

## **Watton Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Report from the Chair of the Steering Committee Dr David Dent FRSB**

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was formally submitted to Breckland Council on 8th November 2022.

The NP then proceeded to a 6 week public consultation (known as Regulation 16), which started on 30th January and closed at 5pm on 7th April 2023 after an extension from 14th March.

The Steering Group had a final discussion with officers of the BC on 30th March when it was agreed that events had overtaken the Plan with regard to a development of one of the designated green spaces (Thetford Road - Area 4 corner by Tesco entrance by the Memorial Gardens) which therefore needed amendment prior to submission. In addition, clarification of a few points relating to designated Green Spaces was sought and responses provided.

The Plan has now been submitted for external examination. The independent Examiner determines whether the NP meets the basic conditions required by law (with or without modifications), then the Council will consider these recommendations. Any concerns at this stage are dealt with in a Hearing with the Examiner. Finally, the plan proceeds to a referendum to 'make' the NP.

The Chair would like to extend his thanks to the members of the Committee who gave of their free time and considerable effort to bring the Plan to fruition - thanks to Jane Fountain (former Chair), Pat Warwick, Kathryn Stallard, Keith Gilbert, Liz Witcher (not least for her editing skills), Deputy Clerk Michelle Thompson and to our consultant Ian Poole for timely advice and support.

We look forward to the examiners report and to the referendum.