

WESTON AND BASFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
STEERING GROUP
MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD 29th FEBRUARY 2016

PRESENT Councillor J Cornell (Chairman)
Councillors J Chambers, J Densem, T Gill
Mr D Fanstone

IN ATTENDANCE Dr. R Giles and Mr A Thomson

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT APPRAISAL

The Steering Group was pleased to welcome Dr Rachel Giles of Cheshire Wildlife Trust who was to prepare the Landscape Assessment Appraisal.

The preparation of her appraisal would take 6 – 8 weeks and would provide evidence based material to support the requirement for Green Gaps.

Mr A Thomson explained the need for the Green Gaps to be enlarged and that whilst Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council had polices on Green Gap these were well out of date.

The responses to the initial questionnaire had provided data which would be useful and this information would be made available to Dr. Giles.

Cheshire Wildlife Trust worked closely with Cheshire East Council's Nature Conservation Officer and was also involved with the Ecology Technical Group advising on the planning of HS2.

The Trust is able to designate sites as being of Special Biodiversity Interest and this designation must be taken into account in determining planning applications.

Mapping would be carried out using data from Natural England and other sources to reference Landscape Character.

Areas would be categorised on the map to indicate their importance as habitats and would appear as High Priority area (Red), Potential High Priority (Orange) or other areas.

Site visits and aerial photography would be used to provide data for evaluating the sites.

This process would provide evidence to identify areas for Green Gaps and would also indicate wildlife corridors.

Ecological reports submitted with planning applications would be used where appropriate.

The National Planning Policy Framework contained policies on wildlife and ecology and provided, in certain circumstances, for mitigation where development was to be carried out on woodlands or grasslands.

Interim reports would be submitted and lists of items of interest in preparing the appraisal would be made available to encourage residents to identify habitats of species.

The group felt that historical information prepared by Charles Fairey would be a useful resource.

Councillor T Gill undertook to provide the Ecology reports submitted with the planning application for the proposed Haddon development.

The following items were identified as being helpful to Dr Giles in her appraisal:-

1. Copy of the Questionnaire analysis
2. A list of recent major planning applications reference numbers
3. Contact at the local Bat Group and any other local wildlife 'experts'
4. Any local knowledge on areas of interest.
5. A copy of Charles Fairey's work
6. Any information on land that has not been cultivated for over 20 years

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Steering Group considered the current financial situation and the need to proceed with arrangements to avoid the loss of Locality grant monies before 31st March.

Andrew Thomson would advise Cheshire Community Action to issue forward payment invoices to help avert any shortfall.

Similarly Dr Giles work would be invoiced in advance and Johnsons Printer should be approached to submit an invoice for printing to be carried out in connection with the next questionnaire and public consultation exercise.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was to be held on Wednesday 6th April 2016 at 2pm.