



## **The Neighbourhood Plan**

The final public consultation on the draft plan will now commence in late January because, on advice from our planning consultant, the draft plan was submitted to a voluntary 'health check' by the national Planning Examination Service (NPIERS) in December. Now it has passed this scrutiny, we can enter the final phase of examination and adoption knowing the plan will have the best chance of succeeding when it is submitted– subject to any amendments resulting from the imminent consultation with residents and statutory authorities.

## **Character Assessment**

During the autumn, the Steering Group undertook a complete housing character assessment of the town and consulted with residents on which housing features and layouts were representative of the character of Higham Ferrers. The result is a very important document which housing developers must take account of when submitting planning applications in the future.

Printed copies of the Higham Ferrers Character Assessment are available to view at the Town Council Offices. It can also be viewed online at the following address:

<http://www.highamferrersneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/Character-Assessment.aspx>

The document so impressed our planning consultant, Planning Aid England, they used it as a case study to assist other towns and cities across England and Wales engaged in neighbourhood planning. Their report on the process –which we recommend you read - can be viewed at:

<http://www.ourneighbourhoodplanning.org.uk/case-studies/view/477>

Note: Special thanks are due to Nigel Cheetham for his expertise in compiling the document from research data provided by steering group members.

## **Community Plan- Highways and Transport (H&T) update**

Top management at Northamptonshire Highways Department have agreed to receive a presentation from the H&T team on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. The team will propose ideas for traffic calming (including enhanced parking) along the A5028 (HF main thoroughfare) between the Northampton Rd and Stanwick Rd junctions. The proposals were approved by town councillors in December. The aim is to get agreement and support for drawing up a master plan of improvements which can then be costed, as a prelude to bidding for funds for a phased programme of improvements based on priorities already established through Community Plan consultations. We are at the start of what could be a long journey but we are determined to push hard for overdue town centre improvements!