

## **ATC Comments On The Local Plan ver 1.0**

### **Settlement Boundaries**

1. There is general acceptance of the need for settlement boundaries. However, the town council felt that these were relatively elastic in the areas around Andover which facilitated additional housing development especially around the new estates around Picket Twenty and Augusta Park leading to over development. There were on the other hand areas to the West of Andover where the position set on the boundaries was leading to the inability of villages and settlements to grow organically. In some cases, boundaries were reliant on a single physical feature such as a road, for example in between Charlton and Saxon Fields whilst in other places that there was a continuous of green space.

### **Villages**

2. It was noted that whilst 30% of the TVBC population lived in villages outside the main towns, they would be expected to provide only 5% of the housing allocation. In our view this would lead to increasing gentrification of villages, preventing downsizing for their inhabitants, and their loss of viability would increase the strain on the services provided in the towns. Test Valley instead of being a set of viable communities would increasingly be two urban clusters around Andover and Romsey.

### **Infrastructure**

3. This area was undoubtedly the main source of contention. Whilst it is accepted that TVBC was aligned and dependent on a number of partners, these regularly failed to deliver in a spectacular fashion much to the detriment of our residents. In no particular order:

#### **3.1. Transport**

3.1.1 Cycling and Walking. Whilst the responsibility sits with HCC, we do need to insist on having a proper walking and cycling network. We note that we have developments coming on stream in Andover which do not plug into a network because there effectively is none.

3.1.2 Roads. In the new developments the roads are often incomplete and reliant on SUDS which has been mismanaged resulting on HCC quite rightly refusing to take them on. More needs to be done to in getting early adoption by HCC which incidentally ensures that they are completed to fit standard. The road network design is too often an afterthought within the estates, and organic growth is not viable from a town planning perspective as it leads to choke point and inefficient traffic flows.

#### **3.2 Water and Drainage**

There is a real concern that Southern Water can neither supply the amount of water for developments nor also maintain the drainage system in a fit state. We believe that there are three issues which can be separated out: the supply of clean water,

the collection and treatment of sewage, and the drainage of surface water. As the local planning authority, TVBC needs to work with the Environment Agency and Ofwat to ensure that responsibilities are properly tied down and enforced, and that residents are not continually asked to pick up the costs. Furthermore, more significant environmental damage is being done which is hitting tourism and our local industries.

### 3.3 Health Services

The increasing population of Andover has already led to an increasing difficulty in accessing GP and other services including dentists. Whilst developer contributions to the Hampshire & IOW ICB might be supposed to help, the reality is different as no additional services result. The provision of GPs in Andover in terms of numbers appears to be remarkably stable, but the population has steadily grown and the increase in nursing homes and sheltered housing suggest that the demand is growing both in terms of capacity and also capability. A similar position can be applied to mental health services, in particular for young adults, where the service is failing. Our residents deserve better, especially as these services are supposed to be funded from central taxation. There was a general feeling that the ICB was failing to take a holistic approach to health services evidenced by the Dummer hospital consultation, and that community services were taking a back seat.

### Green Space

4. Andover has significantly less green space than some of our major urban centres, with wards coming under the mandated government standards Green space should be usable ie park land, playing areas, community gardens, etc and not just areas of open space.

### Allotments

5. There was a general view that allotment provision needs to be doubled from the previous plan. Smaller developments also needed to be factored in through some form of contribution. Smaller gardens and increasing leisure time allied to an ageing population has led to an increasing requirement. Allotments provided after development are very expensive and beyond most local councils.

### Self-Build

6. Some residents have complained that TVBC is not particularly friendly towards self-builds. Whether this is partly explained by the impact of COVID is not clear, but there was a feeling that TVBC was too focused on larger developments. As an aside, although this was raised as an issue in Andover, it probably has significant application for villages.

## Building Standards

7. The big issue here is to ensure any new builds are built to high environmental standards including solar panels, heat pumps, EV charging points, batteries, and insulation. These are relatively cheap to install when building but are expensive if residents must retrofit to comply with central government targets. As a result, the town council will generally object to a development without some future proofing, but we believe that any Local Plan must give clear direction. The difficulty might be that central government fails to implement the appropriate building standards