

HBO Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee
Report to the Parish Council
10th February 2025

There has not been a meeting of either the Steering Committee or the Working Group since the last report. However, there is a Steering Committee meeting scheduled for this coming Thursday and the general public are invited to attend.

We are somewhat disturbed that the Parish Council has removed the £10,000 that was set aside, over a year ago, to help fund the making of the Plan. To date, we have been fortunate to have secured outside funding or technical assistance for our endeavours and have not had to call on the Parish Council. However, there will be further costs, in particular, policy and general report writing and other incidental costs and it is highly unlikely that the funds we have left will cover those costs.

We now have three separate teams of professionals working on our behalf to produce the Plan:

Design Code

We have received a draft copy of the Design Guidance and Code. This has now been fact checked and returned for amending. Once completed and inserted into the Plan, the Design Guidance and Code will inform potential developers as to what type of housing we wish to see in terms of particular design, size and number.

An extensive survey of the village and surrounding areas was carried out to ensure that new housing will reflect and enhance the existing characteristics of our housing stock.

Landscape Character Assessment Survey

This survey is ongoing and once complete, will identify all biodiversity, heritage designations, flood zones, ancient woodlands and many other features in the parish.

Once completed It will produce an assessment of landscape sensitivity, which will provide valuable information for our housing site assessment.

Housing Site Assessment

Under the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, Hatfield Broad Oak must provide 115 new dwellings and, by producing a Neighbourhood Plan, we will be able to determine where those dwellings will be located. We now have a professional team on board who will look at all of the necessary factors, including our Community Survey, the Housing Needs Survey, carried out in 2022, and the report by English Rural Housing Association assessing sites for social housing. The team will then provide us with their judgement as to the best places for housing allocation.

We are aiming to carry out a survey, sometime in April, of the whole parish to ascertain the views of our residents. Whilst we will never be in a position to please everyone with where our new housing will go, our aim will be to make the final decision on allocation a majority decision.

Alan Fisher

10.02.25