

## **Aberford Neighbourhood Plan Press Release**

Back in 2011 the Government's Localism Act provided local communities with new powers to produce their own Neighbourhood Plans and, from the offset, Aberford & District Parish Council formed its own Neighbourhood Development Planning Group, initially consisted of 32 residents of the village, to take full advantage of the opportunity presented.

The Act's key aim was to provide local communities like ours with the ability to have a major statutory say in helping shape developments in their own area and, if our Neighbourhood plan is adopted, its policies will add significant weight to future planning decisions. It will stand shoulder to shoulder with policies put in place by the Government and Local Planning Authority.

If adopted our plan, which has recently taken a significant step towards completion, will help shape development in the parish for the next 10 – 15 years.

Over the past six years our Plan Management Group, which consists of local volunteers, Parish Councillors and a valued Consultant , has analysed the results of major public consultations, checked other research and policy documents in order to form policies for our Plan.

Environment, heritage, housing, transport, landscape and community facilities are just some of the aspects which form the backbone of the plan and will actively affect all planning decisions in the future.

Having now undergone compliance checking by Leeds City Council to ensure our policies don't contravene European, National/Local policies, the Aberford Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to Leeds City Council in June and the end is, finally, in sight!

Said Aberford's NDP 'Chair' Tom Robbins “This is a unique chance for the local community to have a real impact, with legal weighting, on how development happens within Aberford. The Group has developed policies based directly on the consultation undertaken last year to achieve completion of 'The Plan'.”

David Howson, Aberford PC 'Chair', added. “All the many volunteers have worked so hard through the years to enable The Parish Council to present its 'Plan' which was based on consultation with all who live and work in the village. Everyone should feel very proud of what has been achieved.”