

# **Tenth Meeting of Kirkstall Neighbourhood Forum at 7:30pm on Wednesday 31 January 2018 at Burley Greenhow Community Room, Haddon Road LS4 2HN**

## **Draft Agenda**

- (1) **Election of a Chair:** Propose John Liversedge, who chairs the Board.
- (2) **Apologies for absence:** Helen Ashman, Steve Harris, Wally Wheatley
- (3) **Endorsing the list of members:** The meeting is asked to approve new members.
- (4) **Minutes of the Ninth Public Meeting held on 30 November 2017** (attached) and any matters arising.
- (5) **Secretary's report** (attached below) & any matters arising
- (6) **Treasurer's report** & any matters arising
- (7) **Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve:** report from Johanna Mawson.
- (8) **Vision for Kirkstall:** This was a previous Kirkstall planning document completed in 2010. Some of its objectives have been achieved, some abandoned and some are still relevant today. Parts could be re-used and would save considerable work. Paper copies will be available at the meeting, and electronic copies can be downloaded from the Council website [https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Vision for Kirkstall Ward.pdf](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/docs/Vision%20for%20Kirkstall%20Ward.pdf) This work could take several meetings. We should agree a way forward with this.
- (9) **General Policy discussion:** This is an opportunity to raise new matters, and possibly seek reports to a future meeting.
- (10) **Dates, times and venues for future open meetings.**

John Illingworth  
28 January 2017

# **Ninth Meeting of Kirkstall Neighbourhood Forum at New Burley Club on Thursday 30 November 2017 at 7:30pm**

## **Draft Minutes**

**Present:** (26) Helen Ashman, Rosie Atkins, Hannah Bithell, Bobby Bowker, Tom Brannigan, Fiona Butler, James Corah, Steve Harris, Kulras Heer, Chris Hill, Paul Holdsworth, Evan Holm, Deborah Howarth, John Illingworth, Sylvia Landells, John Liversedge, Rukeya Lothian, Simon Maddy, Roger Moran, Aredo Oslad, Khan Priestley, Melanie Robbins, Tony Robbins, Andy Rontree, Rufus Shakespear, John Spellman

**Apologies:** (11) Naomi Batten, Graham Bellamy, Wendi Carson, Steve Gradys, Judith Judd, Daniel Lipzith, Christine Needham, Adele Rae, Fiona Venner, Judith Weymont, Lucinda Yeadon

- (1) **Election of a Chair:** John Liversedge was proposed, seconded and elected.

- (2) **New members:** The meeting approved nine new members (Rosie Atkins, Adrian Bennett, David Bryant, Kulras Heer, Esther Lightwing, Aredo Oslad, Khan Priestley, Rufus Shakespear and John Spellman)
- (3) **Report from KVDT:** Chris Hill and Simon Maddy reported on Abbey Mills, including an initial layout for the community block fronting onto Abbey Road. He also included notional allocations of the West Block (unit 3) for residential use, and the Dryhouse (units 10 & 11) for co-working / co-making spaces.
- (4) **Previous AGM:** No matters were raised from the AGM held on 6 December 2016
- (5) **Treasurer's report:** James Corah reported on the financial position. His report was accepted and there were no matters arising.
- (6) **Secretary's report:** John Illingworth reported on the KNF constitution, attendance at Board Meetings, Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme and the unexpected opportunity to create a Kirkstall Valley Park. He answered questions from members.
- (7) **Election of the Board:** The following members were agreed by the meeting: Hannah Bithell, Tom Brannigan, Fiona Butler, James Corah, Steve Harris, Paul Holdsworth, Deborah Howarth, John Illingworth, Daniel Lipzith, John Liversedge, Adele Rae, Andy Rontree, Mel & Tony Robbins. Bearing in mind that attendance during 2017 had been compromised by ill-health, the Board were empowered to co-opt additional members to maintain a good geographic coverage and an acceptable gender balance.
- (8) **General Policy discussion:** Members took the opportunity to review the Current Intentions Document and overall progress towards the referendum. They agreed to add new policies on Cycling Strategy, and on the pressing need to restore the water level in Abbey Mill Goit.
- (9) **Eighth Public Meeting:** Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2017 were agreed as a correct record. There were no additional matters arising beyond those discussed at item 8.
- (10) **Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve:** The report from Johanna Mawson was deferred to the next public meeting.
- (11) **Dates, times and venues for future meetings.** Members agreed that the Board would meet on 24 January and the next full Forum meeting would be on 31 January. The Secretary would investigate quieter and warmer venues.

John Illingworth  
5 Dec 2017

## **Tenth Meeting of Kirkstall Neighbourhood Forum Secretary's Report**

- (1) **Footpaths:** The Council's Scrutiny Board for Inclusive Growth, Culture and Sport has been hearing some of the overwhelming medical evidence of the health benefits from physical activity, and Leeds Director of Public Health has agreed to promote walking as a low-cost public health measure. This could be very helpful to our footpath plans, because the Council works much better when policies have a "home" department.

- (2) I am trying to persuade the Council to designate large numbers of uncontested inner-city footpaths on public land as Public Rights of Way, and to signpost them. There will be very little money for maintenance, but it may be possible to tip sand and gravel into wet areas, and there will be scope for voluntary groups. Several years ago, Cllr Nash and I introduced a policy to “de-culvert” piped watercourses into the UDP. This could improve drainage from marshy areas and improve wetland habitats and biodiversity. There are good candidates in Kirkstall, for example a little stream at the back of Ghyll Road which flows down to the Abbey, and another stream in a pipe under Burley Village Green, which once served a water mill near Haddon Hall.
- (3) **Abbey Mills:** There has been a lot of activity here, not all of it good news.
- a. **Local Services:** It is increasingly apparent that Kirkstall is falling behind in local service provision because suitable buildings are not available. Comparable civic centres have (for example) library, housing office, benefits hub, homework club, children’s play, artisan workshops, business incubators, meeting rooms, meals on wheels, dementia support, creative arts facilities, kitchen, café and the like. All these facilities could be provided in Abbey Mills, if we had access to more of the building.
  - b. **Market testing:** LCC Development officers insisted on “soft market testing” of Abbey Mills, before releasing any of the site to Kirkstall Valley Development Trust (KVDT). In November 2017 the Council invited offers for Lot 1 and Lot 2, with the possibility of selling the “best” bits to a property developer and leaving Kirkstall residents with the most difficult parts of the site.
  - c. **Road Scheme:** A new access road to the north of Abbey Mills was previously included in the Council’s planning brief for the unsuccessful marketing in 2006. It was not included this time, and the required land was excluded from the offer. Nevertheless, some of those bidding included a road whose design is available from the Council’s website. This road must either pass through Kirkstall Abbey Park and make an unsignalized cross-roads connection with Abbey Road and Norman Row, or it must go through the garden of the grade 2 listed Abbey Villa making a cross-roads connection with Abbey Road and Norman Street. Neither layout meets current highway design / safety standards. The appearance of the second variant is beyond hideous since the new road crosses the sunken house garden on an elevated ramp and involves an extensive loss of mature trees.
  - d. **WYCA:** West Yorkshire Combined Authority recently revised its public access and transparency policies. Resulting disclosures show that in December 2016 the Council nominated Abbey Mills for a joint feasibility study with WYCA and Historic England. This study is running in parallel with the Council’s discussions with Kirkstall Valley Development Trust, but it appears that neither process was disclosed to the other parties.
  - e. **Audit Inquiry:** Professional surveys in 2003 and 2017 show that Abbey Mills has deteriorated markedly under the Council’s care. Although it is all grade 2 listed, more than half the buildings have collapsed while I have served as a councillor. I have been granted an Audit Report, which will also examine the deterioration of other historic buildings owned by the Council.

- (4) **Flood Alleviation:** Leeds recently submitted its FAS2 business case to the government. I have asked to see a copy, but it is still early days. We are told that FAS2 includes new river bridges west of St Ann's Mills and opposite Woodside View, giving pedestrian access from the Nature Reserve to the agricultural land along the valley bottom. These are exactly the right bridge locations that will maximise public access to the banks with minimal damage to wildlife habitat.
- (5) Improved public access to the river is an important secondary aspect of the flood alleviation scheme. Once these bridge locations are confirmed, I hope that we can adopt the policies set out in the Council's application. The original Nature Reserve concept saw the **River Island** directly below St Ann's Mills as an "inner sanctum" reserved as a wildlife breeding area, without human access, and (hopefully) no footbridges to the outside world.
- (6) **Fishing Rights:** Installation of fish passes means that salmon and grayling have started to arrive. There is great interest among Leeds angling community in fishing from the Armley, Bramley and Kirkstall river banks. Conversely, attempts to excavate anglers' hides can cause great damage to the river banks. We need a policy on this, because the fishing rights are valuable, but some people regard fishing as a cruel sport. Fishing is prohibited near fish passes and throughout the Nature Reserve. There may be tensions between the fishing and canoeing communities.
- (7) **Feed Leeds:** This is a progressive environmental organisation with an interest in local food production using sustainable methods. They would like to farm part of the grade 1 agricultural land near Burley Mills. In principle, this is clearly acceptable, but there may be conflicts with runners, walkers and wildlife enthusiasts. Public access often means vandal damage, and very few Leeds allotment sites are open to the public. This problem should be readily soluble, but we need to work something out.
- (8) **Heat Pumps:** I am sorry to keep banging on about this, but the technology is feasible, it is the "coming thing" which can massively reduce local CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and it is our only activity which reliably generates a recurrent income stream. It is likely to be vital in achieving all the other things that members hope to do. So far, we have examined water source pumps in the valley bottom, but if we also considered ground source pumps on urban open spaces, then the potential income could be £47 million / year. Nothing else comes close. We need a dedicated team to progress this initiative.
- (9) **West Park School Site:** There is a live planning application 17/06427/FU for 50 houses on the site of the former West Park School. There is a problem with the site access, which is close to Arncliffe Road, where it could increase congestion on Spen Lane. There is a risk that congestion on Spen Lane will increase rat-running along Moor Grange View. All three Kirkstall councillors have objected to the proposals.

John Illingworth  
29 Jan 2018

# Current Intentions Document

*This is version 6 of a document which will go through many drafts. It sets out broad policy objectives and is here to be amended. It will be brought back to future meetings. Since this is a planning document it does not specify who the providers will be, but sometimes this could be a local cooperative or community group.*

**Planning History:** The last strategic planning document to complete the full legal process in Kirkstall Ward was the 1972 Development Plan Review! Local Plans in 1980 and 1986 did not complete the required public consultation. Large areas of Kirkstall were administered by the Leeds Development Corporation from 1988 to 1995 and were consequently excluded from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The only areas that were considered were those with limited opportunity for change. For obscure reasons Kirkstall was also excluded from the UDP Review in 2004, so the current Leeds Development Framework is the first strategic planning document since 1972 which residents could properly challenge and amend.

**Scope:** Our Kirkstall Neighbourhood Plan must comply with relevant parts of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) and [Leeds Development Framework](#) (LDF). Locally, we have opportunities to suggest amendments to the LDF to avoid conflict with our Neighbourhood Plan. If our suggestions are rejected by Leeds City Council, then we must comply with the LDF. The positive outcome from a recent [Judicial Review of the St Ives Neighbourhood Plan](#) in November 2016 suggests that residents have considerable power if they choose to use it.

**Sustainable Development:** This is usually defined as development which meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of our successors. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and subsequent paragraphs explain how this should be applied. Paragraph 17 on *Core Planning Principles* includes the following bullet point:

- *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);*

**Draft Policy KNF1** restricts further built development in the highest flood risk areas (presently defined as the area between the Kirkstall mill goits and the main river) EXCEPT (1) for water source heat pumps and low carbon renewable energy; (2) greenhouse crops and agricultural activities; (3) physical recreation and active travel; (4) associated educational and scientific activities.

**Draft Policy KNF2** requires high design and construction standards in all new developments, and public spaces, with zero tolerance for second-rate cheapskate developments in the older urban areas.

**Draft Policy KNF3** supports development of the suburban rail network in Kirkstall Ward, including a new rail halt on the Harrogate line between the Hawksworth and Spen Hill estates, and a return to four track working on the Skipton / Bradford lines with the re-opening of all the rail halts and stations in the Aire Valley that were closed by the Beeching review.

**Draft Policy KNF4** supports development of the bus network, with additional bus lanes to be created at traffic bottlenecks, and measures to improve road safety, and reduce traffic noise, vehicle speeds and air pollution.

**Draft Policy KNF5** supports the development of a low-carbon suburban heat network linked to the progressive replacement / renewal of existing water, gas, electricity, telephone and data services and the separation of foul sewage from surface water drainage.

**Draft Policy KNF6** supports the development of an off-road public footpath network, and requires the Leeds flood defence scheme to improve pedestrian access to the banks of the River Aire in Kirkstall Ward.

**Draft Policy KNF7** recognises the need for (1) 500 additional parking places in residential areas that were built before mass car ownership, and (2) wide-area residents' parking schemes, with differential charging in favour of residents, to reduce the problems caused by commuter, match-day and special event parking in residential areas.

**Draft Policy KNF8** identifies the former "Tesco" site bounded by Kirkstall Lane, Kirkstall Hill, Beecroft Street and Commercial Road as an area for housing development (reflecting the LDF site allocations policies) and further specifies affordable high-density low-carbon housing similar in design and tenure to the nearby "Lilac" scheme on Victoria Park Avenue.

**Draft Policy KNF9** identifies the vacant historic Kirkstall Mills (Abbey Mills and St Ann's Mills) for various community / educational uses, for example: after-school / breakfast clubs; artisan workshop; café; children's play; community hub; library; performing arts; physical recreation; restaurant; scientific education, research and development; social care; sustainable energy.

**Draft Policy KNF10** introduces weight and speed limits, one-way traffic flows and improved pedestrian facilities on St Ann's Lane.

**Draft Policy KNF11** supports litter removal, footpaths, planting and future maintenance of the recreational open space between Latchmere View and the Leeds outer ring road.

**Draft Policy KNF12** supports the provision of frequent outdoor play facilities throughout the neighbourhood, such that in principle there is a small outdoor play area with a swing and maybe a slide for example, within only a few minutes' walk of every child's home. The small local 'walk-to' sites will be in addition to larger 'drive-to' sites designed to serve a wider area. The plan will identify sites for these play facilities.

**Draft Policy KNF13** seeks confirmation of all existing Kirkstall footpaths as public rights of way, and their extension, inter-linking and the creation of new accessible footpaths to serve all parts of Kirkstall Ward.

**Draft Policy KNF14** supports the creation of a Kirkstall Valley Park, in partnership with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and other environmental organisations, to link with existing public parks to the west of the River Aire and create a continuous tract of open green space between the A65 and the A647, with a new visitor centre and footbridge at St Ann's Mills.

**Draft Policy KNF15** places the principles of **proportionate universalism** at the core of all our planning policies. This seeks to improve everyone's health and wellbeing, but directs the greatest efforts towards those in greatest need. This is relevant for housing policies, air pollution, traffic congestion, employment, social care and recreational open space.

**Draft Policy KNF16** recognises biodiversity as a legitimate planning objective, aims to minimise the loss of existing wildlife habitats, and where possible create a greater variety of new habitats as an integral part of the development process.

**Draft Policy KNF17** seeks to improve cycle provision where practical throughout Kirkstall Ward by reducing vehicle speeds in residential areas, adding cycle lanes to existing roads, converting

footpaths into byways, and by increasing the number of secure cycle stands at popular cycling destinations.

**Draft Policy KNF18** calls on Leeds City Council and the Environment Agency to repair and enhance the penstocks near Kirkstall Abbey, and thereby raise the water level in Abbey Mill Goit to the average depth during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or, alternatively, to devolve responsibility onto the Kirkstall Neighbourhood Forum to carry out these works on their behalf.

John Illingworth  
29 Jan. 2018