

Sandhurst Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan – Summary of Progress

The purpose of this document is to provide a record of Sandhurst Parish Council (SPC)'s progress in the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. This is a high-level summary of activities, events and dates, full details of which are contained in the various minutes and other documents held by the secretary of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Committee (NPSC).

Christopher Robinson,
Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

January 2012 – Initial Ideas.

SPC received a copy of a joint publication from the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) entitled

“How to shape where you live – a guide to neighbourhood planning”.

February 2012 – DCLG Plans for supporting communities.

Newsletters were beginning to flow from central Government's Department for Communities and Local Government – these are to help local Town and Parish Councils understand the support available and what to expect of their Local Planning Authority.

March 2012 – Councillor Training.

SPC (Cllr Breckon) attended a Neighbourhood planning training event at Lenham, presented by Planning Aid England and Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK). This provided tools and ideas to kick-off the process.

April 2012 – TWBC Workshop.

SPC (Cllrs Breckon & Farrington) attended a joint workshop with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (the designated Local Planning Authority) to be briefed on the TWBC Local Development Framework, and on-going planning and consultation processes.

May 2012 – SPC Annual Parish Meeting.

SPC invited a guest speaker from ACRK to talk about community led planning. After general questions we asked for feedback and received support (by show of hands) for our intention to set up a committee to develop a neighbourhood plan.

June 2012 – SPC resolve to set up NSPC.

SPC resolved to set up a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee, Cllr Breckon agreed to lead the initial review and develop an initial project plan. Further ideas were gained from the 21st June Councillor training in Lenham.

July 2012 – SPC Open Meeting.

SPC held an initial consultation meeting on the 25th July in the Old School Hall. The meeting was well attended, with about 40 people present including six Parish Councillors, the Parish Clerk and our guest speaker Carl Adams from “Action with Communities in Rural Kent”.

Following a presentation by Cllr. Breckon on neighbourhood plans and the processes involved, those present were invited to share their views on a variety of topics, grouped into four main areas, these being social, economic, the environment and new ideas. All the points raised were written onto “post-it” notes and stuck on to one of the charts around the hall. Contact sheets were distributed requesting volunteers to join the steering committee.

August 2012 – First Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee meeting.

The following eight members of the NPSC met for the first time to confirm the appointment of Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and to draft a terms of reference and outline plan.

Chris Breckon	Sandhurst Parish Council (Chair)
John Cunningham	TWBC Borough Councillor (Treasurer)
Howard Phillips	Sandhurst Parish Council
David Rogers	Sandhurst Parish Council & School Governor
John Gillingham	Parishioner
Kathy Mynard	Parishioner (Vice-chair)
Dick Stevenson	Parishioner
Shirley Wiggs	Parishioner (Secretary)

October 2012 – 2nd Meeting NPSC.

Steering Committee are continuing to analyse feedback from the Open meeting, agreeing feedback items to communicate to SPC, other interested parties via an email list, article for the Village Magazine and minutes on the SPC website.

November 2012 – Meeting with our MP.

SPC Councillors attended meeting at Goudhurst to hear progress on the Localism Act and further support to local councils. On the 30th we also attended a joint TWBC / CPRE hosted meeting in Tunbridge Wells on “Positive Planning for the Future In Kent” where we were addressed by the Chair of CPRE and Tunbridge Wells MP Greig Clark, former junior minister responsible for Neighbourhood Planning (Localism).

December 2013 – 3rd Meeting NPSC.

Continuing research and review of feedback and generating a draft questionnaire for the Parish. We will need to ask questions to assess views, especially where opposing opinions have been expressed at the Open meeting. As momentum is building, we agree to meet monthly from here on.

January 2013 – Draft Questionnaire.

4th Meeting of the NPSC – New member, Lin Douglas joined committee. Continuing to review various boundaries, e.g. the Limits to Build Development, Conservation area etc., as well as health and

housing. Completed initial draft of the Questionnaire, presented to the full Parish Council for comments and approval.

February 2013 – SPC approved draft questionnaire.

5th meeting of NPSC – Parish Council approved draft questionnaire. Plan to complete for announcing at the Annual Parish Meeting in May (with background presentation) and issue soon afterwards. Considering options for clustering, co-operation with neighbouring councils.

March 2013 – KALC Planning Conference.

6th meeting of NPSC – New councillor Matthew Cope joined committee. He and NPSC Chair attended conference which included latest Neighbourhood planning updates – review of 1st successful NP referendum at Eden (group of rural parishes in north of England). Agree to prepare application to TWBC to designate Sandhurst Parish as a local neighbourhood plan area.

Announcement of funding available from DCLG – up to £7000 aid to local councils for preparing plans. This needs us to produce a more detailed project plan and budget.

April 2013 – Preparing Area Designation Application

The NPSC Chairman was invited to address the open meeting of Hawkhurst Parish Council who are themselves embarking on an NDP. We have agreed to co-operate where possible although there is insufficient synergy to justify a joint approach.

The NPSC Chairman and new member Matthew Cope attended a consultation meeting with TWBC regarding their Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) which is part of TWBC's new Local Development Framework.

7th meeting of NPSC – reviewed the latest draft of survey questionnaire and agreed that we will need expert advice, and are working on a draft budget and updated project plan.

June 2013 – Neighbourhood Area Designation Application drafted

A draft for this was agreed and sent to the Parish Council for submission to TWBC. However, the chairman of the Steering Committee had to step down as a result of family commitments and the application process was not completed.

Following the chairman's resignation, no further meetings were held during 2013.

March 2014 – Revival of Activity

Recently co-opted parish councillor Christopher Robinson was appointed to chair the NPSC and meetings resumed on 27th March. The Neighbourhood Area Designation Application was revived for submission to the Parish Council.

Work was instigated on estimating costs to allow application for funding to be made in due course.