

Minutes of Peterstow Parish Council – Neighbourhood Development Plan
Meeting on Tuesday 23rd February 2016, 7.00pm in St Peter’s Hall

In attendance:

- Rob Hunter (Councillor, Peterstow Parish Council)
- Roger Townend (Vice Chairman, Peterstow parish Council)
- Pat Newton (Peterstow Parish Council Clerk)
- Ernie Robbins (Chairman of Bridstow Steering Group)
- David Smith
- Barbara Grattan
- Peter Grattan
- Roy Coldrick
- Rachel Underwood
- Paul Plowman
- Richard Gardiner
- Sarah Beggs

Apologies:

- Brian Roe, Martin Lown, Steve George and Dennis Sonn

1. Welcome / Opening

This meeting followed on from the wider meeting of members of the Parish on 12th January 2016, where the idea of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (“NDP”) was broadly supported. The purpose of this meeting was to form a steering group to take the plan forward, to appoint any necessary roles on the steering group and to listen to the experiences of Bridstow Parish Council so as to determine the next steps.

2. Review of the Process

As a result of Herefordshire Council’s Local Plan Core Strategy, Peterstow will have to accommodate a minimum of 27 houses (some of which have already been allocated) by 2031. If we produce our own NDP, this will, when complete, become a statutory document that planning officers must refer to when making planning decisions for Peterstow. It will enable the Parish to specify where we want houses to be built, what type of houses we would prefer and any improvement to facilities and infrastructure we would like to see in the Parish. If we do not produce our own NDP, decisions may be imposed on us by Herefordshire Council.

Whilst the steering group would be responsible for driving forward the project, the whole Parish must be consulted and given the opportunity to have their say and the final version of the NDP would be put to the Parish for a vote (conducted in a similar way to a local election). 50% of those voting must approve the NDP for it to be accepted (although it was not thought that there had to be a certain percentage turnout for the vote to be valid).

The Parish boundary has now been approved and cannot be altered.

It is thought that the process of producing a NDP could take around 2 years and during this time, the usual planning process would continue. This would mean that the Parish Council would continue to have the right to comment on any planning applications in the Parish, but that this would not be binding on the planning officer and that local people would be able to submit any objections in the usual way. Ultimately, however, the planning officer would make his decisions on the basis of the same criteria as currently exists.

There was a concern that a certain way through the process, after a lot of hard work had been carried out by the steering group, a planning application might be accepted by the planning department which provided all the housing required in Peterstow, rendering the work carried out on the NDP useless. However, it was for this reason that it was agreed that we needed to move along with the process as quickly as possible so as to make sure that the Parish has a greater say on what houses are built. It was thought that once the NDP had reached a certain stage, the planning department might take account of it, even if it hadn't yet been formally approved.

3. Experiences from Bridstow Parish Council

Bridstow had an initial meeting amongst the members of their Parish and then formed a steering group. Their next step, with advice from Data Orchard (consultants employed by them), was to split into groups covering areas such as the environment, housing, footpaths etc. and to hold a half-day session where members of the Parish dropped in to give details of issues they wanted to be considered within each of those areas. These issues then formed the basis of a questionnaire which was given to every member of the Parish over the age of 16, the answers to which, when returned, will help them formulate what should be included in their draft NDP. They will then need to conduct surveys etc. as to the feasibility of the draft proposals and to consult with landowners.

There are guidance notes available on Herefordshire Council's website and draft plans from other Parishes that can be used to help develop our own NDP.

Bridstow have applied for and obtained part of the £8,000 grant available to each Parish from Herefordshire Council for this process. Estimates have to be obtained and submitted to the Council to obtain the grant and the money needs to be spent within 6 months, so it is wise to apply for the money in smaller tranches, as needed. The application can be submitted online.

Ernie Robbins advised that it was important throughout the process to make sure that the members of the Parish are consulted and that we have evidence of this. For example, we might want to record the number of people who attend meetings, their age groups and their feedback etc. Good communication is vital. Information can be disseminated via the Peterstow Times, the Peterstow Village website, the noticeboards at the shop and church and via the church flyer. For important meetings and information, flyers delivered direct to houses would be effective.

4. Creation of a Steering Group

The following roles were appointed:

- Chair – Ron Hunter
- Parish Council Co-Ordinator – Roger Townend
- Secretary – Sarah Beggs
- Communications – Richard Gardiner

All other attendees expressed a willingness to help out as volunteers. Roger will speak to Brian Roe to see if he would be prepared to take on the role of treasurer.

5. Next Steps

- The steering group will meet once a month on the 1st Monday of every month at 7.30pm in St Peter's Hall. The next meeting to take place on 7th March. Meetings expected to last for an hour.
- Rob will pass to Sarah the email addresses and telephone numbers of all members of the steering group.
- Rob is to attend a meeting with Herefordshire Council on 3rd March to discuss funding for this financial year and to determine whether an application for funding needs to be made before April. Roger will see whether Brian Roe can attend (assuming he wishes to take up the role of treasurer), otherwise Roger himself will attend with Rob.
- Sarah will draw up minutes of this meeting for distribution.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm.