

# The Built Environment Group Newsletter

## **Huge response to Mendip's Local Plan Part Two Consultation.**

Mendip's residents have been thanked for taking the time to comment on the council's important Local Plan Part Two document.

More than 1,000 people attended consultation events throughout the district in October and November 2015 and a massive 800 written responses have also been received.

Over the coming months, the Planning Policy Team will be reviewing the consultation responses in detail, appraising individual sites and testing options. Some targeted consultation will take place during this time, including with infrastructure and service providers, with the aim of publishing a draft plan by the end of 2016. A statement detailing how the consultation responses have been taken into account will also be published.

All respondents will be notified of the draft plan's publication and have the opportunity to comment on detailed proposals before they are considered at a public examination.

Cllr Nigel Woollcombe-Adams, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, said: "I would like to thank everyone who took the time to give us their views during the Local Plan Part Two consultation.

"This is a very important document which will identify areas for development across Mendip so it's great, and very useful, to have had so much feedback from local people.

"The council's Planning Policy Team will shortly begin analysing all the responses to help shape a draft plan for publication later this year."

The Local Plan Part Two is one of the council's key planning documents. While the Local Plan Part One sets the overall strategy, including housing numbers for the district, Part Two provides more detail and considers individual sites for housing, employment and community facilities across Mendip.

It will also review which open spaces should be protected and whether any other policies are needed, for example, around space standards for new homes or helping people wishing to build their own homes.

Due to the number of responses received, individual responses will not be published on the council website. However, a summary of the issues raised will be published on the website - [www.mendip.gov.uk/localplanpart2](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/localplanpart2) - in due course, along with responses of public bodies and statutory organisations, such as parish councils. Individual responses will be available to view in the council offices on request.

Anyone with further questions about the Local Plan process can contact a member of the Planning Policy Team by email: [planningpolicy@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@mendip.gov.uk) or telephone: 0300 303 8588.

## ***Public Access***

One of the services that we are pleased to be able to offer to members of the public via our website is 'Public Access'.

Public Access is an area of our planning pages that allows a visitor to view details of planning applications .

Here you can view application documents, review summaries of each representation made on planning applications and view some planning history. Public Access also allows you to submit comments on-line for applications that are currently being determined, track applications, create weekly or monthly lists to see which applications have been validated or decided and you can also set up email notifications for new applications or decisions in your area.

In order to assist visitors to our Public Access Website we've created a series of 'How To' instructions. This series of documents is a comprehensive and easy to follow guide on how to use the various functions that are available on Public Access.

You can access these documents by going to the planning home page of our website and selecting 'How to use Public Access' - <http://www.mendip.gov.uk/publicaccess>

We cover 5 different topics in the instructions. These are:

- How to register with Public Access
- How to Comment on a planning application.
- How to create an email notification for new applications or decisions in your area.
- How to run a weekly or monthly list.
- How to track a planning application.

We hope that these instructions will enable visitors to our Public Access website to carry out their tasks with ease.

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## ***Neighbourhood Plan Update***

Neighbourhood planning groups are continuing to make good progress in Mendip.

The Frome Neighbourhood Plan is currently undergoing independent examination, for more information see [www.mendip.gov.uk/fromeneighbourhoodplan](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/fromeneighbourhoodplan)

Rode have published a draft of their Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan is available at: [www.rodeparishcouncil.webs.com](http://www.rodeparishcouncil.webs.com)

For more information on neighbourhood planning see our website [www.mendip.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning)

## *More Success in Planning Appeals*

Mendip's planners have recently celebrated success in winning two appeals resisting wind turbine development. Both cases we being dealt with by Public Inquiry, the most challenging form of planning appeal. Planning officers are cross-examined in depth by the developer's barrister, over a number of hours and sometimes days.

At Torr Works Quarry (east of Shepton Mallet), the Council refused consent for four 80m high.

After a 7-day Inquiry, both the Inspector and the Secretary of State fully agreed with the Council's concerns. The Inspector's report is some 75 pages long!

Meanwhile at Piltown Farm, West Pennard the Council refused consent for two 15m high turbines on landscape grounds. This case is notable because an earlier Inspector had originally approved the turbines, but the High Court ruled that this decision was flawed. The Inquiry was to re-determine the appeal (with another Inspector), which the Council then won.

This follows considerable success at appeal more generally, with a significant majority of appeals being dismissed.

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## *Building Control*

In November, Building Control ran a stand at the home building and renovation show at the bath and west showground, Shepton Mallet. It was branded under LABC (Local Authority Building Control) and we were able to give advice to the general public on the service we provide and guide them through the application process. It was a well attended event and one that we will have a stand at this year as well.

We held a CPD training event in January ran by Proctor Group regarding condensation control which was attended by local builders, architects and members of the building control team. The event was well received and any idea you have for future training sessions please get in touch with building control.

On April the 15<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting our local awards at Pennard House. Nominations made by our surveyors of projects completed throughout the last year will be put forward in a number of categories. Those that have been nominated will shortly be contacted with regards to details of the event.

## ***Housing Options Team - Topic 4 Retirement and Sheltered housing in Mendip***

Retirement and sheltered housing is for people who can live independently but need the peace of mind that there are on-site services that can be called on to provide low level support for short-term or longer-term needs.

There are different types of sheltered schemes and retirement housing, to rent and buy. In Mendip, they tend to be run by Housing Associations or charities. Schemes usually consist of between 15 and 40 dwellings. These may be bedsits, self-contained flats, bungalows or luxury apartments. The complex is often built around a garden or communal facility and is linked to a central control centre for security.

Most schemes have a manager or support worker, and a community alarm service. There are often communal facilities; usually a lounge, laundry, guest flat and garden. Meals are not normally provided, but a few schemes include a restaurant and some can arrange hot meals.

Private developers also build retirement housing for people with very minimal support needs, who are usually over 55 years, to buy or rent, or for shared ownership.

Retirement housing is aimed at people with very minimal support needs, while sheltered housing is for people with higher level support needs, for example, people who can live reasonably independently but may need some support with daily tasks.

Often, people who move into sheltered housing, through the enabling type of service, find they can do the things they were struggling to do before, more easily.

Almshouses are a type of sheltered housing is run by charitable trusts, mainly for older people. Each charity has a policy on who it will assist, for example residents who live in a particular geographical area, or workers who have retired from a particular trade. As almshouse residents are beneficiaries of a charity, they don't have the same rights as tenants.

If the older person would prefer to live in a family-style household, local Abbeyfield societies may be a good option. These are voluntary organisations that run supported sheltered housing for 8–12 residents.

**Cont Overleaf.**

Examples of sheltered housing schemes in Mendip

Name	Area	Organisation	No of units	Tenure
The firs	Wells	Abbeyfield	7 units	Rent
Shepton Almshouses	Shepton Mallet	Shepton Mallet United Charities	12 units	Rent
Wells Almshouses	Wells	City of Wells Almshouses	32 Units	Rent
Abbeyfield House	Wells	Abbeyfield	9 Units	Rent
Holmcroft Court	Shepton Mallet	McCarthy and Stone	42 Units	Purchase
Hanover Close	Shepton mallet	Hanover	24 Units	Rent
Gartons Mead	Evercreech	Aster Living	47 Units	Rent
Carlton Court	Wells	First Port	31 Units	Purchase
The Cloisters	Wells	Hadrian properties	32 Units	Purchase
Palace Court	Wells	Anchor	26 Units	Purchase
Southover & Beckett place	Wells	Aster Living	23 Units	Rent
Greenways	Chilcompton	Aster Living	31 Units	Rent
King Alfreds Courtyard	Wells	First Port	17 Units	Purchase
Mondyes Court	Wells	First Port	44 Units	Purchase
Homechime House	Wells	First Port	55 Units	Purchase
Herbert Dunn House	Leigh upon Mendip	Housing&Care21	4 Units	Rent
Tucker Street	Wells	Aster Living	42 Units	Rent
Stanley Williams House	Leigh upon Mendip	Housing&Care21	4 Units	Rent
Scotts Close	Holcombe	Aster Living	26 Units	Rent
Nightingale Close	Wells	Aster Living	24 Units	Rent
Douglas Yeats Court	Coleford	Housing&Care21	38 Units	Rent
Gerald Quick House	Wanstrow	Housing&Care21	4 Units	Rent
Jean Button House	Coleford	Housing&Care21	4 Units	Rent

Examples of sheltered housing schemes in Mendip

Buxton Close	Wookey	Aster Living	27 Units	Rent
Coles Garden	Kilmersdon	Wiltshire Rural Housing Association	7	Rent
Dallimore Mead	Nunney	Aster Living	26 Units	Rent
Wilcox Close	Glastonbury	MHA	19 Units	Rent
Cavendish Lodge	Glastonbury	Millstream management services	38 Units	Purchase or rent
Old Market Court	Glastonbury	Aster Living	45 Units	Rent
Hanover Gardens	Frome	Hanover	30 Units	Rent
The Whithys & Houndwood Close	Street	Aster Living	52 Units	Rent
Queen Elizabeth Court	Street	Anchor	37 Units	Rent
Northleaze House	Street	Anchor	40 Units	Rent
Maple Close	Street	Aster Living	33 Units	Rent
Portway	Street	Aster Living	38 Units	Rent
Phoenix Court	Frome	Guinness	14 Units	Rent
Phoenix House	Frome	Guinness	34 Units	Rent
Westleaze and Normandy House	Street	Aster Living	45 Units	Rent
Lime Close and Townsend Orchard	Street	Aster Living	54 Units	Rent
Wilshires Barton	Frome	Aster Living	22 Units	Rent
Morgans House	Frome	Guinness	14 Units	Rent
Castle Street	Frome	Guinness	14 Units	Rent
Trinity Street	Frome	Aster Living	29 Units	Rent
Sunnyside Place	Frome	Aster Living	25 Units	Rent
Gorehedge	Frome	Aster Living	30 Units	Rent
The Blue House	Frome	Frome Almshouse	17 Units	Rent
Roddenbury Close	Frome	Aster Living	30 Units	Rent
Sunnymeade / Abbots Close	Meare	Aster Living	18 Units	Rent

The above examples are taken from [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org) website, an excellent resource for finding older persons accommodation in your area. Most of the above units available for rent, are allocated through [www.HomefinderSomerset.co.uk](http://www.HomefinderSomerset.co.uk), however some organisations run their own waiting lists, so it may be best to talk with them direct and register your interest as well as completing a HomefinderSomerset application. All contact details are available on the [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org) website.

## ***Right to Rent - The new law and how it affects the private rented sector***

From 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 2016 anyone who rents out a private property in England including those sub-letting or taking in lodgers, must make Right to Rent checks and this includes letting agents as well as landlords and even owners who are just letting out one empty family home after, say an elderly relative has died or moved into care.

The Immigration Act of 2014 introduced the concept of a “right to rent” in the private sector which basically means a “right to live in this country”.

After a comprehensive pilot study in the West Midlands, the law has been rolled out and covers almost all new private sector tenancies and licences from the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2016.

Prior to letting a domestic property, the private landlord or his agent must now obtain the original documents like a UK passport or a passport showing the holder is a national of the European Economic Area (EU) to prove the tenant’s identity, check them with the tenant and copy those documents and keep dated copies on the Landlord’s files. The checks must be carried out regardless of race, creed or colour and include all those living in the property as their main or only residence.

The Home Office’s Immigration Dept will be the enforcing authority but they will be liaising with all councils to ensure a consistent message is given to private landlords across the country, and the Mendip district area is no different.

The Private Sector Housing Team is liaising fully with the south west’s Home Office officials and there will be a cross-referencing of information where the council’s officers believe there may be non-compliance or further investigation is necessary.

The penalty for landlords who do not carry out these checks, or don’t do so robustly enough with copies kept, may be fined but the Home Office Immigration Officers will be happy to advise where the landlord needs help or clarifying issues that arise.

More information on the scheme is available on [gov.uk/righttorentchecks](http://gov.uk/righttorentchecks)

Please note that the Right to Rent laws do not apply to social housing or to student accommodation provided by an educational establishment e.g. halls of residence, nor do they apply to tenancies of more than 7 years, tied accommodation (i.e. provided by the employer) or to mobile homes.

For more information go to the government website above.

### Find Out More

Visit our website to keep up to date with the latest at Mendip District Council  
[www.mendip.gov.uk](http://www.mendip.gov.uk)

#### **Useful Contacts:**

**Customer Services:** 0300 303 8588  
Or email us at:  
[customerservices@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@mendip.gov.uk)

**Planning:** Please contact Customer Services and ask for the Duty Planner

**BE Technical:** Please contact Customer Services and ask for the Duty BE Technical Member  
Or email us at:  
[betechnical@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:betechnical@mendip.gov.uk)

**Heritage Conservation:** Please contact Customer Services and ask for Heritage Conservation or email us at:  
[HeritageConservation@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:HeritageConservation@mendip.gov.uk)

**Private Sector Housing:** Please contact Customer Services and ask for PSH or email us at:  
[PrivateSectorHousing@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:PrivateSectorHousing@mendip.gov.uk)

**For Building Control:** Please contact Customer Services and ask for Building Control or email us at:  
[bcontrol@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:bcontrol@mendip.gov.uk)

For Housing Options and Planning Policy please contact customer services and ask for the relevant department.