Neighbourhood Planning Group Meeting
6pm – 8:30pm 19th December 2018
Guildhall, Laxfield

Present: Ian Poole, John Worthington, Barry Cable, David Alchin, Lisa Auchterlonie, Quentin Cowen, Candida Wingate

Apologies: Sue Innes

The purpose of the meeting was to meet the consultant, Ian Poole, and establish our next steps towards achieving the Plan.

Those steps are to – take stock of what we know, identify what we don't know and establish what we need to know.

Background and general discussion
Ian explained that around February/March, MSDC will publish the number of houses each parish is required to provide. Our Plan must meed those identified housing needs if it is to carry any weight.

Ian went on to demonstrate how the number of houses might be achieved, using a model of permissions granted since 1st April 2018, interim 'windfall' housing and the remainder of housing units, as stipulated by MSDC, that we would be required to supply.

We can ask AECOM to consider site/s that would do for a Community Land Trust for 15 houses.

It's important to know how the village has grown over the years. If we can show that the village has grown incrementally we can demonstrate that it's out of character to have big developments.

Regarding non-listed yet valued buildings – it is possible to register buildings that are considered to be heritage assets but that are not listed – this means that planners need to have more respect towards them when making development plans.

We need, therefore, to conduct an 'historic character assessment' and get as much information as we can to include in, and support, the Plan.

Members of the different working parties reported back on what they had established thus far. This included -
  • David Alchin on the Movement and Accessibility group
  • John Worthington on Land Use – making the point that we need to understand the demand for housing

- Candida Wingate on green spaces and footpaths: We need to identify views and footpaths etc, that are considered assets, to build up a map of all assets in the village.

Ian informed us that we can get AECOM to do design codes for green and orange sites and that there is such a thing as 'local free space designation'; Ian has a framework that we could use and that, too, would be useful in the Plan.

We need to identify important green spaces and views

Ian explained about building within the settlement boundary and also the official definition of 'affordable housing'. This led to some discussion about the merits of a Community Land Trust in the village.

There was a general conversation about loneliness and how it might be combated. Ian asked how we would like to see the village develop over the next ten years and much was spoken about the sense of community and yet how there were things (like the playing field) that could be developed to great advantage of everyone.

Quentin asked how it might be possible to address culture change from the top down and how one might influence green initiatives – using recycling (or rather the lack thereof) as an example of the need to improve local services – Ian suggested we look at models outside the village and cited one that acted as a community meeting space as well as a household rubbish collection site.

What can we get done by March?

We don't have to have all the initiatives done by March, as previously thought.

There are two strands to the Plan - Planning Policies and Community Actions.

The Community Actions can be investigated as of now, and is an on-going piece of work.

Planning policies are informed by the work done on built environment e.g. important buildings, green views, important topography, housing numbers and types of housing.

The number of houses will come off the back of Mid Suffolk in March and also from the AECOM locality work. This is the most complex piece of the Plan, and is written last.

Ian suggested that we hold the next public meeting in April, by which time we should have analysed the questionnaires, developed some of those findings and also had the results from AECOM's work on suitable sites and resulting design codes.

ACTIONS

- Write up household survey results so that they can be published, even if we don't publish them yet. (CW prepared to do this – if Sue agrees)
- Request that the Parish Council purchases Parish Online, which is a license to access certain maps – and we need those particular maps for inclusion in the Plan. (Sue – are you happy to action this?)
- Collate all the various bits of information we have produced thus far and send on to Ian – again, Sue please could you send them to Ian
- Ian to send local green space assessment form to Sue
- Ensure that AECOM is aware of the survey findings regarding environmental concerns, housing preferences etc., so that they are aware of them before assessing the sites put forward by residents.
- Push AECOM to get work done ASAP and request design codes.
- Possibly put in site to be assessed by AECOM as a potential Community Land Trust site – Sue
- AECOM could do desktop exercise on what demographics suggest our housing needs might be
- Barry to look at how the village has developed over the past years and identify important heritage interest buildings, even if not listed.
- Similarly, we need to identify views of significance – perhaps we could ask members of the green space working group to do this
- List the clubs that do take place – Lisa, are you able to action this? If not, let me know and I'll ask someone to do it)
- Arrange next public event for **SATURDAY 27TH APRIL** – Ian will attend and provide information boards and speak to visitors about options, background information etc.
- Barry to book hall
- We can start writing up what we've found thus far
- Keep Ian in the loop

Finally, John explained that he had revised the suggested contents for the Plan, based on the Botesdale Plan – which was produced by Ian and which is more appropriate to our needs than previous Plans we've considered.

There being no further business and not many sandwiches left, the meeting closed at 8:30pm