

## **Note of the Dabplan Steering Group meeting 28/08/2013**

1) Rob Mills of Westmeston PC has agreed to meet with us concerning a joint Neighbourhood Plan application, but it has not yet been agreed by Westmeston Parish Council. There has so far been no communication from Anthony Gedge at Street Parish Meeting.

2) There is a need to find street representatives for the parish. It was suggested that neighbourhood watch or “The Beacon” distributors may be approached to help, as they will know their distribution areas and may be able to suggest people to come onto the neighbourhood plan project management team. It was thought that another five people would be needed.

3) The “Statement of Purpose” sent out by Tom Dufty was discussed. A conversation ensued regarding adding the words “Sustainable Development” to the document. This was agreed, even though it was felt that no one really knows what it is, apart from the generalisation proposed on the NPPF as:-

### **An economic role**

contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

### **A social role**

Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

### **An environmental role**

Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

It was felt that the last of these is the most contentious, and as such the inclusion of Sustainable Development, and terms such as this may deter residents from fully comprehending the nature and purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan. A code for sustainable homes can be found at :-

[http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code\\_for\\_sust\\_homes.pdf](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/code_for_sust_homes.pdf)

The purpose of a neighbourhood plan was discussed which is defined as “a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work”. Within this a discussion took place on what is deliverable by a neighbourhood plan within the constraints of the NPPF, and the SDNP and Lewes District local plans.

Further discussion took place regarding the wording of “Statement of Purpose” and Tom said that he would re-word the document in the light of the discussion and send out a revised copy for the next meeting. It was felt that we should aspire to submit the Neighbourhood Plan and its associated documents to the planning authority by September 2014.

It was asked if we have a budget. The parish is theoretically entitled to a £5000 budget for Neighbourhood Planning payable on completion of the submission of the statement of intent to the planning authority. This has now been done. It is early days and so far no money has been forthcoming. This will now be requested from LLDC.

4) The terms of reference as sent out were agreed, and discussion went on to how best to broadcast the requirements for a community engagement project plan. The following means of communication were suggested with more to follow:-

The Beacon

All communication mediums such as the Mid Sussex Times and the Sussex Express  
Ditchling News

The Hassocks and Keymer Talk About incorporating the Ditchling Dialogue and Village Voice Magazines

St Margaret's School

The Ditchling notice boards

Beacon Parish of Ditchling, Streat & Westmeston web sites: -

<http://www.beaconparishes.org/>

[www.ditchlinghistoryproject.org](http://www.ditchlinghistoryproject.org)

[www.ditchlingpc.org.uk](http://www.ditchlingpc.org.uk)

[www.ditchling-museum.com](http://www.ditchling-museum.com)

Various local pressure groups.

5) Community Engagement Strategy geared to local opinion

We do not want to just inform people of what us going on, but rather we want to know what the community is thinking. When we know this we can draft policy options, to go out to the people and interest groups, and this will form the basis of the final Neighbourhood Plan. A spread sheet was demonstrated showing what is required. This could provide the critical path to completing the Neighbourhood Plan, and a sub committee was engaged to work on this.

It is recognised that some opinions offered by the public will be outside the scope and aspiration of the neighbourhood plan, and this will need to be conveyed to the public as it occurs, as people need to be aware of these constraints from the very beginning. A sub committee was engaged to work on an engagement plan and consultation plan.

It was suggested that was could apply for help from AIRS (Action in Rural Sussex), who are geared up to assist with the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, but it was felt that at the moment we will see how we can progress without them. Please see:-

<http://www.ruralsussex.org.uk/service/Neighbourhood-Plans/>

A strategy of neighbourhood plan documents is required stating information requirements. We need to go through what we have, how we can use it, and in particular make it easy to understand. The final question was "what do we need".

Don McBeth

29/08/2013