

Minutes of the Newmarket Vision Community Planning Delivery Group

held on 21 May, 2015 at 10.00am
Council Chamber, Newmarket Town Council

Present:

Cllr Rachel Hood (Chair)
Cllr Michael Jefferys
Sara Beckett
John Durrant
Graeme Lockey

Michael Robinson
John Smithson
Julian Wilson
Rachel Wood
Christine Rush

Apologies received from William Gittus, Richard Fletcher, Marie Smith, Robert Feakes, Quentin Cass, Claire Elbrow, Kim Langley and Andrew Burton.

1. Review of minutes dated 14 April, 2015 and matters arising

Michael Jefferys asked that the minutes be amended as he had given apologies for the last meeting. The rest of the content was agreed as correct.

Open Spaces

- JS has met with Studlands Residents Association. A general maintenance discussion was had and their views on Public Open Space will be fed into the Consultation.
- The redundant buildings in the Orchard area are seemingly left over from the Americans. JS has put in an order to demolish these buildings. This will open up the space for the wider community and transform it from a very unattractive area to a desirable area for all to enjoy and will help to prevent undesirable behaviour; but mindful of keeping it an interesting ecological resource.
- GoWild will be consulted on a potential map and branding showing the walk from the Orchard area, through to woodland, George Lambton playing fields, the Green, etc.
- JS reiterated that he had met with Jeff Horner (Flood defence) and agreed they would liaise over water course information that will go into plan.
- Richard Fletcher, at a previous meeting, had asked that JS identify what small pieces of work that could be achieved. JS said that this would be forthcoming when his report was finalised. MJ asked if there was merit in setting up a working group? RH thought that this is something the delivery group would like to keep ownership of and that JS had done so much work on this already. The meeting agreed for JS to continue to update the delivery group as JS leading on this piece of work.
- The question of funding was raised by MJ. JS currently tidying up allocated funding for signage for GoWild with the hope of extra further along the way.
- JS stated there are 18 bridges over Number One Drain. JS provided a hand out showing four pictures which were discussed:
 1. Entrance from town on Exeter Road; cycleway signage and wrong placement of litter bin; JS needs to check if any other route is better for the entrance.
 2. Willie Snaith Road (crosses cycle route) - still problems over ownership of the Green on left of the picture. Historically FHDC have always cut the grass, but not owned by FHDC, further investigation required.

3. Cycle path/footpath and ditch – Guy Smith and Suzanne Buck, SCC may know who owns this piece of land.
 4. Last picture of bridge number 18, leading to Studlands Sports and Social Club has been dredged as part of the flood defence plan.
- Interestingly JS has found that Icknield Way has noteworthy link to Newmarket and apparently there was an Anglo Saxon river where No.1 drain is.
- http://www.icknieldwaytrail.org.uk/IW_Trail_Leaflet3.pdf

The alternative route takes riders into **Newmarket (12)**, for three centuries the national home of flat racing. The town owes its status largely to the capacity of the surrounding chalk downland to provide extensive areas of elastic turf ideal for horse racing and training.

Entering the town, the route passes along the Horse Walks, which means that you can travel through the middle of the town avoiding the main street. It is advisable not to use these walks until after 1pm, because of the strings of racehorses which use them each morning. These morning training sessions and walk-outs provide an impressive spectacle for onlookers. Newmarket is home to the National Stud, and the National Horse Racing Museum, both of which are open to the public.

After Newmarket, the bridleway leads north and eastwards to Chippenham and then east again to **Herringwell (13)** where the two Riders Routes rejoin each other. The Herringwell church, rebuilt after a fire in 1869, is dedicated to St Erhelbert, King of East Anglia, who was beheaded by Offa, King of Mercia in 792.

At **Tuddenham (14)** look out for the interesting sundial on the village green.

In Suffolk **Cavenham Heath (15)**, bisected by the Icknield Way, is a National Nature Reserve noted for the many national and local rare plants growing here and its varied habitats: heath, grassland, woodland and fen. It is one of the few remaining cow-estand dunes in Britain, and the best example of its kind in the Breckland, with its unique landscape of large sandy fields separated by windbreaks of gnarled Scots pine.

At **Temple Bridge (16)** the Icknield Way crosses the former Lark Navigation. Originally set up in the late nineteenth century, it allowed barges to navigate from the Great Ouse north of Ely to Bury St Edmunds.

Icklingham (17), on the north bank of the River Lark, is an area steeped in history. Iron Age brooches and coins have been found here and these together with the important Roman/Christian church are shown on the village sign.

West Stow Country Park (18) is a reconstructed Anglo-Saxon village based on detailed archaeological excavations. Four sunken-floored huts and a wooden hall have been built, which give an accurate impression of what a small Saxon village may have looked like.

King's Forest (19) is an area of coniferous woodland commemorating King George V, and forms part of Thetford Forest, the largest lowland forest in England. Relatively barren sandy soil, the legacy of prehistoric agricultural occupants, is interspersed with belts of old pine and broadleaved trees, which host a variety of wildlife. The route here crosses the ancient Icknield Way trackway, which in prehistoric times headed north for the Norfolk coast, but in Saxon and medieval times was drawn to Thetford.

The small estate village of **Easton (20)** was described by Daniel Defoe as "a place capable of all that is pleasant and delightful in Nature and improved by art to every extreme that Nature is able to produce". The 18th century Easton Hall, whose grounds were landscaped by John Evelyn and William Kent, is home to the Duke of Grafton.

The focus of long distance routes in Suffolk is **Knettishall Heath Country Park (21)**. The Country Park covers some 400 acres of heather and grass heathland, woodland and riverside meadows, much of which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Around the Park are waymarked walks and a permissive horse route.

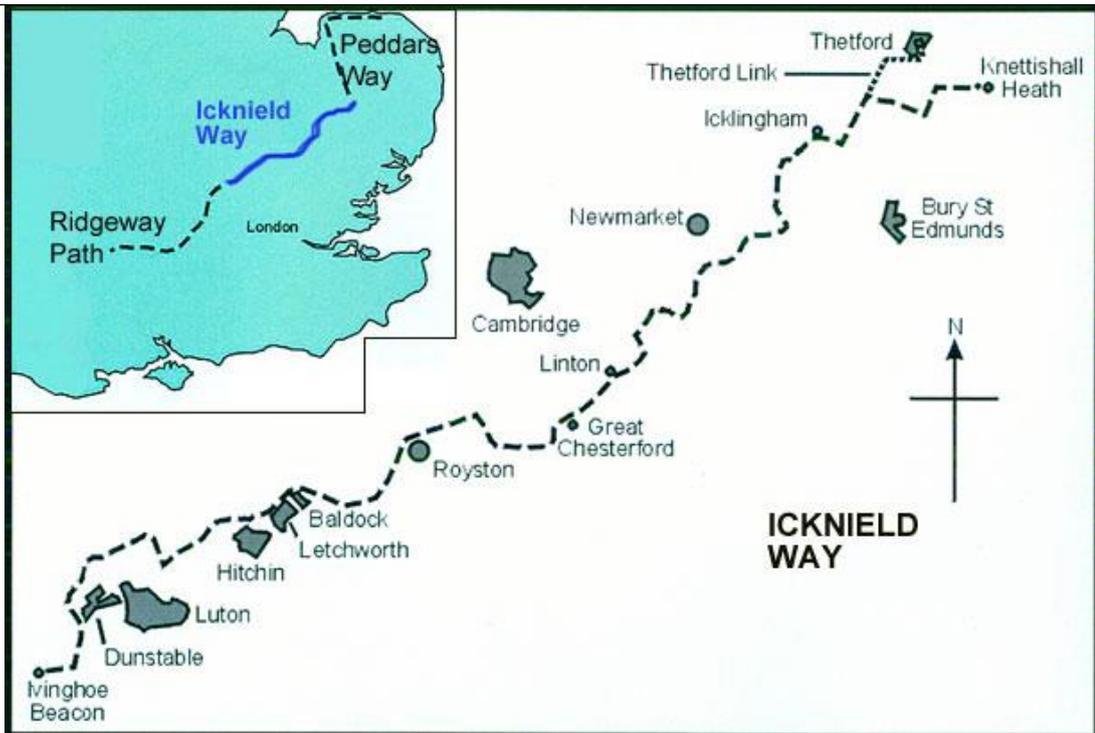
The Icknield Way route continues to **Riddlesworth Hall School (22)** via a ford in the Little Ouse River. After very wet weather, especially in winter, the ford is not recommended. The alternative route would be via Gasthorpe and through the forest.

Please note that riders need permission from the Forestry Commission to use this alternative route, tel: 0342 810271.

Please take care crossing the A11 dual carriageway (23).

At the railway line (24) riders must telephone for clearance and obey the signalman's instructions.

The Icknield Way Riders Route ends at **Roudham Heath (25)** where the Peddars Way Horsedens Route can be joined and followed to the North Norfolk Coast (see Introduction).



RW stated that in the past she was a volunteer with GoWild projects. RW does not believe that the public right of way is widely known although there has been some complaints about the upkeep and use of the area.

JD stated that the group should attempt to create enthusiasm and get the community wanting to take ownership of this area and to look after it.

The meeting talked of raising awareness via local media.

JS warned not to raise expectations too soon. JS has started consulting and once the management plan has been completed and small projects arise, then the media can be involved; but JS thought it was too early as yet. JS envisaged autumn, when plan is in draft format. RH thought that Mark Beaumont, West Suffolk Communications Officer could do a small press release to raise general awareness that work was progressing in this area. JS stated that he would provide MB with appropriate material and the West Suffolk Parks email address:

parks@westsuffolk.gov.uk could be used in the communique to encourage the community to get involved and come up with suggestions for re-naming the No. 1 Drain, plus welcome general comments and views all to assist and form part of the consultation process.

JS will have a better idea of what is required once report is written, then it can be broken down into manageable projects. Plus flooding management, grounds management. Jeff Horner's plan will tie into JS plan naturally.

Action: RH asked JS to arrange a draft press release and draft key points of the management plan and potential progress timeline.

- An email update was circulated to the group, provided by John Smithson, after the meeting that JS had spoken to Guy Smith of SCC on his return to the office and that Guy Smith will be carrying out a tidy up shortly of the left spoil from the dredging works that took place last winter.

Town Centre Public Access Buildings

An email update had been circulated by William Gittus prior to the meeting:

- WAG sent his apologies for the delay in responding to QC and stated that there is still a possibility from the Jockey Club Estates perspective of NHRM being occupied by various public bodies and will send a rough idea of lease terms to QC shortly.

2. Affordable Housing - no further update provided.

3. Meeting ended at 10.55am

Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting to commence.

4. Next Meeting of the NV Community Planning Delivery Group:

Thursday, 25 June, 2015 at 10:00am.

Please Note 27th July Meeting will commence 10.00am at ThingmeBobs for a '*walk and talk with John Smithson*' along what is currently known as the Yellow Brick Road. Please wear suitable footwear and clothing. The NV Community Planning Delivery Group will return to the Town Council offices to complete normal business.

Red solid line denotes 'Yellow Brick Road', Newmarket

