



**MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Switchboard: 01444 458166
Fax: 01444 450027
DX 300320 Haywards Heath 1
www.midsussex.gov.uk

Contact: Julie Blackstock
E-mail: julieob@midsussex.gov.uk
Direct line: 01444 477240
Out of hours: 07702 034236

Your ref:
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PRESS RELEASE

Residents encouraged to comment on draft District Plan consultation

The 12-week public consultation on the draft District Plan is just over halfway through and Mid Sussex District Council is reminding residents that there are many ways they can feed back their views and help to shape the future of the District.

The draft District Plan sets out in broad terms what, where, when and how development will take place in Mid Sussex over the next 20 years. It has been prepared with the help of Town and Parish Councils in Mid Sussex so that it reflects the views of local communities.

“We want Mid Sussex residents and businesses to have their say on how they want to see their area develop,” said Councillor Gary Marsh, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration. “The Council has prepared a draft District Plan document and now is the time for local people to submit their views and help the Council to shape the final version.

“The Council has carried out detailed research to find out the level of new housing our community will actually need over the next 20 years and the infrastructure that will need to be delivered alongside it. The headline news is that our draft District Plan proposes a significant reduction in the number of houses to be built in Mid Sussex, compared with the targets previously imposed on us by the Government.

“However, the draft District Plan is about much more than just housing numbers and I urge residents to consider every aspect of the plan. The overall aim is to increase the self-sufficiency of our communities and reduce their dependence on other areas for employment and other facilities. This way, it is not only more convenient for local people; it



reduces the need for residents to commute and creates sustainable communities with a reduced carbon footprint.

“I hope residents will get involved, embrace this consultation and help us to shape a District Plan that meets the needs of residents and businesses alike, while protecting the unique character of our towns and villages.”

Residents can view the draft District Plan online at www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan and paper copies are available at the District Council, Town Council and Parish Council offices, and at local libraries and Help Points. Leaflet drops and public exhibitions have been taking place across the District at busy locations, such as train stations, supermarkets and town centres, and they will continue to take place throughout the consultation period.

Comment forms have been distributed to every household in the District, as part of a large feature in the latest edition of the Council magazine, 'Mid Sussex Matters'. Detailed comments can also be submitted by email to LDFConsultation@midsussex.gov.uk or in writing to District Plan Consultation, Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS.

ENDS

For more information please contact **Julie Blackstock** on 01444 477240 or julieob@midsussex.gov.uk

Notes to Editors

The draft District Plan aims to:

- Protect the valued landscape, historic and ecological heritage of Mid Sussex, including the unique identity and character of Mid Sussex towns and villages
- Significantly reduce new housing growth by over one third compared with the South East Plan targets
- Promote economic vitality, by supporting the rural economy, tourism and vibrant, attractive and successful town and village centres
- Support the provision of more local job opportunities to reduce the need to commute
- Improve infrastructure provision, such as leisure facilities, by funding through a new Community Infrastructure Levy (a contribution from developers to community facilities)
- Create sustainable communities that reduce our carbon footprint.

The draft District Plan consultation will finish on 13 January 2012. The results will be reported back to Mid Sussex District Council's Better Environment Advisory Group in March 2012 and a revised District Plan will be reported to Council for approval in May/June 2012.

Once approved by Council, there will be another six-week consultation period where people will be invited to submit their views on the District Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination. The Inspector is expected to report back early in 2013, with final adoption of the District Plan potentially taking place in spring 2013.