

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

**Meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Working Group
Tuesday 13th December 2011
at 6.00 pm in the Municipal Buildings, Truro**

Minutes

ATTENDEES: Councillor Lindsay Southcombe – Truro City Council (Chairman)
 Councillor Anthony Ayers – Truro City Council
 Councillor Richard Tinney – Kenwyn Parish Council
 Councillor William Robinson – Kenwyn Parish Council
 Rob Lacey – Cornwall Council
 Cheryl Marriott – Cornwall Wildlife Trust
 Sarah Wetherill – Transition Truro
 Rob Pickering – Community Energy Plus
 Claire Brown – Cornwall Neighbourhood for Change

1. APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Mr Roger Gazzard –
 Town Clerk, Truro City Council

Item		Action
2	Minutes	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 22 nd November 2011 were approved as a correct record.	-
	Rob Lacey reiterated the reasoning behind the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan and informed members there were two European requirements to be met when drafting the plan: the Habitat Regulations Assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal. Mr Lacey mentioned there was a 'Do It Yourself' tool to create a Sustainability Appraisal on the internet but due to the potential complexity of the work in Truro and proximity of Special Areas of Conservation felt it would be wise if the working group sought funding so it could be completed professionally. He added Sarah Arden, and Cornwall Council would be able to provide some support during this process.	RL
	Mr Lacey suggested the best way to tackle the plan was to break it into key stages, to agree upon an overall vision of Truro to work towards, and define the key issues to be tackled. Only then would the Sustainability Appraisal be utilised, and issues such as access, habitats, and biodiversity would feed in. The approach would be circular, and the Sustainability Appraisal may reveal the need to make changes to policies, or site alterations. However, a lot of the evidence looked at would have already been appraised. Councillor Tinney pointed out other working groups would be looking at the issue of sustainability too, for example the Economy or Housing groups, however it would be the job of the Steering Group to amalgamate these findings, along with those of the Environment and Culture Working Group.	RL
		CT
	Cheryl Marriott asked what sort of guidance the Neighbourhood Plan would be working from, and it was confirmed there was no template as Truro and Kenwyn were acting as frontrunners. It was pointed out housing numbers would be driving many of the decisions and while the Core Strategy would be 'fixing' certain decisions for the area, the Neighbourhood Plan would be able to influence the development of the Core Strategy. Rob Lacey added	CM
		RL

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

<p>Neighbourhood Development Orders could be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan, setting a standard which would make planning easier, and as long as adhered to, would in some instances allow the foregoing of the planning application process.</p>	
<p>Mr Lacey informed members the Green Infrastructure Strategy, and other key documents, would provide much of the evidence the group needed, and act as a launching point for further evidence gathering. He pointed out if a series of projects the area wished for in the future was set, and a way of delivering them could be sourced, they were more likely to be achieved.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>Councillor Southcombe asked if, based on evidence, the Neighbourhood Plan was able to challenge the predicted housing numbers. Councillor Tinney informed the group of a Cornwall Cabinet meeting due to take place the next day, and if the plans being presented at the meeting were passed, then issues would arise as the proposed development would come into affect prior to the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Lacey confirmed there was currently only a one year supply of deliverable housing land in the Truro area- a 5 year supply is required. To reduce the likelihood of unwanted developments he suggested Truro City Council and Cornwall Council remain in close communication. Consultation being carried out on the Core Strategy in January – March 2012 would be the time period during which housing numbers currently proposed could be challenged. As the Core Strategy gets closer to adoption it will gain weight. Housing numbers will need to be agreed as once the Core Strategy is adopted, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be in conformity with it. If a contrary figure were to be adopted by the Neighbourhood Plan it would be over-ridden by the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>LS RT</p>
<p>Mr Lacey reported in the interim, the Local Plan 1998, and the Structure Plan 2004 would be looked at in relation to proposed land developments, though neither took into consideration the Green Infrastructure Strategy or similar documents. It was felt the Green Infrastructure Strategy and also the Landscape Strategy carry weight in terms of planning decisions, as did The Cornwall Wildlife Trust's information on green corridors in the area. It was added the National Planning Policy Framework would be used increasingly in decisions locally (after its enactment) until the Core Strategy comes into effect.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>It was agreed the Sustainability Appraisal would need to be started as soon as possible, and Mr Lacey pointed out it was up to Truro and Kenwyn Councils how much detail they wished to go into in developing their Neighbourhood Plan as the Government left the specifics of Neighbourhood Planning open.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>Mr Lacey reminded the group The Eden Project would be providing support after Christmas, which would enable the working group to focus on the specifics of their vision. It was also questioned if November was a feasible deadline as the Neighbourhood Plan should not be open to constant challenge, and therefore be as specific as possible.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>Mr Lacey spoke about the Core Strategy and the figure of four and a half thousand proposed houses for the Truro and Kenwyn area. It was pointed out there had not yet been a plan agreed for suggested sites where the houses</p>	<p>RL</p>

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	<p>would be built in the area, and responses from the public on the proposed numbers would be due back around March/April, with the view suggestions of the public should form the basis of the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Additionally, the nature of the Plan was discussed in relation to current proposals for the area, and other aspects should be taken into consideration, such as economical sustainability, and not just housing numbers, though they would be the most visible aspect of the plan.</p> <p>Councillor Tinney pointed out while the Neighbourhood Plan encompasses all of the above, the Environment and Climate Change Working Group needed to focus on their specific challenges only, with the view of deciding which areas could be surrendered to development and which should not be touched at all.</p> <p>Sarah Wetherill agreed with Councillor Tinney, pointing out how important it was to not only focus on aspects the Councils did not wish to include or develop, but to factor in what they did want early on, otherwise they ran the risk of being without a specific plan.</p> <p>Cheryl pointed out there would be residents who wished for housing development, and Sarah added the group would need to provide evidence for the final figure of proposed housing the Plan decided upon, and it was important the Housing Working Group consulted with the Environment and Climate Change Working Group along the way.</p> <p>Cheryl asked if landscape was represented in the evidence provided, and Mr Lacey informed her a general view could be provided in the Landscape Report. He informed members they needed to focus work on understanding areas that should not be touched as well as challenges and opportunities offered by other areas, after which, areas could be identified where urban encroachment was, and where it would be appropriate to build.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">RT</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SW</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CM SW</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CM RL</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Definition of Sustainability</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the definition of sustainability, and Councillor Southcombe read out a definition she had created, and it was agreed she would circulate it via email for members to consider, and adapt, in preparation for the next meeting. Councillor Southcombe's definition is as follows:</p> <p>Sustainable development is development that meets current human need (but not necessarily wants) without compromising natural capital. It takes account of the needs of future generations, other species and the carrying capacity of the planet. It recognises the intrinsic value of nature and the rights of all humanity, wherever they may live.</p> <p>Rob Pickering added he felt 'resilience' should be added to the definition, and perhaps the impact of development on changing lifestyles.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">LS</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RP</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Documentation Evidence Provided by Hilary Gooch</p> <p>As Hilary was not present at the meeting it was agreed a discussion regarding the evidence she provided would wait until the next meeting. Mr Lacey offered to provide documentation evidence Hilary Gooch was unable to source.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">ALL</p>

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	<p>local residents getting involved, as has the 'Save Truro' action group, and therefore she hoped they would wish to be involved in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Claire Brown from Cornwall Neighbour for Change, who was invited to the meeting at the suggestion of Rob Lacey, spoke about grant funding that was available for community development programmes who would be looking at health, training etc. The deadline for the first phase was the end of January, where money would then be awarded to select groups to aid sustainability and resilience to deal with climate change. The final bid would then be submitted for June, where grants would be awarded up to five years assistance in developing area plans. Claire wondered if the grant would be of any benefit to the Neighbourhood Plan, and had approached the working group first as one of the main goals of the funding was to prepare communities to deal effectively with climate change, as well as supporting vulnerable people in making greener choices.</p> <p>Claire pointed out capital funding was also available, and some of the projects being looked at involved habitat work such as the linking of areas as discussed earlier in the meeting. The main stipulation to application was a charity must be involved in projects being applied for, as the lead partner.</p> <p>Rob Lacey informed members available funding, such as the grant Claire spoke about, would be a useful avenue to explore to find ways of delivering the proposals in the Plan, and could also act as a way to engage members of the public. It was suggested the working group could identify projects which local groups could then take on, such as local food production, and the sourcing and development of allotment land. Rob Pickering added renewable energy as a particularly important topic where focus could be applied.</p> <p>Councillor Southcombe stated she had already spoken to the Town Clerk regarding community energy, and they were considering holding a public meeting in the Town Hall, where it could be discussed openly.</p> <p>Cheryl pointed out that the Green Infrastructure Strategy also contained some project ideas that addressed accessibility issues, sustainable transport, and link paths, etc.</p> <p>It was agreed Claire would speak to the Town Clerk regarding the funding, and Roger would feed back to the group at a later date.</p>	<p>CB</p> <p>CB</p> <p>RL</p> <p>RP</p> <p>LS</p> <p>CM</p> <p>CM</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Action Plan</p> <p>The group agreed on the following action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Southcombe to email members with her definition of 'sustainability' for the group to work on for the next meeting. • Claire Brown to speak to Roger Gazzard regarding the grant funding, who would then feed back to the group at the next meeting. • Rob Lacey to provide electronic and hard copies of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Sustainability Appraisal, the Habitat Regulations Assessment, and any other documents he feels relevant to the working group. 	<p>CS</p> <p>CB</p> <p>RL</p>

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	Mr Lacey also suggested the group had a meeting exclusively to determine the key issues they felt should be addressed within the remit of the working group, to provide focus for the evidence gathering, and identify the gaps. Rob Pickering added the Plan would need to allow for both slow and rapid growth in the area	RL RP
7	Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 10 th January 2012 at 6pm.	-

The Meeting closed at 7.55 pm

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CHAIRMAN