

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE –Spring 2014**

What progress recently, many of you will be asking! Well, the answer is, we hope you will agree, considerable, to the point where we now expect that the Plan can be submitted before the end of 2014 – assuming your Steering Group can conquer the mountain of supplementary paperwork required for submission with a Neighbourhood Plan!

We are hoping that our next consultation with the Tasset community will be the one you've been waiting for: the publication of the Draft Plan itself! This will be available for you all to see and comment on, with a formal consultation in the summer so that we can be sure that what we are proposing reflects the majority of the community's wishes. After revisions, the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan – the key target, at which point your Steering Group hopes to sit back and take a rest! - is then planned for autumn 2014.

The plan then has to be scrutinised by an independent examiner, and the final say is, of course, yours, at a local referendum. If approved, this will mean that the Neighbourhood Plan becomes the primary planning document when considering all future planning applications within the Parish.

So, what recent developments have led us to this point? Well, following the drop-in session for local businesses last June, already reported on in *Tasset News*, we held a drop-in session for the community in October, which many of you attended and gave us valuable feedback on the emerging objectives which will inform the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. We also set out our 'Vision statement', which seemed to meet with approbation, and which is:

*To maintain and enhance the special qualities of the landscape and the environment, and the vitality of our community, for current and future generations who live and work in, and visit, the Parish of Tasset and Greystead.*

And then down to the 'nitty-gritty! In the last few weeks we have begun drafting the policies for inclusion in the draft Plan, based on all the feedback we've had from residents, local businesses and other stakeholders. These will be principally focused on planning issues, but we hope also to include other matters of concern to the community, as shown in the Residents' Questionnaire, e.g. traffic and litter.

Another key current development is the commissioning of a 'Design Guide' for Tasset & Greystead from a leading firm of Northumberland architects, following invitations to quote from three North East practices. Your Steering Group expects to confirm this appointment within the next fortnight, and , views this Guide as crucial to the Plan's success. It will be based on a detailed study of the parish and will address issues such as ensuring that any new buildings are appropriate in terms of scale, mass and placing to their surroundings; how to manage future development in Greenhaugh and Lanehead, together with smaller groupings of housing in the Parish; and how best to protect the Parish's superb views and open spaces. Thanks to [REDACTED] hard work, together with our planning consultant, [REDACTED], we were awarded a grant of £7,000 by 'Locality', an organisation which supports local communities in Neighbourhood Planning, to produce the 'Design Guide'. 'Locality's' funding is, in fact, a double bonus, as we also benefit from their advice when drafting Neighbourhood Plan policies - crucial to us non-experts as we get to grips with complex planning issues.

We have also been looking at 'heritage' assets in the Parish, based on the Tasset Archive Group's invaluable recording work, with a view to providing protection in the Plan for historic buildings and other features not already Listed Grade I or 2, and therefore not protected under national legislation.

As we move into this final phase, the complexion of our Group has changed slightly. Sadly, we said goodbye to [REDACTED], but have welcomed [REDACTED] to the team, who, as a Parish Councillor, will help us liaise closely with the Council at this key point in the process. We are also pleased to report that [REDACTED], who, given her background as a Chartered Surveyor, will be able to offer specialist expertise, has agreed to help the Group with development of the Plan.

With the community's help we hope to deliver a Plan that will help us maintain the beautiful area we live in for the next decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, helping it to adapt to change in a way that remains sensitive to the very special character of Tarset & Greystead Parish.

Neighbourhood Planning Group  
February 2014

#### **FOR TARSET NEWS – Summer 2014**

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: JUNE 2014**

Dear Tarset,

Your Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been working harder than ever during the spring months to progress the final stages of the draft Neighbourhood Plan which, as you know, we hope to submit before the end of 2014!

#### **Firstly, and most importantly, a key date for your diaries!**

**Please come to the meeting we are holding at Tarset Village Hall on 25 June from 6.00-8.30 pm when we will be consulting all Tarset & Greystead residents on the emerging policies for the Plan. The Group will present its proposals at 6.30 pm, followed by residents' input, discussion and questions. Our architectural advisers, Spence & Dower (see below), will also attend, and tea, coffee and refreshments will be provided. Your input is crucial and we do hope you can come to have your say about the future of Tarset and Greystead**

Once we have your feedback from this meeting, we will revise and redraft the policies, ready to present all Tarset & Greystead residents with a final draft at a second consultation to be held later this year. That is when when you will have a chance to have your – **final!** - input into the draft Plan before submission.

Meanwhile, following our previous report to *Tarset News* that we were on the point of appointing a leading firm of Northumbrian architects to assist with the drafting of the Neighbourhood Plan by producing a 'Design Guide' for the Parish. We are delighted to announce that the successful candidates are Spence & Dower, a rural Northumbrian practice with an in-depth knowledge of the Parish and an excellent track record of delivering Design Guides and comparable documents. They have already made huge progress, and expect to submit their final draft this month after attending the 25<sup>th</sup> June consultation. As well as seeking to ensure that any new buildings within the Parish are appropriate to the area in terms of their scale, mass and placing in their surroundings, Spence & Dower are also looking at how to protect the Parish's superb landscape and views and how to manage development in Lanehead and Greenhaugh in line with residents' wishes.

**Commented [r1]:** Might "plan" be better ?

Rather than creating a separate 'Design Guide' as an Appendix to the Plan, we have taken the key decision to embed Spence & Dower's draft within the Plan itself, which will make it much more user-friendly and effective when it is consulted by both future planning applicants and by planners themselves. As you may remember, we were awarded a grant by 'Locality' towards Spence & Dower's work, and 'Locality' is also offering guidance over the drafting of our policies – a great help to your steering group, none of whom are planners by training! We also benefit from invaluable ongoing help and advice from [REDACTED], a freelance planner seconded by Northumberland National Park Authority to our Group and from [REDACTED] of Northumberland County Council.

Meanwhile your Committee has formed several sub-committees to bring forward the various draft policies in the Plan, and we now have working groups focusing on the landscape, on eco-matters, heritage assets, tourism and on the conversion of redundant buildings in open countryside to housing use – one of the areas highlighted by so many of you in your responses to the Residents' Questionnaire. [REDACTED], who also sits on the Parish Council, acts as a key link between the Steering Group and the Council – which of course commissioned us to produce this draft Plan for residents.

The aim, as ever, remains to develop a Neighbourhood Plan that will help us all maintain this beautiful area we live in for the next decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and make living and working in Tasset & Greystead sustainable into the future in a way that remains sensitive to the unique character of the Parish.

Best wishes from us all,

Your Neighbourhood Planning Group

1<sup>st</sup> June 2014

#### **Neighbourhood Planning Update: Autumn 2014**

First of all, we would like to thank all those who attended our Community Consultation evening on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Nearly 60 residents came to the Village Hall to see a presentation updating everyone on the progress made by the group since the last consultation towards the end of last year. Spence and Dower, our architectural advisors, then explained the excellent work they have done for the group producing a very comprehensive document that we will be using for our evidence base and also as a standalone document containing landscape and design characteristics and sensitivities for Tasset and Greystead.

Some very useful informal discussions took place both before and after the presentations and questions from the floor raised issues ranging from youth employment and affordable housing to the prevention of noise pollution and how the emerging policies might be enforced.

Those attending were invited to complete a questionnaire to help enable us to judge whether or not our proposed policies were what people were hoping for, and to allow comments and suggestions. This questionnaire was also available for completion online for those unable to attend the meeting. The comments received were overwhelmingly supportive of our proposals and have been most helpful in assisting the development of the policies. Full details of the results are on the Neighbourhood Planning pages of the Community website and a handbook of the information displayed during the evening has been put into a folder for public viewing and is now available for reference in the Holly Bush.

██████████, the NNPA Chief Executive, visited the group recently to see how we were progressing and confirmed that the Park would continue to support us by funding the independent planner until the Park has appointed a permanent planning officer to their staff. As well as our weekly meeting, small groups have been working together developing the draft policies with invaluable help and advice from ██████████ our freelance planner and ██████████ from NCC.

As explained at the consultation evening, the policies being developed cover General Development / Design Principles, Conservation and Historic Environment, Conversion of Redundant Buildings, Development in Lanehead and Greenhaugh, Landscape, Sustainable Local Economy, Sustainable Tourism and recreational development, Renewable Energy and Micro-generation and Community Assets and Facilities. Other policies may be drafted in the light of our ongoing review of the consultations. To ensure a uniform and cohesive written style across the policies and that they conform to national and local planning rules, we have contracted ██████████ to assist us in completion of this work. ██████████'s knowledge of planning and, most importantly, her understanding of the work the group has been doing to try to meet the expectations of the community, make her the ideal candidate for this role. This will speed up our progress and enable us to draw together all the other documentation required before the pre-submission draft plan is produced, hopefully well before the end of the year. At this point you will have your final opportunity for comments and input into the plan before submission to the NNPA and NCC.

Thank you again for your participation in this vital process. Remember this is **your** plan and, although we may not be able to do everything that you ask, your input is essential to the eventual success of the project. All minutes and important documents are available to view on the Neighbourhood Planning pages of the Community web site (<http://www.tarset.co.uk/planning>)

The Neighbourhood Planning Group

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE: WINTER 2014**

Dear Tarset,

Since the very helpful Community Consultation evening in June, with its overwhelmingly positive response to the draft Plan proposals, your Steering Group has been working harder than ever to complete the drafting of policies for the Plan in small working groups, as well as meeting each week to progress all aspects of the Plan, including its mammoth evidence base. Although we have not quite managed to hit our target of completing the Draft Plan before the end of 2014, you will be pleased to know that it is now entering its final stages. The nearly complete draft is currently being finalised and edited prior to discussions with the Parish Council, which of course commissioned us to produce this draft Plan for Tarset & Greystead residents. This will be followed by distribution of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan to all of you in the community, and we hope that everyone will take this key opportunity to comment on the proposals in their final draft form. We will then incorporate residents' latest feedback into the Plan before it is submitted for external examination. The final step is, of course, the referendum, when you will all be invited to vote on its adoption.

As reported in our September update, we have been fortunate to have the help of ██████████ ██████████ of ██████████ in drafting the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the policies

outlined at the Community Consultation. This has included translating the policies drafted in your Steering Group's 'layman's language' into 'planning speak' and testing the policies against national and local planning policies. Meanwhile, we continue to benefit from invaluable ongoing help and advice from [REDACTED] herself and from [REDACTED] of Northumberland County Council. [REDACTED] continues to act as a key link between the Steering Group and the Parish Council.

Sadly, [REDACTED] recently resigned from the Group for personal reasons, and your Steering Group would like to pay tribute to his long and dedicated tenure as Hon. Secretary, which was invaluable in keeping us all on track; masterminding an ever-growing mountain of paperwork; and introducing us to the frightening number of online documents we needed to absorb to create a successful Plan. We all miss him, and could not have got to this point without him.

Spence & Dower have just this week finalised their *Tarset and Greystead Landscape and Design Assessment*, which will provide key guidance as to how to ensure that new buildings within the Parish are appropriate to the area in terms of their design, scale and placing in their surroundings. Spence & Dower also looked at how to protect the Parish's superb landscape and views and how to plan development in Lanehead and Greenhaugh in line with residents' wishes. Much of the Plan is based on their help and guidance as to the type of development that is appropriate in a rural parish such as ours. You may remember that we were awarded a grant by 'Locality' towards Spence & Dower's work, which has been invaluable in allowing us to commission this key piece of research which will underpin the Plan, providing a firm evidence base.

The aim, as ever, is to develop a Neighbourhood Plan that will help us all maintain this beautiful area we live in for the next decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and make living and working in Tarset & Greystead sustainable into the future in a way that remains sensitive to the unique character of our Parish. As always, minutes and important documents are available to view on the Neighbourhood Planning pages of the Community web site (<http://www.tarset.co.uk/planning>)

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, and roll on 2015 - the Year of the Plan!

Your Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group,

29th November 2014