



**Ruishton and Thornfalcon Neighbourhood Plan
Steering Group**

Terms of Reference

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1. Purpose of the Steering Group

Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council is the qualifying body for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for their parish. The Parish Council has agreed to establish separate project management arrangements to facilitate the delivery of this plan-making function. The Parish Council has granted delegated authority in exercise of all relevant plan-making functions to the Neighbourhood Plan Administrator in consultation with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group as set out below.

2. Steering Group Objectives

The objective of the Steering Group is to produce a sound Neighbourhood Plan for Ruishton and Thornfalcon parish that defines the planning policy priorities identified by the community taking into account all representations made during the plan-making process and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence. The Plan will include, or be supported by, an appropriate delivery plan setting out, where relevant, the means by which these policy priorities may be implemented.

The Steering Group will:

- Determine the overall scope and objectives of the plan
- Manage the process of preparing the plan and prepare and monitor a project plan and report to Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council to ensure effective progress.
- Build on existing, and maintain, links with the Local Planning Authority
- Keep under review the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plan meets all requirements
- Make recommendations to Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council on resourcing the plan.
- Ensure that the wider community is involved in the and will maintain regular communications with the community via the parish newsletter, website (www.ruishton.org.uk) and directly with the community
- Manage the gathering of evidence necessary to inform each of the issues within the scope of the plan
- Identify and assess options available in respect of each issue and prepare a draft plan for wider consideration.
- Produce minutes, reports and documents relating to the plan

3. Membership of the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group

The Steering Group has the following membership and will be chaired by the elected chair of the Steering Group:

- 3 Members of Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council
- 1 x Town Planning expert
- 1 x Website developer

The Neighbourhood Plan Administrator (Non-Voting) will also attend.

The members of the Steering Group will be reviewed from time to time and may change during the process to ensure appropriate membership and expertise.

The Steering Group will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until at least the independent examiners report is published.

4. Membership of the Neighbourhood Planning Project Group

The Steering Group will oversee the setting up of a Project Team which will consist of a wide variety of people from the local community who can represent organisations within the parish. The members will undertake projects and investigations as part of the evidence gathering and consultation process. The Project Team will set up Project Groups who will feed evidence back into the Project Team and Steering Group for consultation with the wider community. The Project Groups will be:

- Community
- Environment
- Leisure & Recreation
- Heritage
- Education
- Transport
- Employment
- Housing

The Steering Group will amend and change the members of the Project Team, and the initially identified Project Groups, as necessary to ensure a robust community involvement process.

Whilst organisations will have their nominated representatives, it will be acceptable for reserves to attend meetings as necessary. Representatives will be expected to give feedback to the organisations that they are representing.

The Project Team will be established for a time-limited period. The project is intended to run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Project Team will remain active for as long as necessary for the Steering Group to be able to achieve its objectives.

5. Meetings

Steering Group meetings will take place at least six times a year. Decisions made by the Steering Group should normally be by consensus at Steering Group meetings. Where a vote is required each member shall have one vote. A minimum of three members shall be present where matters are presented for decisions to be taken. A simple majority will be required to support any motion. The Chairman shall have one casting vote.

The Project Team will meet as necessary in order to fulfil its function in the most appropriate way.

6. Conduct and Interests

The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct. Whilst some Members as individuals will be accountable to Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council, the Steering Group as a whole is

accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations. The Steering Group will achieve this through applying the following principles:

- Work with mutual trust and respect, and combine their expertise
- Be clear when their individual roles or interests are in conflict
- Provide feedback from Steering Group meetings to Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council
- Inform the Steering Group when they are unable to deliver agreed actions
- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, or religion and belief
- Actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

In situations where interests and roles are in conflict they must be declared before the business is discussed and the Steering Group member should leave the room for that item.

It is expected that the Project Team will also adhere to the above requirements.

7. Decision Making

Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council is the qualifying body for the purposes of preparing the plan. The Steering Group has full delegated authority to manage the process of preparing the plan as set out in the objectives and within agreed budgets; up to and including the publication of the consultation draft plan. Regular reports will be made to the Parish Council and the Parish Council will approve the final draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to the local planning authority.