

Warnham Neighbourhood Plan wins commendation for Planning Excellence

The Royal Town Planning Institute South East held its annual ceremony to present awards for Planning Excellence at the Spinnaker Tower, Portsmouth on November 21, 2019. Horsham District Council and Warnham Parish Council were delighted to receive a commendation for Excellence in Plan Making Practice for the Warnham Neighbourhood Development Plan. The award was especially welcome as much of the competition was against established planning consultancies and large town authorities.

The Warnham Plan was prepared by a Steering Group of Parish Councillors and members of the community. Planning guidance was provided by Alison Eardley Consultancy with overall direction from Strategic Planning at Horsham District Council. Warnham's Plan is one of 24 completed or under preparation in the Horsham District.

The Judges' Panel reported that: "The Steering Group prepared the plan in a challenging context and explored a range of opportunities including the delivery of new affordable housing in the parish. They also undertook extensive engagement with a range of groups in the community. The careful consideration of potential land in the plan was highlighted in the examiner's report. The judges felt that the achievements were worthy of being recognised in the RTPI Award for Planning Excellence 2019"

The Chairman of the Steering Group, John Hamer, said; "Warnham's Plan is the result of over four years' work which involved consultation with all sections of the local community from school children to seniors, businesses to social clubs. It was agreed in the referendum held in June, and sets out planning policies to define and control how the parish can develop between now and 2031. Without such an approved plan, development in the parish would be driven by builders and speculators".

Ann Lloyd, Chairman of Warnham Parish Council, added: "The plan maintains Warnham as a rural community and permits a limited amount of housing development only in accordance with the Plan, and only in sustainable locations. An emphasis is placed on locating future housing where primary school children can walk to school; local facilities and public transport will also be in walking distance. Cycle and pedestrian access to development areas is a key aspect of the plan along with retention and enhancement of hedge boundaries and the provision of open space in housing areas."



Pictured at the Awards ceremony are, l. to r., Roger Purcell, member of the Steering Group; John Hamer, Chairman; Alison Eardley, planning consultant; and Norman Kwan, Senior Neighbourhood Planning Officer at Horsham District Council.