

Blackdown Hills  
 Parish Network  
 Steering Group

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 at 10 am  
 Culm Pyne Barton, Hemyock

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| <b>Present:</b>   | Heather Stallard | HS |
|                   | Lisa Turner      | LT |
|                   | Catherine Bass   | CB |
|                   | Bruce Payne      | BP |
|                   | Geoffrey Sworder | GS |
|                   | Ken Pearson      | KP |
| <b>Apologies:</b> | Cathy Gardner    | CG |

| Item | Minutes  | Action                        |
|------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1.   | Minutes of the last Steering Group meeting were reviewed and agreed.   |                               |
| 2.   | Matters arising taken within agenda.   |                               |
| 3.   | <p>Action Groups</p> <p>a. Communications/ website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBDC voluntary and community fund: a separate account is being kept relating to eligible expenditure, expenditure to date from receipt of fund is £258.33. CB has received a mid-term progress form from TDBC to complete by the end of October.</li> <li>A volunteer, Gill Beardsworth, has agreed to assist in populating the Community facilities side of the website, CB to arrange training for her and has alerted Parish Clerks that she will be in contact.</li> <li>Self help group was considered to be a success, and will meet again as required.</li> <li>An item was published in View from the Blackdowns regarding the website. This resulted in some additional adverts enquiries. Other newspapers had the same item, not apparently published in the Culm Valley Gazette, Wellington Weekly News or Somerset County Gazette, no knowledge of the Western Gazette.</li> </ul> <p>b. Traffic, Transport Highways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little to report as KP has been much involved in local planning issues in Churchstanton. He will arrange a THHG mtg soon.</li> <li>Road maintenance is likely to become a more critical issue as counties can put less resource into this esp in Devon. KP is aware of an amenities team in Chard which has capacity and equipment to undertake repairs and maintenance at very reasonable rates – this could be used/emulated in parishes.</li> </ul> <p>c. Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GS &amp; LT disappointed in the response to several emails to set up a first meeting for the Planning Group – group has yet to convene.</li> <li>CG had suggested by email that the Planning group open its discussions by looking at Neighbourhood Plan in progress by the EDDC BH AONB parishes by sharing of issues from AONB parishes that have already done them. Suggestion that Tracey Bell from Dunkeswell PC updates everyone. CG also suggested looking at where the BHPN stands on proposals for expanding the A303/30?</li> </ul> <p>Much discussion about this, particularly how Stg Gp should manage the reporting of the group's views as a whole. BHPN cannot purport to represent the considered and agreed view of the whole community and</p> | <p>CB</p> <p>CB</p> <p>KP</p> |

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|           | <p>is not a lobby group. It should seek to provide support or comment only where appropriate. It recognises that views may differ greatly across the area depending on a particular parishes' proximity to a specific site eg A303/A358/A30.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LT updated the meeting on the A303 /A30 duelling proposal: the Highways Agency are looking at this again and appreciate the problems within the AONB. DCC's Head of Planning, Transport and Environment Services, Dave Black, is to make a detailed study of routes through the Blackdown Hills and has engaged the AONB to assist in this; a call has just been issued to appoint a suitable consultant to undertake the work of identifying pinch points, obvious potential by-pass requirements etc.</li> <li>• Stg Gp agreed that this will need to be discussed from a community perspective, especially to establish what issues parishes on any proposed routes have. CB to draft a letter to Dave Black and his Somerset counterpart (either the Cabinet member for Transformation and Highways Mr S. Higgs or an officer on that team - Mike O'Dowd Jones?), reminding them of the BHPN and its role as a means of accessing community opinions and contributions. Letter will be shared with the Stg gp for comment before it is sent.</li> <li>• LT suggested that we invite Matt Dickeins, Local Planning Officer at EDDC to talk to the Network about Neighbourhood vs Parish Plans, and to introduce the idea of a 'toolkit' that would be available to assist parishes in preparing plans. KP noted that Churchstanton is preparing a Parish rather than a Neighbourhood plan (as is the intention in the EDDC BHAONB parishes under Tracey Bell's guidance). This plan is intended to be submitted as supplementary guidance for TDBC planning group.</li> <li>• Community Asset registration is also an important issue to establish in parishes (vis. the Stockland registration of the Kings Arms as a community asset, giving 6 month leeway to raise funds to bid for purchase).</li> <li>• Stg Gp agreed that these issues are large enough to warrant inviting Matt Dickens and others to address a full network meeting, probably quite soon after the next meeting, which is to be attended by both County Council leaders.</li> </ul> | <p>CB<br/><br/>LT</p>             |
| <p>4.</p> | <p><b>Next Network Meeting November 13<sup>th</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venue &amp; time: 7.15 for 7.30 start, preferred venue The Blackdowns Hills Healthy Living Centre in Hemyock, the large Studio room with internet, projector and screen etc. ( NB THIS IS NOW BOOKED)</li> <li>• Agenda will include regular business and updates on action groups; these will be placed after a one hour session with the two invited County Council Leaders, Cllrs Hart (DCC) and Osman (SCC) who have agreed to attend this meeting.</li> <li>• Agreed to include the regular invitees as well as directors of the BHBA and the AONB management group.</li> <li>• Briefing for Council Leaders: CB to draft a short note for circulation to the Stg gp before sending, describing the background to the Network, drawing attention to the Community Plan and what the Network is concerned about – eg infrastructure, broadband access and speed, planning issues, travel problems etc. Each to be invited to speak for 15 mins, with 30 mins questions afterwards.</li> </ul>  | <p>CB<br/><br/>CB<br/><br/>CB</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p><b>Natural Futures</b></p> <p>LT described the project which is led by the BH AONB, seeking Heritage Lottery funding to obtain funding for a comprehensive biodiversity audit and subsequent curatorship, working with communities and villages in the BH to achieve specific outcomes. The project has first stage approval already and is asking for representation from the Steering Group to liaise with Pippa Rayner (BH AONB Funding and Development Officer) who is completing the bid. BP volunteered to assist.</p>   | <p>BP</p>                         |

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| 6. | <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A financial statement was issued with the agenda - current account balance stands at £2,778. Parish contributions for 2013-2014 have now reached £815, with £890 in outstanding invoices (this is updated since previous circulation)</li> <li>• CB explained that the management of website adverts is complicated by the current High Street only banking arrangement at HSBC. Suggested moving to an internet based alternative bank eg Co-op. Stg Gp agreed and this will be put in motion immediately.</li> </ul> | CB |
| 7. | <p><b>Date of next Stg Gp mtg:</b> TBA</p> <p>Meeting closed at 12 noon HS was thanked for her hospitality.</p>   |    |