

Minutes of the NPSG - 2nd July 2025 - Village Hall

Meeting 10

Present:

John Russell - Chair
Tony Williams
Lorraine Ward
Tony Collins
Tom Chevalier
Neil Buthee
Kate Russell

Apologies:

David Stacey

- The meeting was Quorate
- The Agenda had been circulated previously
- the Minutes of the previous meeting were taken as an accurate record

Matters Arising - Meeting 9 -18th June 2025:

- Some members are still experiencing access difficulties to the group Share Point - this seems to be primarily related to users of Apple devices
- TW has not had a response from CBC regarding best way to contact local businesses and Landowners
- Concern raised regarding long term relevance of Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans in the context of changes to National Planning Regulations and thus the relevance of the NP project

Feedback from recently held public and open events (Football Fun Day/Fete/NPSG Public Meetings)

- Agreed attendance at all was worthwhile in terms of project profile and feedback generated
- 300-350 attended our stalls across the events (NPSG Open Meetings considered best attended - believed to be because of the single focus and subject matter)
- Leaflet drop was most cited reason for attending, followed by Posters, Social Media, Village Magazine, interest generated from Fete and TRFC events
- We received a total of 73 offers of help
- All comment slip respondents who left contact details have been acknowledged and thanked
- Follow up to those who offered to help was discussed with the view that we should ascertain areas of interest and try to populate our WGs as appropriate
- Analysis of comments to be prioritised - accepting that some comments will be subjective
- Keeping the momentum will be challenging due to project timeline
- Recognised it would be critical to begin WG progress as quickly as possible
- We had a skewed attendance profile in general - noticeable that the younger age groups were underrepresented. This emphasises the benefits of continuing attempts to engage with the various club/societies and schools

Budget:

- TW reported that he had been unable to access any Grant Funding opportunities and had confirmation from the Locality Website that funding had been cut for this year with no certainty of future funding. This emphasised the need to clarify the future relevance of NPs and for the SG to approach the Parish Council for a commitment to continue funding the project through to conclusion from either the Precept or Reserves.
- PC to be approached for additional funding to cover activities in 2025

-c£9400 either spent or committed to date (total budget for 2025 is £10k) - potential that without funding our timeline may be compromised

Working Group Reports:

Green Spaces:

-CBC have published a consultation document - Local Nature Recovery Strategy - feedback deadline 7/9/25.

SEW:

-LW had been able to have a conversation at one of our recent events with a younger member of the community and believes there may be an opportunity to involve the individual in our work
-LW led a discussion on structure of the group Email account and has set up a couple of folders and populated accordingly
-Engagement with Clubs and Societies under SEW going forward
-Agreed to have a stand at Open Garden event (12/13th July)

Future Meetings:

-July 16th moved to July 17th - Neil proposes to host a BBQ (weather dependent) @18.30hrs - 11 Wentworth Gardens. This meeting will be dedicated to analysing feedback from recent open events
-July 30th - Meeting cancelled due to known absences and lack of Quorum
-August 13th - Meeting confirmed
-TVH closed for two weeks from 16th August - alternative venue required for August 27th meeting

AOB:

-Agreed to support Library Window event in September and Open Gardens event in July
-Email contact details need organising into a directory for future use and ease of reference
-We need a list of Land owned by the PC
-We need to contact Landowners to offer opportunity to engage.
-Discussion then held on extent to which we should repeat engagement and consultation attempts with Businesses, Landowners Clubs and Societies etc. SG recognised it was a key objective to include all interested parties and that we needed to show that we had made reasonable attempts to do so, supported by evidence trails. We will use CBC Business Rates data (where available), Companies House Register, local knowledge and best practice gleaned from contacts and continue attempts to contact NP Officer at CBC as well as our Ward Councillor.

Actions:

TW

-contact local businesses by August 13th meeting
-Continue attempts to contact CBC
-Contact Mary Walsh - Ward Councillor - regarding maximising and understanding CBC support available/contacts etc
-Contact (PC Clerk) for historical knowledge and insights into how we locate contact details for local businesses etc. and to update on NP Budget allocations and accruals protocols (BRCC and Greensand Trust commitment and timeline)
-Request list of Land owned by the PC from Parish Clerk

SK

-contact Leader of CBC, our MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and NALC to seek clarification on future role and relevance of NPs in the context of the NPPF and Local Plans - and in the context of recent changes in Government policy towards development
-transfer Email contacts to LW
-contact all recent respondents to seek willingness to volunteer, area of interest
-finalise contacts to acknowledge and thank them and to outline next steps

-Invite PR to August 13th Meeting

LW:

- Continue engagement with Schools
- structure Info@toddingtonplan
- confirm Library event commitment for September
- Contact follow up with Clubs and Societies (initial email sent by SK)

NB:

- Confirm details of Meeting rescheduled to 17th July.

TC:

- Confirm meeting with (Deputy Head, Parkfields School)
- TC to engage DS regarding his future commitment to SG in view of his changed circumstances at work

TChv:

- Arrange Toddington Open Gardens Stall/NP Presence (July 12th/13th Wilkinson Hall)
- Aim to have WG input for CBC Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation document by Sept 7th