

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE THURLESTONE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
Held in the Yeo Room of the Parish Hall on 4 May 2016 at 2pm.

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

1. **Apologies:** Peter Hurrell (PH), Charlie Mitchelmore (CM).
2. **Seminar with Robin Toogood (RT) South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Manager.** RT said this was the first Neighbourhood Planning Group meeting he had attended, but that the AONB unit was keen to help and support such groups. He would at the same time try to answer the list of questions which had been submitted before the meeting, and feed in some resources he had brought with him.

He outlined the statutory duty in planning matters to have regard for the AONB and to conserve and enhance that beauty. The NP should therefore be clear about what it wants to protect and look after, what is special, distinctive and attractive and what the valuable things are in the parish. He said we should look at what we have and what measures we need to protect them. He introduced the group to the mapping tool magic.defra.gov.uk (Magic maps), which through various map layers can show designated areas, habitats etc. The NPPF paragraph 115 affords the highest level of protection to AONB areas, whilst paragraph 116 states that major developments in the AONB should be refused except in exceptional circumstances. The NP should therefore state what would be considered major development in the parish as the NPPF does not define it.

The main reason for the designation of S Devon as an AONB in 1960 was the quality of the 60 miles of undeveloped coastline. That it mostly remained so must be counted as a success. The local planning authority (LPA), (for us, SHDC), decides applications in the AONB. This was the major difference with the National Park, which decides its own applications. The AONB unit has in fact no statutory powers and can only comment on applications submitted to the LPA.

RT said we needed to be clear about what we wanted, put a tight boundary around it and have supportive wording, for instance, for developments up to x houses, close to one of the village centres, would be supported if they were required to meet housing needs criteria. We would need advice to get the

wording appropriately tight. The AONB has its own management plan, and it was developing planning guidance, for which the draft would soon be out to public consultation. The aim was to give pointers to what would lead to acceptably good development in the AONB. He advised us to use their draft criteria and agreed that NPs could end up with more teeth than the AONB.

He suggested we should deal with the most problematic planning areas in detail, and housing would certainly be one of these, but also agricultural buildings, renewable energy, tourism and the possible loss of any community facilities. It was really important that the AONB remained an area where there was not 'development at any cost' but where it was only for the needs of local people. He reminded us of the footnote to NPPF para 14 which excluded AONB areas from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

There was then a discussion on settlement boundaries, as there are none in Buckland and Bantham. RT said that in the past SHDC had had strong policies relating to settlement boundaries so that there would be no random sprawl, or uncontained sporadic development in the countryside. He suggested that we contact SHDC and find out about their policies in the new local plan.

RT then went on to talk about coastal erosion, which had had a big impact in recent years. The AONB policy was to work with the natural processes and adapt. He was familiar with the problems the Thurlestone Golf Club had and with the disappearance of the road in front of the Links apartments. He concluded by telling the group that the NP was a really good opportunity to seize the initiative to protect and enhance the parish with policies to defend the AONB.

3. **The Minutes of the last meeting** held on 6 April 2016 were agreed.
4. **Matters arising not already on the agenda:** None
5. **Updates: - Funding:** DM said the £4915 applied for was now available to draw from the Parish Council account. SC and DM would discuss future funding outside the meeting. JP reminded them of the possibility of applying for some of her personal councillor budget for sundries.

Working groups:

- **Economy:** GL's report had been circulated to the rest of the Steering Group but would treated as confidential. There was question about how exactly all the evidence would be presented and the group was referred to the evidence base for the Lyn Plan which is available online.

- **Wellbeing:** CW had used Sally Martin's analysis of the Family Event questionnaire responses to prepare graphs and charts of the evidence obtained.
- HIRE:** Contact had been made with the following bodies: Devon Air Ambulance Trust about their appeal for night landing sites; the South West Coast Path about coastal erosion and management; and the Devon Association for Renewable Energy (on behalf of the South Devon Woodfuel Hub) about their pre-feasibility study on community heating scheme for Thurlestone. The links to these various reports would be put on the website. Arthur Livett was thanked for the work he had done in respect of Biodiversity and Mike Bone for his work on the website.
- HOUSING:** SC said the return rate for the Housing Needs Survey was 36%, which was particularly high. The survey results would be known shortly. She said she had heard from some of the local estate agents, but that she would have to chase the rest for their responses to our housing market survey. There was also some discussion about a call for sites (see below).

6. **Questionnaire:** Any questions or comments on Draft 4 should be sent to SC without delay. There were a few outstanding queries about renewable energy, a few housing points, dark skies, archaeology and settlement boundaries. *[JP and SC met after the meeting to tidy these up]*.

The logistics of inputting the paper replies when received were discussed. It would be a two week campaign from 27 June 2016. The printers would deliver the questionnaires to us by Monday 23rd May, which would give time to stuff the envelopes and deliver to the VV delivery team.

7. **Review of the Project Plan:** It remains on course, except that a call for sites was likely to be required and this would mean that timescales may slip by a month. This would be not only for housing, but also for employment opportunities and play areas, as all these had been identified by the evidence gathered to date. The possibility of a Heritage Open Day was considered, but no decision taken at this stage. It was agreed that we would await the responses to the Heritage section of the Questionnaire.

8. **AOB:** None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TBA