

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting – May 2022

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

As many of you will recall, we spoke about the NDP at the last Parish Meeting in September 2021, just after we had held our initial “drop in” sessions in the Heritage Hut. I am pleased to report that work has moved on considerably since then, and the NDP Steering Group (Rebecca Whiting, Andrew Lewis, Josie Bassinette, Paul Bradley & Mark Knight) are currently meeting every 2-3 weeks to keep things on track. We were also able to secure just under £10,000 in grant funding to allow us to employ specialists for some aspects of the data collection.

You may remember that the key importance of Walberswick having an NDP is that it is literally the only thing the village can do that has legal standing in the planning application process with East Suffolk District Council (ESDC). Once we have a ratified NDP, ESDC is compelled to take the NDP into account when considering planning applications for Walberswick, unlike comments made by individuals, or even the Parish Council for that matter. So if you care about the type and amount of development that goes on in Walberswick in the years to come, it is vital that you help support the development of the NDP.

We are now clear on most of the “chapters” that will make up the main document:

- **Safe Spaces** - this will bring together all the previous work done on traffic and speeding in the village to form specific proposals
- **Landscape and built environment** – this will include a “character assessment” of every street in Walberswick to help define what makes the character of that particular part of Walberswick special, along with helping to protect particular views that are precious to those that live here
- **Environment & Sustainability** - This will pick up on a lot of the excellent work and suggestions coming out of the original Parish Plan, along with some new aspects, such as the Foreshore. A foreshore working party is currently being set up and led by Councilor Tucker, who is now looking for volunteers to help look at the importance and value to Walberswick of our foreshore. If anyone here is interested in helping with the foreshore working party, please contact Vanessa or any member of the NDP steering group
- **Housing Needs Assessment** – This survey is a vital piece of work that will help us understand the need for additional housing (if any) in Walberswick; this might be affordable housing for young people who have grown up in the village, housing with disabled access, sheltered housing, etc. etc. The entire village (literally every house) will receive a questionnaire on the weekend of 11th/12th June asking about the housing needs of that household and the survey will be open for responses until 25th June. The assessment and questionnaire is being organised on our behalf by

Community Action Suffolk (CAS) - their survey does include asking questions about household finances that some may find too detailed however it is a tried and tested means of obtaining the data vital to accurately assess the future housing needs of an area and the benefit of this data being collected and analysed by external specialists is that all data will be logged outside of the village; your individual data will not be reported back to the steering group. How can all of you here help us tonight help us with the Housing Needs Assessment?

- 1) Fill in the questionnaire when you receive it – either online (ideally) or the paper version which is freeposted back to CAS
- 2) Tell your friends and neighbours about the HNS so they know about it and are encouraged to fill it out
- 3) If you are a leader of a group that meets in Walberswick, mention it at one of your meetings – please note that if you would like someone from the steering group to come along and talk to your group about the HNS or any other aspect of the NDP, we would be more than happy to do so

In summary we remain on track to have working version of the NDP which we can put to a vote in Walberswick within the next 12-18 months and you be hearing a lot more from us over that time as we explore potential ways forward and their appeal to the village. In the meantime the best way you can show support for this piece of work is to complete your HNS when you receive it on 11th/12th June.