

**Minutes of the Acomb Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting, Tuesday
20th September 2016, Acomb Village Hall**

- 1. Present:** Jane Wrigley (Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group)
Charles Enderby (Chairman, Acomb Parish Council)
Matilda Bevan (Local Resident)
Lorna Farr (Acomb Parish Council/Action4Acomb)
Rachel Gagliano (Action4Acomb)
Naomi Liller (Acomb Parish Council)
Norman Robson (Local Resident)

Invited Guests: Bill Grigg (Clerk to Acomb Parish Council)
Duncan Holness (Planning Officer, Strategic Planning and Housing NCC)

- 2. Apologies:** Sybil Gill (Acomb Parish Council)

3. Minutes of the last meeting Tuesday 19th July 2016

These were accepted as a true record.

4. Matter arising from the minutes

None

5. Housing Need Survey

The draft Housing Needs Survey Report was now available. While it included a lot of useful data, it was felt that the main report did not reflect the requirements of Acomb adequately. Although the data was there, it was not identified separately in the report. The consultant (Michael Bullock of arc4) had been advised of our concerns and would include Acomb specific results in future versions of the report.

Jane had attended a joint meeting with Hexham NP Steering Group representatives to discuss the report with the consultant. It was apparent that Hexham had a significant housing need (particularly in affordable housing), but Acomb had a much lower housing need in either market or affordable housing. A very high return, 25%, of questionnaires had been achieved.

Hexham NP Steering Group would be discussing the report on 26th October, and Acomb NP Steering Group would be invited.

6. The Hermitage

Developers had apparently been looking at The Hermitage, with a view to its potential as a development site. However, it seemed unlikely that any action would be taken for a number of years. It was agreed that we should discuss an NP Policy for the location at the next Steering Group Meeting, to ensure that our views were included in any future plans. Charles would hold exploratory talks with the Land Factor after that policy had been agreed. The land currently has several regularly used footpaths/rights of way across it.

7. Appointment of consultant

Two candidates are to be interviewed on Thursday 29th Sept. The Interviewing Panel would consist of Jane, Naomi, Matilda, Sybil and Norman, who would meet at Matilda's house at 10.00 on 26th Sept to agree the interview strategy and compile questions.

In response to a question from Jane, the group expressed the wish to keep the existing evening meeting time of the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Any change following the appointment of a consultant would be by negotiation.

8. Grant Application to Locality

Jane had looked at the website for the Grant Application to support the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that Jane should start the process by an Expression of Interest. She would then require assistance from Bill and the Group, to complete the documentation. There would be a need to create a basic Project Plan for the exercise, but it could be explained that the Consultant would be preparing a more detailed plan.

9. Updates

Steering Group Vacancy

Despite posters in the village, a notice in the Courant and informal approaches, there had been no volunteers to fill the Steering Group vacancy. It was agreed that this would be postponed until the dust had settled on the Garden House Bank Planning Application.

Consultation Statement

Jane had started work on the preparation of the Consultation Document.

Website

This was being kept up to date by Rachel, with Steering Group documents and minutes. However, more photos were required – Norman and Rachel would liaise to ensure that she had all the photos from the Consultation Event in May.

10. Next Meeting

Tuesday 18th October 2016 at 6.30 in the Village Hall

11. Thanks to Duncan

Duncan was leaving Northumberland County Council for pastures new (to be replaced on this Group, temporarily, by David English). The Steering Group thanked him for his contributions to the work of the Group and wished him well in his new role.