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UPDATE

THE NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL MAGAZINE

It's Official! Neighbourhood Plan Referendum 4th May

There will be a referendum on the Northaw & Cuffley Neighbourhood Plan on May 4th 2023.

All residents on the Electoral Roll will be able to vote and this is your chance to have a say and influence the future of Northaw and Cuffley.

There is a significant amount of information on our Neighbourhood Plan on our website which can be found at **https://northawcuffleypc.org.uk/the-neighbourhood-plan/**.

A copy of our draft Neighbourhood Plan, and a short video about the plan, are also available to be viewed via this same webpage, or the plan can be viewed by appointment at our offices at 7 Maynard Place, Cuffley.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is quite separate from the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan. The latter deals largely with the allocation of additional housing on Greenbelt sites and is driven by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. The Parish Council is opposed to the most recent draft of the Local Plan as we consider the amount of development proposed on Greenbelt land in the Parish to be unjustifiable.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot address policy on Greenbelt sites but it can influence design details and

layout of development on sites of all sizes ranging from just one house or extensions through to major developments. In addition, once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place, additional financial resources can accrue to the Parishes from cash contributions from developers which can then be invested by Parish Councils in local community projects

By law the Parish Council cannot campaign for a yes vote in the referendum, however we can supply details to inform residents. We have set out overleaf some questions and answers which hopefully will be useful to residents.

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How do I know if I can vote?

If you are on the electoral roll you will automatically receive voting details from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. Do not forget that if you are voting in person, you will need to take photo ID, this is a change in law which now applies to all elections and referenda. It has nothing to do with the referendum. That is just coincidental.

Can I vote by post?

Yes, provided you are pre-registered to do so.

Who is organising the Referendum?

The Referendum will be organised and managed by Electoral Services at Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. All details will be the same as for national and local elections except rather than voting for candidates it will be a simple yes or no choice.

How is the outcome determined?

On the same basis as all other referenda. There is no benchmark in terms of the volume of votes, it's a simple majority of 50% +1.

What happens if the Neighbourhood Plan is rejected by voters?

There is no "Plan B". The Parish Council, if it wished to continue to pursue a new Neighbourhood Plan, would effectively have to start again with a blank sheet of paper and develop an alternative plan. Due to a number of factors this would probably take up to 5 years before the current stage of a referendum would be reached.

What Happens if the Neighbourhood Plan is approved at a Referendum?

It then comes into effect and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, and planning applicants, will need to have regard to the Neighbourhood Plan when making and determining all planning applications in the future.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a long complex technical document, is there an alternative to having to read the whole document?

Yes. We have produced a short video which gives an overview of the issues addressed in our Neighbourhood Plan. This can be seen on our Neighbourhood Plan webpage **https://northawcuffleypc.org.uk/the-neighbourhood-plan/** or it can be viewed on YouTube using the link **https://bit.ly/NCPCvideo**

Where can I get additional information or clarification?

The Parish Council's website contains a lot of background details, but if this is insufficient then please put questions to the Parish Council using the form that can be found at **https://northawcuffleypc.org.uk/contact-us/** or by calling and leaving a message for us at **01707 875 825**.