

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE THURLESTONE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
Held in the Yeo Room of the Parish Hall on 1 March 2017 at 2pm

Present: Tony Goddard (Chairman) (AG), Sue Crowther (SC), Robin MacDonald (RM), Kit Marshall (KM), Jill Munn (JM), Charlie Mitchelmore (CM), Gary Luddington (GL), Judy Pearce (JP), David Martin (DM) and Chris White (CW)

Also attending: Phil Millard (PM), Sally Martin (SM), Carey Ryan-Carter (CRC) and Sian Hester-Williams (SHW)

1. **Apologies** - Kay Barry (KB)
2. **Minutes of meeting held on 11th January 2017** - Agreed previously by email
3. **Matters arising not on Agenda** – None
4. **Presentation by JP about the new draft Plymouth & South Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP)**

For the draft JLP – click [here](#)

JP opened by emphasising that South Hams DC had benefitted from sharing the preparation of the JLP with Plymouth CC and West Devon BC and that the plan had come together sooner than it would have done had South Hams DC done their own. The plan covers 20 years, 2014-2034, and will be revised every 5 years. It starts in 2014 because that is the year from which reliable population figures are available. It is an interactive web-based plan and JP described how this works. The plan had been signed off by members at Plymouth and West Devon, and was likely to be signed off by South Hams on 2 March. The six-week public consultation period will start on 15 March [ending at midnight on 26 April] and the Steering Group and Parish Council should make representations.

The main points to note from the JLP are:

- There are two policy areas: the Plymouth Policy Area (PPA) which includes the Plymouth Urban Fringe which falls in South Hams; and the **Thriving Towns and Villages (TTV)** which include West Devon and South Hams (excluding the Plymouth Urban Fringe). Dartmoor National Park is also excluded and is preparing its own Local Plan. The policies for the Thriving Towns and Villages are labelled “TTV.”
- Plymouth wants to grow and therefore much of the development would be focussed on Plymouth and its fringes, which means that the South Hams overall is relatively protected.
- The PPA will accommodate 19,000 new homes (71% of the total need of the whole Housing Market Area, which is 27,3000).
- TTV will accommodate 7,700 new homes and 2,580 affordable homes (as defined in the JLP).
- South Hams (not including that part in PPA) will find 4,500 of the TTV target and 30% affordable housing is required on qualifying sites.
- Thurlestone is ranked a Sustainable Village and the indicative level of new housing is 10 dwellings over the 20-year period due to its location in the AONB. Overall, the Sustainable Villages within the TTV are assessed as being able to bring forward 720 homes over the 20-year period.
- The most important policies to note are – **DEV 8 - 10, 15, 18 - 22, 24 - 25, 27 - 28, 34 - 36.**

- At the end of the plan, in the Monitoring and Delivery section, there are measures to prevent land banking and to ensure planning permissions are built out within a reasonable time. The renewal of planning permissions would be carefully monitored.

The following concerns and questions were raised during and after the presentation:

- The **lack of infrastructure**, in particular, the present difficulties of accessing Derriford Hospital and trying to get an appointment to see a specialist.
- The role of the **AONB Unit**. How effective are they, when do they comment on planning applications and how is the term “major development” in the AONB defined? JP said the Unit are funded by DEFRA and mainly involved in policy guidance. She explained that development that is ‘major’ in one area may not be ‘major’ in another. It depends on the individual case.
- **Second homes** and whether the JLP is supporting a principal occupancy restrictions? JP said the housing target figures include a 9% allowance for second homes, but that there is no requirement for principal occupancy restrictions - they will be for the NPs to put forward and support with their own evidence.
- **Housing White Paper** (January 2017) and whether it would affect the JLP. JP said it presented “no showstoppers” and that the JLP was consistent with the paper.
- **Timing of the JLP**. JP reiterated that the JLP will begin to gather weight in planning decisions once it has gone out to public consultation. It is likely to go to public Examination in the Autumn and be adopted in January 2018 or thereabouts.

5. **Bantham Estate proposals** – SC read out a range of website contact form responses, including the following:

- *Whilst I appreciate the need for additional housing and regeneration within the locality as a whole, the plans focus primarily on luxury housing and will not serve to alleviate this need. My family and I have been visiting the area for the last 50 years and feel that any substantive redevelopment will greatly detract from the natural beauty and ambience that makes Bantham such a special place to all who visit and reside there.*
- *Without the reference to affordable housing on the Thurlestone plan, the proposals appear almost totally inconsistent with community aspirations as expressed in the recent exhaustive opinion research.*
- *Bantham’s undoubted appeal is that it has a stunning beach and the area remains largely unspoilt. Any development that turns it into an exclusive millionaire’s paradise must be prevented. I have been a regular visitor to Bantham with my family for more than 45 years.*
- *The plans offer minimal benefits to parishioners, the additional cars generated by the new build properties will ruin the beauty of Bantham and soon, only the rich will be able to access the beaches.*
- *Bantham is an area of outstanding natural beauty and a wildlife haven. Introducing commercial tourism in this way will destroy its charm and unique character. Bantham desperately needs more affordable housing rather than appealing to rich second homeowners. I have been coming down to this area with my family for 65 years now, and my parents and their parents before that, as Bantham is a very unspoilt and special place.*
- *Bantham’s beauty is that it is a quiet little village with a popular beach that everyone can visit and enjoy. By adding the beach club and deluxe housing, the place will be ruined for both residents and visitors. There would be no going back.*

TG then read out an email he had received from a reporter at the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Gazette (KSG) asking whether the Parish Council had approached Nicholas Johnston and had asked him to come up with plans for new housing in the parish in response to the Neighbourhood Plan and Housing Survey. TG had responded to the reporter as follows:

“ In answer to your question: It was agreed between Mr Johnston and our Project Director Sue Crowther that Mr Johnston would attend our next scheduled meeting to share with us his plans for the future of the Bantham Estate. He told us at the meeting that he had in preparation for the meeting studied the results of the Housing Needs Survey and the Questionnaire (which are freely available on the Parish Website) and that his plans purported to respond to the aspirations of the Parish as disclosed by the responses to that Survey and Questionnaire. I have to say that his analysis of those responses is materially different in many respects to our analysis of them.”

[Members of the Steering Group will recall that SC was asked to approach both Mr Johnston and Mr Stidston, our two main landowners with land adjoining the settlements, as to whether they would be prepared to provide land for affordable housing. For more detail, click [here](#) for Minutes dated 7 December 2016.]

There was then some discussion about the original press statement that SC had released to those news agencies and members of the press who had approached her. The statement read as follows:

“As a major landowner in the parish, it was important for the Steering Group to hear about possible plans and ideas from the Bantham Estate. At the moment, these plans are very much at the conceptual stage and there has been no formal planning application. It is very early days and our immediate aim is to continue putting together our neighbourhood plan and to keep residents informed of progress.

It is not our position to either endorse or oppose any ideas from the Bantham Estate. Our job is to help the community have a say in shaping and directing sustainable development in the parish. Ultimately, it will be the decision of the local planning authority, guided by the neighbourhood plan, that will determine the future of the parish.”

It was agreed that we would wait to see if the KSG published TG’s response this week. If not, then a formal response clarifying the Steering Group’s position would be drafted for the Letters to the Editor page of the KSG. [TG’s response was subsequently published in the 3 March 2017 edition of the KSG]

6. Working Group updates:

- **Infrastructure - DAAT helipad**
RM said this was in hand. He is waiting to hear back from DAAT about their preferred sites.
- **Resources**
 - **Community WiFi.** The Community Wifi company that CW had approached has provided him with a costs estimate of £750 per day for 3 days to carry out a survey and the community would have to pay for this. However, CW explained that the company had not yet explained how the system would work and what was involved. He had asked the company for details of a scheme they had elsewhere, but the company had been unable to provide this information.
 - **Mobile mast.** In the meantime, CW had learnt that O2 plans to put a mast on top of the Thurlestone Hotel were well advanced. This had been unbeknownst to him, but JP and CW were happy with the surveyor’s report. However, CW said this mast would only be able to assist properties in sight of the mast and that it would not solve mobile issues in Bantham and Buckland. CW had spoken to Bigbury PC who had told him that they had erected one mast that had been a great success for part of the Parish, but had caused a rift in the community. The second mast (facing Bantham) was never erected - it would have helped Buckland too, but they ran out of time for the final date of the then funding stream. CW stressed that the community wishes to address the needs of Buckland and Bantham too.

- **Community Heating Scheme.** CW is waiting to hear from the Rural Community Energy Fund about funding for the full feasibility study that members were in favour of being carried out by the Devon Association for Renewable Energy, the group who had originally approached the Parish Council.
- **Bantham tidal project.** No further communication from the promoter. No further action.

7. AOB

Heritage – The school historic assets trail. CRC described how this would be carried out over the next couple of weeks with pupils from Thurlestone Primary School. KB has been researching those historic assets within the parish that have no legal protection (ie are not listed) and SHW will write two articles for the Village Voice assisted by KB and CRC. [Note: First deadline for Thurlestone coverage is 15 March latest]

South Hams Coastal Community Economic Plan – SM will read the documents that have been sent to us and which have been circulated to members. She will see what is involved and whether there are benefits to the parish being involved in the project. [Note: Their deadline for a response is 31 March]

Project Plan – SC was aiming to have a draft plan ready by the end of March/early April, but much will depend on other tasks, including our comments on the JLP.

8. Date for next meeting: TBA