

**APPROVED MINUTES  
WEST CHILTINGTON  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY 17 MARCH 2014  
IN ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL, WEST CHILTINGTON AT 7.30PM**

**Present**

Amanda Apps, WCPC  
Muriel Astley  
Anne Bush  
Sarah Fooks  
George Glibbery  
Martin Hughes  
William Marsden  
Clive Needham

Jane Needham, WCNPC Secretary  
Harvie Steele, Chair WCPC, Interim Chair  
WCNPC  
Phil Tapsfield  
Tony Thomas, WC Parish Clerk  
Robert Thornton, WCPC  
Dennis Wright, WCPC

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Bruce Bradley  
Gillian Bradley  
David Foard  
Judy Fryer

Norman Kirby  
Ray Parker  
Hilary Willoughby

Harvie opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed Martin Hughes to the group. He and his wife moved to West Chiltington last summer.

**2. & 3. Matters Arising from last Meeting (status of Action Points) & Other Updates**

**(a) NP Funding stream.** Tony has received confirmation from HDC that £6,000 will be made available to WCPC towards preparation of the plan, £3,000 of which is payable now. Also £7,000 can be sourced from the Department of Communities and Local Government. AiRS will assist Tony to apply for this funding. (Note the cost of the extra printing for production of the HNS was £115.)

**(b) Publicity and Posters.** Phil has done sterling work with the publicity material and flyers have been distributed around the village. NPC members were encouraged to take leaflets to deliver to their neighbours. Noting that Pulborough had a banner advertising their NP, could WCNPC also organise this to get the word out? Possibility of posters in the verges at road junctions was discussed.

**ACTION It was agreed that West Chiltington School would be approached to see if they would put a brief item in to their Newsletter regarding the NP and HNS. (Tony via School Governor.)**

Three help sessions in St Mary's Church Hall have been organised for anyone needing assistance completing the HNS. NPC members will use these to advertise the progress made on the NP, with displays and information being available. Comments sheets for parishioners' thoughts will be available. Light refreshments will also be available. The meetings will be held on:-

Tues 25 March	3 – 5pm	(Muriel, Robert, Anne, Tony)
Friday 28 March	6 – 8pm	(Jane, Clive, Muriel, Harvie)
Saturday 29 March	11am to 1pm	(Amanda George, Dennis)

Further details for those volunteering to assist will be emailed out shortly. **ACTION Jane and Tony Note- Additional Volunteers subsequently came forward.**

**(c) The Business survey** is a letter with questions on the back. Responses will be analysed by NPC members to save money. Norman had obviously spent a great deal of time compiling the list of businesses in the Parish (approximately 245). With regard to Communication and Business issues for inclusion in the NP, Robert pointed out that In fact, although minuted, this was not an action point he had agreed to undertake.

**(d) Distribution of the Housing Needs Survey** has slipped to Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Tony reported that preparation of the HNS and covering letter were completed with the assistance of Phil and Norman. The business questionnaire (which will be going out with the HNS) took more time than expected which caused delays. The date for return is now 9<sup>th</sup> April, rather than 2<sup>nd</sup> April, but the report and analysis from AiRS is still expected back at the end April, certainly by very early May. As the AiRS timescale has changed, Norman's timescale has moved back about a week.

**(e) Impact of the South Downs National Park Authority planning policies in relation to West Chiltington's Neighbourhood Plan.** The SDNPA have accepted our designated area plan. Whilst SDNP policies apply to a few houses along Monkmead Lane, unless a major planning issue arises, they do not get involved as HDC make the actual decisions. William wondered if SDNP involvement in the WCNP would offer the village some protection, and asked if they should be approached to offer such support.

Tony felt that the SDNP did not have a statutory say, but Anne pointed out that they can comment on issues. WCNPC must keep them informed of progress/outcomes.

**4. 'Planning and the Built Environment'** discussion of issues for Inclusion in Neighbourhood Plan. Harvie had hoped that Daphne Wright, planner, could attend to provide guidance for our discussions, but unfortunately she was not able to attend.

Robert stepped in to lead discussions. He had produced some headings within a framework. Previously he, Fran and Judy had undertaken the task of inputting the old Village Design Statement into Word format and were editing checking for compliance with new planning policies as a basis for the new NP. HDC are still working on their policies and their main theme (where specific development will take place) centres mainly around Horsham.

To start discussions Robert recapped how the results of the new HNS will inform what housing need is required to be addressed. Where best to site new development – as infill within the village, or on the edges of the village? Infilling housing would be shielded by trees and hedges, whereas building on fields will be much more visible.

HDC has already produced a map showing sites which may be suitable for development. Once something is identified as a SHLAA it is on the books, we cannot erase it but can dictate how it is developed if finally chosen for development. This map can be found here

[http://www.horshamdistrictldf.info/Files/Map3\\_West\\_Chiltington.pdf](http://www.horshamdistrictldf.info/Files/Map3_West_Chiltington.pdf)

with further details here

[http://www.horsham.gov.uk/environment/planning\\_policy/14196.aspx](http://www.horsham.gov.uk/environment/planning_policy/14196.aspx)

Tony said that residents regularly approach the Parish Council to see if a particular site would be acceptable for development. As a first step it was felt that the sites presently identified as potentially developable (see website above) should be scrutinised against basic criteria (access; potential for flooding etc) to assess their actual potential. We have to demonstrate that we are not anti-development but that it has to be in the right place done in the right way. Interested members of the NPC will organise some 'site visits' in the near future.

The VDS outlines the style of building etc. but this is too much fine detail to discuss at this point. Discussions ranged over many points, including:-

- Should large older houses on big plots be knocked down to be redeveloped with a number of market value smaller properties?

- Should a small estate be tacked onto the edge of the village, if it was well screened
- How to provide shared equity homes/homes for rent
- Do we keep WC a village or turn it into a small town with more amenities
- Building on greenfield sites
- If more development is permitted, can the village get more services (ie a Doctors Surgery)

Both Clive and Robert reiterated that a fundamental point is we cannot say there will not be any future development so through the NP we want to influence and control it. The HNS meetings will give us a chance to get parishioners talking about where a little development can take place, rather than have it imposed.

William felt developments like those in Bracklyn (aka The Spires); Caluna (aka Jayswood) and The Oaks were all very worrying and that people want protection against urbanisation of the village. It is worth noting that HDC's Local Development Framework DC Policy 19 for Heath Common and WC states, 'Housing development must make the most efficient use of land; however there are occasions where this could damage the character of an area. This is the case in Heath Common and WC Common where their low density is vulnerable to change as infill and re-development pressures increase; if this is done inappropriately it would have a significant detrimental effect of the characteristics of these areas..... Within the WC Common policy area, planning permission will only be granted for proposals that retain the unique semi-rural character of low density development set in large plots.'

Clive said he would look at the previous HNS results so that they can be directly compared to the results of this year's survey. In 2009 29 families were found to be in need of affordable homes. It was proposed to build 14 units (only half the need) for WC residents (or those with strong connections to the village). Originally development of the Calluna and Bracklyn sites were to be smaller dwellings but this turned out not to be the case. Calluna delivered 7 homes, and Bracklyn 9, but no affordable homes were delivered, just market value homes. Saxon Weald are still expected to provide the 14 affordable homes identified by the earlier HNS.

With land prices so high in WC developers only want to build large, expensive houses, and people in these types of developments don't want to live next to affordable housing. Developers don't want to build affordable housing so target the small, infill projects where they are not legally obliged to provide affordable housing. Robert explained that affordable houses can be built on agricultural land which is cheaper - a plot costs circa £10,000 with the cost of building the house on top. In Sussex non-agricultural land is the expensive element, not the actual housebuild. WSCC owns some of the agricultural land on the SHLAA list.

## **5. Any other business**

HDC were apparently late in responding to the appeal on The Oaks, Spinney Lane for planning permission to build a house in the garden. HDC did not think they could win and would have incurred substantial costs so did not pursue this. They will continue to oppose any future similar applications as this affects WC's Category 2 status. Tony noted that the Planning Inspector has spent 4 months looking at the appeal in Timbers, Fir Tree Lane, which is way over the usual timescale for scrutiny.

Tony explained that any new development was subject to '106' money and 'CILs' where the parish council receive 25 percent of CILs contribution. HDC would in future give 100% of CILs proceeds to the PC, which can amount to a considerable amount of money. This can be spent within the Parish according to public demand/need. The PC has recently been allocated circa £14,000 for static outside exercise equipment. The PC and other local groups have spent over £40,000 on village projects over the last 8 years from S106 Community Facility Contributions.

Denis Wright said that he had attended a NP Training Session on 25 February and discovered that in general the cost of preparing a NP ran at approximately £100 per head of voting population. He was concerned that WC was underfunded. Tony is not expecting any overspend to occur, we are not using a planning consultant to prepare the whole thing, but taking on the majority of the work ourselves. [Note see Minutes of the January 2013 Meeting – any overspend will be met by WCPC.]

Apparently there are 944 NP in process; only 6 been agreed; 2 others are being re-scrutinised. NP production seems to take about 18 months. This is all very new territory, and a large workloads, but we very much hope that it will be worth it to have a NP in place with the legal protection it offers.

Harvie thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

**6. Next Meeting will be on Monday 14 April 2014 at St Mary's Church Hall, West Chiltington, at 7.30pm.**

Amanda and Anne will lead the discussion on the 'Natural Environment'.

Note: From now on NPC meetings will be held on the second Monday of each month. The venue and start time remain the same.

### **Just what do all those abbreviations mean?**

AiRS- Action in Rural Sussex  
HDC- Horsham District Council  
CILS –Community Infrastructure Levy  
HNS- Housing Needs Survey  
NP – Neighbourhood Plan  
NPC – Neighbourhood Plan Council  
SDNP -South Downs National Park  
SHLAA sites –Strategic Housing Lane  
Availability Assessment  
SW – Saxon Weald – housing association

S106 Monies levied by HDC as part of the  
planning process. Also known as  
'planning gain'  
VDS – Village Design Statement  
WC- West Chiltington  
WCPC -West Chiltington Parish Council  
WCNPC -West Chiltington  
Neighbourhood Plan Council  
WSCC -West Sussex County Council