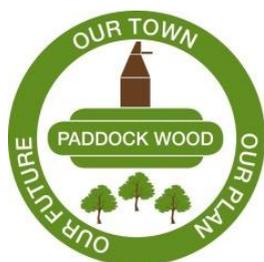


Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan:

The Town Centre



At the July meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group we discussed in depth the findings of the Town Centre Working Group led by Richard Barsley.

Since that meeting using data from the Neighbourhood Plan public consultations and their own findings the working group has identified five potential key policy areas which they are developing into policies for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to consider putting forward as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The first draft policy involves Paddock Wood Railway Station. With the potential advent of 1000 new homes there is considerable concern about the ability of the rail service to cope with demand and also about parking facilities. Also with people increasingly being encouraged to cycle there is a need for more secure and safe cycle parking.

The second draft policy involves car and secure bike parking in the centre of Paddock Wood. It is hoped that a multi storey car park at the station could be included in the plan, along with protecting and expanding car parking, lobbying Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for the restoration of two free hours free parking.

The third draft policy involved looking at traffic flow within the town centre and how it could be improved.

Fourth, the Town Centre group is looking at trying to ensure that Paddock Wood Town Centre has a balance of retail, residential and community usage with limitations on the number of charity shops, betting shops and estate agents. Additionally they would like to see any residential development in the Town Centre targetted at non car owners.

Finally, the group would like to see the development of a night time economy in the town centre through the encouragement of businesses such as a bistro, bar and restaurant.

With our draft policies nearing completion it will soon be time for another public consultation event when you the residents of Paddock Wood can have a further say in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

To keep up to date with what is going on with all aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan including town centre issues you are welcome to join the Steering Group at their meetings which take place in the Wesley Centre on the third Wednesday of every month at 8.30pm.

Meryl Flashman
Chairman of the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group