

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE - 16th July 2015

Since the last bulletin the NDP Steering Group (SG) has held several meetings with people more experienced in neighbourhood planning to seek advice and appraisal of its work so far. The meetings were with Cllr Derris Watson, from St Cleer Parish, whose NDP has been submitted for the statutory 6-week consultation (4th June); Steve Foster, Community Link Manager for Caradon Network Area (9th June); and Nick Cahill, Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Strategy Officer (30th June).

Cllr Watson said that the Linkinhorne group was doing the right things but that the intention to submit a draft NDP by April 2016 may be rather ambitious. The SG will still work towards this date. St Cleer is a much larger parish in terms of population and has an allocation of 500 new houses to accommodate, which will probably have made their consultations more complex than Linkinhorne's have been and will be. On the other hand, Cllr Watson is well practised in planning matters and may well have a better reckoning of the time required for processes than the SG does. We will see, but it's reassuring anyway to know that we're doing the right things in the right way.

Steve Foster also reassured the SG that all was going well, and said that we were about a third of the way through. It is, however, the easiest third we have covered. He offered useful guidance on the next steps and stressed that he was available at any time for further advice.

Nick Cahill was very clear about the need for the NDP to encapsulate a vision of what the parish wants to look like for the period of the NDP. He discussed ways of assessing the parish's built and natural environment, both with assistance from professionals and by consulting people about what they valued in the landscape. Nick approved the SG's plan to use as evidence the Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative (CISI) reports on Minions and Henwood, and to take advice about further Conservation Area designations. We discussed the SG's plan to hold walks around the parish's settlements, to which everyone will be invited, to examine and assess local features. The SG is currently considering how best to organise these, and how to organise a tea party and talk, complete with a photographic exhibition of people's most treasured places in the parish.

The first to examine, consider and report are the pupils of Upton Cross Primary School, who have conducted their own assessment of what they value and want for the parish. Their findings will be presented four days after I write this at a joint Fun Day held by Linkinhorne Parish Hall and the school. There is sure to be an item about it in next month's issue of *The Link*.

All the proposed further consultation, detailed advice, meetings and publicity (not to mention exhibitions and tea parties) will cost money. The SG is about to plan the realistic timing of remainder of the project and put some equally realistic costs to it. Having done so, we will submit an application to Locality for a neighbourhood planning grant. With luck there will be funds in September. Walking is free, though, so the walks at least can be conducted even before funding comes in.

Lastly, a word about the venues for the SG's meetings. We meet in the parish's four pubs on a turn-by-turn basis. This may appear dubious but it is not. It is, rather, an attempt to be visible. The SG could meet in the halls at Upton Cross or Rilla Mill but this would cost money and they are often booked already. We could meet in each other's homes but this does not seem proper. So the pub it is.

In September the Henwood Village Association is holding a meeting at which it will both discuss the NDP's implications for the village and enjoy a skittles match. It would be useful and interesting to attach an NDP element - however modest - to other parish social activities. Anyone can do it. Any volunteers?

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE NDP:-

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Please do get in touch with any views, suggestions, questions and offers of help.