**Penrith’s Neighbourhood Development Plan takes a big step forward**

Through the Localism Act, Penrith Town Council has been given powers to prepare a statutory Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) to help guide development in the parish. Through the NPD local people have the opportunity to shape new development as, once the plan has been approved via a local referendum, planning applications will be

determined in accordance with Penrith’s NDP.

A Steering Group, made up of Town Councillors and volunteers from local interest groups was set up to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. Penrith’s NDP, which will help shape development in the town for the coming 15 years, has taken a significant step towards completion of the first draft.

Over the past nine months the steering group, have been analysing the results of the public consultation which took place during February and March 2017, and checking other research and documents issued by Eden District Council and the County Council to form planning policies for the future benefit of residents, employers, employees and visitors. Aspects such as housing, transport infrastructure, employment, leisure, parking and community facilities form the backbone of the Plan, which will actively affect all planning decisions in the future.

Over the last few months all the work has been drawn together and undergone checks to ensure the proposed policies don’t contravene National or Local Planning Policies. It is hoped that in the next three months a draft plan will be released to further public consultation at events and via the Town Council’s website.

A spokesman for the Town Council said “The point of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is that it is a product of the views of the local community and is not something imposed on them by the Council. We hope residents will take this second opportunity to shape the future of the town”.