

Minutes of the meeting of the Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Wednesday 17 July at 8pm in the Village Hall (small room)

Attendees: Ruth Bryer, James Tizzard, Pauline Gardiner, Mike Jones, Bruce Parker, Louise Peace, Mike Willoughby

Apologies: Ray Blake, James Carlyle

Minutes of the meeting of 12 June approved

Planning consultant

- A resolution to engage Sally Chapman, at a cost of up to £6930 this financial year as outlined in her quote, was put to the meeting and approved unanimously.

Impact of LS1 on the School

- The LS1 site is to be discussed by the North Herts planning team tomorrow. The group briefly considered the potential impact of new housing at this site on the village school.

Maps and land ownership

- North Herts Planning had sent Ruth a pdf of a map of Ickleford set for A0 printing. One hard copy is in the post and Ruth had three copies made at a local printers. The map proved useful at the meeting.
- A friend of Louise working at the Countryside Management Service (CMS) has supplied her with maps illustrating the various aspects of land use in the parish.
- It was noted that the character assessment should include a map showing the conservation area, which is available.
- Ruth attended the last Parish Council meeting where Danielle and Colin Thurstance agreed to help with identifying land ownership and management of footpaths.

Resignations and recruitment

- Following Miles Maxwell's resignation, Ray Blake has become interim chairman of the Parish Council. This has left him with little time to help with the Neighbourhood Plan. This may change in September if another chair of the Parish Council is elected.
- The group needs a link to the Parish Council so, if Ray remains too busy, it will need another member to join it. As there is a need for help with collating information on natural history, someone with an interest in this area would be particularly helpful.
- James Carlyle has also resigned from the group due to other commitments.
- All should think of others whose interest in the village might extend to joining us. Examples suggested by Bruce were the Saunders brothers resident at the Bury, one of whom worked with buildings.
- It was agreed a more general recruitment campaign would be wise. A call for help in the Village News might be helpful, perhaps focussing on our need for help on the natural environment with a clear outline of the roles required.

Topics

- Members of the group provided updates on their progress against the goals set last meeting.
- Mike W, Pauline and Ruth had made a start on describing street layout etc. using the Planning Aid Character Assessment pro forma. Each had looked at a different part of the village and would continue the work over the summer.
- Illustrations for the character assessment should include versions of a standard map highlighting different aspects of the village and photographs to support points in the text. Two prints made by Bruce were considered good examples.
- A popular feature of the village was the lavender field which, with its associated activities, should be given due prominence in the character assessment.
- Bruce expressed an interest in helping with the natural environment topic. James T agreed to provide some pointers for him to get started on this.
- 'Existing amenities, facilities or business' was the title given by James T and Mike J to a detailed document they had drawn up on this topic. It included an exhaustive list of what was now available and another of material brought up in the feedback from the 2018 questionnaire.
- The next step is engaging with amenity and business groups about what they would like to see in the village.
- How the questionnaire might best draw out residents' views on potential improvements was discussed.
- It was agreed to continue work on the topics up to the 11th September when it will be collated for Sally Chapman to review. She may then attend our next meeting on the 18th September, if she considered it appropriate.

Finance

- Current funds are £164.45, before meeting costs today. Of this, £120 is set aside for land registry searching. A further grant of £200 from Councillor David Barnard has been approved.
- Louise has made a successful application for a grant of £8158 from Locality, subject to completion of their due diligence process. This grant consists of £6930 consultant costs, £1000 questionnaire costs and £228 for meeting room hire.

Bruce Parker's plan for his proposed gift of land to the village

- Bruce Parker outlined his plans for an area of land he owns by Icknield Way. He is developing ideas for the site, including potential amenities, and proposes gifting the land to the village, with a trust set up to manage it.
- This plan was recognised as separate from the Neighbourhood Plan but relevant to it because it concerns the potential development of amenities in the village.

Next meeting Wednesday 18 September (subject to confirmation from Village Hall)