

Message from the Parish Council

THIS IS QUITE LENGTHY BUT IT IS IMPORTANT. SO PLEASE READ ON.....

New Housing Developments

The Government's new housing targets for Test Valley (80% higher than in 2024) means that our Borough Council (TVBC) no longer has a valid Local Plan setting out where houses should be built – the 'right' houses in the 'right' places. The current Local Plan no longer provides the required 5 years 'housing land supply'. A new Local Plan is being prepared, and a draft showing revised housing site allocations has been published for consultation but the final version will not be adopted until sometime in 2026.

In the meantime, the Test Valley (and Romsey in particular) seems to be experiencing a 'developer's free-for-all'. Without a valid Local Plan, TVBC struggle to oppose any planning application for new developments: houses are likely to be built in the 'wrong' places and without reference to any overall plan, often without adequate consideration of the effects on the local environment, or whether the local infrastructure can cope.

Where does this leave us in Michelmersh and Timsbury?

Uncertain. But TVBC have now received an outline application for up to 60 houses on the old 'Choice Plants' site. Another developer has shown plans for 40 houses on Manor Lane, at a public exhibition in the Jubilee Hall in June, so a planning application for that site is expected. And we are aware that there could be an application for 4 or 5 houses on the site next to the Malthouse car park. These sites are all on land identified as 'countryside' in the current Local Plan, but TVBC may decide (even if reluctantly) to allow these developments because of the current 'gap' in housing land supply.

The village has been working on a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which would (under the previous planning 'regime') have given us more control over development in the parish. Previous public consultations (questionnaire and public meetings) showed a clear majority in favour of some new housing, perhaps 30-40, with an emphasis on smaller, lower-cost homes for young families and for older people 'downsizing'. So there is support for some new houses - limited numbers, of the right type and size, and in the right place. But the possibility of our having to accommodate over 100 new houses changes the picture completely.

The Parish Council has to respond to the new Draft Local Plan by 5 September, and to the Choice Plants planning application by 12 September (all residents can of course comment individually) so time is short.

We will be holding meetings in the Jubilee Hall on

Friday 29 August and Monday 1 September, at 7.45 pm

for open discussions leading, we hope, to a consensus on how we proceed and what representations we should make to TVBC on these issues.

We hope you can attend one of these meetings and contribute to the discussions. Not everybody will see this notice, sent via email and Facebook, so please spread the word amongst neighbours. And if you have any questions or comments please email the Clerk at parishclerkmt@gmail.com

The current planning application for the 'Choice Plants' site can be viewed on the TVBC website ('Planning – view Applications') by typing in the reference number **25/01839/OUTS**.

The draft revision to the TVBC Local Plan can be viewed at:

[Draft Local Plan 2042 | Test Valley Borough Council](#)
