

Proposal: Walberswick as a Sustainable Village through the Chapters of The Neighbourhood Plan

I would like to start a thread of thought with fellow Councillors if I may.

The Parish Plan (2000) for Walberswick is an excellent document which reads with an intuitive sense of what the future came to be. It concludes by saying '...take advantage of emerging technology with the objective of becoming a more co-operative and prosperous community, more closely in touch with the world and with our neighbours, whilst still enjoying....the rare....landscape'.

I think that this is an interpretation of a sustainable community, which typically has 3 aspects - social (people), economic (place) and environmental (space). What a great position for us to take things forward into the Neighbourhood Plan. We now have a Climate Emergency¹ which insists that we work closely with the global perspective, with mitigations required at every level and in every action.

The drive for Sustainable Communities² is clearly at the heart of all our plans and bringing the carbon zero conversation to the table becomes more pertinent every day. The Neighbourhood Planning Group has embarked on a series of assessments to gauge our position on many aspects including Built Environment, Conservation area and Traffic Management in response to the public consultation of summer 2021. To date Environmental issues have been identified as a separate strand.

If we use the footnote interpretation (below) to bring sustainability into focus, then the key words for the environment are 'appreciated', 'protected' and 'enhanced'. If we explore the natural environments of our community - sky, land, air and sea say, under those 3 heading it becomes apparent that the concerns of villagers, as expressed in the Parish Plan, (actions listed below) are reflected here. Take for example the beach issues and address these under appreciation protection and enhancement. However, the issues which are identified should be considered through the sustainability model ie environmental AND social AND economic perspectives. It is probable that Chapters will be led under one of the model strands. Now we need to add that discussions and solutions should be carbon aware.

Conclusion / Proposal

The current chapters commissioned to progress the Neighbourhood Plan cover many of the points raised under the Parish Plan as Environmental issues. For example, external

¹ Suffolk County Council declared a Climate Emergency 21st March 2021

² Sustainable communities can be described as places where:

- the needs of everyone in the community are met and people feel safe, healthy and ultimately happy
- our environment is appreciated, protected and enhanced and damage to the environment is minimised
- our economy is vibrant, employment opportunities are improved and our working lives are more rewarding (Staffordshire CC website, January 2022)

lighting on houses would be considered under Built Environment, as would the provision and management of waste bins.

There is work to be done on chapters which might be the 'Foreshore' and 'Shared Spaces' along with 'Mitigating Climate change - energy provision and sea level changes'.

I would like Councils endorsement and support to invite village members to examine the Foreshore - The part of the shore between the sea and developed land (perhaps) - in the context of the Parish Plan and the concept of a Sustainable community.

Appendix

Extract from Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Summer 2021

Environmental issues - 26

These fall into two categories – the unpleasant consequences of neighbouring agri-industry, and the somewhat more directly controllable patterns of behaviour such as intrusive and unnecessary noise from neighbouring properties and careless and unrestricted lighting. Ways of enhancing the safety and amenity of the beach must also be devise

I have found some Good Practice to share on the journey to zero carbon...

<http://www.kilsbyvillage.co.uk/ UserFiles/Files/PC%20network%20mttg%2025th%20Feb%202020.pdf>

<https://www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk/our-team-of-volunteers/>

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/councillor-workbook-local-pathway-net-zero#3-opportunities-for-action>

Extract from Parish Plan Action Plan 2000

5.3 Summary of recommendations

Issues and possible initiatives (Environmental)

5.3.1 Subject to a poll of the village, introduce on an experimental basis an exclusion zone prohibiting certain activities (such as dogs, jet skis, big kites, wind surfing, barbecues and beach fires) from clearly designated areas of the beach between May and September.

5.3.2 Publish reminders, for instance in the Village News, about light pollution (both brightness and indiscriminate use) from houses with external lights. Review with pub landlords their use of floodlighting.

5.3.3 Encourage those who let property in the summer to advise their tenants about the need to restrain noisy behaviour and put out waste bins at appropriate times.

5.3.4 Examine the possibility of making the surface of the access road (owned by WCLC) to Cliff Field car park less dusty.

5.3.5 Review with the pig farmers and the Blois Estate the continuing problems of smell, noise, vermin and dust arising from pig farming.

5.3.6 Review the provision and management of litter bins and dog bins to establish whether there is a need for additional facilities.

5.3.7 Review the current by-laws relating to the shore and dunes, clarify responsibilities and update as necessary (see also recommendation 1.3.6)

From Staffordshire County Council

Creating a Sustainable Society involves:

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

- use energy, water and other natural resources efficiently and with care
- minimise waste, then re-use or recover it through recycling, composting or energy recovery, and finally sustainably dispose of what is left
- limit pollution to levels which do not damage natural systems
- value and protect the diversity of nature

Meeting Social Needs

- create and enhance places, spaces and buildings which work well, wear well and look good
- make settlement 'human' in scale and form
- value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness and strengthen local community and cultural identity
- protect human health and amenity through safe, clean and pleasant environments
- emphasise health service prevention action as well as cure
- ensure access to good food, water, housing and fuel at a reasonable cost
- meet local needs locally wherever possible
- maximise everyone's access to the skills and knowledge needed to play a full part in society
- empower all sections of the community to participate in decision-making and consider the social and community aspects of decisions

Promoting Economic Success

- create a vibrant local economy that gives access to satisfying and rewarding work without damage to the local, national or global environment
- value unpaid work

- encourage necessary access to facilities, services, goods and other people in ways which make less use of the car and minimise impacts on the environment
- make opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation readily available to all