



## We Heart Hart Campaign

For immediate release – 2 October 2015

### Hart Council decides to ignore the wishes of 2,130 people and bases its planning policy on a “guesstimate” of brownfield capacity

Last night Hart Cabinet debated their response to the [We Heart Hart petition](#) containing signatures from 2,130 people and decided to ignore their wishes on three key elements of the petition and continue to base their planning policy on only a “guesstimate” of brownfield capacity in the district.

We Heart Hart put evidence to the council that they should challenge the housing allocation contained in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) because the [jobs forecasts contained within it were outlandish](#), but there was little appetite to consider this. Hart Council also refused to commission an environment and ecology study to quantify the value of our countryside.

Hart Chief Executive, Daryl Phillips stated that the council’s assessment of the brownfield capacity of the district of 1,800 dwellings was a “guesstimate”. Despite the evidence We Heart Hart put forward that in fact brownfield capacity was [between 2,400-3,600 homes](#), the council decided to continue to base its planning policy on this “guesstimate” and press ahead with the controversial plans for a new town at Winchfield. Hart Council said they would try to meet the needs of the ageing population, but seemed to imply that the only way they could do this was by building a new town even though this would build the wrong type of housing in the wrong place for the elderly.

“It is outrageous that Hart Council should dismiss the opinion of 2,130 people. Hart’s own consultation only received 750 replies and only 202 of those expressed a preference for a new town” said David Turver who set up the We Heart Hart campaign. “Given the earlier failure of the Local Plan at inspection, it is simply astonishing that Hart should be basing their planning policy on a “guesstimate” of brownfield capacity. It is unbelievable that they refuse to set up a proper register of brownfield sites and can’t be bothered to track which brownfield sites have been granted planning permission” he added.

Ends



For further information, please contact: David Turver at [wehearthart@gmail.com](mailto:wehearthart@gmail.com)

#### Notes to editors

- 1) The objectives of the We ♥ Hart petition are:
  - a. To reduce the overall housing allocation for Hart District
  - b. Demand that the Council develops a vision and strategy for Hart that retains its role as a rural, green hinterland for NE Hampshire that respects the separate character and identity of Hart's settlements and landscapes and preserves the green spaces as amenity space for the urban settlements.
  - c. To require that the housing need is met by building on brownfield sites and increasing density in our existing urban areas
  - d. To request that future housing stock reflects the needs of the changing demographics of the district.
  - e. To demand the council and government do not plan for any new settlement in Hart that will act as a sink for the unmet housing need in neighbouring areas.
- 2) Hart Council's formal response to the petition can be found here: <http://wehearthart.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Hart-Council-answers-to-We-Heart-Hart-petition-20151001-v3-SP.pdf>
- 3) More detail can be found at: [wehearthart.co.uk](http://wehearthart.co.uk) and <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/we-hart>
- 4) Social feeds: @WeHeartHart and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IHeartHart>
- 5) We ♥ Hart logo can be downloaded from here <http://wehearthart.co.uk/home/get-involved/>
- 6) More details about the Winchfield Action Group can be found here: <http://winchfieldactiongroup.org>