

## Local Plan Development Strategy Topic Paper

Comments from Kim Fletcher, Chairman, Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council.

The Table on Page 56 **Housing**, shows that Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of expected houses in the Borough, at 467, and yet the effect of change on the High Weald is not mentioned in the paper at all.

This parish is at the far East of the Borough, in a rural area, surrounded by growing conurbations in other Borough Councils, such as Staplehurst, Headcorn, Biddenden, Hurst Green, all equally situated on the periphery of Maidstone, Ashford and Rother Valley councils.

Peoples' lives do not respect Borough boundaries, but decisions in one borough have severe implications on settlements in the peripheries.

This paper ignores the issues of the High Weald, even though over 50% of the TWBC electorate live in rural areas.

**Consider Education**, Paragraph 4.36, page 29 et seq.

There is much discussion about expanding Mascalls in Paddock Wood.

KCC recognise that the 4 options for non selective secondary education in the High Weald, Mascalls, Homewood (Tenterden) Uplands (Wadhurst) and Cornwallis (Maidstone) are all over-subscribed or have shut their entry for our children.

Annually there are 520 year 6 children coming from the 23 primary schools within a 7 mile Radius of Cranbrook looking for a non selective secondary school.

Please see the attached powerpoint presentation for the justification to build a new school in Cranbrook or nearby. All 13 parish council chairmen would agree that a new school in the area is warranted and needed. This should be in the local plan, not an invitation to LAT to sell land to expand Mascalls.

The **transport** section , Paragraph 5 (p37 et seq) makes no mention of travel from the East to Paddock Wood – it currently takes over 1 hour from Cranbrook to Mascalls in the morning, so the bus leaves at 07:00 to get to school on time.

Paragraph 5.15 has no consideration for travel by bus from the East side of the Borough, and the delays caused by congestion on the A262 in Goudhurst, the A21 at Lamberhurst / Scotney and at Kippings Cross is not taken into account.

The plan as it stands means that Cranbrook will take the largest number of rural houses, but no thought has been given to the infrastructure the community will need to support them.

**The community needs upgrades and investment in schools, medical services, youth services and community facilities.**