

# STOP MASS HOUSING!!

## Five Parishes Group needs your help now! Write in!



**Swale Borough Council has undertaken considerable work to support vastly increased housing numbers in Swale, numbers that have NOT been set by the Government.**

South Sittingbourne and its villages will be likely earmarked for massive development, so-called “garden villages” or “garden towns” (planning ‘buzzwords’) comprising in excess of 10,000 new homes. That’s approx 535 hectares over 1300 acres. That’s 26 times the size of Eden Village near Fulston Manor, Sittingbourne. Or 775 Premiership football pitches. It would equate to 25-30,000 extra residents, compared to just 31,253 Sittingbourne residents on the electoral role in 2017! And there’s no set formula as to what facilities must be provided for a “garden village or town”!

**Swale Borough Council’s “Looking Ahead” Local Plan Public Consultation ends Friday 8th June**

**Please *don’t* assume any proposed development is a ‘done deal’. Residents *can* influence, change and delay decisions as part of any future planning process. We’ve done it before, but we need your help to do it again! Your written submissions are very important evidence for the new Local Plan. We need you to write in to Swale Borough Council!**

The Council has started its public Local Plan Consultation, called ‘Looking Ahead’. At the same time the Council has issued a consultation with developers including, a “call” for sites for Garden Villages/Towns. To take part, residents need to complete one or both of questionnaires available. Every person in a household can respond.

**Consider your life in Sittingbourne today and the impact more housing could have:**

- Have our strategic roads the including the junctions 5 on M2 and the A249 been upgraded?
- Has your local road network been properly maintained and enhanced. Are there too many traffic lights?
- Can you easily get a seat on the train? How efficient is local public transport?
- Will your child have a place at a local school?
- Can you easily book a GP or dentist appointment?
- Can you park conveniently in town or outside your home?
- Our water supply comes from the chalk aquifer. What happens if this is built over?
- Do you enjoy living either in, or close to, the countryside?
- What is the future of our high grade agricultural land?
- Would a new ‘garden village’ provide economic, environmental and social benefits, when there is no guarantee of services being provided?
- Who is this staggering increase in housing going to serve; current residents?

**Where to obtain a ‘Local Plan Consultation Questionnaire’**

There are 2 types of questionnaire available. The 2 options are explained in detail overleaf.

Online:

[www.swale.gov.uk/Looking-Ahead-consultation](http://www.swale.gov.uk/Looking-Ahead-consultation)

Paper copies:

- Sittingbourne Library, Central Avenue.
- Swale Borough Council, Swale House.
- Parish Councils of Bapchild, Rodmersham, Milstead, Bredgar and Tunstall will have copies at their drop in events.
- If you are would like a paper copy posted to you please call Claire Wade, Swale Borough Council 01795 417118.

**Help with completing the Questionnaire**

Overleaf, we explain how to participate, both online and by paper copy, and suggest the most important questions for response. In addition, we have arranged drop in sessions to obtain copies of the questionnaire and advice:

Location:	Date	Time
Antony Room, Bapchild Village Hall	29th May	7.30 - 9.30pm
Bredgar Village Hall	31st May	6.30 - 8pm
Milstead Village Hall	25th May	6 - 8pm
Rodmersham Village Hall	22nd May	7.30 - 9.30pm
Tunstall Village Hall	31st May	6 - 8pm

**We welcome donations to support our campaign (via our website: [www.fiveparishes.org.uk](http://www.fiveparishes.org.uk)). To the many of you who have donated so far, it is greatly appreciated. Please sign up to our newsletter so we can contact as this issue progresses, visit [www.fiveparishes.org.uk](http://www.fiveparishes.org.uk)**

# ACT NOW!

## PARTICIPATING IN THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION - COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRES [www.swale.gov.uk/Looking-Ahead-consultation](http://www.swale.gov.uk/Looking-Ahead-consultation)

### TO COMMENT BY ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

You can choose from:

1. A short questionnaire of 11 questions which does not require your contact details to take part or
2. A longer questionnaire of 46 questions + Guidelines for completion + Data Protection Permission Notice (the long questionnaire cannot be accepted without this separate Notice).

Whilst time-consuming and ambiguous in parts, we encourage residents to complete the longer option as it requires contact details which will protect your submission and ensure you are consulted at further stages of the process. It is a lengthy document but it is your opportunity to tell Swale Borough Council what you think. You may not have answers for every question but the following certainly need your opinion:

Short Questionnaire	'Looking Ahead' Questionnaire
Q4 What should the Local Plan's approach be to housing targets (ie increased housing numbers from central government)	Q33. What should happen to local land designations ie countryside gaps (the area dividing town and village)
Q7. What infrastructure should the Local Plan include?	Q36. How can Swale protect agricultural land?
Q9. Where should new housing development be focused?	Q40. Local Plan Settlement Strategy – should there be a more even distribution of development around the Swale Borough?
Q10. Where should employment land be?	Q45 Should the Council council consider 'New Settlements' ie Garden Towns?
Q11. Your thoughts on more housing	

### TO COMMENT BY LETTER OR E-MAIL

For those unable to complete a questionnaire, you can send comments and SBC officers will attribute your views to the most appropriate part of the Questionnaire. Post your comments to: Local Plan Consultation, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne ME10 3HT.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR RESPONSES:

- The likely impact of further housing on GP surgeries, healthcare facilities and other services on all ages of the community. If the proposed mass development in Borden goes ahead, our local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) responsible for GP and health services, could end up a further £90m in debt. For every new house built in Swale it takes 6 years for the CCG to receive funding for those new residents.
- Has enough work been done to identify all existing brownfield and redundant sites in the Borough for redevelopment so that agricultural land and countryside can be protected?
- Does the Council ensure current 'key' roads in and out of the Borough are maintained, upgraded and enhanced? What is the impact of the lack of investment in Junction 5 of the M2? How does the current traffic flow impact you in and around Sittingbourne and do you expect improvement in the future?
- It is clear from the Council's Peter Brett report that you "may" get a small parade of shops, a pub, a GP surgery, a secondary school and 2 primary schools for every 5,000 dwellings but that is in no way certain. Is it enough and what happens if these are not provided?
- Is the Council addressing environmental issues, such as air pollution, light blight and noise?
- Can public transport accommodate an influx of new people and provide an efficient service?
- Swale is divided currently into two planning areas: 1) Faversham and its villages 2) Rest of the Borough, Sittingbourne, its surrounding villages and the Isle of Sheppey. Sittingbourne and Sheppey have historically been prioritised for housing development whilst Faversham has seen very little. Why not amalgamate these 2 planning areas into one and ensure a fair allocation of future development and economic opportunity? Swale Borough Council state that no new settlements could be created on Sheppey because of issues relating to profitability. So that just leaves Sittingbourne to bear the brunt of the development. Do you agree with this?
- What is the impact on our biodiversity, our ancient woodlands, our hedgerows, wild flora and fauna, wildlife?
- Do developers proposals for a 'Garden Town Village' benefit local people and existing infrastructure?

Please take part in this important Public Consultation before Friday 8 June. **Many thanks for your support.**