

## **Report to APC AGM from Planning Committee 2015-16**

Over the course of the last year from our May AGM the Planning Committee has looked at 224 applications with several second looks at revised or up-dated applications.

Throughout the year each set of Councillors with their own expertise and local area knowledge have looked through and discussed varying applications for building replacements, re-developments, house additions and, of course the huge number of applications in respect of tree felling or crown reducing especially in the more wooded parts of the Parish.

Of those 224 applications we raised just 20 objections, some for second or even third revisions of original applications and TMBC passed half of those where we had raised objections. Some people might think that two sets of people looking through each application is more than necessary but we feel that as our Councillors are living and often working close by the sites of the applications that our knowledge and appreciation of the local street-scene and aesthetic considerations will benefit those living close by more than from a Borough-wide viewpoint.

In respect of the applications there have been few eventful ones this year. We have seen an application in at long last for changing the Little Gem in Aylesford High Street into residential accommodation, a submission for the complete dismantling of the Shell Service Station on Blue Bell Hill which is currently under re-development, an applicant from Eccles addressed the Planning Committee about parking and rear extensions to her property and some names were selected for new roads in development areas. Once again the matter of the Aylesford Nurseries site was discussed and our recommendations re-submitted about the use of this site. We have

looked at and discussed the Local Development Plans from TMBC and we talked about the possibilities of changes to the way TMBC looked at future planning applications by way of Area Committees. At the present time it looks as if the status quo is to be maintained in this respect.

We have also re-visited the revised Medway Council application in respect of the Rochester Airport re-development, discussed many aspects of the former Aylesford Paper Mills site, traffic problems around the Hermitage Lane and Retail Park areas and to the Government's `Housing & Planning Bill` for National `Alternative` Providers where other providers might take on some of Local Councils tasks.

And finally could I please request that some of our applicants take a little more time in their applications as often there is no detail in respect of site plans, how neighbours might be affected and especially in the positioning of trees which require felling or reducing in extent. We do, however receive some very detailed applications, particularly in respect of the larger sites where environmental studies have been carried out and assessed in the presentation of the scheme and if all applications could be so it would be much appreciated.

Malcolm Wright

Chairman, Planning Committee