

Dorstone Parish Council – Update October 2010

Parish Plan

We have been informed that the land use elements (appendix F) of the Dorstone Parish Plan have been formally endorsed as additional planning guidance by the Director of Sustainable Communities on behalf of Herefordshire Council. This means that our Plan will now form additional planning guidance to the emerging Local Development Framework (see below) and will be used as a material consideration in planning issues.

In the letter of confirmation the planning policy team stated that they “would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the steering group on the hard work and dedication that has obviously gone into producing the parish plan over the past two years. The team was impressed with the quality of the document produced and the level of community involvement.”

The Parish Council would also like to thank members of the Parish Plan Steering Group for all their efforts in successfully completing the Plan and winning the endorsement of Herefordshire Council. It is worth noting that not all Parish Plans submitted to Herefordshire Council have received this endorsement. Progress on the Plan are reviewed by a Joint Meeting of the Parish Council and the Steering Group, the next meeting will be arranged before the end of November and a report included in the next Update. The final Plan can be seen on the Dorstone Web Site and copies are available in the DFR.

Herefordshire Council’s Local Development Framework – Preferred Rural Options

We have been asked to submit comments on the above document which is all about the Council’s future plans for the development of Rural Herefordshire. Our reply can be seen on the Parish Council section of the Dorstone Web site. In essence the Parish Council has expressed concern that Dorstone has been designated as a “Hub” settlement to Peterchurch which has been designated as a Rural Service Centre. In planning terms this means, that if the proposals were accepted, that Rural Service Centres and Hubs could be seen as having the potential for up to 100 new homes in the period up to 2026. If agreed, this would be subject to further consultations with the Parish Council and the community.

However based on the results of the Parish Plan the overwhelming view of the Parish was against any large scale development of more than 6 homes on any one site, although generally Parishioners were not against small scale infill development. In addition the Parish Council believes that Dorstone does not fulfil the criteria for Hub status which

requires the presence of three or more key services (including employment site, pub, village hall, shop, post office and primary school). The Planners are regarding the Dorstone Front Room as a shop – which the Parish Council believes is mistaken. Therefore we have asked that the status of Dorstone should revert to its current status, under current Planning policies of “Other settlement” where only limited development of not more than 30 dwellings would potentially occur in the period until 2026.

Community Emergency Arrangements

Herefordshire Council is encouraging Parish Councils to develop local plans and arrangements to deal with possible emergencies, such as flooding or heavy snow, which may prevent professional emergency services from reaching the Parish. Whilst there is no statutory obligation on Parish Councils to have such arrangements in place, we felt there would be merit in developing some local arrangements based on Dorstone’s Front Room. Discussions are therefore taking place between the Council and the DFR Management Committee on how these arrangements might work. It is envisaged that the DFR would act a focal point in the Village to co-ordinate assistance, particularly to Parishioners who live alone or who suffer ill-health who would be particularly at risk in such situations.

Donations

The Council has given a “one off” grant of £200 to the Church to help the maintenance of the Church yard. This request from the Church, prompted the Council to consider the adoption of a Donations and Grants Policy. This would involve the Council agreeing a maximum sum to be set aside each year which could be given as a grant(s) to organisations that provide services to Dorstone. The draft policy is available on the Parish Council section of the Dorstone web site and on the Parish Council Notice Board. Parishioners’ comments would be most welcome on this proposal. These should be sent to any member of the Parish Council or the Clerk.

Bus Stop at Dore View

Stagecoach Bus Company has agreed to have another Bus Stop in the Village at Dore View.

Pat Rye
Chairman