

SHERSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

Notes of meeting held Tuesday 14th May at 7.30pm Sherston Village Hall

PRESENT:

Mr J Matthews (JM) - Chairman

Mrs Sarah Wood (SW) - Admin Support

Representatives of the following Groups/Organisations

Mr Freeth (NF)	Sherston Churches
Mr G Morris (GM)	Sherston Parish Council
Mr M Rea (MR)	Sherston Village Hall
Mr A Price (AP)	Sherston Scouts and Youth
Mr M Johnson (MJ)	Sherston Old School Committee
Mr R Johnson (RJ)	Sherston Businesses
Mrs J Curson (JC)	Green Square
Mr K Smith (KS)	Sherston Sporting Associations
Mr M Llewellyn Palmer (MLP)	Sherston Pre-School
Mr J Knight (JK)	Sherston Allotments
Dr P Petit (PP)	Tolsey Surgery

14 members of the public were at the meeting.

Definitions: "NHP" means Neighbourhood Plan

Item

75. Apologies for absence: Mr J Thomson and Mr Steve Harvey.

76. Approval of notes from last meeting

The notes were approved subject to JK being added to the attendance list.

77. Traffic and Parking presentation by Mr Ben Hamilton-Baillie (BHB)

Mr Ben Hamilton-Baillie (BHB) an international expert in traffic and parking had spent an afternoon in Sherston looking at its traffic issues. BHB went through the history of the relationship between pedestrians and traffic and how it is possible that traffic and pedestrians can share spaces successfully. Areas such as High Street Kensington in London were stated as public spaces where pedestrians and traffic have been combined with a positive outcome.

BHB informed the public about a town in Cheshire called Poynton on a main road from Manchester to Stoke that averages 26,000 vehicles a day. The town and its High Street were economically suffering with few stopping / shopping in town. BHBs Company helped remodel the town by removing the traffic lights, lines, markings and minimising signs. Courtesy crossings were introduced, the width of the Highway changed by surface dressing, defining parking spaces and money spent on drawing drivers/people in. The scheme proved a success and the High Street is now thriving once again.

BHB talked of other examples where removing road markings made drivers aware of their surroundings and was shown to reduce speed. BHB believes it important to treat drivers intelligently: if drivers have a speed limit they will follow the speed limit, but in super market car parks there are no speed limits but people drive slowly.

BHB said Sherston was fortunate to have few road markings and signage. Measures to introduce lines and signs needed to carefully consider / compliment surroundings. BHB stated some areas in the village lacked creativity – i.e. the highway past the Jubilee Triangle, the Rattlebone and the school crossings. BHB stated the school did not have a strong relationship with the street and suggested ways of improving this such as surface dressings, narrowing visual widths and defining spaces.

Questions followed and the presentation ended with BHB advising the Parish Council and village to look at the planned traffic scheme for the High Street; reiterating that signs do not make life safer. JM explained that as a small community the Parish Council went to its local authority for advice when it was made aware of the difficulties that some residents of the village were experiencing when crossing and walking in the centre of the village. Although the scheme is now underway JM believes that some of BHB's ideas could be incorporated. BHB would be happy to look at the scheme and give advice. JM thanked BHB for his fascinating presentation and ideas.

78. CABE Support

BHB's presentation was an example of the support received from CABE as was the event on 23rd March. Without such support the whole process would be much more difficult for the steering group. CABE would like to continue to help and support however due to its funding being cut it is looking increasingly unlikely.

79. Reports from other Steering Group Members.

Church – NF reported that the position remains the same and is awaiting a meeting with Wiltshire Council to discuss plans.

Allotments –JK reported there was a meeting with 16 allotment representatives. JK made contact with 30 out of 36 of the current plot holders. 29 plot holders strongly agree that the site should remain where it is. JM accepts the allotment site is a contentious issue though the steering group mustn't disregard any land in the village at this stage of the NHP process.

Busy Hands – MLP reported that the committee still wish for the pre-school to be on the school site. MLP mentioned that a parent of children who attended the pre-school commented how dangerous it is to cross from Court Street to the village hall especially when walking with young children. JM explained it was the intent of the Parish Council for Wiltshire Council to produce a scheme to alleviate problems. It could give raised pavements from the High Street tree to the post office with a "no parking" area outside the post office gates. A way forward was to perhaps mix BHB's ideas to the planned scheme.

80. SA/SEA Consultation

MJ has spent an enormous amount of time on this document; there will be more for others to do later in the process. The next stage of the NHP the group will employ the services of a post graduate who will assist in the mechanics of the plan.

81. Discuss arrangements for a junior event

At the April meeting the success of the seniors event was reported, unfortunately the junior's event was not so successful. Since then SH has engaged with Sherston Primary School. SH got the school council involved which has representatives from each class at the school and asked the members to go back to their classes and ask for their ideas about the future of Sherston village. The pupils came up with some great ideas which are in the report that has been circulated.

JM would like to contact Malmesbury School to ask if children from Sherston could be asked for ideas. AP informed the group that although the scouts have had a discussion on the future of the village, it needs to be revisited and documented.

82. Report on the village presentation on the 23rd of March

The draft report of the event has been completed although waiting for photographs to be included. MJ suggested that the report should be published in the Cliffhanger and put on the website even if photos are not ready.

83. Progress on Site Identification.

JM showed a map of potential development sites in the village. Workshop results conveyed a wish to see more affordable housing, additional and improved accommodation for the elderly, improved sporting facilities, a new surgery, greater use of public transport and safeguarding specific areas within the parish. The public who attended the meeting suggested an acceptable figure of 60-80 new homes over the next 20 years, including one-off new builds. There are options where developments can go that safeguard certain areas and whilst not all sites are suitable they must be considered and then discounted if not deliverable. Landowners may consider discussions regarding possible development too.

A subcommittee of MJ, JM, KS & GM was formed to look at each site, examining suitability for development. Sites will be realised as unsuitable and others will involve further examination. The group will report back at the next meeting in June.

84. Future Actions

Discussed above.

85. Questions

JK asked at what stage was the group in the NHP process and the timeline. Once the options are presented to the group and sites agreed, policies and proposals will need to be included. Once this is achieved the draft idea could be published and a public meeting held to gauge views. Once the final draft is agreed this can be examined by public examiner. If the examiner is happy with the plan it goes to a public referendum and 51% will need to accept the plan for it to be approved.

MJ would like to somehow incorporate BHBs ideas into the plan; allowing streets and development to work alongside each other. Any new development needs to be attached to the existing village seamlessly.

MR would like to see a separate website dedicated to the NHP. This would allow the public to comment on the plan online.

86. To confirm date for next meeting

The next meeting will be on the 17th June.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm. Notes were taken by Sarah Wood, Admin Support to the Steering Group.