

Report to MW Town Council 18th May 2017

Monitoring the Neighbourhood Plan

In **2010** Shropshire Council as part of their development of a new Core Strategy and Local Plan made a development allocation of between **250 -500** new dwellings for the town of Much Wenlock. The town council at the time challenged this and the allocation is currently **0-500** dwellings, a subtle but useful difference

As a result the community came together to develop what is now the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Council adopted it in 2013 and Shropshire Council in 2014 it is now a statutory planning document. **It is the only document which stands as a defence against a possible 500 new dwellings**

It is a legal requirement of the government that all Neighbourhood Plans are monitored annually. It was a requirement of the independent assessor in 2013 that the MWNP be reviewed in 2017 these requirements and other small changes to the text were the conditions on which SC would adopt the Plan. The assessor also set a target for development of new dwellings of 130 between 2013 and 2026

Since 2013 the Monitoring Group has reported to the Town Council through its representative and made an annual report to the town meeting.

The Monitoring Group meets four times a year, though in 2017 it has met more frequently in order to co ordinate the 2017 Review.

Its role does not include commenting on planning applications.

Its role is to record the number of proposed and completed new dwellings in the town in order to keep abreast of the towns commitment to the 130 target dwellings. It does not record extensions. It does not record changes outside the town boundary but included in the parish though the Monitoring Group frequently challenges SC on this point.

It also monitors the ‘sustainability’ of the town as a community. This is an abstract concept which covers such items as employment opportunities, bus services, school places. In short anything that has a bearing on the growth of the town and its infrastructure and services.

Monitoring the Plan allows us to prove to SC that we are allowing growth in development at the scale the community will accept over a time span which corresponds to the retention of its facilities, and as a result allow SC to refuse unwanted excess development and rebuff any challenges.

Monitoring also includes how the Town Council uses the Plan, though we make no comment on its use.

We meet regularly with SC to ensure that they understand that the residents of MW are committed to the NP and that SC are taking it into account with the development of their own Local Plan for 2016 –2036. This was one of our recent successes.

Author: Lesley Durbin, Community Representative, MWNP Monitoring Group 11/05/2017

The MWNP Review has completed its Housing and Development Report (also adopted by MWTC) which has been accepted by SC as an indication that 'the Plan is working'

SC has told the Monitoring Group that in order to be considered to be up to date Much Wenlock must complete a Housing Needs Survey by the end of 2017. The last survey was in 2012 as part of the NP Residents Survey.

The Monitoring Group is currently crossing over with the Community Led Housing Group as we have learned that the Shropshire Housing Group has been grant aided by SC to engage with such things as housing needs surveys. This is a new idea which we have just begun to work on which could mean the SHG would carry out the housing needs survey for MW.

Our next meeting with Adrian Cooper, Shropshire Council is scheduled for **Monday 22nd , 3.30pm at Shirehall.**

I hope I have been able to impress upon the Council how important the Neighbourhood Plan is to Much Wenlock and hope very much that the Council will offer a representative to continue as part of this group. Many thanks and very best wishes to you all for a successful term of office. Lesley Durbin, Community Representative.