

Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HNP)
DRAFT MINUTES of the Meeting of the Steering Group
7.00pm Monday 11 May 2026 Harberton Parish Hall

Steering Group Members Present: Jono Stirrup, Francesca Smith, Cat Radford (Clerk/Minutes Secretary), Anne Watson.

Working Group Members Present: Joanna Poulton

Members of the public: 3

Not in attendance: Guy Soulsby

Public Session

- Members of the Public (MoP) indicated that they were present to observe the meeting, noting that the live Outline Planning Application for development of the site at Ford Farm is being considered by the Development Management Committee in June.
- There was some discussion between Steering Group, Working Group members and members of the public in which it was noted that whilst the live planning application is for development of a site that was put forward for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan itself is a strategic policy document, separate to the specific details of the live planning application going through the democratic process.
- It was noted by a MoP that he had written to the Parish Council to request that its view on the live OPA be reaffirmed ahead of the Development Management Committee's meeting in June.
- It was commented that the MP for South Devon has invited representatives from Parish Councils to attend a meeting to discuss the role of Neighbourhood Plans in planning policy, following local concern that Neighbourhood Plans are being disregarded in planning decisions. **It was AGREED** to propose to the Parish Council that Anne Watson and Jo Poulton attend this meeting as being active members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering and Working Groups, and as delegated representatives of the Parish Council. **ACTION:** Jono to include this proposal in his monthly update to the Parish Council.

Agenda

1. **Apologies** None received.
2. **Steering Group Membership** No resignations or new members.
3. **Declaration of Interests**
 - 3.1. Register of Interests: Steering Group and Working 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:*
It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 7 April 2026 as an accurate record.
5. **Update from Working Group:**
 - 5.1. Update from meeting with the Local Planning Authority/Neighbourhood Plan Officer
It was commented that the meeting with the Local Planning Authority was insightful and useful, but frustrating. During the meeting the Officers provided the Steering Group with further information relating to the formal comments given on the regulation 14 draft of the Neighbourhood Plan, as a statutory consultee. It was noted that the tone of the formal regulation 14 comments had been unhelpful, but further information given during the meeting was more constructive.

The key messages from the meeting were:

- i) There is significant work to do on redrafting the Neighbourhood Plan if it is to go forward and to convince the examiner that it should go to referendum.
- ii) It would be difficult to get the plan passed by the independent examiner without the allocation of sites for housing in the plan. Public objection is not considered sufficient justification for non-allocation, neither is the objections on ground of the local Highways network.
- iii) The Steering Group may wish to justify its position that it is not appropriate to put forward sites for development based on lack of sewage infrastructure, and capacity for managing run off (potential flooding increase), but would need to write to South West Water to request their substantive position on the capacity of the sewage infrastructure. This evidence could then be used in order to make this case.
- iv) Officers presented a potential scenario that, should the live OPA at Ford Farm be approved by the Development Management Committee, those housing numbers would

count towards Harberton's indicative housing figure, and the issue of not allocating sites for housing would be resolved.

- v) Officers suggested the Steering Group pursue sites that had previously had planning permission, such as Oak Tree Field, or undertake a new call for sites. The Steering Group's view is that neither of these options would be in the best interests of the Parish, as it would delay the process and require additional resource for analysis and appraisal.

In discussion of these key points, it was agreed that the result of the Development Management Committee's meeting with regard to the live planning application at Ford Farm will have an impact on how the Steering Group will approach the allocation of land for development. It is unlikely that the Steering Group will be in a position to undertake a review of all Regulation 14 comments and submit a reworked draft plan before that decision has been taken. The Steering Group is therefore of a view to wait for the outcome of that decision before taking any further decisions on allocation.

It will continue review of Regulation 14 comments and begin undertaking work to revise policy wording in the interim. See item 5.2 below.

5.2. Consideration of actions following closure of Regulation 14 Consultation includes processing of responses and changes to the Neighbourhood Plan Draft

Having now received responses from statutory consultees and members of the public **it was AGREED** that the working group regroup to continue to methodically go through each of the points raised and tabulate responses.

It was proposed that the workflow undertake to review comments from South Hams District Council as the Local Planning Authority first, then statutory consultees, then responses from members of the public, including landowners and agents.

It was expected that this work would continue over the summer, before bringing back a reworked draft to the Parish Council in September, following the Steering Group's own formal review and approval process.

ACTION: Anne and Jo begin by populating a workstream to allocate tasks amongst the steering group.

ACTION: Clerk to request an update from the Neighbourhood Planning Officer on whether a Habitat Regulations Assessment is required.

6. **Summary update on status of the Neighbourhood Plan Draft for the Parish Council**

It was agreed that the notes of this meeting act as an update to the Parish Council. **ACTION: Jono** to provide a verbal update at the Parish Council's next meeting.

7. **Neighbourhood Plan Workstream**

See point 5.2 above.

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

- **ACTION: Jono** to provide a verbal update to the next meeting of the Parish Council.
- **ACTION: Jono** to propose to the Parish Council that Anne Watson and Jo Poulton attend the meeting being convened by the MP on the subject of the role of Neighbourhood Plans in planning policy, as delegated representatives of the Parish Council.
- **ACTION: Anne and Jo** begin by populating a workstream to allocate tasks amongst the steering group.
- **ACTION: Clerk** to request an update from the Neighbourhood Planning Officer on whether A Habitat Regulations Assessment is required.

9. **Confirmation of next meeting date and venue**

Working group meetings will commence in mid June.

The next steering group meeting will take place on 6th July at Harberton Parish Hall

Meeting closed at 20:16