



**SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO TVBC'S PROPOSED ALLOCATION
OF 100 HOUSES NEAR DANEbury SCHOOL, IN THE DRAFT
LOCAL PLAN 2042**

You will all now know that TVBC have proposed that 100 houses should be allocated in the next Local Plan 2042, to be built near Danebury School. As you will also know SOS objects to this proposal and it seems that many of you do too. So now, as promised, we are writing to let you know how to respond yourself. You may remember that at our recent AGM we were told that each response has to be individual because if we all write the same thing our responses will be treated as one response, and one only. We are therefore asking each one of you to write to TVBC to state your feelings about this proposal, and we are going to set out some thoughts in this letter which might help you. And we were also told at our AGM that the sooner we all write the better. SOS will be writing in to object as will each member of our Committee. We need lots of people to write objecting so please ask members of your family and your friends to write as well.

First of all your response has to be with TVBC by **noon on 5th September 2025** and you can either email them on:

planningpolicy@testvalley.gov.uk and write Local Plan 2042 as the subject matter;

or you can write to them at:

Planning Policy and Economic Development
Test Valley Borough Council
Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road
Andover SP10 3AJ

Secondly we suggest you consider the following but remember it is your response and you must be happy with it. Please feel free to choose issues that matter to you so that we don't all write the same thing.

1. Do you feel Stockbridge is special – what makes it special for you?

For example:

- (a) The River Test; the streams that run under and beside the High Street; it is in a valley with hills on either side; it is just one High Street with houses and shops with different architecture; the wonderful views that can be seen and enjoyed from the Town and from the Common Marsh; the busy High Street with free parking; etc etc
- (b) There is a real sense of community in Stockbridge. There are lots of things to do; walk on the Marsh enjoying the natural environment, the river and the views of Stockbridge and its surrounding hills; walk on the Test Way; attend the Community Cinema in the Town Hall; go to a service at one of the 3 churches in Stockbridge (Old St Peter's, St Peter's or St Thomas More Catholic Church); go to a concert from Stockbridge Music in St Peter's Church; attend a performance of Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society (SADS); go to the weekly Community Market; go to pilates, art or other classes in the Town Hall or Scout Hut; take part in or watch Stockbridge Robins (the Football club) at the Recreation Ground; go fishing; take one's children to the Beavers or Cub Scouts or the Scouts or Scout Group Explorers in the Scout Hut; or go to one of the special events in Stockbridge – Open Gardens for the NGS or the Churches, or the annual Flower Festival; go to the annual Trout and About which this year attracted about 10,000 people; many people who live or work in Stockbridge or come to visit, like to meet up for coffee or drinks or a meal in the town; etc etc.
- (c) There are lots of shops and other amenities in Stockbridge which everyone, residents, people who work here, and visitors all enjoy. Grocers, greengrocers, butchers, gift shops, fishing shops, dress shops, Persian rug shops, hairdressers, beauticians and then lots of coffee shops, cafes, restaurants, pubs – something for everyone. Stockbridge also has opticians, estate agents, solicitors, podiatrists,

physiotherapists, dentists, builders, odd job men etc etc. It is a thriving community.

2. How will 100 houses near Danebury school impact Stockbridge?

- (a) They will overlook Stockbridge - the views of the valley side on the west will be altered from any of the vantage points in the town or from the Marsh, the Test Way or from the Downs, or from the A30 coming into Stockbridge from either direction, or from the A 3057 from King's Somborne or Leckford. Once those views have gone they can never be recovered.
- (b) The number of people living in 100 houses – at least 300, and probably more, with each home having one or two cars - will cause more congestion on the bridge over the River, at the crossroads to Houghton and Longstock, in the High Street and for parking. People will not walk or even cycle from the 100 houses – the hill is too steep and long - pushing a buggy up the hill, anyone with any disability, expecting a young child to walk all the way from the Pre-School or Primary School, anyone carrying shopping – all will definitely use a car as will most people just for the convenience.
- (c) Stockbridge will be swamped. There were only 554 residents in 2021 (the last TVBC formal Count) and with another 300 or more living nearby and using all the shop facilities and amenities Stockbridge will never feel the same. The Primary school and Pre-school are already full; the GP Surgery is already under huge demand from Stockbridge and the surrounding villages – getting to see a GP is increasingly difficult; parking is already difficult and paid for parking would probably be introduced to the detriment of residents, shopkeepers, those who work here and visitors; congestion along the High Street is already a problem and on also the bridge where farm and other large vehicles cannot get through when cars are parked on the bridge. These problems would clearly get much worse. Shops and restaurants will always want more people but because Stockbridge has grown incrementally over the last few decades it has been able to cope. An influx of at least 300 more people with their visiting family and

friends will mean that realistically Stockbridge will no longer be able to do so.

Once Stockbridge loses its charm, character and specialness it will never be the same again.

3. Particular issues:

- (a) **Damage to the River Test.** The risk of pollution into the Test and the Marsh Court Rivers, and the various streams that link the two, will increase. TVBC has very recently unanimously voted to recognise the rights of the River Test in order to protect this precious chalk stream, since the River Test with the River Itchen, are iconic chalk rivers recognised world - wide for their clarity and flyfishing. Yet at the same time TVBC are proposing a development of 100 houses near to the River Test which is bound to cause more pollution into the river from waste water, and from surface water flowing from the tarmacked and concreted areas of the development.
- (b) **Flooding.** The Flood and Water Management Act 2020 requires developers to manage surface water run off sustainably. It has been suggested at the public meeting on 28th July 2024 by a Hampshire County Councillor, David Drew, that a reservoir could be built at the bottom of the site of the 100 houses to catch the surface water. There is no space for such a reservoir. The surface water will run down onto the Houghton Road and will add to the risk of flooding in Stockbridge, which since 2013/14 is a risk never far from the minds of its inhabitants. 100 extra houses built high on the valley side are bound to increase the risk of flooding to Stockbridge.
- (c) **Sewage.** In 2024 Southern Water allowed 29,355 illegal spills which on average lasted 10 hours. In 2023 there was a total of 156 hours of spillage into the Marsh Court River, which equates with (on average) 15 incidents. We have seen no evidence to suggest that spills have reduced and hence we are all being asked to pay much higher water bills so Southern Water can increase their capacity to prevent such spills. How will they cope with the sewage of yet another 100 houses near Stockbridge?

- (d) Water supply.** Southern Water has recently imposed a hosepipe ban on Stockbridge and the surrounding areas. How can it guarantee the water supply for yet another 100 houses here, as well as for all the other 100s of houses that TVBC intend to allocate for building in the Local Plan?
- (e) SSSIs.** The River Test, the Common Marsh, Stockbridge Downs and Stockbridge Fen are all Sites of Special Scientific Interest. They need fostering and cherishing. Building 100 houses on the valley side near the school will do neither.
- (f) Conservation Area.** Stockbridge is situated in a Conservation Area because previous TVBC councillors and people who love Stockbridge have felt it was worth conserving. These 100 additional houses will have a serious adverse impact on the Area.
- (g) Public Transport.** Almost everyone who lives in Stockbridge or comes to work here or visits, uses a car. Public transport is very limited and that is why the community has a bus to get local people to and from medical appointments, and to local towns for shopping.
- (h) Tourism.** Everyone loves to come to Stockbridge to enjoy all its amenities. But it consists of a High Street which was a causeway built by the Romans. It can only be enjoyed by a limited number of people as a centre to come and shop, walk, eat or drink. Trout and About can only accommodate vast numbers because the High Street is closed for the day, and that limited one day closure causes huge congestion on the A30 and other surrounding roads. In a town of just 554 residents another 300 or more residents will cause greatly increased congestion which will drive visitors away.

TVBC suggest that the allocation of 100 houses near the School will help to make Stockbridge a thriving community. We should tell them that if they came to visit Stockbridge they would see that it is already a thriving community.

At the end of your objection please ask TVBC to remove this 100 house allocation from the Local Plan 2042.

And finally if you feel as strongly as we do about this proposed allocation, then come to the next **Public Meeting on Tuesday 26th August 2025 at Danebury School at 7pm.**

Of course if you have any queries get back to us or stop one of us in the street.

Jean Boney

Chair of SOS

8th August 2025

Committee members: Alex Lawrence, Chantal Hallé, Elizabeth Miller and Michael Woodhall