

Datchet Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Meeting Notes

Date & Time	Tuesday 27 th July 2020 10.00 – 11.15am, to discuss TVERC survey
Venue	Video conference meeting
Attendees	Fiona Cryle, Marjorie Clasper, Jo Stickland and Alison Crampin
Secretary	Jane Simpson
Guest	Georgie Ellis – Wild About Datchet

Agenda Item		Action
1.	<u>Apologies for absence and announcements</u> None received.	
2.	<u>Green and blue environment</u>	
2.1	Alison welcomed Georgie to the meeting who had received the TVERC papers. Wild About Datchet has agreed to work with DNPSG on the environmental sections of the DNP. GE thought that the TVERC survey seemed old and needed updating. FC had been told by TVERC that generally the surveys are not updated if they cannot get permission to access the site from the landowners. It was thought unlikely that Thames Water or the council would deny access to the reservoir or Upton Park. At the end of the Biodiversity Report, there is a Priority Habitats Map which shows several sites including in north Datchet and around Churchmead but it does not contain much information other than that they are S41 Habitats. (See National Environmental and Rural Communities Act, Section 41.)	
2.2	AC asked if GE knew whether the land in the Colne Valley Regional Park had any extra protection and asked if GE had a contact. GE agreed to get a contact name and send it on. It would be good to see if CVRP have its own wildlife records. GE said that WAD colleagues Hannah Needham or Peter Firth might also have contacts.	GE
2.3	The Priority Habitats were discussed. One is around the boundary of Churchmead School. JSt advised that an area had just been left for the wildlife and was out of bounds. She said that deer, foxes, owls, hawks and other creatures had been observed there. GE confirmed that it was essential to have land like that available and should be left where people can't access. JSt. said she would speak to her colleague who runs the Eco-group at the school for more information and possibly a site visit. GE said she would be happy to be involved. AC thought that these Priority Habitats might help DNP to justify Green Corridors.	JSt.

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2.4	<p>Chris Bowden had told us that justifying Green Corridors is difficult. We can't refer to them generically, we have to identify them. AC asked GE if she knew what we need to do to justify green corridors. GE advised that there was a lot of information on the Wildlife Trust and Living Landscapes websites. AC said CB had told us that a green corridor could also be considered in the draft site allocation. Definitely said GE.</p> <p>CB had also advised us that we can ask that new development includes wildlife-friendly features such as hedgehog fencing and bird/bat boxes etc.</p>	
2.5	<p>Policies on wildlife and biodiversity will have most weight if they are locally specific. Chris said there is a new national policy requirement for development to provide net gains in biodiversity but, in terms of how this is achieved, developers haven't got the first clue. If they can't achieve net gain on site, they can invest in specific improvements elsewhere within Datchet. But that only works if we say what improvements are needed and how they will benefit biodiversity – so advice from GE was sought.</p>	
2.6	<p>AC asked how we can improve our verges. GE said they needed less frequent mowing, only twice a year, to encourage wildflowers. (GE thought this was in July and October, possibly twice in the Autumn.)</p> <p>With regard to key movement routes, the NP can look at how these can be enhanced, perhaps by planting trees and shrubs at lower levels to absorb pollution. GE advised that WAD had started a project to plant wild flowers along the HaHa in Horton Road with John Padwick turning up the ground. GE said that she would pursue this again and check permissions were in place with DPC. AC made the point that it's DRCCT not DPC land. DPC maintains it.</p> <p>GE agreed to read through the TVERC document again and email some suggestions for going forward.</p> <p>MC thought that part of the hedgerow along Southlea Road were worth protecting as parts were very ancient and if the RTS ever materialised then they would be at risk. MC investigating.</p>	<p>GE</p> <p>GE</p> <p>MC</p>
2.7	<p>AC raised the Blue Environment areas of the village. It was thought that many of these could be enhanced. GE thought that there was a lot of scope to enhance the recreation ground ditch, and that people were becoming more aware of river/water pollution which hopefully will see a decline in rubbish being dumped there. We need to remember the Datchet Common Brook needed protection. Its course was not properly recorded on the TVERC map and in the text it was referred to as 'a short stretch of stream'.</p>	
2.8	<p>We agreed it was important to record the Local Wildlife Sites in our NP so new development recognises their importance and is designed sensitively. These sites include Upton Court Park, the Reservoir, and the gravel pits and areas around Windsor View Lakes and Liquid Leisure.</p>	

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2.9	<p>The Land at Mill Place has paths mown through the area and the rest is left untouched. GE thought the rest should be left undisturbed for wildlife. WAD has done wildlife surveys in this area.</p> <p>GE was pleased that DPC had proposed planting 125 trees. She supported planting new trees near older trees for succession planting rather than planting new woods of one species. The Wildlife Trust had recommended types of trees. Also more hedgerows are required as they are really important for wildlife.</p> <p>AC mentioned that we have a copy of the proposed habitats work and survey done by the Wildlife Trusts for the DPC land alongside the railway line. This was prepared for a grant application which was turned down.</p> <p>AC thanked GE for her time and wished her well in her new job.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>4.30pm on 12th August 2020 by video link</p> <p>JSt said that she has a Zoom account – if she set up the meeting we would not need to keep rejoining every 40 minutes.</p>	JSt