

Stevington Neighbourhood Working Party (SNWP)

Minutes of meeting held 23rd June, 2015

Present: Graham Read (GR); Andrew Lockwood (AL); Mary Morris (MM); Heather Eadie (HE); Linda Penney (LP).

Apologies: Roz Buchanan (RB); Sue Thornton (ST); Pat Olney (PO).

1. Minutes of meeting held 19th May, 2015 were approved.

2. Matters arising:

- All external communications should be sent to RB for Parish Council (PC) approval.
- AL has circulated Neighbourhood Plan consultation statement, also on OneDrive.
- MM and Sam Stapleton are visiting Foxbrook residents to deliver information leaflet and to encourage greater participation.
Action: HE and Sam Stapleton.
- ST's other commitments mean she will only be able to give ad hoc support in the foreseeable future.

3. Gemma from BRCC joined the meeting to discuss the support she can offer. Her part-time role is to support NP groups and rural housing needs. Specific help offered to SNPWG includes support with funding applications; signposting; liaison between SNPWG/PC and BCC Planning; and advice on questionnaires and community engagement. Her time is limited but free.

A housing needs survey was discussed at length. If a need for affordable housing is identified, sites for development are Exception Sites, outside the normal Planning consent and the NP. Affordable housing numbers do not count towards the total housing requirement in an area. The PC can choose the Housing Association to develop affordable housing and work with them on designs which fit the style of the village. Positive examples are Old Warden and Sharnbrook Mill Lane. People with a strong local connection have priority initially and at any change of occupancy, provided they meet the criteria (financial) for affordable housing.

It was felt that any housing needs survey in Stevington needs to address social need as well as financial need, eg older people wanting to downsize. Currently there are 263 houses in Stevington plus ~20 unoccupied. A variety of open market housing may address Stevington's needs better than affordable housing.

Gemma will draft questionnaire by Tues, 30th June for adapting. Any questionnaire will be available in paper format, delivered by hand, and online via Survey Monkey, with one questionnaire per household. BRCC will analyse returns. It was agreed to hold the survey until after the summer, to maximise returns, as holidays mean many people will be away. Typically 20% of questionnaires are returned.

Most NP groups have employed planning consultants to draft their NP, as experts in key planning policies to be referenced. Gemma will provide a list of those consultants used by other NP groups. Navigus has been popular.

4. Comments received from the Launch events have clarified the issues of high and low concern within the village community. These will inform development of the NP questionnaire and draft policies. Those issues which are not NP matters have been passed onto the PC to consider.

5. SNPWG members were assigned to sub-groups to start developing policies:

Housing, Infrastructure & Business: GR and AL

Community, Environment & Heritage: HE, MM and LP

Terms of reference will be developed for the sub-groups. Policies will be informed by experience of other NP groups. There are several other volunteers who have relevant expertise who will be consulted as required and asked to assist sub-groups with tasks. Anyone else identified as having key skills will be approached and invited to assist.

Action: AL to email volunteers to solicit specific assistance and draft terms of reference.

All: start developing policies for sub-groups.

6. An update of NP progress will be distributed to the village, posted in the Community Shop and published on the website. This will include promotion of the photo competition.

Action: HE & MM to draft.

7. GR has updated the NP schedule.

Action: AL to summarise for website

GR to give location of 'do not build here' comments posted on map at

Launch events.