



KINGS LANGLEY & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

KINGS LANGLEY GREEN BELT UPDATE

MARCH 2019

CONTACT US: Website: <https://www.greenbeltmatters.com>

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TOO MANY HOUSES — IN THE WRONG PLACES

Local councils struggling to meet the Government's housing targets

The Government's house building targets (300,000 per year across England) are expected to be missed by more than half of the councils in England. A recent article in The Guardian (Friday 8 February 2019) stated: "The National Audit Office (NAO) concludes that the planning system in England is "not working well" and says councils are struggling to negotiate successfully with developers, leaving swathes of the country vulnerable to either housing shortages or situations where the wrong homes are built in the wrong places."

Watford Borough Council has told the government that housing targets are 'unrealistic' for the town and the leader of Three Rivers District Council, Sara Bedford, has also slammed Government housing targets as "hugely overstated" (both reported recently in The Watford Observer).

As for Dacorum Borough Council, a letter sent by the KL&DRA to the Leader of the Council, Andrew Williams, asking for his position on the targets remains unanswered at the time this newsletter went to press.

The KL&DRA is extremely concerned that our village will pay the price for the above mess and have unwanted and wrongly positioned housing developments forced upon us, with no supporting infrastructure, that will destroy the character and setting of our historic village. We know the green field part of Rectory Farm is under threat as part of a possible second phase of development and the latest news we have could also mean significant development at Shendish (see overleaf).

We need all of our villagers to support us in protecting our village so please read on and find out how you can help.

ON THE HOOF WITH SIR MIKE PENNING MP



The KL&DRA met with Sir Mike Penning MP at Wayside Farm recently to discuss the potential sites identified by Dacorum and Three Rivers Councils for housing. Both the Association and Sir Mike recognised that new housing was needed in the village, but felt that it had to be at a level that the village could tolerate and supported by an appropriate level of infrastructure such as public transport, health and education services.

Having been shown the potential level of building across the Gade Valley in both councils, there was a recognition that the village needed to remain a village and the potential level of Green Belt development challenged. (continued overleaf)

Mention was made of the level of migration of people from London and some parts of the Midlands pushing up the price of housing for local people. Sir Mike explained this migration was being fuelled by the level of employment growth in Dacorum, but nevertheless there was a strong need for a higher level of affordable housing for local people in any developments.

Looking across the Grand Union Canal from Wayside Farm, Sir Mike summarised his view that the Green Belt in this area provided the 'lungs' of Kings Langley, particularly given the levels of traffic passing through the village. Every effort needed to be made to keep the village 'green' with protection given to trees and open spaces, and development of brownfield sites prioritised.

MEETING WITH DAVID GAUKE MP (SOUTH WEST HERTS)

The KL&DRA also met with David Gauke MP to discuss the Three Rivers approach to house building, which had resulted in over 130 potential sites being identified. Most sites were on Green Belt land. He argued that there needed to be a trade off as more housing was needed if young people were to get into the housing market, but this should not be at the expense of destroying the very reason local people wanted to stay in the area. David Gauke recognised that coalescence with neighbouring villages could lead to a continuous housing conurbation which no one wanted.

There was an acknowledgement that it was better

to add to existing larger settlements with an established infrastructure able to support a large growth in population. The east Hemel development was a good example of this and could potentially take a large proportion of the required housing numbers, although there was a debate around building very large developments or new towns if there was no inherent community.

David Gauke accepted that all levels of local and national government needed to work more closely together to consider how their strategic decisions, often taken in isolation, affected local people and local areas for generations.

SOME INITIAL FINDINGS FROM THE KINGS LANGLEY PARISH PLAN SURVEY

95% of respondents want Kings Langley to remain a village with **96%** valuing the sense of community.

95% reject building on the Green Belt, but **95%** accept the need to build on brownfield land.

The proximity of open space was regarded as a key defining characteristic by **98%**.

52% would prioritise starter homes for local young people.

19% would prioritise community/social housing for local people.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Association is holding its Annual General Meeting at 7:30pm on Friday 26th April at the Kings Langley Parish Council offices, Charter Court, Vicarage Lane WD4 9HR. This is **your** opportunity to let us know what you think. We also have a speaker from the London Green Belt Council which brings together over 100 organisations including councils, residents and environmental groups with a shared concern for the Green Belt. By promoting their

messages to the public, politicians and decision-makers, they aim to ensure that everyone is well-informed about the vital importance of the Green Belt – with a view to ensuring that it is sustained into the future. Part of this work also involves challenging those who argue that development should be allowed on the Green Belt. In particular they aim to set out the compelling evidence which shows that there's no need to build on Green Belt.

GREEN SPACES BREED HAPPIER MINDS

Views about what is good or bad for your health often appear to change daily. Nevertheless, evidence from a longitudinal study over nearly 20 years with almost one million people has found that those growing up in greener surroundings have up to a 55% lower risk of mental ill health.

This is even more significant when 1 in 6 people over 16 years of age experiences a mental health problem at any one time. Whilst the causes of mental health problems are still as yet little understood, the link between mental wellbeing and green surroundings has now been established and remains the same whether you live in a rural or urban environment.

WHY WE NEED YOUR MONEY

We are currently in a 'quiet period' between the initial consultation from Dacorum Borough Council, and latterly from Three Rivers District Council, and the issue of firm proposals for development.

We are continuing to raise funds, as we anticipate having to respond to a number of firm proposals in the near future, and we will require professional advice to respond effectively.

FLOWER HOUSE, STATION ROAD

Green Belt land behind The Flower house, Station Road, opposite Kings Langley Station has been destroyed without planning permission. Pure Bricks Ltd built a car park on Green Belt land without permission and then sought permission retrospectively. Following objections from local residents and the KL&DRA, Pure Bricks Ltd was unable to justify their application and withdrew it.

Three Rivers District Council should now enforce the reinstatement of the land to its former glory. Local residents and the KL&DRA are calling on Sara Bedford, Leader of the Council to do this, thereby ensuring that Pure Bricks Ltd repair the damage their actions have caused.

SHENDISH UPDATE

Apparently a proposal covering a third of Shendish land adjacent to the railway along the Shendish boundary from the Manor Estate and partially up behind Rucklers Lane, went into Dacorum's Planning Department in January with a view to building 400 houses.

The document is over 600 pages, so would be a highly comprehensive outline proposal for future development (similar to the Angle approach on Rectory Farm). At this stage it is not a formal planning application, but the Association will keep you informed when an application is submitted.

KL&DRA 100 CLUB

The KL&DRA has launched a 100 Club to keep funds coming in to pay for ongoing expenses such as website charges and internet costs, membership of relevant organisations eg CPRE and approved expenses. Before the end of the year we also expect the next stages of Dacorum's and Three Rivers' Local Plans to be published. The expert planning consultants we employed last time cost around £10,000 just for the Dacorum plan so we expect to have to raise in excess of £20,000 if we are to respond with professional expertise.

Members will pay £5 per month for each number by standing order and can have as many numbers as they wish. The total amount received each month is split 50/50 between the Association and the prize fund from which 5 prizes will be drawn. The amount of each prize is a percentage of the total received ranging from 25% for the first prize to 3% for the fifth. So far 33 numbers have been allocated and the first draw will be taking place shortly, for which the first prize will be approximately £40.

If you would like to support the Association this way please email residents@greenbeltmatters.com with how many numbers you would like and we will send you the membership form and payment details.



KINGS LANGLEY & DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

THE FIGHT GOES ON

We are continuing to build up our funds to fight current proposals for large scale housing and future possible developments affecting Kings Langley.

Donations can be made by cheque payable to 'KL&DRA' or by bank transfer:

Name: Kings Langley & District Residents Association

Sort Code: 20-39-07

Account Number: 10394165

PayPal donations can be sent via our website. You can also find out more about KL&DRA:

On our website: www.greenbeltmatters.com

By emailing: residents@greenbeltmatters.com

On our Facebook page: www.greenbeltmatters.com

You can drop off correspondence, application forms and donations at:
Kings Langley Parish Office, Charter Court, Vicarage Lane, Kings Langley WD4 9HR.

ARE YOU OR DO YOU KNOW A NON-COMPUTER USER?

If so please don't feel that as a non-computer user you can't contribute or be part of anything the KL&DRA is doing. You can contact Ann Martin by post to, or by leaving a note at, the Kings Langley Parish Office (address as above). Ann will then contact you and ensure that you are up to date with everything that is happening and she will help you when it comes to commenting on various planning applications as they come up.

We would urge anyone who knows, hears or reads about any proposed housing developments in and around Kings Langley to pass the information on to the KL&DRA. There are several developments or proposed developments being put forward separately from Dacorum Borough Council's Local Plan consultation all of which have the potential to lessen the demand for large scale development in Kings Langley.