

OXSPRING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

ENVIRONMENT SUB-GROUP

Notes of the meeting held on Thursday September 5th 2013 at St Aiden's

Present

Graham Sedgwick
Cheryl Kelleher
Sonia Hume-Dawson
Pete McLeod
Ruth Rovira-Wild
Ann Walker

Apologies were received from Sandra Greensmith who forwarded some items for inclusion.

Many items were discussed; the following are the main items for the record.

Energy

- All new developments to be built to maximise sustainable energy resources, which would include solar panels as an option but would encompass other options too.
- Wind turbines are an emotive issue, but their installation should be evaluated as part of an overall energy policy as suggested below.
- Other Energy sources were discussed, Hydro Generation, Geothermal, Fracking, Solar (standalone installations), etc.
- It was felt that it might be worthwhile in the future to evaluate a total energy policy for the benefits of the Parish as a whole where the various energy generations options including a micro generation policy could be discussed, but to do so would require some form of professional input.
- The possibility of Cooperative bulk purchasing of Energy (electricity, gas and oil) which could have the possibility of reducing energy bills for individuals was also discussed, but details how these might operate would require further evaluation.

Items which it was felt could have an impact on the Local Environment were listed; the following are some of the items which were discussed in more detail.

Housing Development.

- As expected in the present situation housing development featured heavily in the discussions, and some suggestions of how the process might be controlled to lessen the impact on the "Rural Village" environment which Oxspring presently has are listed below.
- All new developments should be designed to maximise the use of an infill policy, it was thought that there could be an advantage in producing a list of possible sites that the residents might be prepared

to support for such developments, any sites nominated would have to be evaluated for its suitability for development.

- All new developments should be designed in such a way as to be in keeping with, and compliment the buildings adjacent to each of the nominated site.
- All new developments should be of a low density design as regards the number of houses on a particular plot.
- It was felt that there isn't a specific architectural character or type which defines, or singles out Oxspring.

With the exception of the number of listed buildings in the village, most of the developments over the last 40 years are of their time and of no specific architectural interest.

We might wish to consider the drafting of a design policy which talks about public realm (i.e. stone walls), type of open spaces, connectivity within the village, etc.

Village Centre and Opportunities for Green Space Enhancement.

It was felt that due to its linear nature and that many of the amenities and activities (Bower Dell, Sports field and even the children's playground) were considered remote from the western end of the Village.

- It was felt that advantages could be gained by exploring any opportunities to develop other amenities towards the western end of the village.
- Opportunities to open up access to the river bank from Willow Bridge to Bower Hill should be pursued, it was recognised that there may be a number of different Land Owners to whom the land belonged and so it was recommended that a list of all the owners on both sides of the river bank, and other relevant areas should be compiled with the intention of entering in to discussions on what access might be agreed.

The following existing green space/amenity areas were identified.

It was felt that consideration should be given as to what opportunities there are to enhance the features that they presently present.

- Ant Hills
- Gordon's Garden
- Children's play area and associated areas.
- Rookery
- Bower Dell
- Sports Field
- Trans Pennine Trail

Add to these also the many excellent walks that exist in the Parish which could benefit from further maintenance and improvement.

Pollution.

The following items of possible pollution were identified, but due to time constraints they were not discussed in any detail.

- Pollution from traffic
- Pollution from farming
- Pollution from localised flooding

The Oxspring NHP Local Environmental Group Members