

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP
Minutes of meeting held on 26th July, 2023 at 7.45pm

1. **Present**, Cllr. Margaret Arger, (MA) Chairman, Robin Oakley, Secretary (RO), Joan Buller (JB), Cllr. Joris Eerdeken (JE), Mr. Colin Love, Mr. Tom Burnham.
2. **Apologies:** Cllr. Adele Sharp (Holiday), Cllr. John Perry (MBC) Cllr. Paddy Riordan (Holiday)
3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 24th May, 2023:** Agreed.
4. **Election of Chairman.** Cllr. M. Arger, proposed by Mrs. Joan Buller, Seconded by Mr. Tom Burnham. There being no other nominations, and by a unanimous show of hands, Cllr. Arger was elected as Chairman.
5. **Matters Arising. Group membership.** It was agreed that Cllrs. Sharp and Riordan would both attend as residents in future and that Louise Brice and Colin Bowden would no longer be members
6. **Housing Needs Survey.** Tessa O.Sullivan has informed the Clerk that she is not going to be able to prepare the Housing Needs Survey so he has contacted three other organisations and now has two options available. It was noted that it is important that the new survey should use the same layout as before so that the results are comparable. The Residents' Survey, as already drafted by Colin Love is to be sent out separately as part of the Village Update. Colin Love has agreed to update his draft to include material from the last village appraisal. The NPRG wish to be active in the preparation of the Residents' Survey.
7. **Maidstone Local Plan Review.** Cllr. Arger reported that she had heard from Cllr. Perry that the Inspector's Report is due by the end of July.
8. **Information from Southern Water.** RO reported that further information has still not been received from Southern Water and the Parish Clerk is chasing Southern Water for the 2022 results. After some discussion it was agreed to ask the Parish Clerk to write to Ofwat, with a copy to Helen Grant MP, asking that organisation to put pressure on Southern Water to send the Council the information requested...
9. **Solar Farm at Goudhurst Road.** It was noted that nothing has been heard of this proposed development in recent months. It was again agreed that Deborah Jenkins, Deputy Clerk should be asked whether she can approach Cranbrook & Sissinghurst, and/or Goudhurst Parish Councils, or Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils to find out what is happening, as much of the site is in Staplehurst parish.
10. **Consideration of Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan** The new Headcorn Plan was discussed at length and it was noted that Headcorn had had the benefit of the following investigations before or during the drafting of their plan:-

A foul drainage survey and assessment carried out by consultants in which all sewerage systems in the parish were investigated.

A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared by Maidstone Borough Council in 2021.

It was considered that Staplehurst needs similar surveys and also a major revision of the flood area maps for Staplehurst which are the responsibility of the Environment Agency and are very much out of date. There also needs to be an assessment of the potable water supply system provided by South East Water in view of their recent failures in the water supply to parts of Staplehurst at times of peak demand.

The Headcorn Plan which runs to 142 pages and is laid out in portrait style was generally viewed as being excellent and it is understood to have been prepared by a local resident who has a company specialising in such documents. It gives the impression that our own Neighbourhood Plan prepared in 2016 is very dated in appearance and content and the content of our new plan would have to be revised with more relevant photographs and a design code, material for which could be forwarded quite soon to Feria who were the authors of our original plan..

The Chairman will seek an urgent meeting with the Parish Clerk to discuss the way forward and try to obtain some ball park figures of the costs of Headcorn's Plan and any surveys that they have paid for.

It is felt that an urgent meeting should be set up with Feria to discuss the way forward, what changes we believe need to be made, some idea of Feria's likely costs and the copyright status of the original document..

Provisional dates for future group meetings in the Youth Club are:-

15 August (brought forward to give more time to prepare material for Village Update)

20 September (NB.substitute Chairman needed)

18 October (NB.substitute Chairman needed)

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Robin Oakley 28 July, 2023