

## Report to Playford Parish Annual Meeting from the Parish Plan Steering Group

On 8 April 2007, a meeting of around 100 residents of Great Bealings, Little Bealings and Playford agreed to establish a Joint Steering Group to develop a parish plan for the 3 parishes. It was not decided that a single, joint, plan would be created, nor a single action plan – however, it was the aim that the consultation exercise would be a co-operative one between the 3 parishes. That said, the idea of a joint plan and action plan was not ruled out.

It was agreed to establish a steering group of 15 people, 5 from each parish. The first meeting of the steering group was held on 22 May 2007, where it was agreed to rotate the chairmanship of the meetings around the 3 parishes.

The initial work of the steering group centred around appointing officers (secretary, treasurer, minutes secretary, etc.), agreeing a constitution, establishing working groups to develop a residents' questionnaire and to consult with other stakeholders and to create a budget and timetable. Agreeing a budget with Suffolk ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) – who are the main funders of the plan – took a while, but the steering group eventually settled on a budget of about £3,900. This was funded by a contribution of £200 from Brooks and Wood, £180 contribution in kind from the Admiral's Head, £100 from councillor Bellfield's locality budget, and around £200 from the Parish Councils, with the rest of the amount being met from ACRE from its income from DEFRA.

In November, the steering group held a number of open meetings to allow residents to say what they believe to be the key issues that a Parish Plan should tackle. These consultation exercises were used to drive the creation of draft surveys/questionnaires to allow residents to express their view on a variety of issues. It's perhaps appropriate at this point to be clear that parish plans are aimed at investigating residents' needs that are far wider than planning in the sense of buildings and land and planning permission. Whilst the draft survey contains a few questions on local planning, it's also looking at transport, traffic, the environment, schools and local services, to name but a few.

The survey has now been piloted and the data gathered from it is in the process of being analysed to see whether we need to change the survey further. We plan to distribute it by hand to all households and residents, with the assistance of the people who volunteered to help. We aim to get something like an 80% return rate.

We also have a process of discussing the needs of local stakeholders, based on face-to-face and telephone interviews. This information will also feed into the plan.

Our aim is to complete the plan, and the action plan associated with it, sometime during mid-2008.



Phil Holmes  
Steering Group Secretary  
6 May 2008