

Minutes of Inaugural Meeting of Renhold Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Wednesday August 19th 2020 at 7 pm

- **Present:** Claudia Dietz, Nicky Gribble, Keith Herkes, Ian McIver, Jemma McLean, Peter Norris, Tony Ploszajski, Amanda Quince and Jooles Roberts
- **Apologies:** Ian Slater
- **Introduction:** Jemma McLean: BedsRCC has been in existence for 60 years. It assists with a wide variety of issues such as environment, transport, good neighbours, neighbourhood plans, housing need surveys etc.

- **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?**

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in the 2012 Localism Act to give residents some say in how land in communities is used and developed. They are not mandatory but if prepared and authorised they become a 'material consideration'. NPs may not contradict existing Local Plans or national policy as the final submission will be tested against these via independent examination. We could achieve this plan within 18 months to two years if we are focused and driven. Several neighbouring parish plans have fallen away as planning has dragged on. We are advised to work closely with BBC to ensure compliance and to access support. BedsRCC has access to limited funding.

- **Why is a Neighbourhood Plan so important?**

We would have a greater say in what Parish looks like for generations to come, land use, green spaces, employment, etc. There is also a financial benefit, as we would receive 25% of CIL with a NP whereas PC only get 15% at present.

- **Questions**

How much work has to be done before a referendum? Referenda are successful if community is engaged from the outset, so we should actively seek out a wide range of views and use a variety of media such as SurveyMonkey and paper questionnaires. Consensus is always difficult as some of the issues are contentious. We should try to establish land ownership from the outset and our community engagement must current and transparent.

What percentage do we need to get the referendum through? 50% of the votes cast.

The BBC Local Plan is already being reviewed, so which of the plans should we follow? The current plan - and then we would have to review in light of any changes.

Are the costs of the referendum covered? Yes, covered by BBC.

What should our designated area be? All land within the parish boundary.

How often should we meet? Once every 3 weeks at the outset to keep the momentum high

- **What funding is available?**

National Government funding has recently been increased to £10,000 in light of Covid 19, but we must spend any money claimed by March end each year so we should not apply for it all in one hit. Funding may cover hire of halls, publicity, hiring consultants etc., but these must be properly documented expenses. If we are prepared to identify land within the parish for development, we could get an extra £8,000.

- **What are the key first steps?**

Approval of designated NP area. Application to BBC. Constitution and terms of reference. Initial publicity and first engagement.

- **Action Plan**

Before next meeting we must:

- Apply to BBC and define designated area (AQ/IM)
- Think about the three roles-Chair, Secretary (thanks Jools for offering to take this role on) and Treasurer (all)

- Look at the key themes (demographic profile, local employment and industry, land use and planning, housing need, transport need, natural landscape designations, historic environment, local centres, community infrastructure) and decide which, if any, you have a particular interest or expertise in (all)
- Read the booklet thoroughly to determine realistic timescales (all)
- Ask Anne Grant for a regular slot in the village magazine (IM)
- Look at other examples of NP (JM cited Wing in Aylesbury Vale as an example of best practice) and make bullet points on those sections you like - so that we do not have to start from scratch (all)
- Send book electronically to all (IM)
- Find/design a logo (NG)
- Design first simple questionnaire to go out with village magazine in October e.g. What 3 things do you like best about living in Renhold? What are the 3 worst things? What 3 things would you like to change? (all)
- Evidence review-what information do we already have on Renhold? (Tony has very kindly offered to take this on)

Longer term

- Terms of Reference (perhaps ask Ravensden if we can model ours on theirs - unless anyone can find a better model)
- Constitution
- Map of land ownership - ask Julian Polhill to contact other landowners in the first instance
- Develop NP website (IM)

Our heartfelt thanks to Jemma for her incisive input, to Ian for setting us all up on Zoom and to everyone for their dynamic contributions thus far

Date of next meeting – Wednesday September 9th at 7pm

Amanda Quince & Ian McIver 20/08/20