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**Local Update September 2021**

**Local Housing Needs Assessment.**

In progressing the Local Plan, national guidance requires the Council to produce a Local Housing Needs Assessment. This is to determine the minimum number of homes required and proposals on the size, type and tenure of houses. It looks at the local market and the needs of a range of groups such as older people, disabled people , affordable homes and the appetite for self build.

The initial figures are suggested a high number of houses required and on the higher level more than 1200 per year. However, as we all know with this sort of modelling, much depends on the assumptions built into the metrics.

More information will be available next month.

**Solar Energy**

For the second year, the Council is collaborating with other authorities across Sussex to help residents install photovoltaic panels and battery storage .

Solar Together Sussex is a group purchasing scheme that brings residents together to buy large volumes of solar panel installations to get the best possible price.

The first Solar Together auction enabled 50 Wealden households to install panels with a calculated saving of 33,000 kg of CO2 per year.

Until 30th September, residents can register their interest online.It is open to all homeowners, landlords and small businesses .

Registration is free and there is no obligation to proceed.

Solar Together will hold an auction to obtain the best price.

All who register will receive a personal recommendation and a quote.

This is a good opportunity for those interested.

**Community Grants.**

Wealden is promoting three types of grants to benefit our local communities.

A second round of Covid Related Recovery grants is available for those who did not benefit in the first round.Groups can apply for between £500 and £3000 and this has to be spent by the end of March 2022.Organisations can receive help with equipment and some bills if they are struggling with reduced income as a result of the pandemic.

Applications by October 14th.

Then there are small grants of between £ 500 and £3000 for voluntary activities in the year from April 2021 to March 2023.This is a usual Wealden grant process. Applications by 30th November.

Partnership agreements are open to key organisations helping multiple Parishes between April 2022 and March 2025. Examples of organisations currently benefitting include the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Conservators of Ashdown Forest.Applications by 30th November.

Further details can be found at communitygrants@wealden.gov.uk

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**September 8th 2021.**

**Your local Councillors.**

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