

Meeting to establish Bramcote Neighbourhood Forum
Proceeding to the inaugural
Annual General Meeting of the Bramcote Neighbourhood Forum
Tuesday 3 May 2016
Memorial Hall, Bramcote

Welcome

Rob Greer (RG), Chairman of the Bramcote Conservation Society (BCS), welcomed the full hall of attendees to the meeting.

There were 102 attendees counted, including Bramcote ward Councillor Martin Plackett, Bramcote Ward and Notts County Councillor for Chilwell and Toton, Dr John Doddy and Beeston North ward Councillor and Notts County Councillor for Beeston North Steve Carr.

Rob then introduced Steve Austin (SA), Chairman of Bramcote Hills Community Association (BHCA) and Paul Nathanail (PN), (chair of BHCA Planning Committee) and invited them to co-present the meeting.

1. Introduction

SA explained the concept behind the Bramcote Neighbourhood Forum mirrored that of the BHCA, which was to “make this an area in which you would want to live.” For example, current issues for BHCA members are proposed developments at the White Hills Park Federation and the outstanding planning application for the site of the former Bramcote Hills Golf Course. A stronger way forward to address these and similar issues would be to create a Neighbourhood Forum and a Neighbourhood Plan. Although the process is quite complex following a legal formula laid down in legislation, we have the opportunity to set it in motion with tonight’s meeting.

This will introduce everyone to the process of making a Neighbourhood Plan, then progress to agreeing the proposed Neighbourhood Area and be followed by the inaugural AGM of the Bramcote Neighbourhood Forum.

Those present this evening who elect to be members need to sign forms to that effect. Having done so, they will be able to vote.

Membership of the Neighbourhood Forum is open to people who either live in, work in or are elected representatives within the proposed Neighbourhood Area. Once the Neighbourhood Forum has been set up, its constitution will be discussed, the steering group will be formed and the next steps discussed.

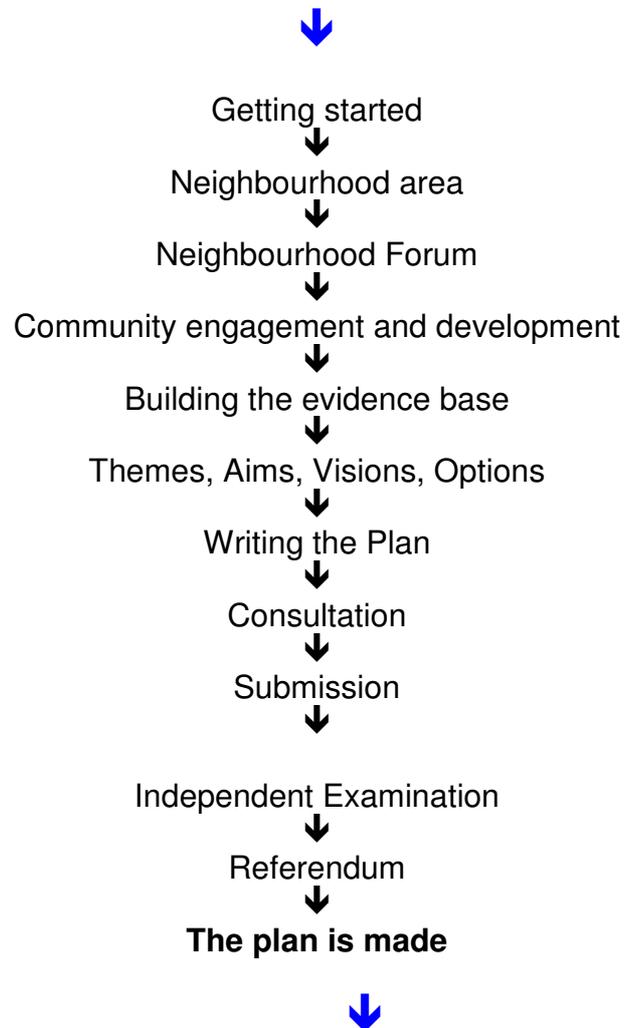
2. Explanation of: Neighbourhood Area, Forum and Plan

PN delivered this part of the presentation in a very clear format that all present could understand. He started by outlining its history from the Localism Act 2011, Part 6, Chapter 3. Broxtowe Borough Council already has part 1 of its local plan, in the form of the Aligned Core Strategy (ACS), in place. Broxtowe’s Local Plan Part 2 is being prepared over the next 6-9 months.

The proposed Bramcote Neighbourhood Plan once made would become Bramcote’s part of this Local Plan for the aspects the neighbourhood plan chose to cover. He believed that the timing is right because Bramcote will definitely change in the future in unpredictable and unknown ways. However, with a Neighbourhood Plan in place, the Neighbourhood Forum members will have some influence on the delivery of that change.

Emphasising this point, he quoted J K Rowling’s character, A. Dumbledore: “There will be a time when we must choose between what is easy and what is right”.

He then showed a slide demonstrating the process required to go through, summarised by the following headings, the blue arrows highlighting the time continuum both before and after:



The Neighbourhood Area

This needs to meet certain criteria e.g. a local ward, which is then submitted to BBC including a map, a statement of the Area's suitability and a statement of why the applying body is capable of being a prospective Neighbourhood Forum. After any relevant consultation, BBC should approve this.

The Neighbourhood Forum

This needs a name, constitution, a specific area to which it refers, membership open to residents, workers and elected representatives, members from different parts and sections of the community of that area. Community engagement would be key to making the Plan, meaning that the group of people involved would not only be well informed, but also share this information with their contacts, local businesses and groups, landowners, educational and health establishments.

Ideally, the more people involved, the more effective the Forum is likely to be and the better the Neighbourhood Plan.

The evidence base would be built up from an understanding of the area thereby creating the foundation for the plan. This would take economic, social and environmental factors into account as well as the area's infrastructure, transport networks and natural and cultural heritage.

The scene would be set to identify key issues and formulate a shared vision statement. Overarching 'aims' could be developed which in turn would be underpinned with appropriate objectives to achieve them.

PN then gave an illustrative vision that Steve Austin, Rob Greer, Cllr Martin Plackett and he had been asked to write as part of a training event held by Broxtowe Borough Council at Eastwood Hall in February 2016:

*"In twenty years' time **Bramcote** will be a **safe, pleasant, environmentally friendly, highly desirable residential area**. It will value **heritage, education, people and environment, and provide people with outstanding schools, amenities and recreational open spaces including a rural arboretum, that we can value and love**. It will be **a welcoming and inclusive place, where everyone can live well and be happy**."*

Creating the Neighbourhood Plan

Writing the plan has to include a description of the area, written planning policies and guidance, proposals, allocation of specific sites for different types of development, the potential for using Neighbourhood Development Orders and the preparation of a short summary.

Consultation with and engagement by the community should be early, often and formal.

When ready, and after a pre submission consultation, the plan should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Broxtowe Borough Council when there would be a formal consultation period of 6 weeks (engagement with consultees, LPA, significant land owners, local community organisations). The submission would include a map, the consultation statement, the main issues and concerns together with information about how these have been addressed.

An independent examiner from outside the area would then examine the draft Plan. Their remit would be to confirm that the basic conditions had been met (including fit with National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF) and conformity with ACS; conformity with Human Rights and EU obligations).

The examiner would be suitably qualified without conflicts of interest, be experienced in weighing evidence and dealing with a range of people and have the ability to make impartial judgments.

A Referendum would then occur asking, "Do you want *Broxtowe Borough Council* to use the Neighbourhood Plan for *Bramcote* to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

4. An invitation to join the Neighbourhood Forum

SA then invited any eligible attendees who were not already signed up Forum members to join. It was explained that membership would enable them to vote, be kept informed and to join the steering group.

RG then invited questions from the audience.

Councillor Steve Carr asked whether the Area could be changed to include a part of his ward north of the A52 next to the eastern boundary. PN explained that much consideration had been given to the Area boundary which was best defined by following the limits of the electoral wards. This had been discussed with Broxtowe Borough Council primarily because the evidence we have to work with is at electoral ward level providing a solid database for gaining a deeper understanding of the area and thereby addressing any planning needs. Moreover, the boundary has to be acceptable to Broxtowe Borough Council and the independent examiner and had been discussed at previous public events. It was overwhelmingly agreed to move forward with Bramcote ward as the proposed Neighbourhood Area.

RG stated that the meeting to set up a Bramcote Neighbourhood Forum to “Help Plan Bramcote’s Future” in Bramcote Ward had been well advertised. A full colour leaflet that was fully explanatory was hand-delivered to all households in the Bramcote Ward and it had featured on the Bramcote Today’s website and on Bramcote Today’s Twitter and Facebook pages.

5. Proposed Neighbourhood Area

PN went through the reasons why the electoral ward boundary for Bramcote Ward makes sense to be the Neighbourhood Area as it is spatially logical; there are emerging development issues (Broxtowe Borough Council Part 2); Local and County Plan coverage (ACS, Waste and Minerals); availability of data (ONS) and lastly this is a political boundary with established recognised representation with existing data and evidence base.

Members Vote

Steve invited members to vote on the proposed Neighbourhood Area of Bramcote Ward as described. There was a show of hands with the overwhelming majority supporting the proposed Neighbourhood Area, 4 against and no abstentions.

A number of questions followed:

- The role of elected representatives for the area if another group is now taking on their role?

PN explained that 1) Broxtowe Borough Council is still responsible for the ACS Part 1 which is in place. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan for Bramcote Ward would become our area’s Part 2 for those elements it was covering. The examiner would ensure that it is in line with the ACS and national strategy. 2) Everyone in Bramcote was invited to join the Forum and be part of the plan-making process. The Referendum vote will depend on who is on the electoral register. Cllr Martin Plackett added that he was happy to talk individually but did not see this as the same as a Councillor’s role. Indeed, he considered that this is localism at its best, of benefit to everyone in the room and in Bramcote Ward. This comment received warm applause.

RG encouraged all those present to get involved and offer up their expertise and skill sets, to engage and communicate their vision of what they would wish Bramcote to be. In particular he was keen to get other local groups to sign up and get involved to specify what they would like within the plan that reflects their group’s priorities. He expressed the view that the Neighbourhood Plan can help offer more protection for specific areas of green belt and make

Bramcote a more desirable place to live which in turn would help the policy to go forwards.

- The Treasurer of BHCA asked about the likely expenditure needed for the Plan to be effective?

SA explained that a number of grants would be available, in particular £9,000 which is centrally sourced then a possible further £6,000. These sums should cover the consultation process. BBC would cover the cost of the Referendum, Bramcote Ward being one of several Neighbourhood Plans within Broxtowe.

- Is associate membership possible for businesses?

PN replied that all local employers would be very welcome, including GP surgeries, colleges and schools. Economic development of the area needs to be looked at.

- Does this include the University, which owns some land?

PN agreed that the University would be welcome as associate members.

- How would registered member data be used?

PN explained that the data would be used primarily for communicating effectively with all members about forthcoming meetings and progress. BBC also required the data for demographic purposes.

6. Proposed constitution

On arrival, participants had been given copies of the draft constitution which they were able to read briefly before the meeting began. PN went through each point and those present raised issues when they felt it necessary. Discussions, clarifications and minor amendments were made, in particular concerning:

- Frequency of open meetings: agreed these should be quarterly, with one of these being the AGM.
 - A quorum remains at 15 members for the AGM.
 - The AGM has the power to amend the constitution.
 - Minutes of the Steering Group would be communicated to inform all concerned and enable all views to be heard.
 - A website will be set up with relevant information.
 - If BBC can support this, there will be provision for members to use a postal vote for the Referendum, otherwise members should vote in person. The referendum is managed by BBC and the Forum is not involved in its running.
 - More community engagement events will be held between now and Christmas.
 - Procedure to follow if the Steering Group had no confidence in a member. RG suggested that if such a scenario arose, it would be hoped that any individual would step down until the next annual or extraordinary general meeting.
 - SA proposed that the amended Constitution should be accepted. This was seconded by RG. There were no objections.

7. Steering Group nominations

Post	Nominee	Proposer	Seconded
Chair	Paul Nathanail	Rob Greer	Martin Plackett
Vice Chair	Rob Greer	Ex-officio as Chair of BCS	
Vice Chair	Steve Austin	Ex-officio as Chair of BHCA	
Treasurer	Richard Willan	Steve Austin	Paul Nathanail
Secretary	tbc	-	-
Publicity/e-communication	Phil Sands	Paul Nathanail	Rob Greer
Publicity/excluding e-communication	Sheila Eden	Volunteer at Meeting	
Event's Secretary	Ian Morris	Volunteer at Meeting	
Membership Secretary	Amanda Radmore	Volunteer at Meeting	
Business Liaison	Michael Cobbett	Volunteer at Meeting	

There were no objections from Forum Members to those proposed and seconded as Steering Group Members and there were no objections to those who volunteered as Steering Group Members.

PN suggested that others e.g. elected representatives from MEP, through to borough councillors could be approached for their expertise and support as necessary.

8. Next steps

PN welcomed the Steering Group members on board. The next step is to write to Broxtowe Borough Council to ask them to designate the Area formally and to recognise the Forum as the qualifying body to put together the neighbourhood plan.

The first Steering Group meeting on 16 May 2016 will provide an opportunity for the group to get to know each other, plan the next steps of the Plan and brainstorm what is wanted for Bramcote Ward to start creating aims and objectives.

9. A.O.B.

- Steering Group meeting 16th May 2016. Venue to be confirmed.
- Hemlock Happening 11th June 2016

RG concluded the meeting at 10pm by thanking everyone who had attended and suggesting that the Steering Group would wish to tap-in to their particular skill sets during the year.