

# Horsham Society

with Ron Bates



## Development will drive more congestion

**T**he Horsham Society has been keeping a watchful eye on the current and future house building and other proposed developments in and around Horsham and the increase in traffic that these developments will bring.

The responsibility for transport lies with West Sussex County Council and policy is set out in the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026. The Plan sets out with the objective to improve the quality of life for those who live, work and visit West Sussex. It further recognises that hard decisions will need to be made during the lifetime of this Transport Plan. The Plan further states that there is limited funding for infrastructure improvements.

The Society wrote to WSCC to raise its concerns that the plan is already out of date and does not take into consideration a number of recent events. The main requirement being that Horsham District Council provide 800 additional homes each year in the area over the next 15 years.

Over 2,000 homes are being built to the west of Horsham and there are a number of planning applications being considered. A major recent planning application has been



submitted by Liberty for a new community north of Horsham which is to include 2,750 new homes, 500,000 sq ft of office space, three new schools and community

facilities.

Also north of Horsham following recent public consultation there is a proposal for a Recycling, Recovery and Renewable Energy (3Rs) Facility which is adjacent to Liberty's proposed development.

All this together with other recent developments such as that at Kilnwood Vale has not been fully taken into consideration in the 2011-2026 Transport Plan. The Part 2 - Implementation Plan - Section 2.5 Horsham, recognises there is already a traffic congestion problem on the A24 and A264. There is also recognition that this traffic congestion is a major contribution to poor local air quality.

The county council has confirmed that they are currently undertaking early preparatory work to review the Plan and expect to publish a draft for consultation in 2017. They confirm that this review will need to identify the transport issues that need to be addressed. It will also consider recent changes to the statutory planning regime and recent decisions by local planning authorities on local plans and planning applications. WSCC further confirm that as development comes forward, the county council works

with developers at pre-application stage to develop evidence that assess the site-specific impacts of development on the transport system.

Overall there does not seem to be adequate account being taken of the increase in the number of vehicle movements brought about by the increase in car ownership. The Department of Transport - Road Traffic Forecasts 2015 - gives a range of 19 per cent to 55 per cent growth in traffic in the next 30 years.

Notwithstanding all the information available from surveys and forecasts there seems that little is to be done to lessen road traffic congestion and improve air quality mainly due to lack of available funds.

A stronger negotiation with developers on Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 contributions would be a start.

*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 the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 259038.*