

## Brancaster Parish Council

### **Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 6.30pm**

The meeting was held in Brancaster Staithe Village Hall

Present: Cllr T de Winton (Chair), Cllr S Bocking, Cllr C Borthwick, Cllr A Dovey, Cllr W Gardiner, Cllr T O'Sullivan, Cllr S Ullswater

Also in attendance: Simon Bower (Parish Clerk) and approximately eight Members of the Public

Meeting began at 6.33pm

#### **2024.09.03.01 - Declarations of Interest**

- a) No Declarations of Interest were received.

#### **2024.09.03.02 - Apologies for absence**

- a) Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bax, Carpenter and Osborn.

#### **2024.09.03.03 - Minutes**

- a) *The minutes of the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024 were accepted as a true record and duly signed.*

*Prop: Cllr Bocking; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Cllr O'Sullivan; unanimous*

- b) Clerk noted locks for noticeboards were on order.

#### **2024.09.03.04 – Public Comments 1**

- a) Subjects raised were:
- Parking/cones/blockage of road by tractors – Clerk to write to NCC Cllr Jamieson (copying MP) expressing concern over continued delays to Traffic Regulation Orders.
  - Foul water – need to report to NCC directly.
  - Phone boxes – compliment on painting, now need shelves.

#### **2024.09.03.05 - Reports**

- a) Chair's report. Cllr de Winton noted the apparent success of Tennis Week with no reports of major problems. He had attended court relating to the rough sleeper, who did not attend and was subsequently arrested - situation continues. Had spent time with other Cllrs on the SHADCRA agreement.
- b) Report from Borough Councillor. Cllr de Winton noted that a Planning Meeting had taken place – 1,100 homes at West Winch had been given outline permission – this partly to ensure that the Borough, rather than an Inspector, kept control of conditions etc. Concern was expressed over roads etc.
- c) Report from County Councillor. Cllr Jamieson was not present and had sent no notes.
- d) Report from Clerk. The Clerk noted the bike racks were now in place. He could now claim back money from the Borough for these. A streetlight needed repair - still awaiting info from Westcotec about the guarantee, before commissioning repair by TT Jones. More correspondence than usual relating to things not relevant to PC. He noted he would be taking a swathe of documents to the Norfolk Records Office.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 1/10/2024

### **2024.09.03.06 - Finance**

- a) The Clerk presented the finance figures. Balances totalled just under £149K. After 50% of the financial year, 50% of budgeted spending had been made. VAT claim to be done soon for c.£6K.
- b) All expenditure as listed in the pack was approved for payment<sup>1</sup>.

*Prop: Cllr Gardiner; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Cllr Dovey; unanimous*

### **2024.09.03.07 - Planning**

- a) Planning Applications were considered:
  - a. 24/01219 - Part demolition, Internal alterations and two storey and single storey side extensions (Valley Farm House, Valley Farm Road, Brancaster Staithe) – Council agreed to make no objection to this application.
  - b. 24/01491 - Demolition of garage and conservatory, construction of new garage, car port and living room extension and thermal upgrading including new wall and roof finishes and alterations to windows and doors etc (Farthings, Cross Lane, Brancaster) - Council agreed to make no objection to this application.
- b) A late application had been received: 24/01407 - New Dwelling to be used as holiday let (The Nook, 6 Common Lane, Brancaster Staithe). It was agreed to defer this to a Zoom Planning Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September.
- c) Clerk noted a response had been received to the query about 2½ storey buildings. These did not count as third storeys for the purposes of planning decisions.

### **2024.09.03.08 - Delegated decisions etc.**

- a) Delegated planning responses had been sent following the Zoom meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> August. These were published online.

### **2024.09.03.09 - Other matters**

- a) Cllr Borthwick noted she had met the Handyman ref the bike racks, an Asset Group meeting was being sorted to consider next project, and she had delivered the Clerk's letter to the Bell's Charity, which was now under consideration.
- b) It was noted that the Brancaster Play Area report contained no urgent actions. There was £9K in ring-fenced funds for future projects.

### **2024.09.03.10 - Correspondence and requests**

- a) Following a short discussion, the consultation on the Borough Local Plan was noted, without further comment<sup>2</sup>.
- b) Clerk noted he had responded to a request from Ringstead PC ref Neighbourhood Plan Inspectors.
- c) Correspondence about litter/bins on the Beach had been forwarded. It was noted that this had been forwarded to the National Trust – response awaited. Concerns over the NT opposition to designating the Beach as a "Bathing Beach" were expressed – Cllr Gardiner to pursue. Cllr de Winton to request agenda item for Brancaster Commons Committee ref maintenance of the Boardwalk (clarity on reporting issues etc.)

### **2024.09.03.11 - AOB and agenda requests**

- a) Cllr Dovey was asked about watersports activity this summer – lower, possibly due to poor weather.

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<sup>1</sup> See below

<sup>2</sup> Links to this had been put on social media etc., and Members of Public were encouraged to comment, copying Council in.

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 1/10/2024

- b) No agenda items proposed for next meeting.

#### **2024.09.03.12 - Public Comments 2**

- c) Subjects raised were:
- Boardwalk – National Trails role
  - Comments on bins and water quality

#### **2024.09.03.13 - Next meeting**

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as being on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 at 6.30pm in Brancaster Village Hall. A reminder of the Planning Meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> Sept was made.

#### **2024.09.03.14 - Private session**

- a) Council agreed to close the meeting under Standing Orders and relevant legislation due to the nature of the subjects to be discussed.
- b) Council considered the contract and appointment of a new Clerk. There being late suggested changes Council agreed to further discussion. [Cllr Bocking left the meeting]
- c) Council noted and agreed the wording of the final agreement relating to SHADCRA dropping its claim against Council which had been signed by lawyers. [Cllr Borthwick was present for this but took no part in discussion or vote.]

Meeting ended at c.8.20pm

#### **Expenditure:**

| Inv Date | To                         | For           | Amount    | of which VAT | budget      |
|----------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
|          | Community First Responders | donation      | £3,000.00 | £0.00        | s.137       |
| 25/7/24  | Littlejohn                 | Audit         | £504.00   | £84.00       | admin       |
|          | ECS - sep                  | Computer      | tbc       |              | admin       |
|          | Tomato - aug - total       | Streetlights  | tbc       |              | utilities   |
| 12/8/24  | Tony Rout                  | Phone Boxes   | £2,000.00 | £0.00        | reserves    |
| 16/8/24  | Marcus Townshend           | Grass Cutting | £122.50   | £0.00        | open spaces |
| 16/8/24  | Marcus Townshend           | Hedge         | £290.00   | £0.00        | open spaces |
| 22/8/24  | BSBDVH                     | Room Hire     | £30.00    | £0.00        | reserves    |
| 22/8/24  | TT Jones - Oct-Dec         | Streetlights  | £130.80   | £21.80       | utilities   |
|          | Barclaycard                | various       | £72.87    | £12.31       | admin       |
| 30/9/24  | Salaries/tax/NI/pension    | Salaries      | £1,754.26 | £0.00        | salaries    |

Signed:

(Chair)

Date: 1/10/2024

BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL

SUMMARY OF BANK ACCOUNTS 2024/25

DATE: 25/09/2024

|                                                    |                       |                           |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Balance Savings Account                            |                       | £142,050.71               |
| Balance Current Account                            |                       | £8,792.60                 |
| <i>Incomplete Transactions</i>                     |                       | <i>-£3,808.92</i>         |
| <i>Current A/C statement balance</i>               |                       | <i>£12,601.52</i>         |
| Actual Balance                                     |                       | <b><u>£150,843.31</u></b> |
| Balance at start of year                           | Savings               | £173,286.10               |
|                                                    | Current               | £11,457.62                |
|                                                    | Total Barclays        | <b><u>£184,743.72</u></b> |
| Expenditure                                        |                       | £67,282.75                |
| Income                                             | to current            | £32,117.73                |
|                                                    | to savings (interest) | £1,264.61                 |
|                                                    | Balance               | <b><u>£150,843.31</u></b> |
| <i>Outstanding invoices due to BPC</i>             |                       | <i>£0.00</i>              |
| Protected - CIL                                    |                       | £19,160.68                |
| Protected - other ring-fenced                      |                       | £41,970.00                |
| <i>General Funds Available including creditors</i> |                       | <i>£89,712.63</i>         |
|                                                    | check - difference    | £0.00                     |

SPENT AGAINST BUDGET      Financial Year      01/04/24      31/03/25

AS AT      25/09/24      payments until      31/10/24  
% of year      58%

| Budget Area           | 24/25 budget             | spent        | income        | yr balance               | budget bal         | note |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------|
| s.137                 | <b>£8,000.00</b>         | £6,520.00    | £0.00         | <b>£6,520.00</b>         | <b>82%</b>         | 2    |
| Open Spaces           | <b>£8,000.00</b>         | £4,451.28    | £0.00         | <b>£4,451.28</b>         | <b>56%</b>         | 1    |
| Utilities             | <b>£6,500.00</b>         | £3,260.89    | £0.00         | <b>£3,260.89</b>         | <b>50%</b>         | 1    |
| Admin                 | <b>£6,500.00</b>         | £3,220.01    | £0.00         | <b>£3,220.01</b>         | <b>50%</b>         | 1    |
| Salaries              | <b>£23,000.00</b>        | £12,279.82   | £0.00         | <b>£12,279.82</b>        | <b>53%</b>         | 1    |
| Insurance             | <b>£2,500.00</b>         | £2,024.31    | £0.00         | <b>£2,024.31</b>         | <b>81%</b>         | 2    |
| Events                | <b>£1,000.00</b>         | £448.50      | £0.00         | <b>£448.50</b>           | <b>45%</b>         | 1    |
| Biodiversity          | <b>£1,000.00</b>         | £363.39      | £0.00         | <b>£363.39</b>           | <b>36%</b>         | 1    |
| Allowances            | <b>£4,500.00</b>         | £0.00        | £0.00         | <b>£0.00</b>             | <b>0%</b>          | 1    |
| Contingency           | <b>£2,600.00</b>         | £1,769.48    | £0.00         | <b>£1,769.48</b>         | <b>68%</b>         | 3    |
| Miscellaneous         | <b>£0.00</b>             | £1,630.00    | £700.00       | <b>£930.00</b>           |                    |      |
| Total - excl VAT      | <b><u>£63,600.00</u></b> | £35,967.68   | £700.00       | <b><u>£35,267.68</u></b> | <b><u>55%</u></b>  |      |
|                       |                          | <b>spent</b> | <b>income</b> | <b>yr balance</b>        |                    |      |
| <i>Refundable VAT</i> | <i>so far totals</i>     | £1,585.07    | £6,822.71     | -£5,237.64               |                    |      |
| <i>Precept</i>        |                          | £0.00        | £23,320.00    | -£23,320.00              | <i>income only</i> |      |
| <i>Reserves</i>       |                          | £29,730.00   | £2,539.63     | £27,190.37               |                    |      |

|                     |                           |                                               |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>TOTAL SPENT</b>  | <b>£67,282.75</b>         | <i>budgeted, VAT and reserves</i>             |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b> | <b>£33,382.34</b>         | <i>all sources, incl interest to reserves</i> |
| <b>YEAR BALANCE</b> | <b>-£33,900.41</b>        | <i>income less expenditure</i>                |
| <b>YEAR BALANCE</b> | <b><u>-£33,900.41</u></b> | <i>balance excluding ring-fenced/CIL</i>      |

Notes:

0 - on target - no concern

1 - under - no concern

2 - over - large items - no concern

3 - over - monitor - main item defibrillator

4 - spent - further expenditure to come from reserves

5 - no set miscellaneous budget: used for monies going in and out and grants, or where allocation tbc

NB CIL money into reserves which is not accessible for everyday spending = £0.00

**BRANCASTER PARISH COUNCIL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE - FOR OCT PAYMENT****EXPENDITURE**

| Date    | Ref   | To                   | For          | Amount    | of which VAT | budget      |
|---------|-------|----------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| 5/9/24  | DD    | Tomato - A - jul/aug | Streetlights | £77.76    | £3.70        | utilities   |
| 5/9/24  | DD    | Tomato - B - jul/aug | Streetlights | £419.02   | £19.95       | utilities   |
| 5/9/24  | DD    | Tomato - C - jul/aug | Streetlights | £53.07    | £2.53        | utilities   |
| 10/9/24 | M-7/5 | Marshall & Williams  | BVH painting | £2,400.00 | £400.00      | reserves    |
| 10/9/24 | clerk | Noticeboard company  | Locks        | £32.96    | £5.49        | contingency |

| Date     | Ref      | To                      | For           | Amount    | of which VAT | budget         |
|----------|----------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|
|          | DD       | ECS - oct               | Computer      | £38.40    | £6.40        | admin          |
|          | DD       | Tomato - sep - tbc      | Streetlights  |           |              | utilities      |
| 31/8/24  | M-1/10   | Heronwood               | Grass Cutting | £262.00   | £0.00        | open spaces    |
|          | M-1/10   | TT Jones - tbc          | Streetlights  |           |              | utilities/cont |
|          | DD       | Barclaycard (£101.68?)  | various       |           |              | admin          |
| 31/10/24 | contract | Salaries/tax/NI/pension | Salaries      | £1,754.26 | £0.00        | salaries       |

| INCOME |  |           |                     |           |       |            |
|--------|--|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-------|------------|
|        |  | VAT claim | Refund              | £6,822.71 | £0.00 | VAT refund |
|        |  | UKPN      | Wayleave-substation | £265.02   | £0.00 | reserves   |

Notes of a virtual meeting of Councillors to consider Planning Matters.

The meeting was held on 17/9/2024, using Zoom.

As this was not a formal meeting, decisions could not be made – it was merely to advise the Clerk on responses when not able to be determined in Full Council.

**Present:** Cllrs B Bax, C Borthwick, V Carpenter, T de Winton, W Gardiner  
Clerk (taking notes) and 1 Member of the Public<sup>1</sup>

- 1) Once Cllr de Winton was able to connect, he took over as Chairman.
- 2) To note apologies for absence – none.
- 3) Declarations of interest – none.
- 4) To receive comments from the Public on Applications - these were included during relevant items.
- 5) To consider the following Planning Applications:
  - a) 24/01407 - New Dwelling to be used as holiday let (The Nook, 6 Common Lane, Brancaster Staithe) – there was extensive discussion, and some confusion, on this item. The Agent confirmed that they would look at the plans again, particularly ref parking. Cllrs voted to raise no objection to this Application. (2 for, 1 against and 3 abstaining).
  - b) 24/01536 - Installation of 10kw Vaillant aroTHERM plus air source heat pump at rear of building, in position shown on enclosed plan (South View, Main Road, Brancaster) – Cllrs raised no objection to this Application.
  - c) 24/01167 - Extensions, alterations & remodelling of dwelling and proposed outbuilding (3 Saw Mill Road, Brancaster). There was an extended discussion on this, with participation from the Agent, who requested further discussion with Cllrs about what they wanted from developers – they were invited to request a separate meeting. Cllrs objected to this application on grounds of being overbearing, design, and being out of keeping with the surrounding properties.
  - d) 24/01554 - Application for listed building consent for internal plaster work and dampproofing to 1m high; removal and replacement of first floor partitions; repointing of external brickwork (Harbour Cottage, Harbour Way, Brancaster) – Cllrs raised no objection to this Application.
  - e) Consider any applications arriving later than those listed if requested - none
- 6) To note any other Planning matters – none, though there was during the meeting discussion of declarations of interest relating to planning matters.

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<sup>1</sup> Another attendee appeared, but refused to speak, show face or identify themselves on request. They were not excluded, but left when questioned.

I note your request for as many of the Councillors as possible to attend a meeting with us so that we can address all concerns and wishes. Whilst I understand your good intent, from past experience, this approach is unfortunately fraught with many problems. With so many differing opinions, it is typically difficult to reach agreement or consensus, risking further delays and additional costs. Much time and effort has already been used to get to the point we are today. I've held site meetings with the sign manufacturers, and we've spent time designing and amending the proposals following discussions between us.

If you are keen to get this scheme up and running before there are any changes within the parish council, I feel we must now decide to proceed with the following design as detailed below. This design is based, where possible, on all of the comments passed to us, and is coupled with our knowledge and experience as highway engineers as to what can and can't happen on the highway. Whatever the solution, however good and effective it is, I don't want the parish council to believe that the queuing will not still take place at times. It must be remembered the signs are only warning of a hazard on the highway, they are not mandatory signs. We are not closing or preventing the use of the highway should drivers still want to use the highway. Many people will be aware of the flooding but equally they will be aware that the flooding is only temporary. Those that are unaware of the flooding may still try to gain access and be prepared to wait. We would hope that there will be some reduction in traffic volumes, but there will undoubtedly be some congestion at times. The purpose of the signing is to give the public localised advanced notification so that they can decide to choose an alternative destination should they wish.

I am therefore proposing to obtain a price for the following design solution:

#### **LOCATION MAP**



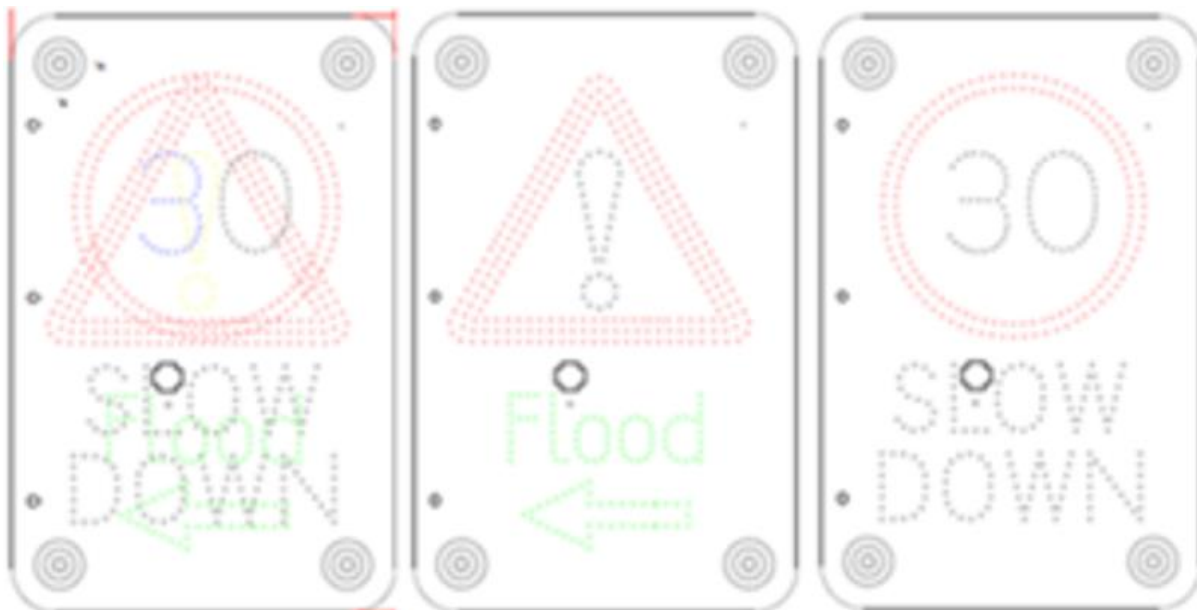


## 1. Flood sensor

- The depth probe will be positioned in a suitable location, as determined by the contractor, as close to the culvert as is possible.
- The probe will be calibrated to make the signs flash when the saltwater starts to flow over the surface of the carriageway.
- The probe can be re-calibrated remotely in the future should you wish to give more/less warning time.

## 2. Flashing LED signs – Dual purpose Flood warning & Speed warning signs

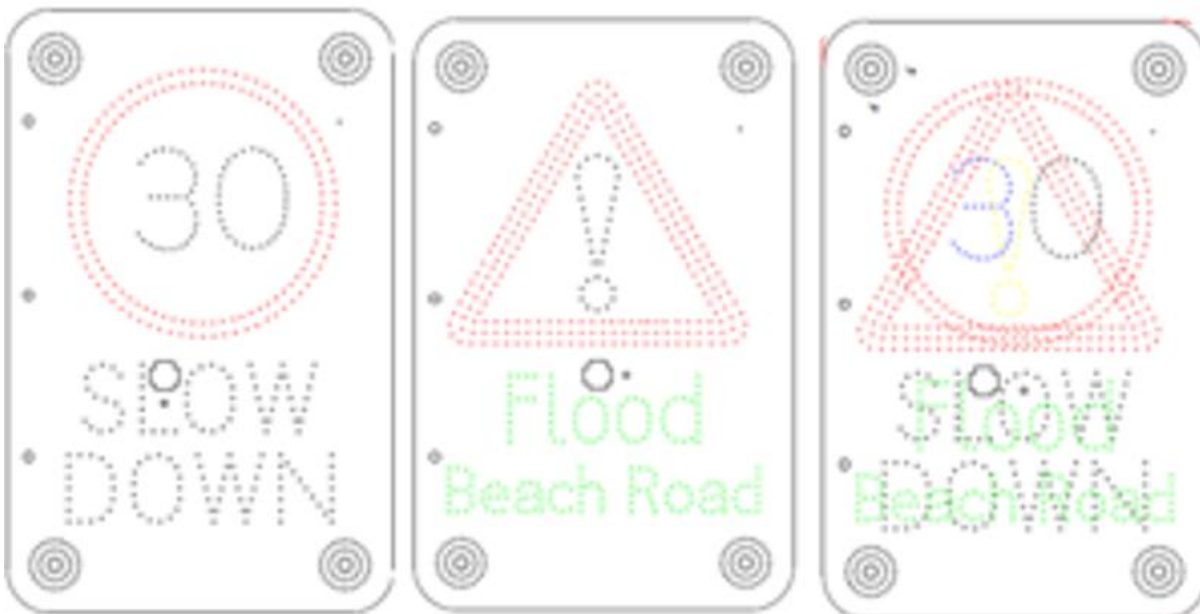
**SITE 1**



## SITE 2



### SITE 3



Our limited available resources are working hard on many other schemes, and generally with a lot less overall design time and costs for a scheme of this size. I hope you will appreciate a great deal of effort and costs at our expense have been involved in getting to the current position. Once I've obtained a quotation from Westcotec, I will contact you again to see if the Parish Council wishes to proceed with this scheme as designed above. Should the Parish Council decide against this proposal I have to make you aware that we will not be able to carry out any more design modifications unless of course the Parish Council is willing to provide the funding.

## **The CPRE Norfolk Responses**

### **Chapter 3. Planning for the homes we need**

#### **Question 7: Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to continually demonstrate 5 years of specific, deliverable sites for decision making purposes, regardless of plan status?**

We have major concerns regarding this proposal. In our view they will serve overall to actively frustrate, rather than deliver, the government's stated manifesto objective of delivering the 'biggest increase in social and affordable housing in a generation', an objective which in principle we support. The restoration of the five year housing land supply rule and 5% buffer will only benefit large builders, leading to speculative proposals for development in what would normally be seen as unsuitable locations.

#### **Question 9: Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to add a 5% buffer to their 5-year housing land supply calculations?**

We have major concerns regarding this proposal. In our view they will serve overall to actively frustrate, rather than deliver, the government's stated manifesto objective of delivering the 'biggest increase in social and affordable housing in a generation', an objective which in principle we support. The restoration of the five year housing land supply rule and 5% buffer will only benefit large builders, leading to speculative proposals for development in what would normally be seen as unsuitable locations.

#### **Question 14: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?**

It would be far better if the builders were required to develop their land banked sites. According to the Competition and Markets Authority (November 2023) the 11 largest housebuilders own or control an estimated 1.17 million land plots across more than 5,800 sites in Britain that have not been built out. The government should insist that these land banked sites are built out before any new sites are allocated. CPRE Norfolk has argued consistently for the phasing of housing whereby existing allocations have to be developed first (161 parish and town councils in Norfolk support us on this). Phasing of sites in this way should be included in a reformed NPPF.

The NPPF should more effectively encourage the regeneration of inner cities (and protect countryside from development) by encouraging the conversion of redundant office and retail space into residential usage.

### **Chapter 4. A new standard method for assessing local housing needs**

#### **Question 19: Do you have any additional comments on the proposed method for assessing housing needs?**

We particularly disagree with the elements of the proposed new method which simplistically equate increasing the affordability of housing with increasing planned levels of supply in a given area. Given the dominance of the big six housebuilders and their control over the rate at which suitable housing land is developed, this assumption is fundamentally flawed and has been patently ineffective in the ten years or so since it has been established in planning policy.

The government should drop its plan to reintroduce compulsory targets - this is not a sensible or effective policy: it did not work in the past and it will not work now. It is a policy based on the mistaken belief that requiring local authorities to allocate even more sites for new housing will speed up the rate at which new houses are built, whereas in reality it merely increases the size of the developers' land banks. For example, in Norfolk, compulsory housing targets led to the local planning authorities setting unnecessarily high targets and making an excessive number of site allocations (mostly greenfield) to accommodate those targets. As developers only build what they can sell they cherry pick the most desirable sites (often in rural areas) and land bank the rest. As a result, previous mandatory targets have not been met - in the Greater Norwich area alone sites for 30,000 houses were not built out during the term of the Joint Core Strategy plan and have been "rolled over" in to the new plan (the recently adopted GNLP). The planners had done their job: it was the builders who were blocking the development of sites in order to maximise profits by building only what they were able to sell at the highest possible price. Compulsory targets merely lead to the penalisation of local authorities and they are not the guilty party.

### **Chapter 5. Brownfield, grey belt and the Green Belt**

**Question 20: Do you agree that we should make the proposed change set out in paragraph 124c, as a first step towards brownfield passports?**

CPRE Norfolk is pleased to see the proposed move towards a 'brownfield first' approach, prioritising the development of previously land. New housing developments should be directed to brownfield sites first, with research from CPRE demonstrating there is sufficient brownfield capacity to deliver 1.2 million homes. (CPRE State of Brownfield Report, December 2022, using brownfield register data from 344 local authorities in England)

Nevertheless, regard must still be given to heritage, ecological and biodiversity constraints as well as transport, flood risk etc. When determining applications for new homes on brownfield sites. The requirement for technical evidence to support new development should not be weakened.

### **Chapter 6. Delivering affordable, well-designed homes and places**

**Question 47: Do you agree with setting the expectation that local planning authorities should consider the particular needs of those who require Social Rent when undertaking needs assessments and setting policies on affordable housing requirements?**

We support the recognition and introduction of the need for new social rented homes in policy. This aligns with our recent research around the need for greater numbers of rural affordable housing, in particular, social rented homes. (CPRE Norfolk, Affordable Housing in Norfolk: how far are aims and needs being met? December 2023.) However, it is difficult to see, without minimum targets, how the aspiration to deliver greater numbers of social rented homes will be met.

**Question 54: What measures should we consider to better support and increase rural affordable housing?**

The NPPF should better facilitate the creation of small-scale rural exception sites (RES) for social rented housing in villages as the best way to provide social rented housing in villages. At present in Norfolk, insufficient RESs are coming forward, resulting in a failure to deliver much-needed rural social rented affordable housing. This appears to be partly as Local Plans are



increasingly allowing some market-housing to be built adjacent to settlement boundaries, likely leading to landowners holding on to land for such market housing, rather than for RESs at less profit. Also, there are indications that registered providers of affordable housing are struggling to provide new affordable units at the necessary and needed rates, due to a number of factors, not least the costs in maintaining existing properties. This leads us to believe that more needs to be done to enable LPAs to deliver social rented affordable housing.

Likewise, the provision of social rented housing needs to be prioritised further, because the linking of affordable housing provision to the building of market housing has failed to provide (particularly rural) communities in Norfolk with genuinely affordable homes.

A further factor which has an indirect effect on the number of affordable dwellings being available and constructed is likely to be the number of properties which are either second homes or holiday homes. This is due in part to the likely profit for these types of ownership when compared to releasing these properties as affordables, and also due to the knock-on effects on the property market in general when the supply of market houses is limited. In the three Norfolk LPAs most affected by this issue, King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth and North Norfolk, the percentages of second homes are 2.9%, 4.5% and 5.8% respectively (2021 census data, Office for National Statistics.) The number of vacant dwellings is also an issue, particularly in King's Lynn and West Norfolk and North Norfolk, with figures of 6.9% and 8.9% respectively (2021 census data, Office for National Statistics.) These figures are supported by further information released by North Norfolk District Council, with 7,169 second and holiday homes as of 1 April, 2022, second homes representing 8% (4,508) of council tax paying homes, and holiday homes representing 4.5% (2,661) of all homes (council tax homes plus holiday homes liable for business rates) (*the possible impacts of second and holiday homes in North Norfolk*, NNDC, 20 July 2022.)

**Question 61: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?**

We would like to stress the following:

- National Policy should redefine what is meant by 'affordable housing', so that discounted market housing and starter homes are removed from the definition, unless these categories are clearly linked to average local incomes and not just property prices.
- Clear, unambiguous and binding targets should be set for affordable housing, particularly for social rented dwellings.
- Greater government support is required to deliver affordable housing on rural exception sites, which would enable small scale affordable housing schemes to be built on the edge of rural settlements. This should include policy changes at national (and local level) to make it easier for such sites to come forward and to make it harder for other types of development in these locations to take place, in addition to the greater provision of grant funding for rural exception sites.
- Restrictions on the resale of affordable housing stock across rural parishes should be extended and enforced, so that these properties continue to be occupied by local residents, and not as second or holiday homes.

**Chapter 8. Delivering community needs**

**Question 71: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?**

We would like to see emphasis placed within the NPPF on the need for providing disabled (or less-abled) friendly public transport, which should be mandated for all new housing developments. This would probably be best inserted into current NPPF para. 108 (new para. 106) alongside the need to identify and pursue public transport.

When considering a hierarchy of sustainable transport, electric/renewable-powered water transport should come high in any such list.

## **Chapter 9. Supporting green energy and the environment**

### **Question 86: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?**

Climate change poses a great threat and CPRE Norfolk supports de-carbonising energy production through increasing the supply of renewable energy. However, this should not be achieved at the expense of the countryside. With good planning and sensible decision making it is possible to deliver a mix of renewable energy solutions of the “right” scale and in the “right” locations. We strongly suggest the following actions:

- Promote the inclusion in the NPPF of the national CPRE campaign objective to prioritise roof top solar energy production – there really is no need to sacrifice countryside for solar farms.
- Promote via the NPPF the use of small scale and community owned onshore wind schemes involving new micro wind harvesting technologies to avoid the negative impact of large-scale turbines on the landscape. The best way forward for onshore wind would be to decouple its production from the national grid and for it to involve numerous small scale local schemes owned and operated by the community. Each village could, for example, have a small turbine (e.g. less than 40metres high) and use it to power a community facility (e.g. a village hall). Coupled with the widespread employment of new micro generation wind harvesting machines to help power houses and businesses the cumulative impact of such schemes on onshore wind production would be considerable. This approach would have a minimal impact on the landscape and is preferable to the widespread employment of large-scale turbines which would cause unsightly visual intrusion over large areas of countryside (the average height of current offshore turbines exceeds 200 metres to blade tip). Proposals for large turbines in Norfolk (and elsewhere) have in the recent past caused much distress and opposition. The best way to secure community support for onshore wind is for it to be done at the right scale in the right places and to not return to a situation where huge turbines are placed in farmers’ fields.
- The re-instatement in the NPPF of a requirement for community support before onshore wind proposals can proceed. The removal of the 2 footnotes (NPPF footnotes 57 and 58) that provided local communities with a meaningful voice in on-shore wind decisions is regrettable. The NPPF should require (or at least recommend) the use of Parish Polls to democratically ascertain if an onshore wind proposal is supported by a majority of the local population most directly affected. If the proposal does not receive majority support it should not be permitted.
- The NPPF should require that the long-distance transmission of energy is facilitated by offshore grid connections or by the burying of cables. and not via pylon routes.
- The NPPF should specifically preclude the use of financial inducements as a means by which developers proposing an onshore wind scheme or other significant development attempt to overcome the opposition of those most affected by the proposals. The planning system must

operate according to sound planning principles and policies and not be influenced by the use of “bribes”.

- The NPPF should require all new buildings to be carbon neutral and provide for substantially greater funding to be made available for schemes to increase the energy efficiency of existing buildings.

## **Chapter 12. The future of planning policy and plan making**

### **105: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?**

The creation of the planning system is one of the major achievements of post war Britain. It was designed to prevent urban sprawl and is still very much needed in this regard. Unfortunately, planners are often unfairly criticised by some politicians.

In Norfolk we know that the blocking of housing development has not been caused by the planners. It is the builders who are the blockers, for example having failed to develop allocated sites for 30,000 houses in the Greater Norwich area. It is not a good idea to weaken the planning system, or to reduce the role of local communities in decision making.

- Proposals in recent years to create growth areas where planning rules would not apply must be resisted.
- The NPPF should re-introduce regional planning. This could enable the special features of an area to be recognised as important considerations in the plan making process. The relatively few remaining parts of lowland England which are still mainly rural in character, e.g. Norfolk, that act as the “green lungs” of the nation deserve better protection. Not everywhere has to be equally suburbanised - that is not good planning. Please support: reforming and strengthening the planning system to ensure that our countryside, landscape and environment are properly protected
- The NPPF should support a strengthening of community involvement in all planning decisions – local democracy is a key element in the planning process and must be respected.