

Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan

2016 - 2018

Over the Past two and half years Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council have been preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, for the whole of the Parish area. It has held numerous drop-in sessions, meetings and provided publicity via its newsletters to keep residents up to date. The purpose of the Plan is to make proposals for how we can create "One Village " of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet that remains separated from Basildon by the Green Belt and decide where any development can be built where our community decide not Basildon Borough Council.

In 2017 Basildon Councils then Labour/UKIP administration was working on proposals in their Local Plan which the Parish Council felt did not fit the wishes of the community and the Parish Council, following consultations with the community, challenged and produced an alternative strategy for development within the Parish to Basildon Council's evolving Local Plan which the then administration chose to ignore.

However, following the May elections in 2018 and the lobbying of the new Conservative administration it agreed to review the proposals in the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan and at the Full Council Meeting on 18th October 2018 gave the Parish Council the opportunity to allocate **1,350** new homes where, in consultation with the community, the Parish Council think is the best place to build. The Parish Council and the BGNB Steering Group have, on behalf of the community, fought hard to achieve this concession

The decision to enable the Parish Council to build 1,350 homes has meant that it has to embark on Phase Two of the Neighbourhood Plan process to seek sites for the new homes and to this end have been engaging on our own " Call for Sites" exercise.

Recently leaflet and letters have been delivered to residents and land interests to gather information on sites that may be suitable and available for development

Click [HERE](#) for Bowers Bugle Extra Winter 2018 for information and update on BGNB Neighbourhood Plan and "Call For Sites" request to Land Interests and the Local Plan.

Basildon Council Planning Officers assisted in this process by helping to send the Parish Council's letter to all the land interests on their own " Call for Sites portfolio as the Parish Council were not able to directly make contact due to General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) preventing them.

The Parish Council " Call for Sites" exercise ended on 14th January 2019 and we are now gathering all information and will carry out an Assessment for the suitability of each site.

The work on the Neighbourhood Plan has a cost implication but currently funding has been obtained to cover the services of a consultant to help in the work of compiling the Neighbourhood Plan which currently is £23,000. The Parish Council Budget has only been used for minor ancillary costs.