

Minutes

Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee:
Wednesday 8th July 2015, 8.00 to 10.00pm, at 38 Templar Rd.

Agenda Item	Action	
1.1	Present: Christopher Hardman (chair), John Bleach, David Stone, Steve Goddard, Mary Brown.	
1.2	Apologies: Jean Fooks, Richard Lawrence-Wilson, Angie Goff, Graham Jones.	
2.	Previous minutes - 6th May 2015 The notes compiled by Christopher were agreed.	
3.	Matters arising not on the agenda None	
4.	Questionnaire & June and September Flying Goose	
4.1	A questionnaire had been designed (complete with approval from the Royal Mail for the folding instructions to suit submissions by Freepost), printed and inserted in The Flying Goose for distribution to every household in the ward. The printing had cost more than originally budgeted, because of delays in the approval by Royal Mail. A version had also been posted on-line.	
	Christopher reported that, to date, 216 printed questionnaires had been returned, plus about 25 on-line, some of them completed by several people in each household. However, it was clear that some questions will need further detailed investigation, for instance where people had been asked to rate the option to “replace large houses with more houses and/or flats”. There had been a favourable response to the idea of providing housing for ‘key workers’.	
	We had encouraged people to complete the questionnaires at the Wolvercote Festival and at the Cutteslowe shopping parade (with the aid of Allie Noel and David Stone) whilst questionnaires had been left at various sites within the ward plus Cutteslowe Community Centre and Summertown library.	
	While the rate of response was better than expected, it was felt that still more could be done to get people to respond. To this end Christopher agreed to contact the local headmaster to seek his agreement to us giving out questionnaires at Wolvercote Primary School. Mary said that she would be able to help with this but only at the end of the following week. John was to chase the youth leader at Wolvercote Young Persons’ Club, who had already taken a pile of questionnaires.	<p>CH</p> <p>JB</p>
	The deadline for submission of the questionnaire had been set to coincide with the school term on Friday 17th July, but late submissions could be accepted.	
	It was suggested that Wolvercote Primary School might be interested in Godstow Abbey as a project for their pupils.	

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- 4.2 The deadline set by the editor of The Flying Goose for our regular newsletter is in early August and this edition will include events until the end of the year. Christopher to act on this, with help from John. **CH**
JB

5. **Godstow Abbey**

As part of the Wolvercote and Wytham Summer Festival, an event held in Wolvercote Village Hall, had been organized by the Department of Geography , the Department of Archaeology, the Ashmolean Museum and the Neighbourhood Forum. The purpose of the event had been to present the Museum’s plans to commemorate the heritage of the site and to seek local people’s views. It was a success. About 60 people attended and a sum of money was raised by donation.

Christopher reported that, designs for the display boards (‘lecterns’) proposed for the site had recently been received. Christopher would circulate these among the Steering Committee for comments, and would then relay these back to the group from the University. The aim was to erect two lecterns, one funded with support from the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the other with support from the local community. **CH**

The Ashmolean also had plans to bring out from their collection local artefacts discovered at the Abbey site and would invite the public to handle them at a specially arranged session in August. Christopher would liaise with the Museum and spread the word in Wolvercote. **CH**

6. **Wolvercote and Wytham Summer Festival**

Besides the Godstow Abbey event, members of the Neighbourhood Forum shared a stall with the Wolvercote Commoners’ Committee on Goose Green in the Fun-on-the-Green event. We engaged with a considerable number of passers-by and more copies of the questionnaire were handed out. Those involved felt that it made much sense for the two groups to share resources and to work more together in future.

7. **Reports on Developments**

7.1 **Northern Gateway**

Ratification of Area Action Plan (AAP) was expected at meeting of Full Council on 20th July. It was agreed that we would write a letter to the press soon after this. Christopher agreed to compose the letter and circulate it among the Steering Committee for our agreement if there were time before submitting it. **CH**

The North Wolvercote Action Group (NWAG) with CPRE (Sietske Boeles) were seeking legal opinion, paving the way for a challenge to the Council’s ruling (the outcome of which could already be anticipated). The challenge was expected to be centred on air pollution both in the immediate area and on Port Meadow. John and Christopher had been included in an exchange of emails passing between members of the NWAG (also known as the Wolvercote Green Group, Wolvercote Action Group or Wolvercote Green Action Group) and Sietske Boeles.

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The initial cost of a legal opinion was expected to be in the region of £3,500. The NWAG had decided to make a statement at the Full Council meeting, to mount the challenge. The Forum had been invited to help in this effort. To comply with Council rules, the statement had to be submitted in writing by 14th July (in less than a week's time), so this was urgent. Steve warned that the chances of success in this action were very low and that the legal costs could be very high. John felt that we should support the NWAG. Therefore it was resolved that John would write to NWAG, giving our support for their legal challenge (provided it had the backing of their advisors), offering practical help, but not financial help due to our lack of funds.

STOP PRESS: As expected, the Council voted to adopt the AAP. John Semple from NWAG presented the statement on behalf of his group and a written reply was given by Councillor Hollingsworth, to which JS offered a verbal response which was not allowed. For details see:

<http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Mid=3470>

JB has written to NWAG, as agreed at the steering group meeting.

7.2 **Wolvercote Paper Mill Site**

The revised outline planning application was expected to be submitted by the University very soon. The reason for the delay had been unclear. It had been suggested that the University in discussion with the Council might be re-considering providing housing for its own staff in key-worker housing. However this did not now appear to be the case.

8. **The Way Forward**

8.1 Christopher felt strongly that the Forum would need to have something tangible to show at this year's AGM coming up on 14th October. He was pleased with the way in which we had rallied together to produce the questionnaire within our deadline and hoped that we would now be able to go a step further. The task now was to bring together the findings from the questionnaire and to formulate some example policies which we could present at the AGM. Therefore he urged everyone, who had already been appointed with the task of formulating policies in specific areas, to now put their drafts on paper so that they could be discussed. In the meantime Christopher would organize for the results of the questionnaire to be analysed (through the programme which we had used for the on-line questionnaire) and would set about finding others to help with the drafting tasks not yet allocated.

CH

Christopher considered that the way forward was not through having regular meetings of the whole steering group, but through smaller groups concentrating on specific tasks.

9. **Treasurer's report:** not available

10. **AOB**

John had recently had a chance conversation with a neighbour about publicizing of the Forum's activities. This person felt that we were not doing enough to

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keep people informed. He suggested that the Forum opens a Facebook account and offered help. The meeting agreed to this. John to follow it up.

JB

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Dates of next meetings:

Steering Committee: Wednesday 5th August 2015 – details to be confirmed.

AGM: Wednesday 14th October 2015