

JOINT MEETING OF THE NORTH WEST AND NORTH EAST COMMUNITY FORUMS



Minutes of a meeting of the Community Forum held on
Thursday, 10th November 2016, Leconfield Hall, Petworth at 7pm.

Attendance and Apologies (in italics):

Bepton Parish Council	Lavinia Milner and Ros Hart
Bignor Parish Meeting	John Dwane
Bury Parish Council	
Cocking Parish Council	David Imlach
Duncton Parish Council	Marie Bracey
Easebourne Parish Council	
East Lavington Parish Council	
Ebernoe Parish Council	Ann Tirrell
Elsted and Treyford Parish Council	Andrew Leno
Fernhurst Parish Council	Heather Bicknell, Maureen Timms and Bill Black
Fittleworth Parish Council	Chris Welfare
Graffham Parish Council	Lawrence Paine and Howard Charman
Harting Parish Council	Andrew Shaxson
Heyshott Parish Council	
Kirdford Parish Council	
Linch Parish Meeting	
Lodsworth Parish Council	Caroline Neville <i>Apologies sent - Helen Cruikshank and Deryck Hamon</i>
Loxwood Parish Council	
Lurgashall Parish Council	<i>Apologies sent</i>
Lynchmere Parish Council	Sandy Moore <i>Apologies sent - Norma Graves and Sylvia McCallum</i>
Midhurst Town Council	<i>Apologies sent - Stephen Morley and Gordon McAra</i>
Milland Parish Council	Jeremy Parker
Northchapel Parish Council	Daphne Trussler <i>Apologies sent - Helen Cruikshank</i>
Petworth Town Council	Chris Kemp
Plaistow & Ifold Parish Council	
Rogate Parish Council	Elizabeth Brown
Stedham with Iping Parish Council	Lucy Petrie and Eddie Lintott
Stopham Parish Meeting	

The Common Parish of Sutton & Barlavington	
Tillington Parish Council	<i>Apologies sent</i>
Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council	Carola Brown and Neil Ryder
West Lavington Parish Council	Anthony Jones
Wisborough Green Parish Council	
Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council	

Chichester District Council	Eileen Lintill, Steve Hansford, Linda Grange, Holly Nicol and Shona Turner <i>Apologies sent - Norma Graves Nick Thomas and Andrew Frost</i>
South Downs National Park Authority	<i>Apologies sent - Claire Mattingly</i>
West Sussex County Council	Janet Duncton

1. Introduction by the Chairman

Andrew Shaxson opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and thanked Petworth Town Council for hosting the meeting. Shona was also thanked for arranging the Farnborough Meeting.

2. Apologies as above. Minutes of the last meeting, 5th April 2016 Matters arising – AOB.

SALC – Andrew Shaxson contacted Trevor Leggo and a meeting was held in July. Linda Grange, CDC Housing wished to attend the next meeting to give a presentation. Linda Grange and Holly Nicol are giving a presentation at this meeting.

3 Shopmobility – Future Plans

Mark Webb, Shopmobility Development Co-Ordinator
Community First HEH, Hewitt's @ Emsworth
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Website: <https://www.cffirst.org.uk/transport/individuals/shopmobility/shopmobility-havant-and-chichester/>

Mark began his presentation by explaining that Community First are locally based and provide advice, support and services to communities across several districts. That they encourage voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to deliver services that support residents' wellbeing. Their aim is to build a strong and influential voluntary, community and social enterprise sector which makes life better for people and helps partners and commissioners, including local authorities, deliver better outcomes.

Mark described how Community First can help with:

- Community Development
- Volunteering
- Youth Work
- Training
- Community Transport

He also explained, 'Hewitts@Emsworth' and 'Sliver Linings' and then went into greater

depth about Shopmobility.

That they have over 16 years experience in Shopmobility, providing services to Chichester District Council, Havant Borough Council and Winchester City Council with a fleet of over 45 scooters. They are also commissioned by Goodwood Events to provide to Goodwood Festival of Speed, Revival and Members meetings hiring around 70 scooters per day.

Mobility Scooters and Manual Wheelchairs are available for hire, either by the day or week or for longer periods or holidays. The prices range from £5 a day for scooters, £4 a day for wheelchairs, this also includes advice and guidance on safe usage. There are pick-up points in Chichester, Winchester and Havant, enabling you to access local shopping and services, or just go for a fun drive. They can also offer scooter and wheelchair provision for event organisers

Chichester Shopmobility is located in the City Centre and delivered on behalf of Chichester District Council, supporting residents and visitors to the district with long term and short term mobility problems. In 2015-2016, 865 trips were taken and not just for shopping, some were for leisure purposes. 60% of clients use the scooters for leisure, ranging from going out for meals to trundling around Chichester City itself.

Community First would like to establish a viable permanent site for Shopmobility to enable them to expand a partnership style service which offers sustainability and an enhanced service to people with mobility problems. A more conducive environment would enable them to operate the service predominantly with volunteers. Once this is established, they could facilitate an increased service within current funding levels.

They are currently exploring the possibility of a feasibility study into the innovative idea of offering an 'All Terrain Mobility Scooter' hire scheme which would be of benefit to areas such as country parks and the rural economy. Thus encouraging tourism and access to the countryside for all.

Via the use of their own transport fleet and partnering with other Community Transport organisations, they are planning on arranging visits and trundles to other areas as well as bringing people to Chichester. They have had initial discussions with Sammy Transport and would welcome approaches from other providers and are keen to expand deliveries to hotels and holiday parks for client use.

How can you help?

- Please take copies of the poster, leaflet and postcards to display and help raise awareness of the service. Further supplies are always available.
- Suggestions for viable, free sites in Chichester for static unit would be welcome.
- Any suggestions for new events to be supported.
- Any local transport organisations that might wish to partner.
- Let us know what would be useful for any of your residents.
- Suggestions for outlets that would hold scooters for local hire are very welcome.

Help us to shape the future of Shopmobility

Answers in response to questions

- The charges are as little as £5. You can become a member for £10 which also includes one free hire. This membership gives you access to all services between Bournemouth and Salisbury. Shopmobility is a national concept and operates in many towns; therefore people can use them in other areas eg. you

are able to join here and go Christmas shopping not only in Chichester but also in Winchester.

- Before a Shopmobility scooter is hired out, full training is given.
- No, they had not thought about approaching Cowdray with regards to the Polo. They do intend to attend rural fairs eg. Parham, West Dean's Chilli festival, and recently a food fair in Chichester.
- Advertising in local parish magazines and websites was suggested as an option to help raise awareness.
- Yes, they would be interested in attending the Petworth Town fete. This is held in Petworth Park and it is a long way from the entrance gates to the fete itself.
- They would not be able to help with achieving better access eg. a kissing gate. This is something the Access Group would look into.
- A lot of areas, eg. Centurion Way which is a long distance would require pick up and drop off points.

4. Affordable Housing Update, Housing Options and Community Land Trusts

Linda Grange (CDC Housing Delivery Manager)

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Holly Nicol (CDC Rural Housing Enabler)

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Linda began their presentation by explaining that this was not a repeat of the presentation that was given at the All Parishes meeting in September. Plus Claire Mattingly, SDNPA was unable to attend and had sent along with her apologies, a statement which Linda read out.

SDNPA – update from Claire Mattingly

A project is currently underway to formulate a distinctive SDNPA approach to the provision of affordable housing on rural sites through the allocation of Developers' contributions from S106 agreements for affordable housing.

In addition, we are developing policies for the first SDNP Local Plan which are expected to set out a requirement for all developers to meet a target of 40% affordable housing to be provided on all but the smallest housing developments.

The project also aims to highlight and help to raise awareness of the lack of affordable housing in the National Park and the impact that has on local communities. We have planned our first Landowners conference which will take place in February and aims to bring together Landowners, Rural Housing Providers, Planning Officers and specialist legal and financial experts to aid delivery of rural affordable housing, by exploring ways to utilise unused land and buildings.

We are also working closely with all local housing authorities within the SDNP and rural housing enablers such as Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing and Action in Rural Sussex, who all work directly with Parish Councils to try and address housing needs within their communities.

We have attended several Parish Forum meetings and events this year and will continue to assist where we can.

Holly then proceeded to explain the average lower quartile (the house price in the district is £240,000, but prices in the north of the district are generally higher.) Statistics published by the DCLG, identify that the Chichester District has always had a higher lower quartile to lower income ratio and the gap has steadily increased.

- Chichester ratio 2015 -13.33
- England ratio 2015 – 7.07

Overall Housing Stock - North East and North West - is focused towards larger and higher value properties (32% 3+ bedroom properties). There is a lack of private rented accommodation (13%), plus less affordable rented housing as a result of the 'Right to Buy'. A total of 1186 homes have been lost through the 'Right to Buy' in NE & NW parishes of which 429 of those properties were in Petworth or Midhurst. In addition, there is very limited supply of new affordable housing.

Affordable rented housing needs in this area:

- 225 households have claimed a local connection to a NE or NW parish, of which 117 (52%) are in priority need.
- The highest need is for 1 and 2 bedroom (81%) properties (NE & NW)
- The highest need is within Midhurst & Petworth, followed by: Easebourne, Fernhurst and Wisborough Green

Existing affordable housing stock in this area:

- 2288 affordable rented, 53% are located in Midhurst and Petworth & Fernhurst
- 1 & 2 bedroom properties have the highest turnover whilst 3+ bedroom properties have a very low turnover

Holly then identified affordable housing in the pipeline which has planning permission. These schemes will deliver a total of 43 affordable properties (26 affordable rent and 17 shared ownership). There are only 3 rented in SDNP – Yet there are 191 households on the housing register who have claimed a local connection to a NE or NW parish in the SDNP. Although there are 3 other schemes being considered, opportunities are very limited.

Linda began her presentation by explaining Government Priorities - support for new homes, homeownership and starter homes for first time buyers. Also extending the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. There has also been the introduction of affordable housing thresholds on small sites – no affordable housing can be sought on developments of 10 units or less although in areas designated as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985, a financial contribution can be sought on schemes of 6-10 units – All parishes in the NE & NW forums are designated as rural for this purpose.

Linda went through other local housing issues and that there is no grant available for affordable rented units. Plus Housing Associations (HA) are only looking to deliver larger schemes. There is also the need to be able to retain and attract young people in the area to provide support services.

Future housing (starter homes and intermediate housing) will be delivered by developers on market sites but will they be affordable to local people? The delivery of housing will be focused in urban areas, there will be less new affordable rented housing and changes to the benefits system will make it more difficult to house single people under the age of 35. There is also likely to be less control over the allocation of new lets and existing stock.

Linda outlined CDC's Housing Strategy 2013-2018 which was reviewed last year.

- Promote and increase opportunities for first time buyers
- Provide a range of options for delivering housing to meet the needs of local people

- Provide advice and support to communities on community led housing options
- Grant and loan funding to support small local schemes.

Linda also gave details on opportunities for first time buyers and went through affordability comparisons. (Please refer to presentation slide for comparison table – slide 14)

Community Led Housing Options

The Chancellor has announced that £60 million will be used to enable community led housing developments, the options of which include:

- Affordable Housing Working Group working with a registered provider
- Community Land Trust
- Self-build
- Co-ownership housing

A Community Land Trust (CLT) has 4 principles

- Not-for-private-profit organisation set up to benefit a specific community
- Can own land and other assets which are important to a community, starting with affordable housing
- hold those assets so they are available and affordable for future generations
- it is open to membership by anyone in the community supporting its aims

The benefits of a CLT

- Local ownership, control and accountability of affordable housing in perpetuity
- Investment directly in local communities.
- A more personal, responsive service for local people.
- Locally agreed nominations arrangements.
- Securing properties for local people (not lost to the market)
- Local consultants, contractors and labour that could boost the local economy.
- Eco-friendly development as determined locally

Partnerships can be created between CLTs and Housing Associations. The CLT leads the project and owns the freehold, whilst the HA has a lease, funds, develops and operates the homes. Plus the HA pays a ground rent to the CLT. Hastoe Housing is a good example of this.

There is a leaflet on how to set up a CLT (email attachment)

CDC is able to offer advice and guidance on setting up a CLT, housing needs surveys, site identification and raising funds and has also set aside £2 million for loans to CLTs

Further information can be found:

National CLT network www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk

Community land trust fund www.cltfund.org.uk

The traditional route for providing affordable rented housing is no longer an option.

Answers in relation to questions

- CLTs are secure in that the CLT owns the freehold and the tenants cannot buy their home outright as CLTs are excluded from the right to buy.
- We have tried to spend commuted sums as close to the site as possible. However, the sum has to be spent within 5 years and in that time you have to be able to identify the site, obtain planning permission and build.
- CDC commuted sums are collected for the Chichester area and SDNPA's commuted sums are collected by SNDPA and we work closely with them. Commuted sums for CDC's area are kept in CDC's area.

- Yes the council can buy a house with commuted sums; however, there is a disparity between the commuted sums received and what you can actually buy. Approximately, £70,000 is received in lieu of a property but this is insufficient to purchase a house especially on the open market. Plus CDC is not in a position to own its own housing. All the housing stock was transferred and we no longer have a housing revenue account and the capacity to own and manage housing.

5. **Gypsy/Traveller Transit Site – 1 year on**

Steve Hansford, Head of Community Services, CDC

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BACKGROUND - During 2011/13 the number of unauthorised encampments (UEs) increased significantly across the District some 53 in 2013 many in village centres on community facilities, causing a good deal of concern and expense to the communities affected.

This was not just an issue in CDC alone but affected the district boroughs (DBs) across West Sussex. There were no public transit sites in West Sussex and that without such a site, the powers open to the Police to deal with UE's was limited.

WSCC and DBs met together and agreed to make available the funding to develop a holistic multi-agency way of managing both UEs and a GTTS. Discussions had taken place with the Police regarding use of powers of direction that the provision of a GTTS would facilitate and a multi-agency agreement was proposed. However no appropriate land could be found for a site until CDC considered the redevelopment of its depot site in Stane Street, Chichester which would release some land sufficient for a 9 pitch transit site.

DECISION - In December 2013 CDC Cabinet and subsequently Council, approved the recommendations and resolved:

- (i) to enter into a multi-agency partnership agreement for the effective management of unauthorised encampments across West Sussex;
- (ii) that the case for provision of a transit site was evidenced and that the planning process was an appropriate mechanism to hear any objections to the proposals;
- (iii) that Council make available and redevelops part of the Westhampnett Depot for use as the transit site; and,
- (iv) that West Sussex County Council should be responsible for the management of the site.

Approval was given to the partnership funding arrangements proposed for the contribution to the capital build cost and to the on-going revenue costs.

It is now 12 months since the completion of the GTTS construction and implementation of the multi-agency management arrangements. A Post Project Evaluation (PPE) has been completed and is now reported on.

The original proposal set the outcomes as:

- The introduction of a multi-agency partnership to reduce considerably the number of unauthorised encampments in West Sussex but, where they do occur to reduce

significantly the time taken to evict unauthorised campers.

- To develop a permanent transit site for countywide use that meets the basic standards in the DCLG guidance for developing transit sites.

COSTS --The PPE has shown that a 9-pitch transit site was successfully constructed and reached practical completion by 26 March 2015 achieving the timescale set out by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and enabling the claim of the full grant of £630,000 towards construction costs. The original estimate together with contingency provision was £1.15 million; however a number of issues were experienced in working on a brownfield site and once construction was underway the total cost of the scheme was revised to £1.2 to £1.3 million. The final scheme cost was £1,210,867. Together with the HCA grant each partner contributed £72,608 to the capital cost of the scheme together with a further £15,000 annual contribution to the revenue budget – all of which have been paid to date.

OPERATION - The transit site opened for use on 6 May 2015, managed by West Sussex County Council in accordance with the approved multi-agency agreements that supported the processes for the management of UEs across West Sussex together with a transit facility. As part of the protocol WSCC also works very closely with Sussex Police and as a result will attend, at their request, to carry out assessment for illegal encampments on private land. Since that date, where possible, travellers have been directed to the transit site, either electing to go to the site on a voluntary basis or being directed by the police. Since the opening the site has only been completely empty for 1 month in February. The site was closed for 1 week to allow defect work to be undertaken in early March and for a further 2 days whilst we had to clean the site. On average over the year the pitch occupancy levels are 61%.

All residents are required to pay £150 deposit which is refundable when they leave if the site is left clean and tidy. On all but 2 occasions this has been refunded, both retentions were for accidental damage. The rent is £70 per week and again this has been collected in full. Residents are also required to pay the site manager for the electricity that they use. To date all utility blocks have been left in a clean state and we have not had to instruct contractors to undertake cleaning. All residents are extremely happy with the site and the facilities provided. The total rent collected was £17,000 and the electricity income £3500

The traveller Education Officer attends the site when children of a school age are on site. The play bus from the children & families centre also attends, as does the library service, Health Visitors and Immunisation service.

IMPACT - The presence of the transit site, together with the single agency management of the initial response to UE's, has led to a fall in the number of UEs in the county from 116 during 2014/15 to 68 during 2015/16 and the number of 'dwell days' when UEs were in situ has fallen significantly from 613 to 252.

The financial year 2015/16 was the first year of WSCC management of all Unauthorised Encampments (UEs) across West Sussex and therefore the first year for a single agency keeping detailed records of UEs including those on private land. The records prior to 2015/16 may not therefore be complete. The numbers of UEs in different areas has been variable, for instance Worthing BC has fallen from 32 to 3. Though CDC has been consistent at 15 (bearing in mind it was 53 in 2013/14) the 'dwell time' appears to have increased but 49 of those days are attributable to one UE where there were medical issues preventing further action. Whilst the number of UEs in any given year is subject to a range of issues, the reduction in 'dwell time' is directly attributable to the Transit site and

the additional powers of direction it gives to the police. There is also the beneficial effect of the consistency of approach and countywide view being taken by a single agency dealing with all UEs. The clear impact can be seen in the reduction of court time and costs as between 1/4/15 and 6/5/15 (before the Transit site opened) 6 UEs resulted in 6 court actions for eviction with minimum estimated costs of £1000 per case whereas between 7/5/15 and 31/3/16 55 UEs resulted in 1 court action.

The evaluation considers that the reduction in the number of unauthorised encampments and the amount of time that they have remained in situ since the adoption of the multi-agency agreement and GTTS has had a positive effect on community tensions as very few communities are experiencing UEs and the number taking place in locations likely to have a significant community impact have significantly reduced.

Liaison with Key Stakeholders - The Transit Site Liaison Group meets quarterly and comprises representatives from Westhampnett Parish Council, WSCC, CDC and Sussex Police. The group focusses on the swift investigation and resolution of any Transit Site related issues which arise. The group has been expanded to include Chichester Park Hotel and Barnfield Harvester. Links are currently being developed with NFU (Woodhorn Farm), Chichester University and Cowdray Estate.

These arrangements have assisted in reducing the number of complaints about the Transit site and those using it from residents in the surrounding area.

Comments of Partners and Stakeholders - “The initial concerns about the design and impact of the site have been resolved through the flint panels, gates and additions to the security of the front wall. There are on-going management issues which arise from time to time but the liaison that has been established and the regular meetings with Police and WSCC site management and CDC are able to address these in a timely way.” - **Chair of Westhampnett Parish Council**

“The countywide protocol for managing unauthorised encampments has been effective in achieving a consistent and timely approach across the whole of West Sussex. Whilst Chichester District may not have seen a significant drop in the number of unauthorised encampments the duration of the encampments has been significantly shorter due to the availability of the powers of direction facilitated by the Transit facility. The reduced duration of the encampments has meant that there has been less potential for any tension with local communities and less policing time required responding to complaints and monitoring the encampments and surrounding areas. The number of encampments outside of Chichester city area in rural communities – especially in high profile community locations, such as village greens and recreation areas, has significantly reduced.

The transit site facility itself has not created any additional policing demand. There was obviously a period of settling in with the local community but the regular liaison meetings have ensured that any issues or local concerns arising have been quickly responded to and resolved. There has been no discernible change in local crime patterns in the district.
– **Sussex Police Inspector, Neighbourhood Policing**

Answers in relation to questions

- There has been no discernible change in crime pattern
- There has been no affect on the local primary school as the travellers do not stay in the site long enough and there is also an education team for on site provision.
- The maximum length of time they can stay on the site, according to DCLG Guidance is 12 weeks; however, we operate on a 4 week period via a licence which has to be

renewed.

- A pitch consists of 3 spaces, one for a living van, one for a travelling van and one for the vehicle.
- There is a separate area for food preparation, cooking and washing up facilities, plus separate area with toilets and showers.

6. Future Topics

- updates on previous topics/issues presented at Community Forum meetings (ie. are any Parishes experiencing problems with the Police since the meeting in April)
- Closure of Post Offices, Banks and Pharmacies
- SDNPA – to talk through a number of issues.

7. Any other Business

Telephone box consultation. There are 22 in the NE and NW areas and if the telephone box is in your area, you will need to either

- a. Provide information to support a request to keep the telephone box working or
- b. Think about what other uses it could be used for

and tell David Hyland before Christmas

School Funding in West Sussex. WSCC and MPs have signed and sent a letter, about being near the bottom of the list for Government grant funding. They also have the support from the schools. Fair funding – why are we worth less?

The next joint meeting of the two Forums is to be held in the Spring

The meeting finished at 9pm