

Newsletter. June 2018

Dear Everyone

Neighbourhood Plan notes for this month

GIS - Acronym of the month - Geographical information Systems

Sounds terribly dull and boring. But its actually very useful for doing things like running a Parish. It enables the Parish to show, at a glance, in a map, things like where floods occur regularly, where precisely the Conservation Area Boundary is, where the dog poo bins are, etc.

So much of the information that we have been collecting for the Plan will be summarised in the form of maps. This includes Landscapes and the environment which I attach for comment. They are both drafts.

Landscapes and Views

The National Planning Policy and the South Somerset Local Plan both say that good Landscapes and Views are very important; they are often what people like most about living in places like Martock. Unfortunately these policies are not always thought to be very important when planning decisions are made. We need to raise their importance.

South Somerset District Council has produced an excellent booklet on our Landscape. Its called the Martock Peripheral Landscape Study and its on the MartockPlan website here (http://www.martockplan.org.uk/Documents/Martock/peripheral%20landscape%20study_martock).pdf). It shows us where our most visually sensitive landscapes are and explains why they are sensitive and why we should try and conserve them. We are using it as the foundation for our neighbourhood policies on landscape.

The attached map showing the areas of sensitive landscape around the village was taken from this study and arrows have been added to it showing some important viewpoints. I will add photographs to this at the Farmers Market tomorrow. **Please come and tell us what you think and, in particular, have we missed any important views.**

Important Habitats and Natural Corridors

Following the discussion in the last newsletter and at the Farmers Market we have produced the attached map showing the areas around the village that are important wildlife habitats and also important wildlife corridors. This map is will be displayed, with some details about each area, for comment at the Farmers Market. **Please tell us of any areas we have missed.**

Call for development sites Mentioned in last months news

We put an article in the June Leveller asking for landowners interested in selling land for development to let us know.

We are required to build about 10-12 houses per year as our bit to satisfy the national need and it is better that we, in the village, have some say in where they should be, who they should be for and what they should look like, than have these decisions made for us by developers. So we need a list of available sites. Being on this availability list will not necessarily mean they are suitable; they will have to satisfy the usual planning conditions, including Neighbourhood Planning conditions.

For more details please look at page 5 of the June Leveller which can be seen downloaded from MartockOnline here (<http://www.martockonline.co.uk/Pages/7/Community-amenities.html>)

Martock Local Community Plan, 2018-23

The Martock Community Partnership has produced the 2018-23 Local Community Plan. This is a rolling action plan for the Parish and you may recall a survey early this year that provided important data that laid the foundation for this.

This plan is the working guide for Parish activities. It does not cover Neighbourhood Planning matters - where new houses should be built and how many - but it does guide the Parish on many related matters such as footpaths, accessibility, traffic and facilities such as recreation, health and education, all of which have an impact on the Neighbourhood Plan

The Community Plan was circulated with the June Leveller and can be downloaded here from MartockOnline. (<http://www.martockonline.co.uk/Pages/70/Local-Community-Plan.html>)

Cartgate Nature Reserve

Next to the Cartgate Picnic Area is a small Nature Reserve. It was deliberately created by Highways England when the A303 was widened thirty years or so ago. It is mainly a section of the old railway track that is raised on an embankment. This was reinforced to create a dam so that an area upstream of the village that can be flooded safely in times of heavy rain. It also doubles as a holding area for controlling any pollution from the road in the case of an accident. (In acronymspeak, a PCD)

It is a small but surprisingly rich wildlife habitat (a few fine Marsh Orchids are in flower now - please take care if you visit) particularly for insects such mayflies and dragonflies but it has got a bit out of hand in recent years. We are now trying to improve it and are hoping to create conditions for the return of Nightingales which were there until just a few years ago.

Highways England has worked with a small volunteer team from the village to hand over the routine management of the site to us. Basically this means they do the big jobs that keep it fit for its various purposes and we litterpick, thin out the reedbed in the pond there, and try to control the Hemlock a little.

If you are interested in helping keep it going, please let me know. We need rather a bigger team than we have. Not very hard work but rewarding.

Come and see us at the Market tomorrow.

Andrew