Horsham town offered by Horsham Blueprint in creating a Horsham Neighbourhood Plan.

There is much already to commend Horsham as a desirable place in which to live, work and study. Now there is an opportunity for everyone to influence the future development of our town over the next 15 years.

Neighbourhood plans are being prepared by parish councils across the country.