

**Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Ewelme Neighbourhood Plan Working Party 6th November 2017
at 8pm at the Watercress Centre**

Chair: Geoff Watts

Secretary: Shirley Meyer

Present: Sarah Maine, Andy Evans , Chris Jenkins, David Solomon, Andy Green , , Mary Taylor-Lane, Sue Cooper, David Cooper, Roger Moore

Apologies: Neil Blake, Gemma Benoliel, Ellie Clements

NB. For the sake of brevity, participants will be referred to by their initials in these minutes.

Further abbreviations:

- NP (SG) Neighbourhood Plan (Steering Group)
- EPC Ewelme Parish Council
- SODC South Oxfordshire District Council
- SC Steering Committee
- SOHA South Oxfordshire Housing Association

1. GW welcomed those present and condolences were offered to Chris as his wife has recently passed away. We were pleased to see him at the meeting.

2. Conflicts of interest: none were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting : the issue of an email that had been sent to **GW** regarding the previous minutes was brought up and discussed. Otherwise the minutes were adopted.

4. Treasurer's Report: none sent. There was the issue of the cheque for £50 prize money and it was agreed that **PC** would send this from the EPC.

5. A few general comments from the Chair: **GW** reported that 46 houses are being built in Nettlebed in three locations. It is significant that they decided not to have an NP.

SM reported that the Berrick and Roke NP are concentrating on potential traffic issues due to the Watlington and Benson relief roads and the large developments at Chalgrove.

6. Analysis of Questionnaire:

The committee members had been asked to look at the survey results after the last meeting and pull out what seemed to them the main and most important strands. A selection follows:

- Size of developments should be limited to no more than 10-20 houses
- 2-3 bedroomed houses were preferred
- Building must be high quality and well designed
- Housing must have no detrimental effect on the historic assets of the village
- Brownfield sites or infill were preferred as building areas
- The need for affordable housing was made

- There should be no impact on the environment or views (AONB)
- Protection of green spaces and agricultural land is important
- A pop up surgery was a popular suggestion
- Other issues were discussed and noted such as traffic in the village
- All the above contribute to formalising a Village Envelope, details to be confirmed.

GW to work on preparing a full summary of data which will soon to be made available in the form a link from the website. It then will form part of our pre-submission plan.

We are now in a position to start working on the pre-submission plan and draft policies.

It was agreed by all that there was no longer any need to continue hiring Survey Monkey and GW agreed to finalise this.

Prize draw: The draw had been made by Rev. Jonathan Meyer in the presence of three witnesses and the winner is Rowena Watts of Hampden Way. She will be notified shortly.

7. Church Land: SMe reported that David Mason from the Oxford Diocese had been to visit the Rectory and a meeting had taken place between himself and Rev. Meyer, SMe and GW.

The Diocese is very keen to work with villages and have been involved in many NP's throughout Oxfordshire and Bucks.

At present the Diocese is considering an extension of the existing burial ground into the Rectory garden and the building of a new Rectory, possibly on the old tennis court area.

There was a discussion regarding affordable housing and whether Ewelme is the right place for it. As it is an AONB the quota of 40% affordable housing is relevant on developments of 6 or more houses (not 11 as elsewhere).

GW pointed out that any such developments need to comply with both the Local Plan and any policies we adopt. Discussions could be made with a housing association and SODC.

SC brought up the idea of the **Exception Site**. For the sake of clarity I have taken this from a government website:

The [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) defines **rural exception sites** as:

Small sites used for [affordable housing](#) in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. **Rural exception sites** seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating [households](#) who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the [local authority](#)'s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

On 20 August 2015, the government published its [Rural Productivity Plan](#), which included a measure to allow [starter homes](#) to be built on **Rural Exception Sites**. They suggested that this would allow local areas to allocate more sites for [starter homes](#) specifically for people who already live in the area, or have an existing family or employment connection to the area.

- She then went on to explain the situation with Benson's affordable housing. The subject of the provision of affordable housing needs further investigation and research.

GW made the point that the definition of the “village envelope” is important in ensuring that people understand a) how we reached this decision and b) it being the area within which any development can be considered.

M T-L stated that we must use policies to define the sort of houses we want and which cannot be enlarged for speculative gain.

8. Reporting: the need to start drafting policy ideas is vital and it was agreed that a division of labour was the best way to tackle this. Each nominated committee member should originate some headings and notes to form a basic framework for the evidence and polic(ies) in their designated area. Non present members are to be contacted with a specific area/topic to research. All are advised to look at other NPs whilst doing this.

GW reminded us that we must keep returning to our original “VISION”, as set out below, to guide us through the process.

Responsibilities:

- DS.... introduction
- AE.....housing, building design and quality
- SMe...biodiversity/wildlife etc.
- SC/DC...transport issues
- SM....affordable housing
- AG....data analysis (with GW)
- Others – to be contacted
- GW...editor

AOB: It was noted that SMe is leaving the parish end January 2018 and a new Secretary will be needed!

Date of next meeting: Monday 27th November at 8pm in the W/C Centre. **SMe to book**

Homework:

- **All to read SODC Local Plan**
- **All to research and draft a policy/policies in a designated area.**