



Reach for the Future

The Reach Neighbourhood Plan

Minutes of the Reach Neighbourhood Plan Project Group meeting held by Zoom on Wednesday 29 July 2020

Attendance:

Nick Acklam (Chair)	Present
Charlotte Cane	Present
Jo Riches	Present
Ian Poole	Present
Steve Boreham	Present
Charles Moseley	Present for some of the meeting (internet issues)

Apologies for absence from Jon Dunnett, Catherine Gibson

1. Minutes from the last meeting were approved
2. Nick welcomed everybody and reported that Penny Greenhill had resigned from the Group. Nick thanked Penny for her significant contribution to the Group over the last 18 months.
3. Nick informed the Group that the PC had written to ECDC expressing concern about gaps in the information on which solar farm application on Burwell Fen was to be made. This was especially true around visual impact. The absence of a process to assess the cumulative impact of solar farms in a landscape had implications for our neighbourhood not least as future solar farm applications around the Weirs Drove substation could extend into our neighbourhood. He had also attended a Planning Committee meeting on 6 July when this application was approved in a way that emphasised the absence of strategic overview. Work was ongoing to persuade ECDC to adopt a less tactical more proactive approach
4. Catherine had submitted her inventory of green spaces. The group thought that it was a good start. Members were invited to add other areas or amendments.
5. Nick reported that he had created a shortlist of ecological consultants who could undertake the biodiversity assessment and had sought provisional quotes from them.

These would allow us to confirm affordability and finalise a bid to Locality for Grant Funding (which would also include provision for Ian's fees) for the remainder of the FY

6. Ian then led a discussion, based on his briefing note below, to flesh out the structure of the plan that we had agreed at the last meeting
7. The Group agreed that its priority task was to document what we know about Reach, to clarify our aims for the Plan and, a little more tentatively perhaps, how we should achieve those aims. Nick agreed to contact Group members individually to see how they might actively contribute to this process and would then edit some pieces for sections 1 to 5. Charlotte agreed to dig out a pen portrait of the village which had been developed in a PC sponsored session a few years back when we first considered developing an NP for the village.
8. The action points were:
 - a. Draw up a tender document for an ecological survey, draw up a short list of suitable companies and ask them to bid. (Nick and Ian)
 - b. Review and offer additions and amendments to the LGS inventory (All).
 - c. Consider contributions for sections 1 to 5 (All)
 - d. Begin the draft (Ian supplemented by the group)

8. We discussed how and when we could begin sharing our proposals with the village. We acknowledged that coronavirus restrictions would make it very difficult to pursue our desired approach of an open day or drop in session at the Village Hall for the foreseeable future. We also felt that release of a piece of the draft (just because they were ready) was fraught with difficulty because of the inter-connectivity of proposals. Certainly nothing could be released until we had completed the ecological survey given the fragility and significance of some habitats in our neighbourhood which could impact on other policy proposals. Our aim was thus to release a draft Plan in the round ideally before Christmas when people would have time to read it.

9. No date was set for the next meeting. We would consider reconvening once we had a draft Plan to review and/or to brief whichever ecologists we appointed.

If you have any enquiries regarding these minutes please contact Nick Acklam, Chair of the Project Group, on 01638 743749 or email n.acklam@reachparishcouncil.org

Reach Neighbourhood Plan

Briefing Note for Project Group

16 July 2020



Document Structure and Content

We have now arrived at the stage when we can commence writing the Neighbourhood Plan. At our meeting on 17 June a draft document structure was presented, as below:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 About Reach
- 3 Context of the Plan
- 4 Vision and Objectives
- 5 Planning Strategy
- 6 Housing
- 7 Local Economy (including Tourism)
- 8 Natural Environment
- 9 Historic Environment
- 10 Sustainable / Carbon Neutral Development
- 11 Services and Facilities
- 12 Travel

Places4People will develop the planning policies for chapters 5-12 but for each chapter it is important that we identify “what we know”, what the issues are and our aspirations/objectives are for that topic area. This is an important role for the Project Group and the next meeting will need to focus on who can contribute to identifying this information on a topic-by-topic basis.

At the meeting on 29 July we will look to identify what the policies will cover and, based especially on the outcomes of the residents’ survey, Community Actions (the non-planning matters that will address concerns and identify aspirations – such as the district heating system). So please come prepared to contribute ideas for what the Plan could include so that we can kick them around, refine them and start to explore a vision of what Reach will look like in the future.

On that basis, it is important that you’re aware of the results of the residents’ survey and also have a feel as to what topic area or areas you would like to be involved in developing through the contribution of background information that will inform the content of the Plan and support the planning policies.

I look forward to seeing you all again at our meeting on 29 July.

Ian Poole

