

Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)
Meeting of the Steering Group
 7.00pm Tuesday 22nd April 2025 Harberton Parish Hall

Steering Group Members: Alex Crowe, Francesca Smith, Guy Soulsby, Jono Stirrup, Anne Watson
 Minute Secretary/Parish Clerk: Cat Radford
 Apologies: None
 Members of the public: 7

Public Session The public session was moved to the end of the meeting.

Agenda

1. **Apologies** There were no apologies.
2. **Steering Group Membership** There were no changes to membership. No new members and no resignations.
3. **Declaration of Interests**
 - 3.1. Register of Interests: Steering group members were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if they have changed.
 - 3.2. To declare any interests No interests were declared on items on the agenda.
4. **Minutes** *Consider approval of the following minutes:*
Minutes of the meeting of the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 18th March 2025*

RESOLVED to sign the minutes as an accurate record, without amendments.

It was agreed to take the agenda out of order, and discuss item 7 first. The minutes follow the sequence of the original agenda

5. Update on actions from the meeting of 18th March 2025*

Ref	Action/Task	Owner	Progress
240715 8	Send the email as drafted by Alex to the green space landowners. (Using a list of the sites in the draft chapter to identify the landowners).	Clerk (Cat)	Ongoing
20241014 6.2	Prepare note to PC (and for AECOM for SEA): proposing housing allocation policy & draft housing chapter. NB this can only be actioned once housing allocations have been made.	Alex	<i>NB this can only be actioned once housing allocations have been made.</i>
20241014 6.2 Updated 20250121 6	Update draft Neighbourhood Plan <i>to include Parish Council comments on energy chapter, consultation responses re Local Green Spaces and Views, also add references to consultation throughout document as necessary (re roads parking flooding nature etc). Also work in other stakeholder comments outstanding (including District Council officers and comments from the District Councillor, John McKay), comments from the meeting with new committee members, held on 9th December 2024 and newly drafted sections including: Parish Profile Annex, desired footpaths map, maps of bus stop and safe crossing.</i>	Alex	
20241014 6.2	Pursue Harberton footpath and bus stop with DCC.	Clerk	Ongoing
20241014 6.2	Get Foreword from the D.Cllr John McKay. <i>Agreed to defer chasing this until after the work with AECOM has been concluded.</i>	Alex, Jono	Ongoing
20241014 6.2	Tidy up evidence base folder and create index <i>It was noted that material exists on the website and Alex has</i>	Alex	Ongoing

	<i>been keeping a folder, but this needs to be organised and properly indexed.</i>		
20241014 6.2	Identify and commission copyeditor and designer for final form of doc <i>It was noted that there is the possibility of using the in-house team at South Hams District Council, but this will require a budget.</i>	[Unallocated until relevant]	NA
20241014 6.2	Checklist of final editing tasks incl <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add hyperlinks to references in text • Check permissions of people in photos (eg SHV photo currently used in Env chapter) Check all refs to NPPF - NPPF para numbers have changed in 2024 update.	[Unallocated until relevant]	NA
Updated 20250218 5	Produce a revised draft of the Parish Profile Annex and forward to Alex for inclusion within the Reg 14 draft that will be presented to the committee in full, once complete. Alex to support Francesca in accessing the DropBox to support narrative development.	Francesca/ Alex	Ongoing
Updated 20250218 5	Identify an approach and make a recommendation to the committee on the creation of a list of non-designated heritage assets for inclusion in the Heritage Chapter. Clarification: The output required is list of non-designated heritage assets in the Parish, with some comment on why they are considered important in the community; for example a simple table. Ideally this would be a collective process with others in the community.	Jono	Ongoing
Updated 20250218 5	Forward 'Desired Footpaths Map' and 'Map of Bus Stops and Safe Crossings' to Alex for inclusion in Regulation 14 draft	Guy	Ongoing
Updated 20250218 5	Write Consultation Statement <i>This is an annex on "how this NP was created"</i> and Basic Conditions Statement A <i>requirement of all NPs.</i> It had been reported that this action be completed once the Regulation 14 consultation is completed	Anne	<i>To complete when Reg 14 complete</i>
Updated 20250218 5	Alex: Advertise photograph competition to bring forward suitable images for use within the Neighbourhood Plan document Get selection of images to insert into the plan. Guy: to support selection and compilation process	Alex/ Guy	Ongoing
20250318 7	To prepare response to AECOM that notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Harberton Parish' rather than 'Harberton' should be used when referring to the Neighbourhood Area to differentiate between the Neighbourhood Area and Harberton village. • Reference to 2024 survey/consultation where there have only been references to consultation in 2015, providing links to the data available. 	Clerk (Cat)	COMPLETED
20250318 7	To review the HNA specific consideration of adaptability standards for accessibility and phrase a question to forward to AECOM	Anne	COMPLETED
20250318 7	ACTION: Clerk to request a meeting with AECOM to discuss matters arising.	Clerk	COMPLETED. Meeting held 31 st March 2025. For discussion at 7.1
20250318 7	To send comments and questions to the Clerk on the draft Site Options Assessment. The Clerk to then to AECOM for consideration.	All Clerk (Cat)	COMPLETED

20250318 7	To draft a paper for the Parish Council's consideration on options surrounding potential site allocation, to bring back to the next HNPSG meeting for discussion.	Alex	COMPLETED For discussion at item 7.2
20250318 10	The member of the public coopted to a flooding group will apply a case study approach and use draft policy on live applications, and report back to the HNPSG for review	Delegated to Peter Cogley	No update
20250318 10	To revise the chapter on flooding, removing some detail a place into appendices.	Alex	COMPLETED For discussion at item 6.
20250318 10	Provide a paragraph on sewage pipes for inclusion in the evidence base.	Guy	Ongoing
20250318 10	Speak with the Harbertonford Flood Warden to ensure matters at Harbertonford are reflected within the draft.	Alex	Ongoing
20250318 10	Draft a question about use of Section 106 funding to support flooding initiatives to be forwarded to the Neighbourhood Planning Officer.	Alex Clerk (Cat)	COMPLETED Response received. See below. Relevant extract: "If approved, the outline PP would likely be ahead of the adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and as such the NPD would not be able to impose conditions on the site. However, the provisions of the JLP would apply, so design, drainage, parking, ecology etc etc would all need to adhere to JLP policies in order for permission to be granted. In order to have controls over and above the JLP the NDP would need to have been adopted prior to any application on a site (outline or otherwise)."

6. **Chapter on flood mitigation** *Consideration of Parish Council comments on draft chapter. Note correspondence on River Harbourne Critical Drainage Area (Palmer's Dam)* It was noted that the Parish Council had reviewed the chapter and comments had been returned for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- i) ACTION: Jono agreed to liaise with Cllr Chris Bowley on flooding matters in Harbertonford, to ensure they are reflected in the flood mitigation chapter, requesting advice from Peter Cogley as required.
- ii) ACTION: Alex to make amendments to chapter on flood mitigation, taking into account the Parish Council's comments.

7. **Site allocation matters**

- 7.1. Site Options Assessment *Discussion on updated report (if received ahead of the meeting) and on matters raised at the meeting with AECOM* It was noted that all members of the Steering Group had attended a meeting with AECOM consultant on 31st March 2025 to discuss the draft Site Options Assessment. The following summary headline notes were noted:

- a) **Winsland House: Returning grading to a red site (having proposed to change rating to amber in March 2025 iteration).** A NP will be examined against the Basic Conditions. If there is a conflict with the Local Authority here, it wouldn't meet the Basic Conditions test. The AECOM consultant is now of the opinion that they got that wrong – having looked through the comments and available evidence (minutes and notes from SHDC) Winsland House should now be a red site.
- b) **Allocating Winsland House even if it is a red site** Even if it is a red site, that doesn't mean that it isn't possible for the HNP to put it in the plan (noting that dwellings here would not count towards the indicative housing figures for Harberton and Harbertonford). The HNP would have to have very good evidence or justification for including the site. It would then be up to the examiner to ask for it to be removed. It was suggested that the HNP could have a separate policy for Winsland House – 'if development proposal to come together for this site, this would be the criteria that it would be supported in the plan'. This would enable the HNP to address interest in Winsland House.
- c) **How 'sustainability' is defined by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** 'Sustainable' is about access to services and facilities; it's about trying to limit car-based journeys. Flooding comes into it to an extent, but generally when assessing sustainability, you are looking at how you travel to it (a site). There is no fixed definition of what 'considerable distance' means, a rural area and a town are considered differently. AECOM has been asked by the Steering Group to look at how it applies 'considerable distance' to all sites for consistency.
- d) **Areas at risk of flooding and mitigating flood risk**
- Steering Group Members asked specific questions about a clause in the NPPF that says, *"Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas of highest risk"*. It was noted that there are areas of the Ford Farm site that are in flood Zones 2 and 3, but there is an area of the site that is not in a flood zone, and therefore could be considered developable.
 - It's up to the planning process for the developer to demonstrate that all flood risk is mitigated through that development.
- e) **What the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group does with the information provided by the Site Options Assessment** The RAG ratings provided by AECOMs work assessing the sites takes into account the planning practice guidance and three tests (whether a site is suitable, available and achievable). This includes a professional judgement on whether a site is in conflict with national or local policy. The site options assessment is intended to give Neighbourhood Planning groups enough flexibility to decide on what sites to allocate. There is very deliberately a site selection process: *"You can take those ratings, put forward their own evidence, tying up with the NP objectives, and what the community has told you what it wants. Linking back to objectives, leads to your allocations. You can have evidence to show why you have refined the ratings, as long as you tell the story."*
- f) **Meeting indicative housing targets** During the call with AECOM it was commented that evidence from the Site Options Assessments indicates that none of the sites that have come forward are good/suitable for development. The sites are not suitable to meet the indicative housing figures. The AECOM Consultant commented: *It is unusual to do a site assessment where there are no suitable sites. Even where we've allocated sites as amber, they are not great sites. Not sure why you have the sites you have – none are sustainable sites for development. This is one case where there isn't a lot of opportunity for new housing within the villages"*. It was commented that some NPs don't put sites forward. It was suggested that HNPSG pursues a meeting with SHDC Officers to discuss this, commenting that all the evidence points towards a lack of suitable sites to meet a requirement for 20 homes in Harberton and 30 in Harbertonford, asking the Planning Authority what the justification is for this figure, and what it recommends the HNPSG does under the circumstances. This will enable to HNPSG to then consider its approach.
- g) **Access** When asked specifically about site access, AECOM commented that this depends on the area and is up to the discretion of the Highways Authority. When looking at a very rural area they might not need the land to connect to a footpath, for others it may be a significant matter.
- h) **Allocation of exception sites** It was noted that the HNPSG would need the agreement of the landowner to allocate land in the plan as a rural exception site for affordable housing. As

owner of the Ford Farm site is putting forward a planning application, they are likely expecting a return.

NEXT STEPS: The AECOM consultant will through all the comments now and address them in the and come back with the report in the next 2 weeks, having made changes.

It was noted that the updated reported had been received, along with a summary document addressing AECOM's response to queries raised. AECOM had provided information about the Chidham and Hambrook Neighbourhood Plan, which downgraded the number of homes from 500 to 300 following consultation with the Local Authority. HNPSG members discussed a number of further questions raised on both documents.

RESOLVED:

- i) To ask AECOM whether the sites that came forward at Chidham and Hambrook were all amber or red (i.e. not green) and if AECOM had any examples that were more similar in scale to Harberton (i.e. smaller number of dwellings required).
- ii) To request the following amendments:
 - a. Page 18, table 1 sites SH_23_02_13 and SH_23_16_08/13 are both noted as 'Land off Harberton Road'. AECOM note that this is how they originally appear in the SHLAA. It is requested that a correction/note is made that indicates that sites are actually on Plymouth Road (as Harberton Road doesn't exist).
 - b. The more recent application in process at the site known as Ford Farm is for up to 17 homes. Not for 17.
- iii) To sign off the AECOM report and publish it, subject to the amendments above.

7.2. Note to Parish Council on Winsland House site allocation *For discussion*

Alex introduced the paper that he had drafted for consideration by the Parish Council. The paper attempts to set out the facts, evidence and arguments in as a neutral way as possible. It was noted that the original purpose of requesting instruction from the Parish Council was that the HNPSG had not reached a consensus on allocation of Winsland House, and as outlined in the HNPSG Terms of Reference, matters which cannot be resolved within the Steering Group will be put to the Parish Council for discussion and decision. It was also noted that the issue on whether or not to allocate the site has been visible and controversial, and therefore there is an argument that the Parish Council, as elected officials, make the decision in a way that is transparent.

There was discussion on the contents of the paper, and agreement that the HNPSG could now reach a consensus on recommending an option to the Parish Council. This was on the basis that the site at Winsland House is developable, but in conflict with the JLP. It was commented that the situation may change, but the site can't be allocated without significant problems resulting.

RESOLVED:

- i) That HNPSG recommends the 'middle way' to the Parish Council: Option 3: Do not allocate the site, but state in the NP that development of the site would be supported in principle, subject to suitable conditions.
- ii) ACTION: Alex to make a small amendment to the draft where it refers to changes in the electorate since the last consultation. The amended sentence will be circulated by email for comment before being sent to the Parish Council.

7.3. 2024 Housing Consultation *Consideration of questions raised on validity of consultation in light of Site Options Assessment Review.*

Outcomes of the public consultation were discussed. Discussion focused on two main areas:

- a) There was discussion on honouring wishes of the community and how they responded to questions asked at consultation, whilst also seeking to deliver an achievable Neighbourhood Plan. There was some concern that there were matters such as specific housing conditions, the provision of an offroad footpath to a bus stop on the A381 and the provision of a footpath that now appear to be undeliverable.
- b) That the consultation was run prior to a review of the Site Options Assessment and that one site has changed from green to amber. The public's view may have changed as a result of the change in status of the site.

RESOLVED:

- i) Discuss re-running the housing consultation at the next meeting
- ii) ACTION: Anne agreed to draft a 'pros and cons' of consultation re-run document to support consideration of this matter at the next meeting.

7.4. HNP options for site allocation *For discussion*
Not discussed.

RESOLVED:

- i) Carry forward this item to the next meeting.
- ii) ACTION: Alex to draft a paper for consideration.

8. **Meeting with Local Planning Authority (South Hams District Council)** *To consider meeting date/time and scope.*

RESOLVED

- i) ACTION: Anne to collect availability from HNPSG members and share results with Cat in order to schedule a meeting with South Hams District Council Officers.
- ii) ACTION: Cat to share the list of questions as drafted by Alex and Anne to South Hams Officers in advance of the meeting. Cat to amend to include query whether a Strategic Environment Assessment is still required for a plan that only has two potentially allocatable sites.

9. **Considerations of next steps for the Neighbourhood Plan** *To consider next steps on direction/focus of the Steering Group, and associated tasks.*
Not discussed

10. **Summary of actions before next meeting**

Ref	Action/Task	Owner
240715 8	Send the email as drafted by Alex to the green space landowners. (Using a list of the sites in the draft chapter to identify the landowners).	Clerk (Cat)
20241014 6.2	Prepare note to PC (and for AECOM for SEA): proposing housing allocation policy & draft housing chapter. NB this can only be actioned once housing allocations have been made.	Alex
20241014 6.2 Updated 20250121 6	Update draft Neighbourhood Plan <i>to include Parish Council comments on energy chapter, consultation responses re Local Green Spaces and Views, also add references to consultation throughout document as necessary (re roads parking flooding nature etc). Also work in other stakeholder comments outstanding (including District Council officers and comments from the District Councillor, John McKay), comments from the meeting with new committee members, held on 9th December 2024 and newly drafted sections including: Parish Profile Annex, desired footpaths map, maps of bus stop and safe crossing.</i>	Alex
20241014 6.2	Pursue Harberton footpath and bus stop with DCC.	Clerk
20241014 6.2	Get Foreword from the D.Cllr John McKay. <i>Agreed to defer chasing this until after the work with AECOM has been concluded.</i>	Alex, Jono
20241014 6.2	Tidy up evidence base folder and create index <i>It was noted that material exists on the website and Alex has been keeping a folder, but this needs to be organised and properly indexed.</i>	Alex
20241014 6.2	Identify and commission copyeditor and designer for final form of doc <i>It was noted that there is the possibility of using the in-house team at South Hams District Council, but this will require a budget.</i>	[Unallocated until relevant]
20241014 6.2	Checklist of final editing tasks incl <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add hyperlinks to references in text 	[Unallocated until

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check permissions of people in photos (eg SHV photo currently used in Env chapter) <p>Check all refs to NPPF - NPPF para numbers have changed in 2024 update.</p>	relevant]
Updated 20250218 5	Produce a revised draft of the Parish Profile Annex and forward to Alex for inclusion within the Reg 14 draft that will be presented to the committee in full, once complete. Alex to support Francesca in accessing the DropBox to support narrative development.	Francesca / Alex
Updated 20250218 5	Identify an approach and make a recommendation to the committee on the creation of a list of non-designated heritage assets for inclusion in the Heritage Chapter. Clarification: The output required is list of non-designated heritage assets in the Parish, with some comment on why they are considered important in the community; for example a simple table. Ideally this would be a collective process with others in the community.	Jono
Updated 20250218 5	Forward 'Desired Footpaths Map' and 'Map of Bus Stops and Safe Crossings' to Alex for inclusion in Regulation 14 draft	Guy
Updated 20250218 5	Write Consultation Statement <i>This is an annex on "how this NP was created"</i> and Basic Conditions Statement <i>A requirement of all NPs</i> . It had been reported that this action be completed once the Regulation 14 consultation is completed	Anne
Updated 20250218 5	Alex: Advertise photograph competition to bring forward suitable images for use within the Neighbourhood Plan document Get selection of images to insert into the plan. Guy: to support selection and compilation process	Alex/ Guy
20250318 10	The member of the public coopted to a flooding group will apply a case study approach and use draft policy on live applications, and report back to the HNPSG for review	Delegated to Peter Cogley
20250318 10	Provide a paragraph on sewage pipes for inclusion in the evidence base.	Guy
20250422 6	Liaise with Cllr Chris Bowley on flooding matters in Harbertonford, to ensure they are reflected in the flood mitigation chapter, requesting advice from Peter Cogley as required.	Jono
20250422 6	Make amendments to chapter on flood mitigation, taking into account the Parish Council's comments.	Alex
20250422 7.1	To ask AECOM whether the sites that came forward at Chidham and Hambrook were all amber or red (i.e. not green) and if AECOM had any examples that were more similar in scale to Harberton (i.e. smaller number of dwellings required).	Clerk (Cat)
20250422 7.1	To request the following amendments to the Site Option Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 18, table 1 sites SH_23_02_13 and SH_23_16_08/13 are both noted as 'Land off Harberton Road'. AECOM note that this is how they originally appear in the SHLAA. It is requested that a correction/note is made that indicates that sites are actually on Plymouth Road (as Harberton Road doesn't exist). The more recent application in process at the site known as Ford Farm is for up to 17 homes. Not for 17. 	Clerk
20250422 7.1	To sign off the AECOM report and publish it, subject to the amendments above	Clerk (Cat)
20250422 7.2	To make a small amendment to the draft 'Note to Parish Council on Winsland House Site Allocation' where it refers to changes in the electorate since the last consultation. The amended sentence will be circulated by email for comment before being sent to the Parish Council.	Alex

20250422 7.3	To draft a 'pros and cons' of consultation re-run document to support consideration of this matter at the next meeting.	Anne
20250422 7.4	To draft a paper on HNP options for site allocation for consideration.	Alex
20250422 8	Collect availability from HNPSG members and share results with Cat in order to schedule a meeting with South Hams District Council Officers.	Anne
20250422 8	To share the list of questions as drafted by Alex and Anne to South Hams Officers in advance of the meeting. Cat to amend to include query on whether a Strategic Environment Assessment is still required for a plan that only has two potentially allocatable sites.	Cat

11. **Meeting venue** *Consideration of venues going forward*

RESOLVED For monthly meetings to be held in Harberton where there is Parish Hall availability on the meeting dates, and meeting in Harbertonford on the occasions when the Harberton hall is not available.

12. **Meeting dates** *Next meeting date, and confirmation of meeting dates for remainder of financial year.* A calendar of meeting dates was distributed.

RESOLVED Hold the next meeting of the HNPSG on Monday 19th May 2025. ACTION: Jono to confirm availability of Harberton Parish Hall.

Public session:

- The HNPSG was asked when interested parties would have sight or be able to comment on the draft AECOM report. It was responded that developers/landowners/agents would be able to comment then. The land promoter of Ford Farm commented that they would be interested to know if AECOM has taken into account information made available through the live planning application.
- A MoP commented that they feel strongly that the consultation should be re-run, particularly in when hearing that AECOM consultants have commented that there are no suitable site. The HNPSG committee were asked to think about the need to consult, and also to consider the option not to allocate sites.
- A MoP was concerned to observe discussions of the HNPSG which suggested that not allocating sites could be of detriment; that development could enable unwanted development. It was commented that objections can always be made to planning applications through the planning process.