

June 2016

# Press Release One

## CPRE Gives a View on Village Housing



East Hoathly and Halland, Village Concern Group

On Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, the Sussex Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) was invited to East Hoathly with Halland. About 65 residents attended and expressed their interest to being kept informed.

The meeting was held to raise awareness of the issues surrounding the proposals in the new Wealden Local Plan, which amounts to an increase of 50% dwellings in the village of East Hoathly and 25% in Halland.

The meeting was also organised to give the residents a different perspective than they already had from Wealden District Council's (WDC) plan presentation last November. In addition, the meeting was to give alternative ways of going forward to challenge what may take place in these two villages and many more throughout Wealden.

***“Just 8% of housing in the countryside is considered affordable in contrast to 20% in urban areas, and many villages suffer from the sale and non-replacement of council houses.”*** CPRE, *“Planning Reforms 2016: What’s the Problem?”*

Villagers are very concerned about the effect the proposed 190 homes in East Hoathly and 30 homes in Halland will have on the already overburdened infrastructure on doctors' surgeries, school places and the road networks. The identity of both villages is at risk. The destruction it will create on the landscape and to the wildlife will be devastating and heartbreaking.

The concern has been exacerbated by a flood of land being offered up for development in the Parish on both the outskirts and cores of both East Hoathly and Halland. The land has to be assessed, approved, sold and built

on but there is the potential for over 1,000 homes in East Hoathly alone. Many of which will not be affordable for the majority.

Of the many interesting points raised by the CPRE was that WDC is the only Council in all of Sussex that has not argued or disputed central Government's pressure to build 20,000 homes throughout Wealden. These numbers have been accepted by WDC and include over 2,000 new homes for neighbouring Councils.

In addition, we were told that once the new homes are built in Hailsham, which is taking the brunt of the new builds, their population could increase to 50,000. This would mean that from Uckfield to Eastbourne, it will be one large urban conurbation with South Wealden losing most of its green countryside beauty.

A united front will be formed with other villages in the South Weald facing similar circumstances and with help from the Save Wealden from Overdevelopment Team (SWOT) and the CPRE, we hope to change the direction that we are being forced to go.

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