



## PLAISTOW VILLAGE TRUST



27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Sirs

Ref.: Requirement to re-run Regulation 16 Consultation in Plaistow and Ifold

Following the recent advisory note on the Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan website (<https://plaistowandifoldparishnp.com/2020/04/08/update-neighbourhood-planning-guidance/>) and as a body to be consulted on the Neighbourhood Plan and its process, The Plaistow Village Trust has been asked by its Trustees and Members to raise significant concerns about the formal Neighbourhood plan process in light of the Covid19 pandemic.

The Plaistow Village Trust has three primary concerns about the process:

- **The availability of printed documentation**
  - This was only available during restricted working hours in Plaistow in Holy Trinity Church
  - The Church has been closed since 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 under Government guidelines
  - Those without internet access would be denied the ability to request document by post
  
- **The lack of awareness of changing timetables for consultation for those without internet access**
  - The Consultation document was initially published on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 with an end date of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020
  - On 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 the deadline was extended to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 however by now the place for viewing material was closed under Government guidelines
  - On 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020 the Government issued the following update: “Referendums: All neighbourhood planning referendums that have been recently cancelled, or are scheduled to take place, between 16 March 2020 and 5 May 2021 are postponed in line with the [Local](#)



[Government and Police and Crime Commissioner \(Coronavirus\) \(Postponement of Elections and Referendums\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) until 6 May 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2# covid-19>

- On 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 Chichester District Council (CDC) updated as follows:  
“We will need to consider further the implications for the formal Neighbourhood Plan process. It may be that the Government issues more emergency legislation which changes the requirements for Neighbourhood Plans, but under the legislation as it currently stands there will ultimately be a need to rerun the Regulation 16 [Public] Consultation at an appropriate time. While that would be extremely unfortunate and frustrating, given the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to be the matter of legal challenge, and the clear risk of prejudicing all parties right to engage in this formal consultation process, this is considered necessary.”

<https://plaistowandifoldparishnp.com/2020/04/08/update-neighbourhood-planning-guidance/>

- **The lack of clarity on the final timetable for consultation**

- The last update on the timetable end date was over three weeks ago, a period during which the Government confirmed a continuation of the countrywide lockdown and restriction on movement.

As a statutorily consulted body in the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and in line with the Government advisory note published on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020, Plaistow Village Trust wish to request that the referendum be formally postponed in line with the [Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner \(Coronavirus\) \(Postponement of Elections and Referendums\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) until 6 May 2021. This would also enable the Neighbourhood Plan committee to make appropriate and enhanced consultation for those who wish to access the consultation documentation in person.

Whilst there might be individual opinions which express that a delay to this process is unnecessary, it is our belief that the above process is open to challenge were it not to be postponed and re-run, given the Government advisory and facts we have highlighted.

Yours faithfully,

Rupert Nathan  
Chairman  
Plaistow Village Trust





