**Questions (and Answers) about the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum in Breinton.**

**Q.** When is the Referendum?

**A**. On Thursday 3rd November 2016

**Q.** Can I vote in the Referendum?

**A.** Only if you are on the Electoral Register for Breinton. If you are not registered and wish to vote please contact Electoral Services at the Town Hall in St Owen Street Hereford before October 18th 2016

**Q.** Where can I vote?

**A**. In person in the Village Hall but you can also vote by post or proxy if this is what you prefer/usually do. The polling station is open from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm.

**Q**. What am I voting on?

**A.** ’ You are being asked ‘Do you want Herefordshire Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Breinton to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area?’ and can vote ‘yes’ or ‘No’

**Q.** What is meant by the Neighbourhood Area?

**A**. The whole of the parish of Breinton. The Neighbourhood Plan only influences planning decisions within the parish.

**Q.** What happens if the more local residents vote ‘Yes’?

**A.** The Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’ i.e. after a short while during which Herefordshire Council give the Plan their final approval it becomes part of Herefordshire’s planning law and is influential in deciding planning applications in the parish. The Referendum is a once only opportunity to have Plan written by local people to guide proportional development and infrastructure in the parish up to 2031. The Plan includes things such as settlement boundaries and policies on designated green spaces, protected views, agricultural land, green infrastructure etc. all of which local consultations have repeatedly told us are valued and make Breinton so distinctive.

**Q.** What happens if more local residents vote ‘No’?

**A.** The Neighbourhood Plan is not ‘made’. This means that there is no Plan. It is not the case of ‘if I vote no they will have to change it to what I want’. After a ‘No vote’ planning applications will be decided by Herefordshire Council using only their Core Strategy and their other plans, the National Planning Policy Framework as well as their own priorities for things like housing to decide what development takes place and where in the parish. Neither the detailed local information contained within the Neighbourhood Plan nor its policies will have any formal status.

**Q.** How much has this all cost?

**A.** The Parish Council has successfully applied for Government grants to help us produce the Neighbourhood Plan over the last 2+ years so there has been no direct cost to local people. The grant money has largely been spent of independent planning advice and on publicity/local consultation events etc. A lot of volunteer time and effort has gone into the Plan and many people have attended consultation events, answered questionnaires but this all came free. In addition Herefordshire Council will receive £30,000 for each Plan that is finally approved (‘made’) in the County. This will cover things like the cost of the Referendum.

**Q.** Are there other Neighbourhood Development Plans?

**A.** Yes, they are all part of the Government’s Localism agenda and is happening across England. Over 250 Plans have now been successful in their Referendums. In Herefordshire seven Neighbourhood Plans were approved earlier in 2016 and a further five areas are having a referendum on the same day as Breinton. These are in Bartestree & Lugwardine, Callow & Haywood, Kingstone and Thruxton, Weston Beggard and Whitbourne. Across Herefordshire a further 90+ Neighbourhood Plans are being prepared.

**Q.** Why has it taken so long to produce Breinton’s Neighbourhood Plan?

**A.** We started in 2014. There is a formal process that involves at least two lengthy periods of consultation and all of the comments received have to be considered. We actually repeated one of the consultations since some late comments were so significant that they, quite rightly, meant that the Plan should be amended. In addition there is a formal, independent, examination of the Plan’s proposals. This all takes time and remember, it’s all being done by volunteers and even in Breinton their numbers are limited.

**Q.** How long does the Plan last?

**A.** To 2031, the same length of time as the Herefordshire Core Strategy

**Q.** Can the Plan be reviewed or changed?

**A.** Only if the Plan is approved by a Referendum (‘made) in the first place. At present there is no formal process for reviewing a ‘made’ Plan however Parliament is currently considering legislation that will make this easier. Also, Breinton’s Neighbourhood Development Plan runs for the next 15 years (to 2031) during which time many things will change and the Herefordshire Core Strategy is supposed to be reviewed. This means that there will be clear opportunities for the Parish Council and local people to look at the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and update the information it contains before 2031. The Parish Council wants to keep the Plan up to date and relevant even though a review will mean a lot of work again.