

Minutes of Little Hallingbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
Monday 18th Nov 2024 7.30pm.

Present: Jane Fitzgerald, Brenda Layton, Val McKirdy, Sue Meyer, Keith Summerford, Robert Wingard, Nicky Joshus RCCE. **Apologies:** Cara Fitzgerald, Donna Johnson.

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Coffee Morning and Consultation Event Oct 2024: The results of the feedback and our responses to the comments raised are now on the LHNP website. Those who gave their contact details, to be kept up to date with progress of the LHNP have been emailed with the results and a link to the LHNP website to see the responses to the comments. The results have been put on social media and an article will appear in the December issue of Village Views to provide an update for residents.

Further Evidence gathering:

- **Local Green Space audit.** A draft of the appendix which will form the basis of the Local Green Space NP policy was outlined by Jane F. The 'long list' of potential Local Green Spaces in the Village is being put together for each Landscape Character Area, along with a proforma to audit them.

The audit will confirm whether the Local Green Space should be included on our 'short list'. It will be necessary to contact landowners of Local Green Spaces and to advise UDC of our intention to designate these once the audit is complete.

A map of each Local Green space will be included in our evidence and various methods of obtaining the maps were discussed. It may be possible to obtain the maps from UDC once the Local Green Spaces have been audited and defined.

Jane F will take this to the next stage and circulate the draft document to the Steering Group.

The Local Green Spaces must be, close to the Community they serve, demonstrably special to the Community and not extensive tracts of land. If land is already protected by Green Belt policy, consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained, such as where LGS designation could help to identify areas that are of particular importance to the local community.

- **Important Views Policy:** The need to identify and record the Important Views in the Village for LHNP Important Views policy were explained by Keith S. These will be based on those in the LHNP Landscape Assessment Survey. Each view must be documented such that they can be easily found when the Plan is inspected and 'What Three Words' locations were suggested. An audit will be conducted and the views described, to capture the important aspects of each. The Technical Guidance from the Landscape Institute and examples of other Important Views audits will be consulted. VM/KS to discuss further.

A discussion regarding these views being in Green Belt took place and it was agreed the Green Belt aspect would be covered elsewhere in the LHNP.

Once we have a draft of the Important Views, we may need to re-consult with Residents.

- **Business Survey:** Robert W. presented a draft Business Questionnaire. The NP Business policy is likely to result in a protection for Business premises to retain employment and the services provided in the Village. The draft questionnaire will now be amended and a list of business to be consulted drawn up.

- **Farm Diversity Policy:** Recent changes to the NPPF in this regard may mean the proposed policy is no longer necessary. UDC Local Plan also covers this. VM to investigate.
- **Bio-Diversity Policy:** There is an initiative underway called the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It is suggested that NPs align their goals and objectives for Bio – Diversity with this initiative. We have asked to be put in touch with the person dealing with this for our area.
- **Light Pollution Policy:** The need to maintain the Dark Skies area within the Parish by reducing the impact of light pollution in the areas identified, will be included in the LHNP policy.
- **Green and Blue Infrastructure Policy:** The preservation of hedges and ditches will be covered in this policy and the need for an area of ‘Set-Off’ between any new development and a PROWs to prevent footpaths with open aspects being turned into narrow fenced alleyways.
- **Public Rights of Way Policy:** The Harcamlow Way, its rural setting and cross field views should be protected. Development proposals should enhance the many PROWs in the Parish as part of the Green Infrastructure. These aspects will be included in the LHNP policy.
- **Community:** It was suggested that we undertake a Community Group Survey to ascertain the needs of the various groups in the Village and to identify if the LHNP can assist. Nicky J will obtain an example of a Community Survey for us to consider how we can take this forward.

Planning Consultant: We would like to take advice regarding whether to pursue a Settlement Gap Policy and what the effect of the Government review of the NPPF with regards to the Green Belt, due for publication in December, will have on our proposed Green Belt policy. It was agreed that Nicky J will ask UDC whether we can take advice from Rachel Hogger, Modicum Planning on these matters.

Locality Grant: It was agreed to apply for a Technical Grant from Locality for support from AECOM with drafting our NP policies. We will also obtain a quote for producing and printing the Reg 14 consultation document which residents will be asked to complete. Other items of expenditure will await the next round of funding.

Project Plan Update: The project Plan produced in 2023 by RCCE was reviewed and we can see that most of the Evidence Gathering and Community Engagement stage of the tasks are complete. Nicky J confirmed that ‘Sustainability Scoping’ will not be required as we are not allocating housing, other than affordable housing, in our NP.

AOB: Ben MacLean has now left the Steering Group due to other commitments; Ben has been thanked for his contribution to the project.

LH Parish Council agreed to embark on producing the LHNP in early 2023. The Steering Group was formed in Nov 2023 and have now been meeting for a year. Sincere thanks were expressed to everyone involved for their support and contribution to the project over this period.

Next meeting - January 2025 date to be confirmed.