

**Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP)
for
Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath**

Minutes of Meeting Held at Arden Academy on 20.08.2015

Present: Jane Aykroyd (JA, Chair); Karen Allen (KA); Tony Aykroyd (TA); Geoffrey Evans (GE); David Gentle (DG); Ian Fisher (IF); Dave Fraley (DF); Richard Grove (RG); Lis Hedley (LH); Deborah Hope (DH); Bryan Hunt (BH); Louisa Jakeman (LJ); Graham Jones (GJ); Carol Kay (CK); Ian Kay (IK); Bill Lally (BL); Martin Lambert (ML); Andrew Marston (AM); Stuart Millard (SM); Martin Murphy (MM); Richard Newton (RN); Billy Penny (BP); David Pinwell (DP); Cameron Scriven (CS); David Wallis (DW).

Apologies: Tony Abbott; Jean Badman; Gill Griggs; Neil Inman; Steve Lyle; Councillor Rebeiro.

1. Agenda Item 1 - Chair's Update:

This meeting follows the first of our 'New Member' sessions. A very warm welcome to five new attendees, four of whom from Bentley Heath, including a business representative. Thanks to all those involved in the recent communications campaign, which has succeeded in raising awareness in the Bentley Heath community.

JA also welcomed our two speakers - Martin Lambert, from the Dorridge and District Residents Association (DDRA); and Andrew Marston, from Knowle Society - who will be sharing their experience of community engagement and thoughts on collaboration.

In the seven weeks since our last meeting we have continued to make very good progress, albeit maintaining pace over the holiday period has at times been challenging. Main points of note are:

- a) We have submitted our Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum applications to Solihull Council. The six week consultation period started on 13 July (when details were posted on the Council's website) and runs through to 27 August. Thanks to BH and DW in particular for leading this.

To increase awareness of the application, we have posted copies of the Council's consultation notice in a wide range of locations across the community, with thanks to Martin Lambert and Dave Pinwell:

In Knowle: Eric Lyons (butcher); Costa; One Stop; Greedy Guts (sandwich shop); Shoe Box of Knowle; Glasshouse Tower Jewellery; Tesco; Piccadilly Cards (for Precinct Notice Board); Knowle Village Hall; Knowle Library; Knowle Parish Church.

In Dorridge and Bentley Heath: Dorridge Village Hall; Dorridge station waiting room; Sainsburys Dorridge; Enzo (hairdressers); Bentley Heath notice board.

At the end of August, Solihull Council will assess feedback received, discuss any points arising with us (if necessary), and then prepare the application for Cabinet Office review. All being well, we should expect to hear the final outcome in early October.

- b) The Articles of Association, Memorandum and Standing Orders are now finalised. Thanks to DP for all his hard work over many months fine tuning these documents to our needs, and to LJ for final proof reading.

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

The Directors (JA; LH; DW; BH; IK) met on 13th August to complete the Application to Register a Company (IN01). Thanks to MM for offering Arden Academy as our Registered Office. The only thing left to do before sending the forms to Companies House is to complete the list of member signatures. JA requested that all members who had not yet signed to please do so before leaving the meeting.

- c) Membership is growing nicely - more from IK later. We now have an excellent paper application form that has been well received, as well as an easy-to-use on-line (web) form. These will really help us to grow membership quickly once our Forum status is officially confirmed. Thanks to IK and TA for all the work they have put into creating these forms, and also to IK for creating and managing the membership database.
- d) We continue to develop communications and publicity material and now have a number of 'one pagers' explaining in simple terms: 1) 'What's a Neighbourhood Plan?' 2) 'What's a Neighbourhood Forum?' and 3) 'What does Membership Mean?'. Together, these form a 'New Member Welcome Pack', as used for the first time at today's New Member session. Each leaflet can also be used separately as handouts or 'take-aways' at future public events (eg. Dorridge Day).
- e) Good news on the web site, which is now officially live after a major push to get pages populated with quality content, links to relevant resources, and all key documents uploaded. TA has been leading this work over the holiday period – many thanks to him for long hours slaving over a hot computer!
- f) The Focus Groups have been relatively quiet over the holiday period, although all have met at least once. We have a number of requests and queries with Emma Tinsley-Evans (SMBC) pending her return from holiday in early September. In particular, we are keen to involve our Council contacts for housing and roads and infrastructure to make sure that we clearly understand and properly define the remit of each Focus Group.
- g) In summary, then, we now have all the building blocks in place to be able to move forward with confidence into the next phase of development. Now our focus must be on achieving as wide a community engagement as possible to define the vision, objectives, opportunities and issues that will form the heart of our Neighbourhood Plan. This means:
 - planning events and activities for the public 'launch' of the Forum and Plan (a key focus for today's meeting, with Dorridge Day on the horizon). This requires us to get the right timing and balance between informing and guiding attendees, so they have the contextual information they need, and listening and responding to feedback
 - identifying and booking venues for meetings between now and Christmas
 - considering use of both traditional and on-line tools to promote and maximise community inter-action, eg. via social media, 'Survey Monkey' etc
 - being able to clearly articulate 'what good looks like' - in terms of the final plan and also for each of the sections relating to Focus Group topic areas
 - strengthening our understanding of, and links into, the business community - ideally led by a business member who is willing to lead this aspect of Forum activities.

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

2. Agenda Item 2 – Forum and Resident Association Collaboration

ML and AM shared their experiences of community engagement over the decades that the Knowle Society and DDRA have been operating. Points of note arising are:

- Typically 60-80 people attend KS meetings - mainly members, although meetings are open to the public.
- People engage where they perceive a real need or 'cause' - otherwise, apathy generally rules. The Waitrose proposal is a case in point, where over 500 people turned out in 6 hours on a Saturday. The next best supported community event is switching on the Christmas lights.
- Communications are mainly through newsletters and the website. Over 80 people act as distributors covering Knowle, Dorridge and further afield (a good number of subscribers live outside of Knowle).
- The average age of members is high. Many do not have, or do not use, computers, making it impossible to rely on e-mail as the main form of communication (some may not want to give out their e-mail addresses). This means that perhaps as few as 10%-20% can be contacted electronically.
- Consequently, running surveys has also had its challenges and can take a long time - in some cases time runs out before the survey can be completed.
- Facebook is viewed as a 'core' tool - eg. "liking" a facebook page is a good way of gaining wider publicity. However, younger members of the Forum suggested that young people are moving away from Facebook towards Twitter, with Facebook becoming more the domain for parents and 'middle aged' people (particularly women).

Key Points Arising:

- What is the 'need' or 'cause' that will motivate people to join and get involved in the Forum? – we need to be able to clearly articulate this.
- Forum publicity could include eg. slipping a leaflet inside the KS and DDRA newsletters to take advantage of their existing distribution network.
- **DECISION:** a Forum representative form will attend the KS and DDRA meetings.
- **ACTION: ML** to provide contact details for Ian Spencer (DDRA planning lead).
- **ACTION: SL** to contact Ian Spencer re. attending the Housing Forum Group.

3. Agenda Item 3 – Dorridge Day, Open Days, Workshops

Dorridge Day is on 13 Sept, 12 noon to 4pm in Dorridge Park. It is organised by the Knowle and Dorridge Round Table. The Mayor and Mayoress are expected to be in attendance, and potentially also Caroline Spelman MP.

The DDRA will have a stand in the Community Area and have offered us shared use of their space and display stands. There was some discussion as to whether it may be better to have our own stand, ie. to emphasise the fact that we are a separate body. However, it was agreed that, at this stage and so close to the event, we will proceed with the DDRA's kind offer of support. This is something that we should review going forward.

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

Key points arising:

- From experience of the early Neighbourhood Plan drop in sessions, ML emphasised that *having a map showing the area is essential* – people want to be able to see this.
- BH, IF, DW confirmed they will help man the stand. **KA** to confirm. (Richard Perry, Sainsbury's has previously offered to help).
- MM suggested creating a postcard-sized handout to either slot into the Dorridge Day programmes or give to people as they enter the event. **ACTION:** JL / MM to discuss.
- **ACTION:** MM also suggested a balloon with the KDBH logo on and will investigate.
- We should also consider having a prize for the best idea on the day?

Agenda Item 4 – Focus Group Updates

Due to time constraints, key points only were covered by the teams during the Forum meeting, with short supplementary updates to be included in the minutes (below).

Housing:

From Forum discussions, housing team to:

- Get a copy of the Middle Fields' development proposals.
- Understand St Philip's Church proposed development, which has recently passed planning permission.

The Housing Focus Group last met on 8th July - summary below.

Following the group's recent meeting with Emma and Mark at SMBC, we discussed which areas of interest were worth pursuing further and where we may be able to exert some influence. There was also general discussion around possible ideas for policies - such as housing densities, defining character areas, size and type of housing in different areas and rural exception sites.

The Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan was discussed as an example of a recently completed NP investigation. It was agreed that group members would take time to study this after the meeting and look for other similar examples. The aim is to find best practice, with a view to contacting the NFs or Parishes concerned to see what support and guidance they may be willing and able to offer.

It was also agreed to contact Emma and Mark again about the following (done, responses awaited):

1. Seek clarification concerning the viability of the Forum becoming a Statutory Consultee for planning applications, and what needs to be done.
2. Check when the Knowle Village Green enquiry is taking place.
3. Enquire if the figures included in the council's "Meeting Housing Needs SPD" document could be aggregated down to more closely focus on KD & BH. Clarify if the figures quoted relate to population and/or dwellings.
4. Check whether Emma has been asked which policies in the Local Plan are defined as strategic by SMBC. If not, make the request.

The next meeting of the Housing Group is on 26th August.

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

Learning and Community Facilities:

Forum update: DG has produced a paper outlining the vision and objectives for the Group. MM suggested that 'cultural' aspects should be included as part of the Plan.

Minutes of Group Meeting Thursday 13th August

- MM has met with Alan Robeiro and Ken Messon (elected members) both keen to join in the Forum and will attend meetings when they are able.
- MM still awaiting a reply from Caroline Spellman
- MM had met local Primary Heads. All are keen to become part of the project and will all support communication across the community.

Discussion focused on:

- (a) What are the vision and objectives for the focus group? David Gentle has kindly produced a draft document.
- (b) Dorridge Day
- (c) How will we survey and collect information from the community. How can we access information from SMBC about the local community?

ACTION

1. We need to meet Emma at SMBC – (believed she would be at the meeting on 20th August). Since she was not, MM to contact so we can meet before our next meeting.
2. David G to produce a draft document re vision and objectives.
3. MM to meet ARUP on 19th August 10.00am
 - Arup can support Focus Group on key (core) documents needed
 - Happy to advise Forum on the key issues they have picked up from other Neighbourhood Forum groups
 - Suggested Focus Group should add 'cultural issues' to its brief
 - Suggested our next key task is NOT local consultation but it is Community Engagement. We can only consult when we have a plan.
 - Suggested we have a community engagement 'week' with a series of meetings but certainly have one/two big ones where we invite representatives from all community groups including – Council, elected members, Highways, Planning, Police, Church groups etc.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 11.00AM - ARDEN

Roads and Infrastructure:

The 'Solihull Connected' Transport Consultation has been launched going through to 20/9. Members are encouraged to go to the website and fill out a questionnaire – the Focus Group will be completing one together.

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

The Group has identified some further areas of concern raised by members of the public. This includes: the (now) dangerous junction in front of Dorridge Station; the inconvenience caused to people dropping off passengers at the station by the huge and unnecessary enlargement of the paved areas; and unnecessary and vicious “sleeping policemen”.

However since these seemed like “niggles”, and possibly inappropriate to our duties, we feel it necessary to meet with a representative of SMBC to establish our frame of reference before going any further. This has been made more urgent as we have not been allocated a place at the Solihull Stakeholders Meeting (Transport). I have contacted Emma again, to see what we can arrange.

4. **Agenda Item 5 - Membership Update**

Member numbers now stand at 37.

5. **Agenda Item 6 – Update on Web Development**

JL encouraged all members to go and have a play on the website. All feedback really very welcome, particularly given the amount of recent development.

Next steps are to look at adding social media – eg. a Facebook Group. Also to consider how best to use the web capability linking with other tools, such as ‘Survey Monkey’ which other Neighbourhood Forums have used successfully.

6. **Agenda Item 8 – Minutes and Actions From Last Meeting**

One correction to the minutes. Apologies to Scanlans for referring to them as solicitors – they are, in fact, surveyors.

Update on outstanding actions below (all other actions included in the minutes of the last meeting have been completed).

BH to check with ETE exactly what are the ‘strategic policies’ of SMBC.

UPDATE: Emma’s response copied below:

“As a Council we haven’t actually gone through and formally identified which policies of the Local Plan are defined as strategic for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning. However, national policy sets out the strategic matters about which local planning authorities are expected to include policies in their Local Plans. These are:

- *the homes and jobs needed in the area;*
- *the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
- *the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
- *the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and*
- *climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.*

Therefore, at this stage I would suggest that the following policies of the Solihull Local Plan are strategic:

Policy P1 – Support Economic Success

Policy P2 – Maintain Strong, Competitive Town Centres

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

- Policy P3 – Provision of Land for General Business Premises*
- Policy P4 – Meeting Housing Needs*
- Policy P5 – Provision of Land for Housing (including site allocations)*
- Policy P6 – Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers*
- Policy P7 – Accessibility and Ease of Access*
- Policy P8 – Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion*
- Policy P9 – Climate Change*
- Policy P10 – Natural Environment*
- Policy P11 – Water management*
- Policy P12 – Resource Management*
- Policy P13 – Minerals*
- Policy P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness*
- Policy P17 – Countryside and Green Belt*
- Policy P20 – Provision for Open Space, Children’s Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure*

However, I intend to have a meeting with colleagues to discuss this matter further, so the list may be subject to change.”

- **JA** to create a short powerpoint communications ‘video’ covering the NF / NP that any Member can then use. **CARRIED FORWARD**
- **BH** to liaise with Emma Tinsley-Evans (ETE) to identify Focus Group contacts. **CARRY FORWARD**: Contact for Infrastructure still to be confirmed.

7. **Agenda Item 8 - AOB**

JA advised the meeting that, with work on drafting Articles of Association now complete, it is proposed to apply to Companies House to form a Company under the Companies Act 2006 in accordance with decisions at previous meetings of the Forum, with all members present, and those who have signed and sent their apologies, having agreed to be subscribers to the Memorandum.

DP proposed a **resolution** that:

- The application to Companies House to form the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan Limited Company be completed and signed by the subscribers.
- The draft Articles of Association be adopted for the Company.
- Jane Aykroyd, Elisabeth Hedley, David Wallis, Bryan Hunt and Ian Kay be designated as the initial Directors of the Company upon incorporation.

DECISION: The resolution was put to the meeting and agreed unanimously by those members present.

8. **Agenda Item 9 – Agree Date and Focus for Next Meeting**

The next Forum meeting will be on **Wednesday, 9 September, Arden Academy, starting at 7pm**. The proposed agenda will include:

Proposed Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath

- Run through / test Dorridge Day preparations and readiness.
- The first of a series of 'The Voice' sessions when we focus on different perspectives within our community. CS and BP will put the youth perspective.
- First Treasurer's Update (bank account; grant application; budget).
- Launch events in October/November.

We are waiting to hear if either the Solihull Council housing or transport and infrastructure liaison officer can attend.

Dates of Forum meetings through to the end of 2015 are:

- 8th October (when we should know if our applications have been approved by SMBC)
- 4th November
- 3rd December