

Sandon Village Design Statement Association

Minutes of Meeting 28 January 2008 @ 8.00pm held at 9 Chalklands

Those present:

Cllr. David Pearson – Chairman
Neville Jessop – Vice-chairman
Cllr. Dianne Neal
Dennis Terry
Marjorie Ferguson
Sue Dobson
Jenny Robinson CBC
Stella Meesters RCCE

1. Questionnaire

Draft 2 was a cut-down version of the original draft. Questions about services etc. are not relevant to the VDS.

No. of questions. Not critical provided they are relevant.

It is important to test the questionnaire before distribution.

Parish Plan/VDS. A Parish Plan is a lot more work than a VDS. Questions need to be relevant to a VDS. The latest draft goes in the right direction. Questions can be included that are not VDS questions but it must be made clear that they are not VDS questions and the reason for including them must be explained. Any such questions must have a particular purpose.

Questions should not be leading. Stock questionnaire is all statements but it is not finished. It is expected that it will ask for agreement/disagreement.

The questions should be couched so that the results can be quantified. The number of open-ended questions must be kept to a minimum. The vast majority of questions must be tick-box type.

Comments from the photo-fun day and exhibition are a good starting point for selecting questions but the committee can add their own and use questions from other VDS groups that they consider relevant. Make sure you can do something with the answer to each question. Do not ask questions that will raise people's hopes unnecessarily. On the other hand, unless it is recorded that something is desirable, it will not happen. Obtaining grants is often dependant on demand from the community.

The VDS is a part of the planning hierarchy comprising, from the top: Government policy, Regional policy, Borough Council policy, VDS. As a supplementary planning document, our VDS will act as formal guidance for the planners. There are examples of the VDS being used to decide on matters by the planners and inspectors. The VDS becomes 'Material Consideration' for planning matters.

To be adopted by borough council planners, the VDS must fit in with planning system. VDS must be positive in suggesting improvements.

Ensure that questions fit in with but do not repeat policy that is already included in Core Strategy.

Question answers should be graded Agree to Strongly Disagree. Be consistent.

Four tick boxes prevent 'don't know' answers. Questions must be clear.

Jamie has commented that some early questions were too protectionist regarding open countryside.

Public Realm. This is the area between public buildings.

Jenny agreed to check on the status of Sandon quarry.

We must keep a record of any sources of information.

For RCCE grants, members should keep a record of time spent on the project.

2. Next Meeting

7 pm 18 February 2008 at 9 Chalklands, Howe Green