



# Lamberhurst Parish



## Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 – 2036

**Setting the pattern for future development in Lamberhurst Parish  
Regulation 15 version September 2020**

**Prepared in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood  
Planning (General) Regulations 2012-2017**

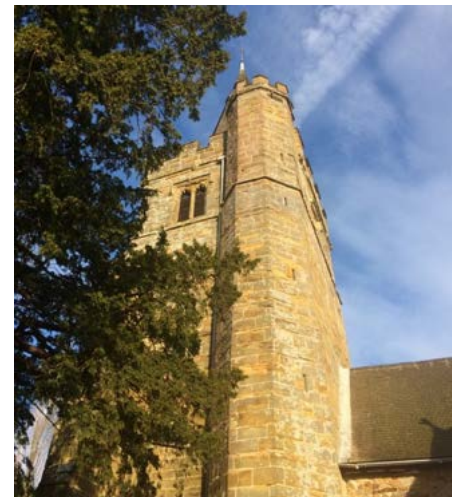
[www.lamberhurstvillage.org](http://www.lamberhurstvillage.org)

## Parish Vision

**“In 2036, Lamberhurst Parish will be a vibrant and diverse community that takes care of its environment and provides suitable housing for residents of all ages and means.**

**At its heart will be a strong social core with good local facilities including schools, GP surgery, shops, cafes, pubs, recycling and parking facilities as well as excellent links in terms of communications and public transport for residents and rurally based businesses.**

**Well maintained Public Rights of Way will provide safe routes throughout to encourage walking and cycling. Lamberhurst will continue to be a compelling destination for visitors to the scenic Kentish High Weald.”**



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# Lamberhurst Parish

Lamberhurst Parish covers an area of approximately 22 square kilometres. It spans some 5 kilometres (3 miles) from North to South, and 7 kilometres (4 miles) from East to West.



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# Chapter 1 Introduction

## What is this plan?

Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and aim to give local people a bigger say on what happens in their area. This Plan sets out a vision and objectives for the parish to 2036, and also a set of planning policies by which these will be delivered, and which will:

- Promote and control new development in the parish
- Make sure that any new development is well-designed and in harmony with the character and appearance of the area
- Safeguard and improve local community facilities, and those features of local culture, built heritage and the natural environment that make Lamberhurst such a special place.

We also look beyond the planning system to other community actions which will help us deliver our objectives and complement the planning policies.

This will give additional guidance to those wishing to submit planning applications within Lamberhurst parish. Once adopted, it will influence planning decisions made by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and also inform the work of other public bodies such as Kent County Council, government agencies, and the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee on matters affecting Lamberhurst.

## Where have we reached in the neighbourhood planning process?

**This is our final Regulation 15 plan which we will be submitting to TWBC for formal examination. It has been approved and adopted by Lamberhurst Parish Council and has been modified following the issue of our regulation 14 plan (or pre-submission draft) in July 2019 and**

**public consultation that took place over eight weeks between 12th July and 6th September 2019.**

**Submission of the LNDP to TWBC will begin the formal statutory stages leading up to its final approval and adoption. These stages will involve further public consultation, examination by an independent inspector, and a local referendum in the parish (where the plan must achieve a simple majority of votes cast to proceed to adoption). Further changes to the plan may result from this process.**

## What area will the Plan cover?

The Plan covers the whole of the civil parish of Lamberhurst and the key features of the Plan area are summarised in Chapter 2 of this document.

## How has the local community been involved so far?

Work began on the Plan late in 2017. Throughout the preparation of the Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan, we have tried to promote the widest possible engagement of the local community in planning for the future development of the parish. Our guiding principles have been:

- To commence community engagement early on, before we started drafting anything, and to seek a clear understanding of those issues and concerns which are of most importance to the local community
- As work progressed on the plan, to offer further opportunities for comment as a draft vision and objectives were worked up and a draft plan prepared
- To offer a range of different ways for people to engage as preparation of the plan has progressed. We have tried to make our

arrangements appropriate and proportionate for a rural community. This has included residents' surveys, workshops and discussions, a website, the parish magazine, public notice boards, and special consultation events for key groups in the local community (such as businesses and young families) and meetings with external consultees

- Tapping into the knowledge and experience available in the local community wherever possible, by making the process as open and inclusive as possible
- Through all the above actions, to meet the statutory requirements for public engagement set out in the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations.
- All community activities were conducted pre-Covid 19 and the Parish Council will endeavour to communicate the updated Plan and public consultations following the Covid 19 guidance.

### Supporting documents

Throughout work on the plan, we have been assembling an evidence base which will give us information to better understand the issues affecting Lamberhurst Parish's future and help us to develop our planning objectives and policies. Some of the evidence is listed in the appendices

and elsewhere in the document but a more comprehensive details can be found on the Lamberhurst Parish website

In parallel with the Neighbourhood Development Plan itself, the legislation requires us to prepare other documents, which also have to be submitted to the local planning authority at the start of the formal statutory stages of the neighbourhood plan process. These are:

- **A Public Consultation Statement** explaining how the local community and other interested parties have been involved in the preparation of the plan and how their views have been taken into account
- **A Basic Conditions Statement** explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies meet legal requirements in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and how they relate to national and local planning policy, and relevant European legislative requirements
- **A Sustainability Appraisal** TWBC has determined that such an appraisal is not required for this Plan because it proposes no new development allocations beyond those indicated in the emerging TWBC Local Plan.

## Chapter 2 Developing the plan

### Development Process

The proposal to create an LNDP was outlined at a public meeting held in Lamberhurst War Memorial Hall on the 18th April 2017, attended by 70 residents. The meeting unanimously agreed that such a plan would be of benefit to the Parish and, following the meeting, our intention was registered and subsequently accepted by TWBC.

### Organisation

Community training and awareness meetings were held between December 2017 and February 2018, during which volunteers were sought for the steering and working groups. At the first Steering Group held on the 26th March 2018 Graham White was elected Chairman. The group is supported by professional planning consultants, Jim Boot and Lindsay Frost.

The key objectives of the steering group were to understand:

1. Future housing needs in Lamberhurst
2. Criteria to be used when considering potential sites for housing
3. Where new housing might be located
4. Design requirements for new developments and homes
5. Aspects of living in the Parish that are important to residents
6. How to formulate plans for the delivery of sustainable development

Following the decision to produce a community-led plan, five working groups were tasked with building an evidence base and identifying issues, objectives and policy areas. The five working groups were:

- Landscape & Environment
- Community & Wellbeing

- Business & Employment
- Housing & Design
- Traffic & Transport
- Additionally, a housing sub-group was formed between members of the steering group and members of the Parish Council, all of whom have extensive experience of planning and housing issues.

### Community engagement

The key steps undertaken were:

- **18th April 2017** – 70 residents attended a meeting in the Memorial Hall to listen to presentations from Parish Council representatives about the benefits of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan and the steps to be taken in the process.
- **December 2017 to January 2018** – 25 residents volunteered for working groups.
- **24th June 2018** – Launch of the questionnaire.
- **August 2018** – A summary of the questionnaire results was delivered to all households.
- **September 2018** – An exhibition of findings from the questionnaire was held in the Memorial Hall.
- **September-November 2018** – Four public workshops and one workshop for business owners were held in different venues around the Parish.
- **12th January 2019** – A workshop was held for families.
- **9th April 2019** – Photographic competition, an exhibition of entries and a public vote to determine the winners.
- **July 2019** – A pre-submission draft plan was published in both electronic and hard copy form



and made available to residents and wide range of organisations who have an interest in Lamberhurst (such as the local authorities, utility companies, government agencies, environmental and business organisations). A bespoke feedback form was provided in both formats to solicit written feedback and local exhibitions were staged throughout the Parish to explain the objective and contents of the plan and encourage feedback. A public consultation document was produced in August 2019 to support updates to the Plan.

### **Communication of the Plan**

Regular updates have been published in the Parish Magazine and posters were produced to publish the community meetings and the consultation in July 2019.

### **Evidence gathering activities**

#### **Questionnaires**

A questionnaire was launched on the 24th June 2018 and ran until the 21st July 2018. It was open to all residents age 14 or above. Paper copies of the questionnaire were sent to each household in the Parish. It was also available online. 330 responses were received, representing 46% of paper questionnaires circulated.

A separate questionnaire was also sent to over 90 local businesses and received a response from 67%.

#### **Community Workshops**

Public workshops were held with the aim of creating a set of objectives and exploring options and proposals for the LNDP. In the workshops, we examined the evidence gathered through the questionnaire and identified a number of development options. The impact of each option was assessed, for the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Small, medium and large development scenarios were all discussed. In addition, there was a family workshop to engage younger residents and one for interested business

owners, who had also been sent a business questionnaire. Details are set out later in the LNDP.

### **Vision and Objectives**

Creating visions for the parish and setting objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Housing and Design**

Developing design policies, considering future housing needs and setting site selection criteria.

### **Traffic and Economy**

Addressing traffic issues raised in the questionnaire and understanding the local economy and its potential.

### **Landscape and Community**

Identifying those aspects of Parish life that are most valued by residents. This includes the societies, amenities, facilities and aspects of the landscape that are most beneficial to quality of life

### **Community views captured at open meetings**

#### **Meetings in 2018**

**Vision and Objectives** held on 27th September.

**Housing and Design** held on the 1st November.

**Landscape and Community** held on 15th November.

**Traffic and Economy** held on 27th November.

#### **Formulating and Writing the plan**

Regular meetings of the steering group and the working groups developed an evidence base which in conjunction with the resident's survey were used to formulate policies that met the objectives and policies that were identified in the community workshops. At every stage we took professional advice from our retained consultants to ensure our policies met existing planning regulation. Additionally, meetings were held with the Planning department of TWBC who commented on our draft plan before it was committed to print.

All ages included



A family orientated workshop was held on the 17th January 2019. Children and parents came along together and built models of the facilities they would like to see in the parish, using Lego and recycled materials.



Local children build their own lego and recycled material designs for new development within the Parish

## Chapter 3 Lamberhurst: Portrait of the parish

### Location

#### High Weald of Kent

Lamberhurst is a rural parish in the High Weald of Kent, about 10km (6 miles) south-east of Tunbridge Wells. It extends from the border between Kent and East Sussex, north and east across the main A21 road (London – Sevenoaks – Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells – Hastings). At its maximum, the parish is about 5km (3 miles) north to south and 7 km (4 miles) east to west. It covers 21.66 km<sup>2</sup> (8.36 mi<sup>2</sup>). The parish is bisected by the valley of the river Teise, a tributary of the Medway. Settlement is focused in the village of Lamberhurst, with outlying hamlets at Hook Green and Lamberhurst Quarter. Bewl Water, the largest reservoir in south east England, dammed and flooded in 1975, lies immediately to the south of the parish and is also an important leisure attraction.

The map on page 6 shows Lamberhurst in its wider sub-regional context. It has good north-south road communications along the A21, much of which is dual carriageway in the London direction, but single carriageway towards the coast. The B2169 provides an alternative route west to Tunbridge Wells and north to Horsmonden, with the B2100 a route south into Sussex. To the east, the A262 links Lamberhurst with Goudhurst, Cranbrook and Tenterden. Most local roads are, however, country lanes with limited capacity.

The nearest railway stations are at Wadhurst and Frant, both of which are about 7 km (or 4 miles) away.

Administratively, Lamberhurst parish forms part of Tunbridge Wells Borough in the county of Kent. Lamberhurst adjoins the parishes of Pembury,

Brenchley, Horsmonden and Goudhurst in Kent, and Wadhurst and Frant in East Sussex.

#### Environment

The whole parish is included in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in recognition of its nationally important landscape. It is an historic landscape of hilly ridges and picturesque valleys with sunken lanes, irregular fields, historic hedges; scattered settlements & farmsteads; houses & cottages; orchards & ancient woodlands.

The underlying geology of the High Weald in this area is formed by the Hastings Beds, a mixture of sandstones and clays, the latter of which include iron ores which supplied the Wealden iron industry up until the 19th century (see history below). The landscape is characterised by low ridges running from the north-west to south-east. The River Teise runs between one of these ridges as it flows eastwards towards Goudhurst.

The village of Lamberhurst grew up at a crossing point of the river and has a linear form, extending up the valley sides on both banks. Large blocks of woodland are an important feature of the landscape, many dating back centuries. Between the woodland blocks are sweeps of arable land and grazed pasture. The northern part of the parish grades into the “fruit belt” around Brenchley and Horsmonden, with fewer blocks of woodland and more orchards and hop gardens, separated by shelter belts of trees and tall hedges. Both orchards and hop gardens have been in decline in Kent over recent decades.

### History

#### Wealden village parish

Lamberhurst is a Wealden village parish situated on the Kent border with Sussex. During the

centuries preceding the Norman Conquest of 1066, this densely forested area of Andredswold, was almost uninhabited. From the 8th to the 10th century, this general area was used for grazing livestock owned by manors in north Kent. Many of the present roads follow the drove ways and boundary ditches created by these first visitors. By the end of the 9th century, clearings had begun to be made in the forest (Dens) and permanent settlements began to evolve.

Influential landowners from the 10th to the 19th Century were the Church, the Manors of Lamberhurst (based on Court Lodge), Scotney and Bayham. The Manor of Lamberhurst forming the major part of the parish today.

### **Wooded hill for lambs**

Lamberhurst parish takes its name from the site of the present church, founded in 998.

“Lamburhurste” is a Saxon word meaning “a wooded hill suitable for lambs or lambing, near a stream”.

The main village settlement grew up astride an iron-age track-way which cut through the forest along a sandstone ridge and down into the valley, over the best river crossing for miles, up or down stream, from the bridge site up the hill to The Down and on to the coast.

### **The River Teise**

The River Teise has always played an important role in the development of Lamberhurst. Its banks provided valuable areas of water meadow used, even today, for the raising and grazing of sheep and cattle. Water meadows were an unusual feature in this generally forested area, rarely found outside of the Romney Marshes.

It was the Kent & Sussex border up until 1894 when the whole of the Parish was moved into Kent – apparently the price of Kent hops being higher than Sussex hops.

## **Industry**

By the 2nd half of the 10th century the village nucleus was situated on both sides of the river. Later two inns at the river crossing accommodated travellers to and from the coast. The River Teise and its tributaries have provided water power for grist mills to grind corn, fulling mills for the cloth and leather industries, and were the motivating force behind the forge trip hammers and even a blast furnace. During the last century Town Mill (which stood at Mill Bay) was employed to produce electricity for local consumption.

Iron had been cast in the Weald long before the Romans came but it was not until the 16th century and up to the 18th century that Lamberhurst became an important centre for iron working. There were many furnaces and forges situated in this area and acres of woodland were consumed to make charcoal to fuel the fires. The best remembered is the Lamberhurst Furnace at Hoathly, re-named Gloucester Furnace following a visit by Queen Anne and her young son the Duke of Gloucester in 1697. It was here, in 1710, that the railings for Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral were cast. A section was returned to Lamberhurst in the 1970's and erected outside the War Memorial Hall.

More than 250 prehistoric flints have been found in the Parish, mostly relating to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. These include at least one Neolithic axe.

### **Ford over the River Teise**

The trackway which became the London to Rye & Hastings Coach Road and was turnpiked in 1740 and is believed to be Iron Age. A three arched stone bridge replaced the wooden bridge and ford in 1750 and lasted until the 1970's when it was replaced by the present structure. Spray Hill was cut in 1835 by local workmen, to by-pass the steep Town Hill. The London to Hastings Road (A21) ran through the village centre until the Lamberhurst By-pass was opened in 2005.

## Brewing and hops

Lamberhurst also had an active interest in the brewing & hop industry. The earliest remaining Oast House is at Ridge Farm on The Down although following its conversion to a private dwelling, little of the original structure has survived. Most local Oast Houses have been converted to residential use although a few retain their original purpose, most notably at Little Scotney Farm.

## Smuggling

Smuggling started in the reign of Edward 1, around 1300, when a customs duty was placed on the export of wool. The smuggling of wool was known as 'Owling', after the owl-like noises made by the smugglers to communicate with each other. Smuggling thrived until about 1833, shortly after the Coastguard took control of coastal policing. The demise of smuggling, along with the transfer of the iron industry to the north left many of the people of Lamberhurst, paupers. Some were forced to seek Parish Relief at a Wealden Hall House which had been gifted to the Parish as a Workhouse and is now known as "The Charity".

## Sheep and cattle

Lamberhurst, by the 14th century was established as a farming community. Sheep farming and wool became the principal economic village activity, largely due to the water meadows each side of the River Teise, a rarity in the Weald. The Broadway was turned into a wide thoroughfare to accommodate booths and cattle pens for the weekly fairs held from 1314. By the 1700's, these had died out and been replaced by an annual fair. The abattoir at Lamberhurst, by the time it closed in 2001, had become one of the largest in the country, processing 18,000 sheep a week. The site has since been developed for housing.

## WW2

Lamberhurst saw WW II action, with doodlebugs dropping short of London and a German aircraft,

crashing in a hop garden, now part of Lamberhurst golf course.

## Wine

Lamberhurst Vineyard was established in 1972 and soon became one of the largest and most modern in the country. The vines that are still grown on the hillside, south of the River Teise, have become a valued and iconic part of our landscape, although the wine is no longer produced here.

## Modern businesses and economy

Throughout its history Lamberhurst has fulfilled a variety of roles. A full analysis of the main businesses and economy of modern day Lamberhurst Parish is set out in Chapter 11.

Agriculture and related services form the single largest activity with a range of small businesses located in converted farmstead buildings.

Tourism, recreation and leisure activities are a growing part of our economy as Lamberhurst parish has much to offer the visitor, both for a short stop over as well as a base for touring and walking.

## Community

### Population

The Census of 2011 indicated a parish population of 1,248 (603 males and 645 females), living in just over 700 separate households. At that time, 22% were children aged 16 or less, 62% were in the working age groups up to the age of 64, with 16% in the older age groups. This means that – unusually for a rural community in south-east England – Lamberhurst has a slightly younger age profile than the national average. The population is overwhelmingly White British in origin, with only 2.4% from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.

Most people live in a dwelling they own, with 65% of households being owner occupiers, and the remainder split between private renting (17%) and social landlords (13 %) and a small number of other forms of tenure. Around 37% of the housing



stock is detached, with 33% semi-detached, 16% terraced and 13% flats and apartments. Housing conditions are customarily good.

### **Health**

The local community is generally healthy, with the great majority reporting “very good” or “good” health at the time of the 2011 Census.

Nevertheless, just over 200 (12%) reported long term health problems or disabilities. This is less than the national average of 17%. The nearest GP surgeries are in Lamberhurst itself and in the nearby villages of Horsmonden, Goudhurst, Brenchley and Wadhurst.

### **Public transport**

There is a limited bus service each weekday linking Lamberhurst to Tunbridge Wells and Wadhurst. There are also infrequent services to Benenden, Kilndown, Maidstone and Tenterden. Therefore, the local community is necessarily very dependent on the private car. Nevertheless, the 2011 Census reported 8.7 % of households have no access to a car, but the majority of households (58%) have two or more cars.

For a relatively small rural community, Lamberhurst supports a very wide range of local community groups.

### **Economy**

The local agricultural economy now supports far fewer employment opportunities, “on the land”, than before. Nevertheless, there are still a number of working farms in the parish. As agriculture has changed, many old farm buildings no longer fulfil their original purpose and have been converted to a range of other commercial uses: this has both diversified farm businesses and provided a stock of buildings for new local enterprises. Other local businesses include Lamberhurst Vineyard and various local services and facilities (see below). Tourism is also an important element in the local economy, with Scotney Castle, Bewl Water, the Vineyard, and attractive local villages and

countryside, bringing many visitors to Lamberhurst. It also helps to support some local facilities, such as local shops and pubs.

At the 2011 Census, 1,196 people were economically active. Of these, 450 were in full-time employment, 148 in part-time employment, 232 were self-employed and 32 were unemployed. Local people are employed in a wide range of professions and trades. About 37% have either a degree or a professional qualification. There is a significant degree of out commuting to jobs in nearby towns, particularly Tunbridge Wells and London

### **Local facilities**

Lamberhurst supports a general store and post office, five pubs, a tea room, a pre-school and primary school, doctor’s surgery, two churches and a village hall. There is a large recreation ground with sports facilities and a children’s playground in the centre of the village; allotments at Brewer Street and Wiseacre; and a golf club at Church Lane.

## Chapter 4 Summary of planning context

The Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be prepared in general conformity with both national and local planning policy.

At the national level, these policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2019.

At the local level, these policies are in the following documents: the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2006), Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF Core Strategy (2010), Tunbridge Wells Borough Site Allocations Local Plan (2016),

various supplementary planning documents on detailed matters, the emerging Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Kent Waste and Minerals Plan (2016)

The neighbourhood plan also has to take account of a range of statutory planning designations which give legal protection to a number of features of the natural environment and the built heritage, in Lamberhurst parish.

Details of the Planning Context is set out in Appendix 4 of this document.

## Chapter 5 Representing community views

### Questionnaire analysis

By analysing responses to the questionnaire, we were able to understand many of the issues and concerns held by residents and to identify the features and characteristics of the Parish that are most valued. This information formed the basis of a series of public workshops that were tasked with setting an overall vision for the Parish and developing a broad set of meaningful goals and objectives. These have guided the development of this plan.

The creation of the LNDP has been supported by residents at all stages. The questionnaire was completed by approximately 50% of those eligible and the workshops were well attended. This has provided information, opinion and feedback that we have used to assess the policies and proposals included in the LNDP.

### Development of vision and objectives

This, our first workshop delivered a vision for our Parish during the next 15 years. The vision highlights the key qualities of our Parish as well as identifying the concerns and aspirations of our community. Many of the themes discussed in this first workshop were repeated in discussions at later workshops, which were single topic driven.

The following issues were seen as a critical focus in our vision of the future, as they are such an important part of Lamberhurst, past and present:

- The unique landscape in and around the Parish.
- The need for balanced and integrated communities
- The need for sustainable housing and local services
- The need to improve traffic flow and road safety
- The need for appropriate development

- The need to conserve the unique High Weald AONB

### Vision

In summary, quoting those attending the workshop:

**“In 2036, Lamberhurst Parish will be a vibrant and diverse community that takes care of its environment and provides suitable housing for residents of all ages and means.**

**At its heart will be a strong social core with good local facilities including schools, GP surgery, shops, cafes, pubs, recycling and parking facilities, as well as excellent links in terms of communications and public transport for residents and rurally based businesses.**

**Well-maintained Public Rights of Way will provide much needed routes throughout to encourage walking and cycling. Lamberhurst will continue to be a compelling destination for visitors to the scenic Kentish High Weald.”**

### Landscape and Environment

Our Parish occupies one of the most dramatic areas in the High Weald AONB with views across ancient landscapes that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Protecting this unique landscape is important to our community:

- Retaining our distinct village character
- Protecting and enhancing our heritage and its setting
- Protecting our views in and around the village and its environs
- Protecting and enhancing bio-diversity and the natural environment
- Conserving ancient woodland
- Conserving water resources
- Maintaining dark skies

## Community and Wellbeing

Our residents have a strong sense of community and the meeting focused on their needs and aspirations in both planning policy and community projects:

- Improving and developing community facilities and services
- Improving our communications infrastructure i.e. broadband and mobile services
- Preventing the loss of retail and commercial space.
- Retaining community assets for future generations
- Providing access for all to facilities and services
- Improving dissemination of Parish news and information
- Building pride in our community

## Housing and Design

Improve the sustainability of Lamberhurst Parish as a demographically mixed and balanced community delivering new homes that meet the needs of our residents.

- Delivering environmentally sympathetic, energy efficient, flexible designs and use materials that age well.

## Affordable housing

Ensuring affordable housing, for rent or shared ownership, is provided to those with a strong local connection, both now and in the future:

- Improving the balance in our housing stock, delivering housing projects that meet the needs of the community, now and in the future.
- Delivering housing to support an ageing population and those wishing to downsize.
- Developing housing of a scale and character appropriate to our Parish

## Maintaining character

Enhancing the beauty of the parish by delivering housing that is individual in design and sits comfortably with the existing developments:

- Maintaining the character of our landscape
- Ensuring efficient use of resources and available land
- Maintaining the character of the built environment.

## Traffic and transport

Initiate and support actions to improve parking, implement traffic calming and develop flexible community transport where feasible:

- Ensuring adequate traffic and parking considerations are included in all development proposals
- Initiating projects to address key local issues that may not be covered by broader land-use policies
- Reducing traffic congestion throughout the Parish
- Improving road safety across the community by reducing traffic speeds and preventing rat-running
- Facilitating safe walking, cycling and riding

## Business and employment

An additional specialist questionnaire was devised for businesses in the parish and a further workshop was held for interested business owners in the parish. Details are set out later in the LNDP, but in summary the goal is to:

- Support the development of new and existing businesses and the creation of employment opportunities within the community
- Improve the strength of the local economy by encouraging diverse employment opportunities for residents
- Support increased tourism
- Protect retail and commercial premises from change of use
- Pro-actively encourage initiatives that facilitate live/work opportunities by improving communications infrastructure and connectivity.



## Chapter 6 Our policies

# Landscape & environment

### L1: Local Green Spaces

Local green spaces will be protected from development except in very special circumstances.

### L2: Development within the AONB

Development within the Parish will only be permitted where it conserves and enhances the landscape and has regard for the High Weald AONB.

### L3: Retaining parish character and conserving the landscape

Limit new housing on hillsides, retain distant views and maintain the separate identity of different parts of the parish.

### L4: Bio-diversity

Utilise all opportunities to protect and enhance natural habitats and encourage the bio-diversity of flora and fauna.

### L5: Water management and flood risk

Development should be located and designed so as to lessen flood risk, both to itself and to other land and properties.

### L6: Public footpaths and by-ways

New housing development should be located with easy access to the public rights of way network to encourage journeys around the parish on foot or bicycle.

# Community & wellbeing

### C1: Assets of Value to the Community

Development proposals that enhance the viability and community value of our existing facilities will

be supported, providing they accord with the other policies of the LNDP.

### C2: Broadband and Mobile infrastructure

Proposals which provide access to superfast broadband and improve mobile phone communications within the parish will be supported where possible.

### C3: Developer contributions

Developer contributions will be sought for investment in off-site infrastructure as required and in other projects that enhance community life.

# Housing

### H1: Location of housing development

Housing developments in the countryside will be strictly controlled in the interests of conserving the High Weald AONB.

### H2: Housing mix, tenure and affordability

The mix of housing type and tenure will be expected to reflect the community's need for smaller dwellings.

### H3: Allocating affordable housing

Affordable housing provided by the LNDP will initially be subject to a local connection

### H4: Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for small scale developments of affordable housing on rural exception sites will be supported provided they meet the criteria set out in the LNDP

### H5: Replacement Dwellings

Replacement of existing dwellings should only be permitted where the existing building has established and continuing residential use rights

and the current building is unstable or uneconomic to repair.

## **H6: Conversion of existing buildings**

A proposal will be supported if the character of the building is not adversely altered and it does not result in the loss of employment or of an asset of community value.

## **Design**

### **D1: Design of new development**

All new development must achieve a high quality of design and reinforce local character.

### **D2: Boundary treatments**

Boundary treatments should reflect the character and appearance of the locality and improve biodiversity where possible.

### **D3: Climate Change**

New developments should be designed to mitigate and adapt to climate change, making use of renewable energy sources, reducing waste and CO2 emissions where possible.

### **D4: Dark Skies**

New developments should not detract from the unlit environment of the Parish.

### **D5: Housing Density**

The appropriate density for a housing development should be led by achieving high quality design in keeping with the local plan.

### **D6: Historic environment**

Great weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of listed buildings, ancient monuments and local heritage assets (non-designated and adopted). Any development

proposals causing harm or loss to these assets will require clear and convincing justification.

## **D7: Conservation areas**

Developments within the designated conservation areas will be expected to preserve and enhance their special characteristics.

## **D8: Parking**

All new developments should meet a minimum parking standard at a ratio of one car space per bedroom.

*NB: This exceeds the standard proposed in the TWBC Local Plan (Policy TP3).*

## **Traffic & transport**

### **T1: Sustainable Transport**

Development should be served, where possible, by sustainable travel arrangements.

### **T2: Traffic management**

Developments that accord with the policies in the LNDP and result in improvements to, or do not hinder, the free flow of traffic in the parish will be supported, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies.

## **Business & employment**

### **B1: Business and Economy**

Developments that provide local employment opportunities will be supported, where they are in accord with the LNDP.

### **B2: Tourism and hospitality**

Development that improves the range and quality of existing tourist facilities, including visitor accommodation, attractions and eating places will be supported where they are in accord with policies set out in the LNDP.

## Chapter 7 Landscape & environment

### Objective

Lamberhurst is often described as the “Jewel of the Weald”. It is wholly within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which recognises that the landscape is of national importance. The community wishes to conserve this unique landscape for future generations, therefore it is important to protect biodiversity by conserving our ancient woodland, gills, water resources and dark skies.

### High Weald AONB

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers some 560 square miles in the counties of Kent, East and West Sussex and Surrey. It includes the whole of Lamberhurst parish. The designation was confirmed by Government in 1983 and gives national recognition of the quality of the landscape, and the importance of enhancing it, in decisions by public bodies. The NPPF 2019 (para 172) states that “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in...AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”.

The AONB is overseen by a Joint Advisory Committee, which has produced an AONB Management Plan, setting out a vision for the AONB and recommended actions for partner bodies, for the period 2019-2024.

### Local Green Spaces

The Environment Working Group has identified, recorded and mapped local listed green spaces, examined biodiversity, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Nature Conservation Value (SLNCV) They also assessed other suitable sites for possible designation and studied issues relating to the River Teise, public footpaths and byways.

A survey was conducted by TWBC in June 2018 (in accord with Local Green Space Designation

Methodology 2019) to review, identify, list and map all potential local green spaces. The following areas proposed to be designated under the TWBC Local Plan by virtue of their beauty, historical significance, recreational value, tranquillity or the richness of their wildlife and plant life:

- a. St Mary’s Churchyard
- b. Victoria Walk including the War Memorial
- c. Chequers Field
- d. Hook Green Common – meadow
- e. The Slade Allotments
- f. Brewer Street Allotments – 2 sites

In addition to the TWBC Local Plan, this LNDP also designates:

- g. Common land areas at The Down and Hook Green
- h. River bank adjacent to rear of Brewer Street

### SLNCVs & Conservation

Sites of Local Nature Conservation Value & Conservation Areas:

- The Gravel Pit at The Down

## SSSI

Sites of Special Scientific Interest:

- Scotney Castle Estate
- Brookland Wood, Lamberhurst Quarter.

## RIGS

Regionally Important Geological Sites:

- Scotney Castle Quarry.

## Additional sites of interest

Additional sites identified for possible designation:

- Common land areas located on the Down and Hook Green that are currently managed as meadow habitat with mown paths. The group identified and listed the flora and invertebrates present.
- An area of river bank adjacent to the area at the rear of Brewer Street.
- Meadow habitat can be further enhanced by creating areas which are maintained, as evidenced by the area at the top of School Hill. Roadside verges are often the last refuge of meadow plants and must be carefully managed and maintained in order to halt their decline.



Victoria Walk along School Hill

## Ancient woodland

Ancient woodland is defined as “any area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD”. It includes:

- Ancient semi-natural woodland mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration.
- Plantations on ancient woodland sites – replanted with conifer or broadleaved trees that retain ancient woodland features such as undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi.

National policy in NPPF 2019 paragraph 175 states “development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists”.

Areas of ancient woodland, greater than two 2 hectares in size, were mapped and documented by TWBC in 2007 in an effort to ensure their protection.

The ancient woodland in Lamberhurst has been in existence since the 15th century, covers 16.27% of the parish and the LNDP supports its protection, by not permitting any new development near these woodland sites.

Ancient woodlands are particularly threatened by invasive species such as rhododendron ponticum, cross pollination with garden cultivars and garden escapees, often attributed to fly tipping of garden waste. Adequate provision must therefore be made in any new development for the disposal of garden waste and recycling, if we are to preserve the integrity of these woodland areas.

On the Scotney Estate, one can see evidence of sound woodland management practices, for example, regular coppicing which removes the dense canopy and enables the native seasonal spring flora to flourish.

## River Teise and flood management

Lamberhurst parish is bisected by the valley of the River Teise which flows eastwards, then northwards, to join the Medway near Yalding. The



Teise has a long history of flooding with records going back to the 15th century. The most serious floods in recent memory were in 1960 and 2000. The Environment Agency assessed options for reducing flood risk in 2008 and concluded that flood protection would be a more economically viable option than upstream flood storage.

TWBC, following consultation with the Environment Agency, have concluded that there is no plan for further flood defence work in the Teise valley during the 15 year period of this plan, although the situation is monitored regularly.

National and local planning policies generally seek to steer new development away from areas of higher flood risk but, where this is not possible, to manage and mitigate flood risk arising from new developments.

In 2011, the EA and TWBC sponsored flood protection for properties that were most at risk and encouraged landowners to create natural defences. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) produced in July 2019. This will assist in preparation of site-specific flood risk assessments for larger planning applications and applications in higher risk areas. Looking ahead, flood management policies will need to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Away from the flood plain of the Teise flood risk in Lamberhurst parish is generally low. However, surface water drainage problems can arise almost anywhere in periods of very intense rainfall when local drains and culverts are overwhelmed, especially in enclosed sites. In addition, our surveys have highlighted the following:

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) regards the Teise Valley at Lamberhurst as a priority habitat.

Several species of invasive plants that threaten our sensitive eco system have been discovered. These include:

- Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*
- Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*
- Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*.

### **Public Rights of Way**

There are 26 miles of Public Rights of Way which run throughout the parish. There are also two Public Bridleways that pass through the Parish with the Public Footpaths, providing higher rights of access for equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians. These are mapped on ordinance survey maps and are signposted with standard footpath signs. Many of the footpaths are not connected, have no obvious destination and cross busy roads like the A21. The Ramblers Association have a network of Parish Path Observers and they report any problems with the footpaths to the Highways/Office of Public Rights of Way. Landowners are responsible for gates and stiles and keeping access open. Walkers using the footpaths may also report any issues they find. Many of our most cherished views of the High Weald can be observed from public footpaths.

### **Supporting Kent CC guidance**

- Kent CC Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

### **Supporting TWBC guidance**

- Interim Habitat Regulations Assessment
- Borough, Kent Report and Inventory Maps October 2007
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (July 2019)
- Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017.

### **Supporting AONB evidence**

- High Weald AONB Neighbourhood Plan Guidance
- High Weald AONB Management Plan

# Policy L1: Green spaces

## Policy Objective

**“Ensure that all local green spaces are documented, assessed and mapped.”**

Local green spaces will be protected from development except in very special circumstances.

For example where:

- there is an existing building or structure within the local green space such as a sports pavilion or maintenance store which needs to be renewed, extended, or replaced to maintain its viability
- any new development is for the benefit of the community and preserves the particular qualities of the local green space that led to its designation
- it consists of essential small scale public infrastructure, and the existing use and community value of the space is not detrimentally affected.

## Evidence and support information

Results from the Parish Questionnaire showed that 94% of residents are in favour of designating local green spaces in order that they are adequately protected. 40% indicated that green spaces were their most valued asset.

In July 2018 the green space sites were re-assessed with other sites being added by the LNDP working group. The Environment Working Group identified, recorded and mapped local listed green spaces, examined biodiversity, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Nature Conservation Value (SLNCV) They also assessed other suitable sites for possible designation and studied issues relating to the River Teise, public footpaths and byways.

A survey was conducted by TWBC in June 2018 (in accord with Local Green Space Designation Methodology 2019) to review, identify, list and map all potential local green spaces. The following areas proposed to be designated under the TWBC Local Plan by virtue of their beauty, historical significance, recreational value, tranquillity or the richness of their wildlife and plant life:

- St Mary’s Churchyard
- Victoria Walk including the War Memorial
- Chequers Field
- Hook Green Common – meadow
- The Slade Allotments
- Brewer Street Allotments – 2 sites

In addition to the TWBC Local Plan, this LNDP also designates:

- Common land areas at The Down and Hook Green
- River bank adjacent to rear of Brewer Street

The results of these surveys was mapped by TWBC in August 2018 and the list of draft recommendations has been produced (Table 7.1: Green Spaces). The draft recommendations have been approved by the Parish Council in September 2020.

Table 7.1: Draft Lamberhurst Parish Green Spaces

Site No	Name of Site	Submitted by	Current Policies	Size	Criteria 1 Planning permission	Criteria 2 Allocated or proposed	Criteria 3 Extensive Track	Criteria 4 Proximity	Criteria 5 Demonstrably Special	Local Green space designation?
140	Coggers Hall	Review of Landscape Designations	Policy EN22 applies. CA (partly). LB. AONB.	0.8 ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	There is sufficient evidence that this area meets the designation criteria	✗
141	Lamberhurst Green	Review of Landscape Designations	Policy EN21 applies, CL, CA, AONB	0.03 ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area was not considered as it is already sufficiently protected under other designations	✗
142	Chequers Field (Sports Field) and Play Ground	Role & Function Study	Policy R1 (partly) applies. PROW. AONB.	4.63 ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is a recreational open space, used by the local community for informal recreational activities.	✓
143	St. Mary's Churchyard, North East of Golf Course	Role & Function Study	PROW. LB. AONB	0.78 Ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is of particular local historical significance as St Mary's Church, a Grade 1 Listed Building, has served the community of Lamberhurst for centuries.	✓

Site No	Name of Site	Submitted by	Current Policies	Size	Criteria 1 Planning permission	Criteria 2 Allocated or proposed	Criteria 3 Extensive Track	Criteria 4 Proximity	Criteria 5 Demonstrably Special	Local Green space designation?
									This area is also accessible to the local community.	
144	The Down	Lamberhurst Parish Council	Policy EN15 (SLNCV/LWS) and TP27 (partly) apply. CL. CA. AONB.	5.71 ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area was not considered as it is already sufficiently protected under other designations.	✗
AS_33	Victoria Walk & War Memorial	Lamberhurst Parish Council	CA. AONB.	0.25 ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is of particular local significance because of its historical value. This area is also of important visual amenity and contributes to the character/setting of the settlement	✓
AS_34	Brewer Street North Allotments	Lamberhurst Parish Council	AONB	0.32					This area is used for informal recreational activities (gardening).	✓
AS_35	Brewer Street South Allotments	Lamberhurst Parish Council	AONB	0.18	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is used for informal recreational activities (gardening) and potential parking for allotment users. This has been removed from list as may need multi-use to benefit the local community	✗
AS_36	The Slade Allotments	Lamberhurst Parish Council	AONB	0.21	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is used for informal recreational activities (gardening)	✓



Site No	Name of Site	Submitted by	Current Policies	Size	Criteria 1 Planning permission	Criteria 2 Allocated or proposed	Criteria 3 Extensive Track	Criteria 4 Proximity	Criteria 5 Demonstrably Special	Local Green space designation?
AS_37	Hook Green Common	Lamberhurst Parish Council	Policy EN15 (LWS; partly) applies. CL. AONB.	0.75	✓	✓	✓	✓	This area is of particular local importance because of its recreational value and richness of wildlife. This area also contributes to the character/setting of the settlement. Although this area is already designed as common land, it is considered that further designation as a Local Green Space would be appropriate to help preserve and restore this area.	✓

## Policy L2: Development within the High Weald AONB

**“Landscaping should be in harmony with the surrounding area.”**

### Policy Objective

Development within the parish will only be permitted where it conserves and enhances the landscape and has regard for the High weald AONB.

The whole of Lamberhurst parish is within the High Weald AONB which recognises the national importance and scenic beauty of the landscape, its wildlife and cultural heritage, and limits the scale and extent of new development.

Development in the parish will only be permitted where it conserves and enhances the landscape and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 or subsequent iterations of the plan. In particular any development must demonstrate that it:

- takes opportunities to restore the natural function of watercourses to improve water quality; prevent flooding and enhance wetland habitats;
- respects the settlement pattern of the parish and uses local materials that enhance the appearance of development and help to reconnect occupiers with the landscape;
- relates well to historic route ways and does not divert them from their original course or damage their rural character by loss of banks, hedgerows, verges or other important features;
- does not result in the material loss or degradation of ancient woodland or historic features within it and, where appropriate will contribute to its ongoing management;
- conserves and enhances the ecology of fields, trees and hedgerows; retains and reinstates historic field boundaries; and directs development away from medieval or earlier fields, especially where these form coherent field systems with other medieval features.
- Any landscape plants should follow the planting recommendations scheme for native plants (No Leylandii and Laurel should be permitted to be planted)
- A full sustainable drainage approach should be included within all new development such that the drainage system provides surface water quality control, water quality protection, biodiversity enhancement and amenity provision.

### Evidence from Community survey

The residents who responded to the questionnaire broadly agreed that retaining existing hedgerows, planting soft boundaries with native plants and

avoiding panel and close board fencing were essential with meeting the historic character of the landscape. Responsible Planting Guide (to be published) and Hedgerows suitable for AONB

## Policy L3: Retaining parish character and conserving the landscape

**“To preserve the setting and character of our parish.”**

### Policy Objective

Limit new housing on hillsides, retain distant views and maintain the separate identity of different parts of the Parish.

Development which conserves and enhances the special character of Lamberhurst parish will be supported, where it:

- retains the linear form of Lamberhurst, lying on a north-south axis across the Teise Valley
- avoids hill and ridge top locations, where its profile is visible over a large area
- maintains the separate identity of, and open land between, Lamberhurst and Lamberhurst Down
- retains the following key views from public vantage points, both from the surrounding countryside into settlements, and from within settlements out into the surrounding countryside.

Key views include:

- From the top of School Hill looking across the village.
- From the footpath running between Sand Road and Pearse Place
- From the footpath across the vineyard looking both towards the village across the valley to Bayham
- From Pierce Barn towards the village.
- From the golf course, across the valley towards Scotney.
- From the 1st tee of the golf course.

### Evidence and support information from community survey

The protection of areas of common land e.g. the Down, Hook Green Common and the Village Green, were frequently raised by residents at public meetings and in answer to the questionnaire.

In November 2018 the Parish Council prepared a plan to reclaim the heath at Hook Green and work on this has already begun.

Our settlements across the entire parish are unique, increasingly rare and widely recognised as important to the landscape of the High Weald.

Developments must not erode the essentially rural, working agricultural character of the area.

We must seek to avoid the incremental removal of hedgerows and woodland boundaries.

Evidence base:

Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2001)  
and the Tunbridge Wells Landscape Characterisation (2017)

A view survey has been carried out by the Community Group and the evidence has been mapped with individual information found in Valued Views and shown Key Photo View Point Overall Map p28.

1. The view from the Vineyard looking across in the direction of Bayham Abbey from WT3862.
2. View to Lamberhurst Church from Golf Course:
3. TQ 67693 36443 View from School Hill towards village
4. View from Scotney Estate side of A21 across to St Mary's Church Lamberhurst
5. View from Sand Road footpath to Lamberhurst School across to Pearse Place and landscape behind
6. View from High Street looking towards the triangle green at the junctions of the Broadway and Spray Hill
7. The view from the top of Town Hill looking towards the centre of the village
8. View from Footpath looking away from village TQ67453560
9. View from public footpath at the top of the hill near Mount Pleasant Lane looking across the valley towards Lamberhurst village
10. View from public footpath WT386 looking across the Vineyard towards the village.
11. View from Town Hill to the Down
12. View from Clayhill Road towards Bayham Abbey ruins

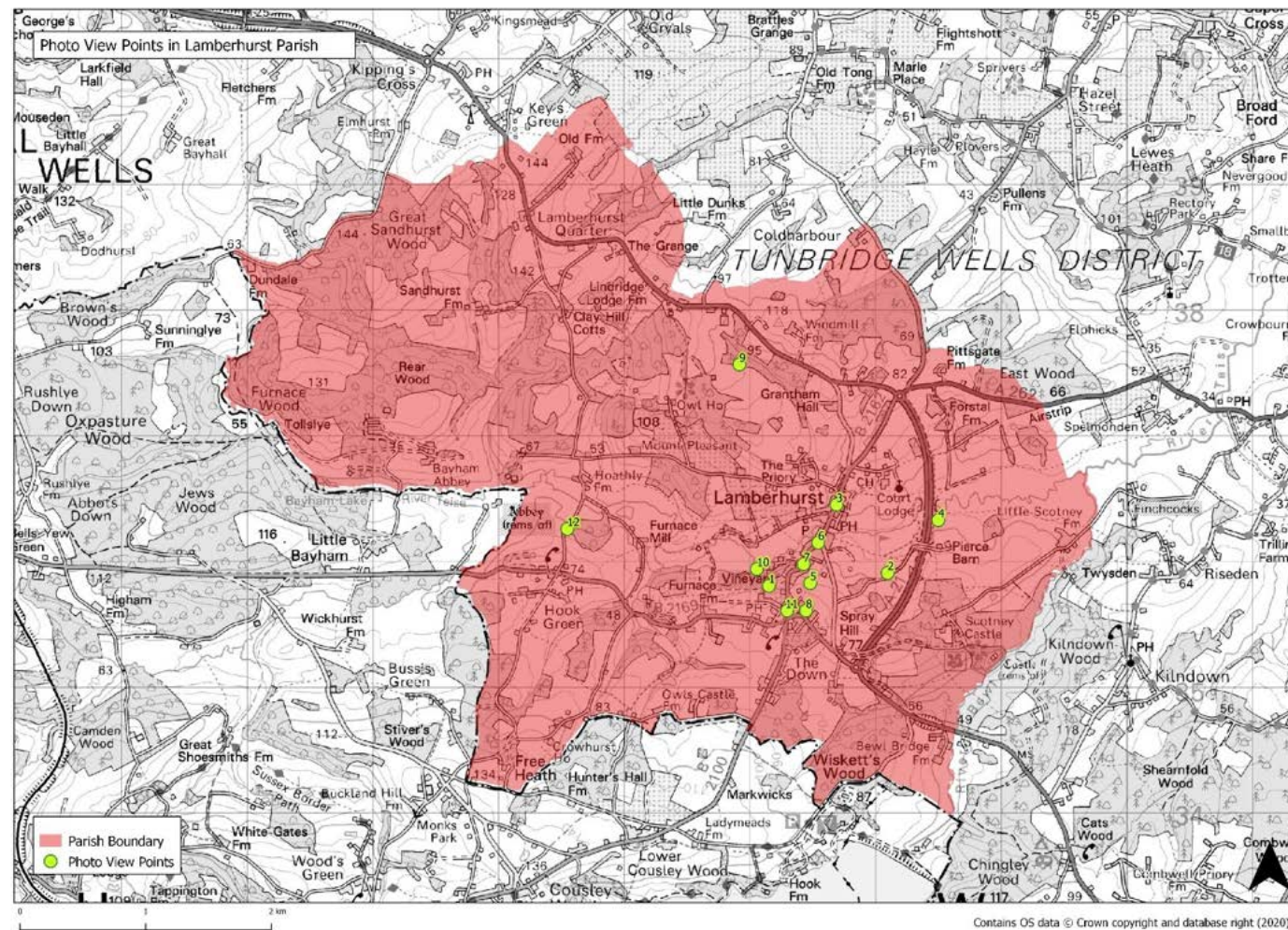


Valued view from the Vineyard to the village showing the Clock Tower



Valued view from Clayhill Road, Hook Green, across to Bayham Abbey





Map L3: Key valued view points in parish

## Policy L4: Bio-diversity

**“Preserve and manage Areas of Local Nature Conservation Value including meadow habitat and ancient woodland.”**

### Policy Objective

Utilise all opportunities to protect and enhance natural habitats and encourage the bio-diversity of flora and fauna.

Development proposals must utilise all available opportunities to protect and enhance natural habitats and encourage the biodiversity of flora and fauna, in particular where the site includes:

- land designated, and protected, for its biodiversity interest (SSSI)
- unimproved meadow or pasture (wildflower grasslands)
- ancient woodland
- the River Teise corridor
- pond or wetland

These sites are shown in a map in Appendix 3.

Development proposals which are likely to have an adverse impact, either direct or indirect, on local biodiversity will only be permitted where it is supported by a specialist ecological impact assessment which demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, that there are no alternatives with less harmful impacts, and that appropriate mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation measures, can be provided to achieve a net enhancement to the site's biodiversity. Any development proposals should consider additional benefit of enhancing biodiversity through drainage provision.

Where opportunities arise from development, the preparation of management plans to conserve and enhance important habitats in the parish will be encouraged.

Applicants require an Ecological impact Assessment and the design of the development will need to be informed by the survey results, following the [British Standard BS 42020:2013](#) following the step-wise process: Avoidance; Mitigation; and Compensation

### Evidence and support from Green Space assessments

The Gravel Pit on the Down Conservation Area is the only site in the ALNCV.

Other areas assessed for suitability and supported by the results of the questionnaire were The Down Meadow, Hook Green and the Village Green.



The Down, part of the commonland, in the Parish

## Policy L5: Water management and flood risk

“Manage and maintain meadows as part of the landscaping policy.”

### Policy Objective

Development should be located and designed so as to lessen flood risk, both to itself and to other land and properties.

Developers should mitigate any risk of flooding by:

- a. siting as far as possible in areas of low flood risk (Flood Zone 1) and avoiding areas of higher flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3), and utilising information from local flood records
- b. providing site-specific flood risk assessments with the planning application, assessing the risk in detail and identifying the most appropriate ways of managing and mitigating that risk, in cases where either the location (FZ 2,3) or the scale of development warrant it
- c. identifying appropriate flood protection, resilience, resistance or mitigation measures, based on the above assessment
- d. incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water run-off by measures to store it, or slow down the rate at which it discharges from the site, together with arrangements to secure its ongoing management and maintenance.
- e. Using any opportunities arising from flood risk management to improve water quality and to control, or eradicate, invasive plant species.

### Evidence

The Environment Agency recommends continuing to enhance natural flood defences.

Historic flood events in 1960 and 2000 highlighted the importance of improving flood defences to reduce damage to property.

Major flood protection measures were installed by the Environment Agency in 2011. [To see the data](#) (Pages 422-426 for the Flood Risk Policies)



View of flooding from Brewers street to the Rive Teise



**Map L5: Flood Zones in Lamberhurst Parish**



## Policy L6: Public Rights of Way

**“Promote a walking and cycling community.”**

### Policy Objective

New housing development must be located with easy access to the public rights of way network to provide footpath/off-road connectivity from developments to existing PRoW networks.

Where a development site includes public footpaths and other rights of way, the existing route should be maintained through the site to a similar standard, wherever possible.

Where this is not possible, a suitable alternative route should be provided, to the satisfaction of the local planning and highways authorities, as part of the development.

Where PRoW is directly affected by development proposals, plans should clearly state that planning applications that would adversely affect the existing PRoW network will not be permitted.

### Evidence and support information

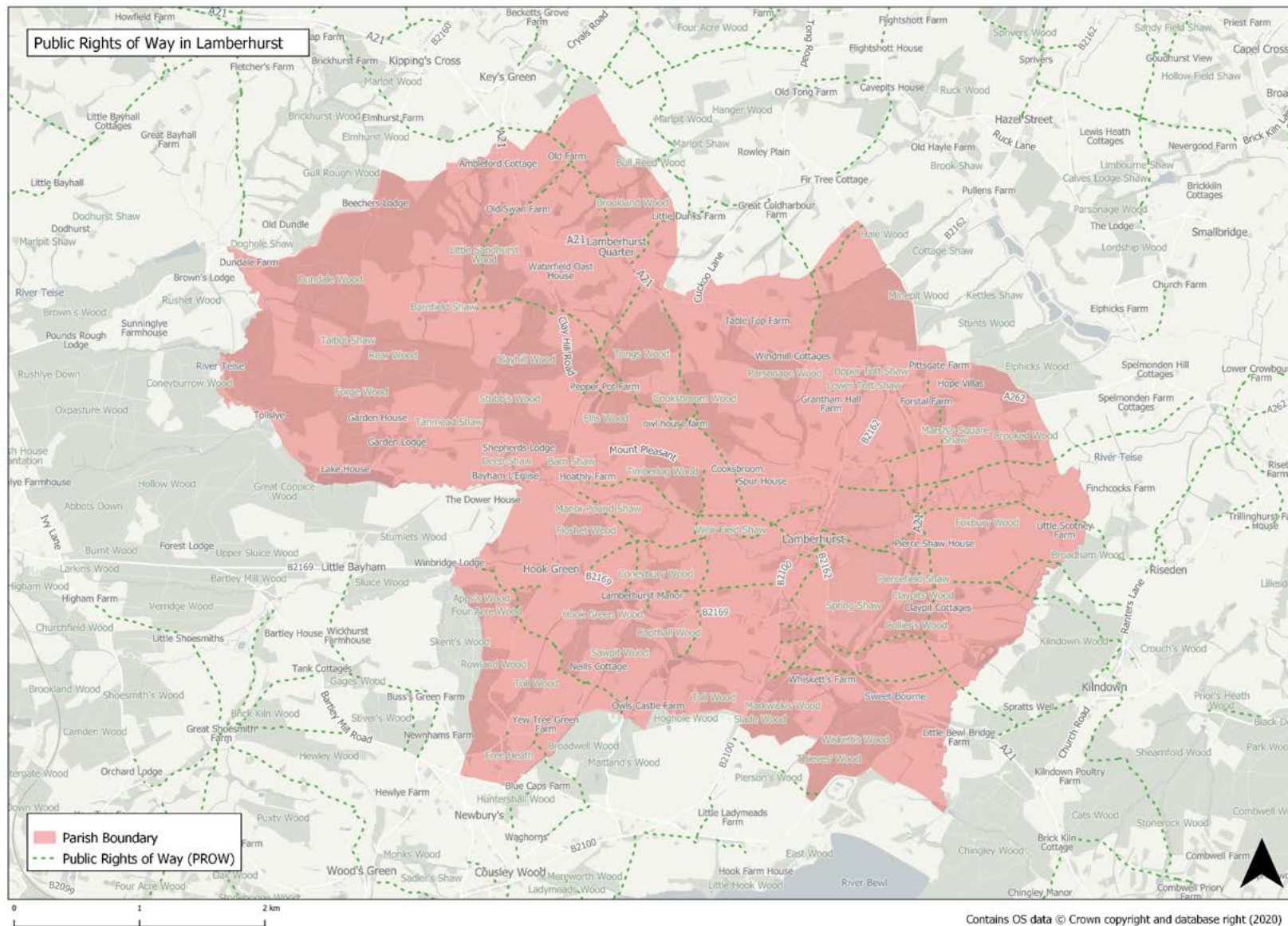
Lamberhurst Parish enjoys 26 miles of public footpaths, bridleways and by-ways which are shown in the Public Rights of Way Map p.33. There are also forgotten routeways that the group are looking to map.

Kent CC ROWIP, is a statutory document for the PRoW to ensure continued working and delivery of improvements to the PRoW network in Lamberhurst Parish.



Children playing on haystacks around the Parish





## Chapter 8 Community & wellbeing

### Objective

Sustain and enhance the community assets of the parish to benefit local parishioners, including accessible footpaths throughout the parish, supporting and using community facilities and integrating stakeholders such as The National Trust at Scotney Castle and English Heritage at Bayham.

### Village

Lamberhurst Parish has a village which sits along the River Teise with two hamlets, the Down and Hook Green, as well as Lamberhurst Quarter alongside the A21. All of these areas have a strong sense of identity and the residents value rural living. Local amenities like the village shop, the Doctor's Surgery, Post Office, Parish Office, public houses, open spaces, footpaths and bridleways are also seen as important.

### Strong community

Lamberhurst Parish has a strong sense of community as evidenced by the number of different clubs and societies as well as St Mary's Church.

### St Mary's Church Lamberhurst from the golf course



### Youth involvement



Families designing housing with lego



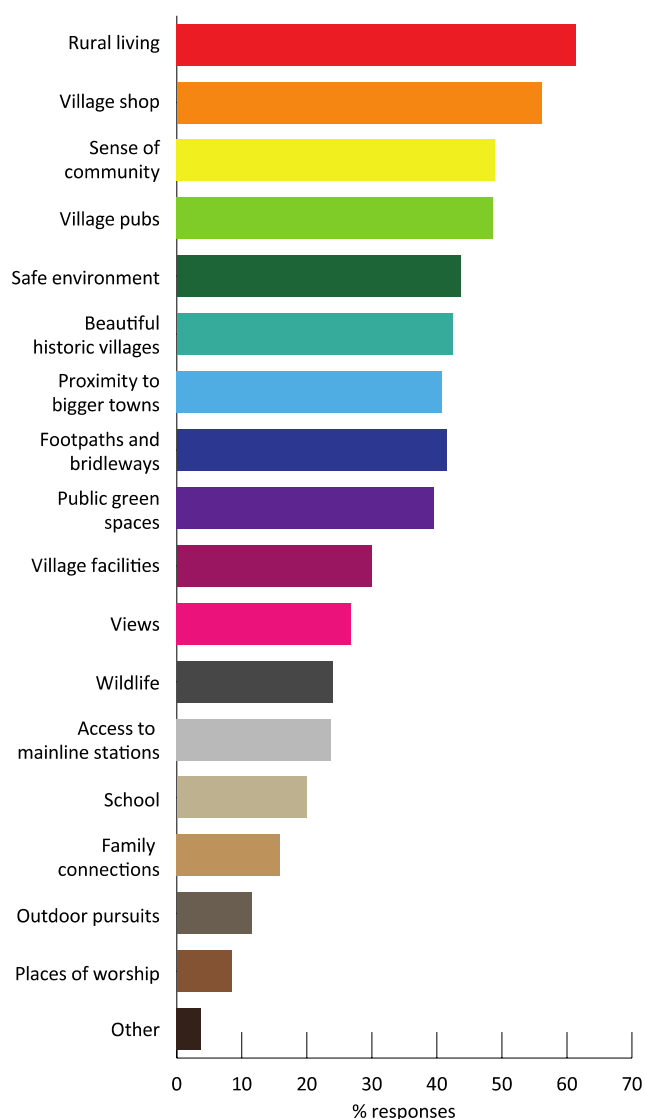
Child making his own designs using recycled materials

## Evidence from questionnaire survey

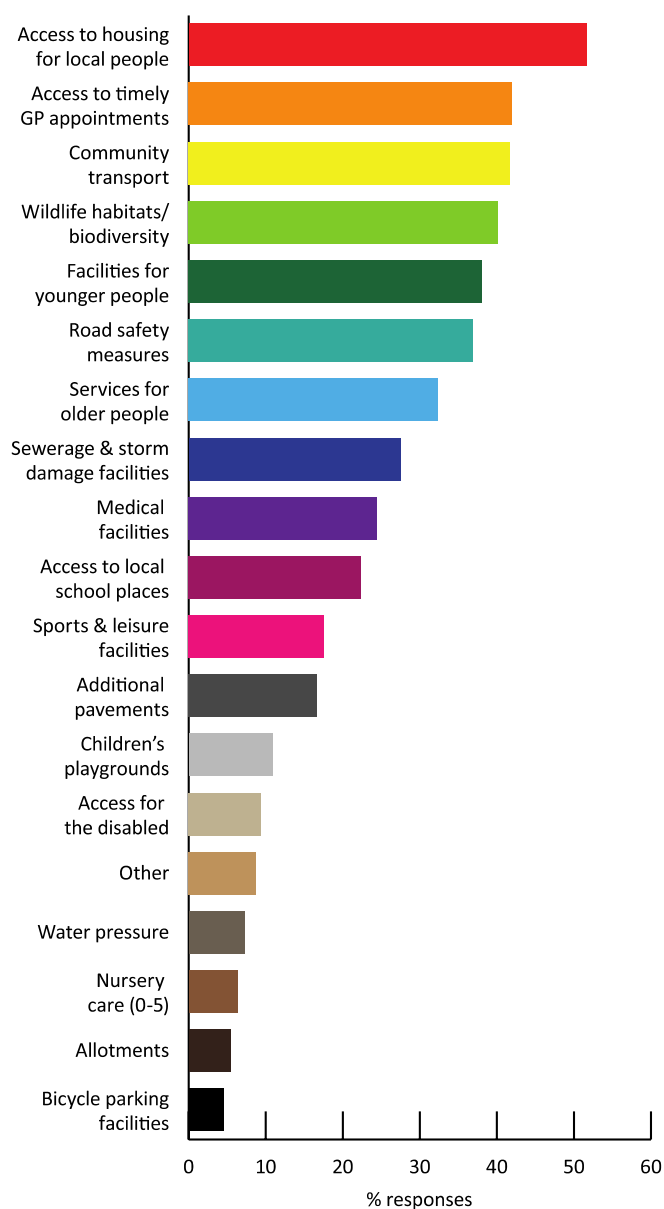
The LNDP residents' questionnaire was conducted in June 2018.

This highlighted the importance of village amenities.

**Graph 8.1: Most valued aspects of living in the parish**



**Graph 8.2: Priorities for next 15 years**





## Landscape and community workshop



Local residents discuss community and transport issues at the one of the workshops

## Lamberhurst societies and amenities

Local societies and clubs include:

- Lamberhurst Golf Club;
- Bowls Club;
- Lamberhurst & Kilndown Cricket Club;
- Lamberhurst Football;
- Brownies and Guides;
- Katherine Mansi Dance School;
- Lamberhurst Pantomime Society;
- Gardeners' Association;
- Royal British Legion;
- Local History Society;
- The Playing Fields Association;
- The Bonfire Society;
- Lamberhurst Community Cinema;
- Lamberhurst pre-school;
- Annual 'Hopping Do'.

## Need for youth activities

Residents identified a lack of activities for 11-14 year olds. Future plans should take into

consideration the development of the Memorial Hall and other facilities and seek further investment from potential developers in order to satisfy this need.



Community events held on the Broadway in Lamberhurst village

## Green spaces and common land

The survey responses showed that many residents not only valued our many green spaces and common land but also the ability to walk around the village in order to reach local amenities.

## Walking around the parish

The Community and Wellbeing workshop group recognised there are several well used paths with distant views, used by both locals and visitors, including circular routes from the village centre. There is opportunity, however, for new or improved footpaths linking potential developments to the village centre. There is also potential for all-weather tracks around the river Teise, connecting Brewer Street to the Vineyard and, potentially, the village to Bewl Water. These should be multi-use for walkers, 'buggies', disabled people, joggers and cyclists.

## Parking problems

Parked vehicles often block pavements, forcing pedestrians, buggy or wheel-chairs onto the road, putting them at risk from cars and lorries. Local roads and country lanes have become 'rat-runs' as drivers attempt to avoid congestion hotspots.

# Policy C1: Assets of value to the community

**“Ensure that the vital assets of the community are protected.”**

## Policy Objective

Development proposals that enhance the viability and community value of our existing facilities will be supported, providing they accord with the other policies of the LNDP.

Proposals resulting in the loss or diminution of these facilities will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. facilities of equivalent or better standard to serve the parish will be provided at a suitable location and will be secured through an appropriate planning mechanism
- b. there has been a sustained effort to find another public, voluntary or commercial body to operate the facility as demonstrated through it being marketed for a period of at least two years by an appropriate agent, at a time when the site is available, or available shortly.
- c. the facility is no longer required and there will be no adverse impact on the social and community life of the village.

## Evidence and guidance

The community workshop indicated that any loss of an asset or amenity of value within Lamberhurst Parish will diminish our community.

Further Guidance: [Sport England Guidance needs to be taken into consideration](#)

## Community Assets

Designated Community Assets are:

- Car park to the rear of the Memorial Hall
- Car park below the Brown Trout
- Chequers Field
- Fair Fields
- Lamberhurst Playing Field
- The Chequers Inn

- Victoria House Stores
- Village Clock
- War Memorial Hall
- The Elephant’s Head Public House

Other assets include:

- St Mary’s Church
- Doctors’ surgery
- St Mary’s Primary School

Other important connections include:

- Bayham Abbey
- Bewl Water (in another parish)
- Scotney Castle
- The Vineyard
- The Golf Course





## Policy C2: Broadband and mobile infrastructure

**“Improve telecommunications provision throughout.”**

### Policy Objective

Proposals which provide access to superfast broadband and improve mobile phone communications within the parish will be supported.

In particular when they:

- produce demonstrable communication benefits to local residents and businesses
- are sympathetically located and designed to integrate into the local environment, in particular avoiding harm to the AONB landscape (policies L2 and L3) and the conservation areas (policy D7)
- and use all available opportunities to share masts and other equipment between code operators.
- Make arrangements for de-commissioning and removal of equipment after it is no longer required.

### Fibre To The Premises (FTTP)

TWBC's draft Local Plan (ref: Policy ED3 Reg 18) states that for all residential and employment developments within the limits to built development, site allocations will enable fibre to the premises (FTTP). In other areas, all residential developments over five dwellings and employment proposals of 500 square metres or more (including through conversion) will also enable FTTP.

For schemes under these thresholds, the Parish Council's expectation is that provision for FTTP will be achieved, where practical. For sites of less than five dwellings or 500 square metres of employment space, or where it can be demonstrated that FTTP is not practical due to special circumstances, (such as issues of viability, the inability to provide the appropriate physical trench, and proximity to the nearest breakout point on the fibre network), then other non-Next Generation Access technologies, including wired and wireless infrastructure, providing all-inclusive internet access speeds in excess of 24 Mbps, should be delivered wherever practical.

### Evidence

Throughout both the residents' questionnaire and the business survey these were highlighted as major issues for improvement.

Broadband speeds vary considerably throughout the Parish. Some outlying areas struggle with speeds of less than 2 megabits per second. In the village itself, however, more acceptable speeds are generally available, ranging from 7.5 to 50 mbs. If speeds at these levels could be consistently achieved across the parish, they would provide a reasonable service for most users.

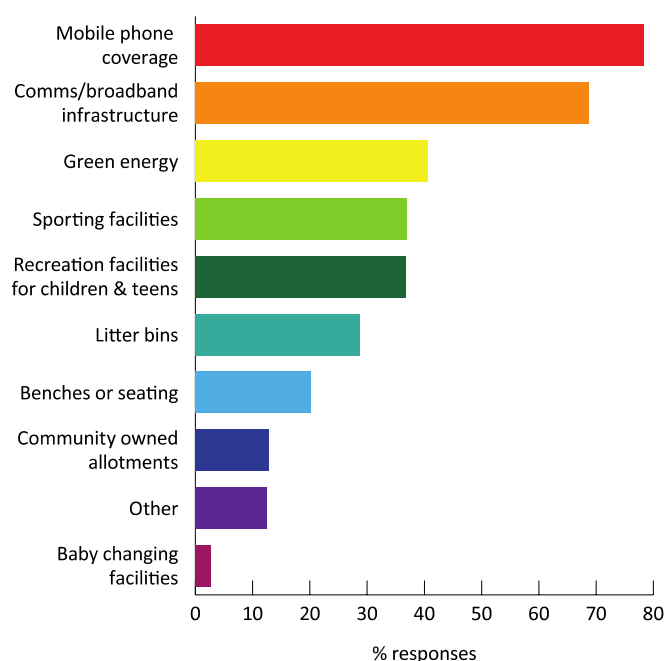
BT's estimates are largely confirmed by recent Parish Council surveys.

However, it was found that some villagers are getting service speeds considerably lower than estimated and in some cases lower even than neighbours close by. If this is the case, it may be an issue with the subscriber's own computer hardware (modem, router, internal extension cabling etc.) or it may be as a result of problems with the BT lines and/or the master socket in the house. Some recent cases in Hook Green reflect this and show the scope for significant

improvements in broadband speed when the problems are resolved at the individual property level.

Nevertheless, it remains the position that telecommunications in rural areas are generally worse than in the towns and cities; that local topography can cause mobile “dead spots”; and that rapid advances in technology will require continuing, large-scale, investment over the coming years. Accordingly, national and local planning policies require a positive approach to telecommunications investment.

**Graph 8.3: Recommended improvements**



New development often puts pressure on local infrastructure, particularly where it is of a scale to increase traffic flows, school rolls or doctor's

patient lists, or where it necessitates an upgrade of other local community facilities such as open space and recreation. The planning system provides mechanisms for developers to contribute to provision of improved infrastructure through legal agreements attached to the grant of planning permission under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. Such agreements should meet the following tests:

- they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms,
- they are directly related to the development,
- and are fairly and reasonably related, in scale and kind, to the development

TWBC also have the option of introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), but have yet to introduce a charging schedule to help fund the infrastructure required to support growth in the Borough. The CIL is a standard levy per unit of floor space (square metre) in certain forms of development, where its imposition can be justified by economic viability assessments. If CIL is introduced in future, 15% of receipts in Lamberhurst would be passed to the Parish Council for investment in local infrastructure, rising to 25% if a Neighbourhood Plan is in place. This would require the Parish to identify its priorities for investment. A provisional list, based on soundings in the local community, is set out in policy C3 and will need to be kept under regular review if CIL is introduced.

## Policy C3: Developer contributions

**“Improve telecommunications and infrastructure provision throughout.”**

### Policy Objective

Developer contributions will be sought for investment in off-site infrastructure as required and in other projects that enhance community life.

Where new development requires investment in off-site infrastructure to make it acceptable – for example in terms of highway capacity and safety works, provision of high speed broadband, additional school or doctor’s surgery capacity, or provision of new recreational or play facilities – developer contributions will be sought through a section 106 agreement attached to the grant of planning permission.

Affordable housing will be provided on-site in accordance with policies H2, H3, H4 and H5.

New development should also provide opportunities to secure investment into the PRoW network, which could enhance opportunities for active travel and outdoor recreation across the Parish.

If, at a future date, TWBC introduce a CIL Charging Schedule and the Parish Council receive CIL receipts from new eligible developments in Lamberhurst (15% of all receipts prior to formal making of the neighbourhood plan and 25% thereafter) community priorities for investment in local infrastructure are set out in Chapter 13, Community Action Plan, Project P3.

### Evidence and guidance

A need for a community action plan to co-ordinate a set of projects that will enhance community wellbeing will be established – see Chapter 13.

Through the process of liaising with residents across the parish in order to create this LNDP, many projects have been suggested that would improve the well-being of the community but are outside the scope of our plan. A ‘Wish list’ of costed projects should be drawn up by the Parish Council to ensure that developer contributions can be sought by TWBC Planning Officers when determining proposals for developments within the Parish.



Local residents at the Vision workshop held in the War Memorial

## Chapter 9 Housing & design

### Objective

Ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing in order to meet the needs of parish residents now and in the future, to include potential rural exception sites with local nomination rights.

Maintain a strong community by ensuring a mix of homes that integrate various types and tenures of housing within the village.

Enable local people who wish to do so, to remain in the village throughout their lifetime, ensuring that housing stock meets the requirements of residents of all ages.

## Housing

### Evidence

Our Starting point for preparing both the housing and the design policies for the LNDP are:

- Evidence on the existing population, housing stock and housing needs in Lamberhurst, including a parish housing needs survey carried out in 2019.
- Views from the local community obtained from the residents' questionnaire in July 2018 and a housing and design workshop, held in November 2018.
- Existing national and local planning policies on housing and design.
- Evidence gathered by TWBC on housing and design matters as part of their work on the emerging local plan.

This has enabled us to develop objectives for housing and design in Lamberhurst and to produce planning policies and community actions to help us deliver them.

Quoting those attending the Housing and Design workshop:

**“Lamberhurst is a beautiful parish that could benefit from sympathetic expansion retaining its character, views, community, architecture and**

**wildlife. New blood and commerce should be encouraged but social housing should also be provided.”**

### Statistics

Local housing needs in Lamberhurst are, to a great extent, driven by the structure of the existing local population and the existing housing stock.

Table 9.1 shows the structure of the population indicated by the 2011 Census for both the parish and for Tunbridge Wells Borough. Table 9.2 shows the structure of the housing stock at the time.

**Table 9.1: Structure of the population as in 2011 census**

Variable	Parish	%	District	%
<b>Total population</b>	<b>1,248</b>		<b>117,956</b>	
Males	603	48.3	57,232	48.5
Females	645	51.7	60,724	51.5
Aged 0 to 15 years	238	19.1	24,545	20.8
Aged 16 to 24 years	96	7.7	12,288	10.4
Aged 25 to 44 years	285	22.8	30,060	25.5

Variable	Parish	%	District	%
Aged 45 to 64 years	380	30.4	31,095	26.4
Aged 65 to 74 years	158	12.7	10,809	9.2
Aged 75 to 84 years	57	4.6	6,426	5.4

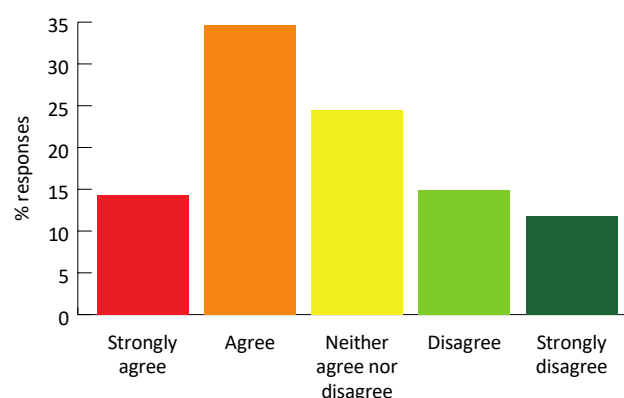
Variable	Parish	%	District	%
Aged 85 and older	34	5.6	2,733	2.3
Density ( <i>persons per hectare</i> )		0.7		2.0

**Table 9.2: Housing Stock**

Variable	Parish	%	District	%
<b>HOUSING</b>				
Total household spaces	702		49,085	
▪ Total household spaces with residents	667	95.0	47,174	96.1
▪ Total household spaces without residents	35	4.99	1911	3.9
Detached houses or bungalows	260	37.0	13,096	26.7
Semi-detached houses or bungalows	228	32.5	14,424	29.4
Terraced houses or bungalows	114	16.2	8,779	17.9
Flats, maisonettes or apartments	97	13.8	12,620	25.7
Caravans or other temporary structures	3	0.4	166	0.3
Occupancy rating (rooms) of -1 or less	29	4.1	4,055	8.3

## Agreement to new homes

The residents' questionnaire in the summer of 2018 indicated that 48% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed, that there was a need for new homes to be built in the parish over the next fifteen years, with 27% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this proposition.

**Graph 9.1: Agreement to new homes**

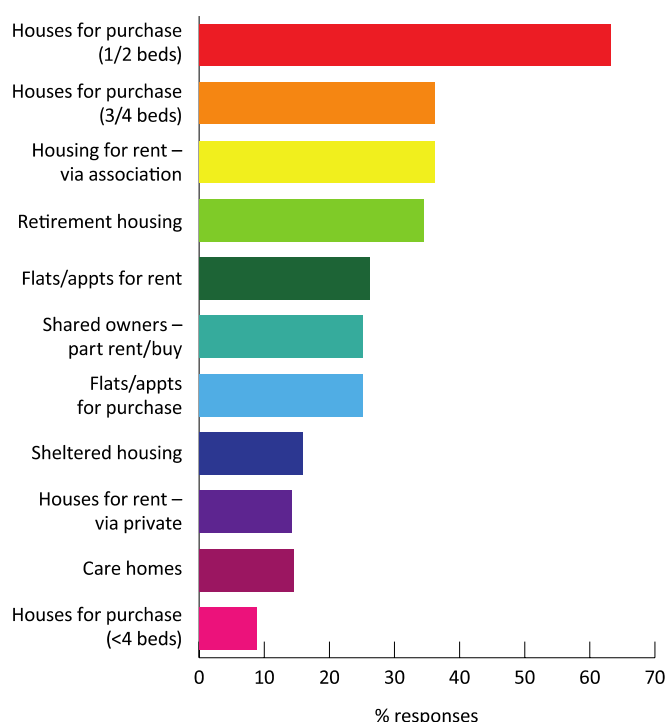


## Preferred housing types

Over 60% of the respondents believed in a requirement for smaller homes and flats, alongside social housing for rent. This was also reflected in a need for retirement housing rather than larger housing for purchase.

There was general agreement with the need to build affordable housing for people with local connections on modest incomes and having a policy which supports self-build homes for local people. Residents generally felt that housing development should consist of a range of small-scale developments.

**Graph 9.2: Preferred new housing types**



## TWBC Housing Needs Survey (2018)

TWBC conducted a household survey in 2018 which highlighted that

64.7% of the households who responded and were planning to move, hoped to stay within the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.

23.2% of households, 11,064 in total, envisaged moving within the next five years. 5.3% of

households, a total of 2,540, would like to move but are unable to.

## Lamberhurst Housing Needs Survey

Lamberhurst Parish was given the opportunity to conduct their own HNS supported by TWBC and produced by Rural Kent Action with Communities, during January 2019.

This survey confirmed that high property prices and a predominance of privately-owned homes means that many local people are unable to afford a home in Lamberhurst.

The LHNS identified a need for up to nine affordable homes for local people; three single people, one couple and five families. Seven of the households need housing now, one in the next two years and one in the next five years. The nine respondents needing affordable housing indicated a strong local connection to Lamberhurst; eight currently live in the parish and one outside but would like to return.

The nine households indicated that they need the following accommodation:

- 3 x 1 bedroom
- 1 x 2 bedrooms
- 3 x 3 bedrooms
- 1x 4 bedrooms
- 1 x 5+ bedrooms

The actual size of property that respondents are eligible for in terms of rented housing will depend upon the council's allocation policy. In total, four respondents indicated an interest in shared ownership and two in a discounted market sale.

The survey in total has identified a total need for twelve affordable homes if you include the three elderly householders. In addition, there is a requirement for eight open market properties that are suitable for older householders who wish to

downsize to houses that are more suited to their needs.

### Existing Planning Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) sets out the role of the planning system in significantly boosting the supply of housing. In making plans, local planning authorities are directed to plan positively to meet the housing needs of an area and respond to market signals, such as housing affordability, in order to deliver a broad choice of high-quality homes, increase opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable inclusive and mixed communities. At the same time, the NPPF promotes high standards of design and the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment and heritage assets.

New housing development in Lamberhurst parish has been strictly controlled over many years by various policies in local planning documents produced by TWBC. This is because Lamberhurst is a “lower tier” settlement with relatively fewer facilities and poorer access to public transport and employment opportunities in comparison with larger, more sustainable, settlements in the Borough. In addition, Lamberhurst parish has a number of protective designations in both the village and surrounding countryside, particularly the High Weald AONB.

These local planning policies seek to contain most development within “limits to built-development”, as defined in “saved” policy LBD1 of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (2006) and shown in Appendix 3.

This policy aims to prevent the unrestricted sprawl of development beyond towns and villages and to restrict development in the countryside to that required by agriculture, forestry and other uses requiring a rural location. There may also be

exceptions, in certain circumstances for development specifically tailored and maintained in perpetuity, for local housing needs. As result, the number of new dwellings completed in the parish over recent years has been modest, as shown in Table 9.3 below:

**Table 9.3 Dwelling completions in Lamberhurst**

Period	2006-11*	2011-16*	2016-19*
Dwellings completed	15	7	12
Annual average completions	3	1.4	4

*\* Data is from April to March in following year.*

*Source: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council*

As part of its work on the new Local Plan, TWBC recognises that, in line with national policy, a significant increase in the pace of housebuilding will be necessary in future.

This has resulted in a “call for sites” where landowners and developers can put forward sites for consideration as potential development allocation sites. TWBC then assesses their potential on the basis of suitability in planning terms, availability and deliverability within the local plan period to 2036. Such sites are assessed in TWBC’s Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). Thirteen sites have been put forward in Lamberhurst parish and are the subject of ongoing assessment by TWBC.

Any development allocations arising from the process will be included in the draft Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan which is expected to be published for public consultation in August or September 2019.

## Policy H1: Location of housing development

### Policy Objective

#### **“Concentrate new housing in and around the village.”**

Housing developments in the countryside will be strictly controlled in the interests of conserving the High Weald AONB.

New housing development will be provided by any development allocations in the emerging Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2019) and by appropriate small scale development within, or adjoining, the "limits to built development" for Lamberhurst.

Housing development in the countryside will be strictly controlled in the interests of conserving the nationally important landscape of the High Weald AONB and will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where:

- a.** the proposed dwelling is necessary to meet a demonstrable agricultural or forestry need, or needs of other activities which require a rural location, in accordance with national planning practice guidance and "saved" policy LBD1 of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (2006).
- b.** the Local Planning Authority will give priority to the retention and the conservation of existing agricultural buildings, recreation and tourism uses that provide employment. The conversion of such buildings to residential use will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances in accord with the criteria set out below (Policies D1 to D8 inclusive).
- c.** the proposal is a "rural exceptions scheme" to provide social housing tailored to meet local needs in the parish, supported by appropriate evidence and managed in perpetuity by a social housing provider in accordance with "saved" policy H8 of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (2006) and policy H4 of this plan.

### Evidence

The existing housing stock in Lamberhurst is weighted towards detached and semi-detached houses, whereas much of the local housing need derives from smaller households requiring 1 or 2 bed accommodation, or older people looking to “downsize” to a smaller dwelling and retain their local social links. Our public consultations showed that there is strong community support for new housing development to focus on smaller

dwelling, which are more affordable, and for housing which enables people with local connections to stay in the parish and so reinforce community cohesion.

The evidence on housing needs in Lamberhurst shows that even the cheapest open market housing requires a high deposit, and high annual income, well beyond the means of many local people. There is also specific evidence of local people in housing need.

## Policy H2: Housing mix, tenure and affordability

### Policy Objective

#### **“To protect the current mix of housing requirements.”**

All proposals must consider the mix of housing type and tenure and will be expected to reflect the community's need for smaller and affordable dwellings.

Provide:

- a.** a minimum of 30% 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings
- b.** a maximum of 30% 4+ bedroom dwellings

Any variation will only be permitted where there is robust justification based on independently verified viability information or updated housing needs information.

On tenure, a borough-wide target of 40% affordable housing, including affordable rented and shared ownership housing, will be sought for all developments of 10 or more dwellings. For developments of less than 10 units (including conversions and subdivisions), affordable housing will be sought according to the stepped target and threshold below, unless robust and independently verified financial viability evidence is provided showing that the development would not be viable at the target level:

Scheme size (units)	Affordable housing (units)
1-2	0
3-4	1
5-7	2
8-9	3

Affordable housing units should be integrated throughout the development, be similar in external design and materials from any market housing on the site, and be managed as social housing in perpetuity by a registered social landlord.

### Evidence

Our public consultations show strong community support for new housing developments that focus on smaller, more affordable dwellings that enable people with local connections to stay in the Parish.

There is a current requirement for nine new affordable dwellings. The national threshold for seeking affordable housing is 10 dwellings, but local authorities in designated rural areas, for example, in an AONB, can seek lower thresholds and the LNDP to do this.

## Policy H3: Allocating affordable housing

### Policy Objective

**“Enable local people of all ages to stay in the community.”**

New affordable housing provided by the LNDP will initially be subject to a local connection.

All new affordable housing in Lamberhurst provided by the Plan will initially be subject to a local connection, meaning that people with a strong local connection to the Parish, and whose needs are not met by the open market, will be first to be offered the tenancy or shared ownership of the new homes provided.

In this context a strong local connection means an applicant(s):

- who has lived in the Parish for 5 of the last 8 years and is currently resident here, or
- who has lived in the Parish for at least 5 years and whose parents or children are currently living in the Parish and have at least 10 years continuous residency here.

### Evidence and supporting information

Affordable housing is open to residents on the District Housing Scheme and does not necessarily ensure residents with connections to our Parish will be given priority. The Parish would be able to identify ‘Rural Exception Sites’ which have strict criteria so those that have local connections have priority for local housing.

Housing in the Neighbourhood Area is expensive and less affordable than across England as a whole. 9 affordable housing requirements have been identified.

Policy H5 in TWBC draft Local Plan, under heading ‘Local Connection’ provides details of the ‘local communication cascade’ used by TWBC housing.



Affordable housing for local residents

## Policy H4: Rural exception sites

### Policy Objective

**“Support where possible the delivery of rural exception sites.”**

Proposals for small scale developments of affordable housing on rural exception sites will be supported provided they meet the criteria set out in the LNDP.

Proposals for such housing schemes on rural exception sites on the edge of the village, beyond the "limits to built-development "(Policy H1), where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where:

- the proposals are drawn up on the basis of a detailed study of local housing need, endorsed by TWBC as a local planning and housing authority, which identifies the type and tenure of housing required, and the rent/shared ownership arrangements which can be afforded, by local people in housing need
- the dwellings are owned and managed in perpetuity by a registered social landlord
- the development meets the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, particularly in terms of conserving and enhancing the High Weald AONB.

### Evidence

The evidence from the [Housing Needs Survey](#) and responses to the questionnaire highlight the need for affordable housing for those with a strong local connection to the Parish. Where a business can demonstrate that key workers cannot be recruited without the provision of housing, then our plan would be supportive of such development. It will rely on policies in the NPPF and the new TWBC Local Plan to provide the necessary policy controls.



More affordable housing for all ages (Hopgarden Close)



## Policy H5: Replacement dwellings

**“Encourage net gain in our local housing stock.”**

### Policy Objective

Replacement of existing dwellings should only be permitted where the existing building has established and continuing residential use rights and the current building is unstable or uneconomic to repair.

All other policies set out in this plan will apply and in addition the following criteria must be met:

- a.** the replacement building does not exceed the total volume of the original building, plus any additional volume that could be generated using the maximum limits imposed for extensions under the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended)
- b.** the location of the replacement building coincides, in whole or part, with the position of the original building unless an alternative location within the existing curtilage of the property would reduce the visual impact of the building from areas to which the public have access, or facilitate the necessary realignment of a public highway.

### Evidence and support information

All policies set out in this plan will apply and in addition the criteria set out above must be met.



Housing that fits into the outstanding landscape within the AONB

## Policy H6: Conversion of existing buildings

**“Ensure existing buildings are conserved.”**

### Policy Objective

A proposal will be supported if the character of the building is not adversely altered and it does not result in the loss of employment or of an asset of community value.

Proposals for the conversion of existing properties to alternative uses will be supported where:

1. The proposed conversion will not adversely affect the character of the building as a result of works to adapt or extend the building
2. It does not result in the loss of employment or of an asset of community value (see policy C1) or loss of amenity to the surrounding area through changes to local character or significant increases in traffic generation or pressure for on-street parking spaces.
3. The proposed use would not increase flood risk, either in itself or to neighbouring properties, in a vulnerable location. (See Policy L5.)

The Parish Council will monitor applications for changes of use to buildings in Lamberhurst to ensure that a balance is maintained between residential, commercial and community uses.

### Evidence and support information

In most cases, there are benefits in ensuring that buildings which are no longer suitable for their existing use can be converted to another beneficial use, which makes suitable use of the building. However, some safeguards are needed to prevent development which will harm local character and community value or have adverse external impacts through, for example, traffic or parking.

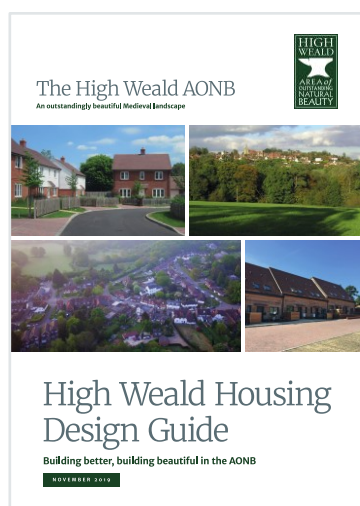


Mill House converted from the original Mill

## Design

Lamberhurst Parish has a wealth of historic buildings which have been built using local materials and with the scale and form which allows the housing to be part of the medieval landscape. More recent developments, such as Hopgarden Close, have shown how this special opportunity has been overlooked using generic housing layouts and buildings which fail to capitalise on the true character of Lamberhurst Parish.

These types of developments tend to lack appropriate levels of parking and a higher density of housing, introducing hard boundaries which create a more urbanised environment.



Any new developments should take due regard to the [High Weald Management Plan](#), the [High Weald Housing Design Guide](#) and the [High Weald Colour Guide](#) to the design of new houses within the Parish. This will help to ensure higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character, and is embedded with a true sense of place, without stifling innovation and creativity.



The Lamberhurst community in 2018 also produced a [detailed character assessment](#) of the Parish for the Village, the Down and Hook Green. This information gives further detail to the design guidance especially in the conservation and adjoining areas. Any new housing development should also take into consideration the distinctive characteristics of the [Parish Character Assessment Areas](#) as well as these additional features:

### Distinctive characteristics of Lamberhurst Village

Height	Two storey throughout with some attic (dormer) windows. Limited variation in eaves and ridges with chimneys.
Form	Scale with terraces, semi-detached cottages and detached houses; properties face the orientation: Domestic scale with terraces, semi-detached cottages and detached houses; properties face the streets with the majority of pitched roofs sloping towards the street providing simple roof lines.
Layout /orientation	Linear along roads with greenspaces in front, with small front gardens and large gardens to rear.
Materials	Clay tile roofs, tile hung on first floor with red brick (sometimes painted white) on ground floor.

Windows, doors and porches	Sashes and some Georgian casements, village shop windows but mainly small to fit in with style of building.
Boundary treatment	Gardens fronted by hedges and picket fences – very few brick walls.
Natural features	Many green and natural features and a network of footpaths allowing the settlement to fit in with its surroundings.

### **Distinctive characteristics of The Down**

Height	Two storey
Form	Mainly detached or semi-detached cottages with terraces ie Woodbine Cottages.
Layout /orientation	The Down is a large open space surrounded by houses at irregular intervals. The rest of the area is low density with scattered development. The Hedges along the roads give a sense of enclosure.
Materials	Clay tile rooves, tile hung on first floor with red brick (sometimes painted white) on ground floor. Clay tile rooves, some tile hung on first floor or whole building, interspersed Windows, doors and porches with occasional sand (iron) stone or full brick painted white (The Vine). Where weather board is used, it tends to be for the whole building (vernacular buildings) or front rather than the first floor. Some rendering.
Windows, doors and porches	Small windows, white painted frames.
Boundary treatment	Hedges and large front gardens with 'soft' grass verges fronting the road and large gardens to rear (countryside). Gravel driveways.
Natural features	It is the landscape and the spaces and their edge treatment that provide a strong characteristic. Also, mature trees and hedgerows.

### **Distinctive characteristics of Hook Green**

Height	Mixture of levels from two storey to converted barns.
Form	Mainly detached.
Layout /orientation	Farmstead structures wrapped in historic rural features such as hedgerows and remnants of meadows. The turnpike roads and other roads add to the character and the hedge structures and woodland edges maintain the sense of enclosure.
Materials	Traditional of area, wood, clay tiles.

<b>Windows, doors and porches</b>	Smaller windows with white frames, however new builds as above have integrated the larger windows which may cause light pollution and are disproportionate to the other buildings in this setting.
<b>Boundary treatment</b>	Soft boundary treatment with hedges, pasture. There are households around the common land that have started to change the natural environment to horticulture this should be resisted.
<b>Natural features</b>	Greenness and boundaries that fit in with rural pasture and classic AONB characteristics.



## Policy D1: Design of new development

### **“High quality complementary design.”**

#### **Policy Objective**

#### **“High quality complementary design.”**

All new development must achieve a high quality of design and reinforce local character.

All new development should reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of this part of the Kentish High Weald, which is derived from:

- low density development, set in landscaped grounds with soft boundary treatments, which help to integrate it into the High Weald landscape
- scale, layout and design which respects and complements its surrounding area and reflects the cultural heritage of the area
- use of traditional building materials particularly brick, clay tiles, sandstone, weatherboarding
- attention to detailed design, with discreet siting of service features such as ducts, meter boxes, and bin stores
- take into consideration the value and importance of PRow network

Planning applications should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, showing how the proposed design and access arrangements for the proposed development have responded to, and been informed by the site context. Accordingly, design should have regard to:

- a. guidance in the High Weald AONB Management Plan and the conservation area appraisals for Lamberhurst and Lamberhurst Down, and relevant supplementary guidance prepared by TWBC
- b. the scale, form and character of existing buildings in the locality, particularly listed buildings and conservation areas;
- c. established building lines and the pattern of rooflines, front gardens, and boundary treatments (see policy D2)
- d. extensions to existing buildings should normally be subsidiary to the main building in scale and height, with matching design and materials, unless a compelling design case justifies an exception
- e. use of good quality materials that complement the existing palette of materials within the High Weald (see High Weald AONB: Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development - September 2017)
- f. the need for sustainable development which will reduce energy usage, generate renewable energy, re-use rain and grey water, and reduce waste (see Policy D3)
- g. the requirements of 'Secure by Design' to minimise the likelihood and fear of crime;
- h. provision of sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage, and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape, together with access for people with restricted mobility (see policy D9).

- i. using opportunities to promote biodiversity by incorporating trees, hedges and plant cover, water features, bird and bat boxes
- j. the need for driveways to have a fully permeable surface, in order to avoid adding to surface water run-off (see policy L5)
- k. the need to make best use of the site to accommodate development
- l. the need to reduce light spillage and maintain dark skies (see also policy D4)

Where applicants are seeking planning permission for new development and for extensions, alterations and changes of use to existing buildings, they must demonstrate that their proposals are in harmony with the distinctive and attractive character of Lamberhurst in the Character Assessment document which will be available with the next issue of this plan; which will be after the consultation period.

### Evidence and support information

Statutory landscape protection and conservation designations put a strong emphasis on the need to secure development which is in harmony with the local environment in Lamberhurst parish.

Likewise, the residents' survey for the Neighbourhood Plan showed a strong measure of agreement on the need to secure high quality design in new development and that new development should:

- be sympathetic to its surroundings
- provide landscaping to help integration into the local environment
- provide adequate parking
- maintain dark skies
- provide a size and mix of buildings appropriate to the site
- respect spaces between buildings

#### Further Guidance:

KCC ROWIP, KCC PRoW and Access 'Good Design Guide'.

- provide adequate external amenity space for refuse and recycling
- mitigate, and adapt to, climate change



Design Group workshop

## Policy D2: Boundary treatments

### **“Protect existing boundaries.”**

#### **Policy Objective**

Boundary treatments should reflect the character and appearance of the locality and improve biodiversity where possible.

Boundary treatments in new development should reflect the character and appearance of the locality and be used as an opportunity to integrate the development successfully into its surroundings and, where possible, improve biodiversity.

In Lamberhurst village, boundaries are marked by hedgerows, low walls, or picket fences in metal or wood. Outside the village, hedges will normally make the most appropriate boundary treatment and native species such as hawthorn, field maple, beech, and hornbeam should be used together with native trees appropriate to the location.

High walls and fences, and “statement” gates and pillars, which close off buildings from their surroundings, are likely to be alien and intrusive features and closed board fencing is not welcomed.

#### **Evidence**

Private front curtilage in Lamberhurst tends to be enclosed by hedgerows, low walls or picket style fencing, either wood or metal. This is a recognisable feature of the street scene and needs to be replicated in line with landscaping policies.

Feedback from the residents questionnaire included statements like:

- “Retaining is better than recreating.”
- “Landscaping should be in harmony with the surrounding area.”
- “Use responsible planting guidance with native High Weald species, soft verges, hedges and low wooden or iron fences and gates.”



Soft boundaries including hedges, iron rails and picket fencing is prevalent

## Policy D3: Climate change

### “Minimise impact on climate.”

#### Policy Objective

New developments should be designed to mitigate and adapt to climate change, making use of renewable energy sources, reducing waste and CO2 emissions where possible.

In addition to managing and mitigating flood risk (policy L5), new development should utilise available opportunities to:

- a. reduce energy usage by orientation of the building(s) to take advantage of passive solar gain and, in combination with shading, to mitigate the impact of overheating in the summer months
- b. generate renewable energy through solar panels, ground and air source heat pumps, biomass, or other measures appropriate to the site
- c. re-use rainwater and grey water by slowing down and storing water for use on site
- d. provide charging points for electric vehicles, either attached to individual units, or in a communal arrangement
- e. reduce waste during the construction process and, after occupation, by making provision for on-site composting and recycling
- f. reduce CO2 in the atmosphere by landscaping and planting trees within the development site.

#### Evidence and support information

Lamberhurst is having to cope with a changing climate. In south east England, we can expect milder and wetter winters with more intense rainfall events and increased flood risk. We can also expect warmer, drier, summers with increased frequency of extreme heat and drought

events. Therefore, it is essential that new development takes these risks into account and both mitigates, and adapts to, climate change. Mitigation addresses the causes of climate change (accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere), whereas adaptation addresses the impacts of climate change. Both approaches are needed.



## Policy D4: Dark skies

**“To retain dark skies over the parish.”**

### Policy Objective

New developments should not detract from the unlit environment of the Parish.

In order to preserve dark skies over the parish, external lighting in new development will only be permitted where:

- the lighting is necessary for operational, safety or security reasons
- any light spillage beyond the application site is eliminated, or reduced by measures such as timing and proximity controls, orientation, screening, shielding or glazing
- there is no adverse impact on nearby residential properties
- should meet the dark skies lighting standard by the Institute of Lighting Professionals

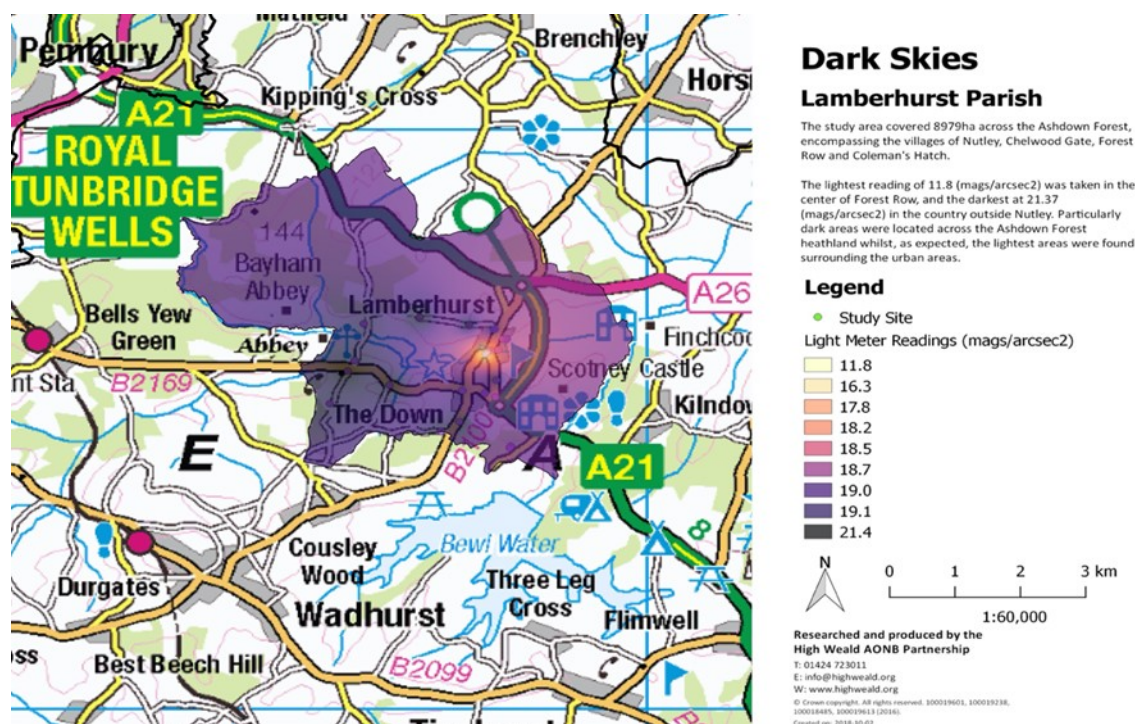
### Evidence and support information

The High Weald AONB Management Plan: Objective OQ4 requires that the special qualities that people value, such as tranquillity, dark skies and clean air, are recognised and taken into account in new developments.

As a rural area at some distance from major urban areas (albeit with some street lighting in the village

and at the A21 junctions), most of Lamberhurst has dark skies. (see map below) This enables the stars to be seen and enjoyed on clear nights and is highly valued by local residents.

Lighting in new development should be designed to maintain dark skies.





## Policy D5: Housing density – “To restrict density to rural standards.”

### Policy Objective

The appropriate density for a housing development should be led by achieving high quality design in keeping with the local plan.

In Lamberhurst, the maintenance and enhancement of local character has greater weight in planning decisions than achieving a nominal minimum housing density figure derived at the national or borough-wide level.

The appropriate density for a housing site should be led by achieving an attractive development that is in character with the village and the surrounding rural area. Typically, densities will be higher in the centre, and reduce towards the edges, of the village and take particular account of the character of the village, its conservation areas and the wider AONB landscape as set out in supporting documents to this plan.

Ensure that the character of the High Weald AONB is protected throughout Lamberhurst Parish with housing density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare in new development (about 12 dwellings per acre).

### Evidence and support information

National planning policy promotes the effective use of land for development. This includes consideration of the setting of minimum density standards for new housing, with the highest densities in locations which are best served by public transport, such as town and city centres.

This approach is not appropriate for Lamberhurst where density should not be driven by minimum standards but by the local site context and the goal of achieving a development which blends with its surroundings. Therefore, in contrast with the minimum standards advocated nationally, a maximum density guideline works better here.

The Tunbridge Wells Landscape Character assessment recognises the sensitive nature of the landscape through the Teise valley, and LNDP questionnaire respondents indicated that any new development should reflect the historic density of the area in which it is proposed.

### Tunbridge Wells Landscape Character assessment strategy:

The Local Character Area should be considered in the context of the High Weald AONB, and the potential role of certain parts of the character in the setting of the AONB. The valued features and qualities of the landscape should be conserved and enhanced.

1. Maintain the secluded sparsely-settled character of the area. It is important that the valley does not become significantly further developed. The Teise Valley is highly visually permeable and any development, even single farm buildings on the valley floor or adjacent valley side, has the potential to be intrusive.
2. The restricted valley setting means that large-scale buildings in association with arable cropping have the potential to have a very high visual impact.

## Policy D6: Historic environment – “To control infill and rebuilds.”

### Policy Objective

Great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the heritage of Lamberhurst Parish. Any development proposals causing harm or loss to these assets will require clear and convincing justification.

#### Heritage assets in Lamberhurst parish are as follows:

- listed buildings
- scheduled monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Protected Military Remains
- archaeological notification areas (as shown in the Kent Historic Environment Record)
- Conservation Areas

#### Non-designated heritage assets:

- Non-scheduled archaeological sites
- Non-listed historic buildings
- Historic landscape features
- Historic parks and gardens

#### A. Assets with statutory protection

Great weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of listed buildings and ancient monuments as statutorily protected, heritage assets. Development proposals causing any harm or loss to these assets will require clear and convincing justification. Accordingly, development proposals which adversely impact on the continued preservation, conservation and use of these assets will only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances where:

- the proposals comply with other relevant planning policies and
- the applicant has demonstrated that there is no other way of accommodating the proposed development, and
- the proposed development will result in substantial benefits which outweigh the loss of, or damage to, the historic asset and
- the opportunity is provided to record any historic asset affected and to provide information to the public by appropriate means

#### B. Other heritage assets

Proposals affecting the non-designated heritage assets will be assessed on the basis of the scale of harm or loss against the significance of the asset.

Planning applications affecting archaeological notification areas will be expected to be accompanied by an appropriate desk based assessment and where necessary a field evaluation.

## Policy D7: Conservation areas

**“Protect, preserve and enhance the conservation areas.”**

### Policy Objective

Developments within the designated conservation areas will be expected to preserve and enhance their special characteristics.

In addition to the requirements set out in policy D1 of this plan, development within, or affecting the setting of, the designated conservation areas at Lamberhurst and Lamberhurst Down will be expected to preserve and enhance the special character of these areas as described in the appraisals carried out by TWBC in 2002.

Redevelopment which involves the demolition of an existing building (or part thereof) within the conservation areas will only be permitted where:

- a. the building being proposed for demolition makes no positive contribution towards the character or appearance of the conservation area, and the new development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area to a greater extent, and
- b. all applications for development within the Conservation areas must be accompanied by a Heritage Assessment, and a detailed Design and Access statement showing how the proposal complies with these requirements.

### Evidence and support information

The history of Lamberhurst is reflected in a rich cultural heritage and many buildings and sites of historic and architectural interest.

These include a number of features which have statutory protection as follows:

**Conservation Areas** are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designation imposes a test on all new developments to “conserve and enhance” the special character or appearance, as it is defined in the designation statement.

Lamberhurst parish has two conservation areas: Lamberhurst village (designated 1971 and extended in 1992 and 2005) and The Down (designated 1992 and extended in 2002), which adjoin each other. The Borough Council has

assessed the special character of the two conservation areas in a 2002 document (see above)

**Listed buildings** are buildings of special architectural or historical interest, listed by the Government on the basis of national selection criteria. Designation confers additional controls over demolition, alteration or extension, or works affecting their wider setting.

There are 141 listed buildings in Lamberhurst parish covering a wide range of the local built heritage including barns, farmhouses, walls, bridges, pubs, oast houses, and churches. Three buildings have the very highest (Grade 1) status: St Mary’s Church, Scotney Castle and Scotney Castle ruins.

**Scheduled Ancient Monuments** are a national designation for the statutory protection of ancient buildings, ruins and archaeological sites. They are

designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, to whom any applications for works affecting them are addressed. Lamberhurst has two scheduled ancient monuments at Scotney Castle and Bayham Abbey.

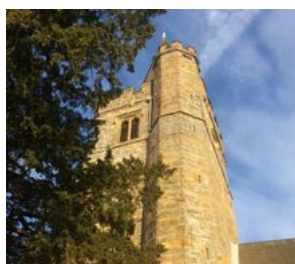
In addition to buildings and areas with statutory protections, there are a range of other heritage assets which – whilst without legal protection- are highly valued and add considerably to the character and distinctiveness of the parish.

Heritage assets, whether designated or non-designated, are often part of wider complexes than can be seen today. For example, iron mills like Furnace Mill are part of an industrial landscape that includes the mill site itself but also millponds, mill leats, slag heaps, accommodation, woodlands and tracks. It is important that the integrity of these landscapes are maintained and that consideration is not only given to visible features.

### Local Heritage Assets

In addition to the designated heritage assets not included:

1. Village Clock (circa 1863): Attached to Old School Tower circa 1850



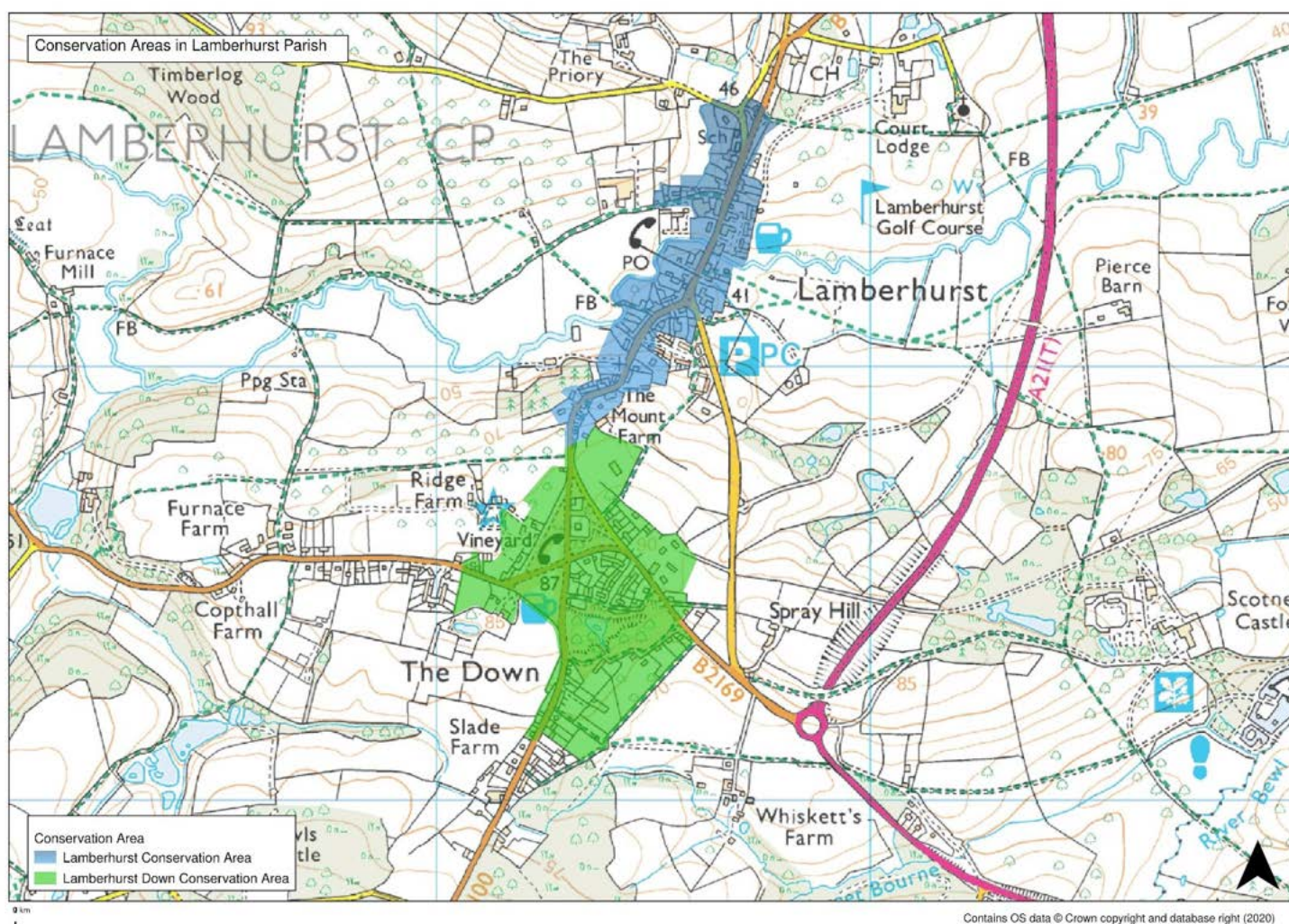
2. Milestones (circa 1750): School Hill
3. Iron Bridge: Across the River Teise at Furnace Farm
4. Lock up: Old Village Gaol in Brewer Street
5. Lady Well: Court Lodge Park/Golf Course
6. Hop Pickers' Huts and Cook House: Furnace Farm
7. War Memorial (circa 1920): School Hill
8. Telephone Box: Outside War Memorial Hall on the Broadway.
9. Furnace Mill
10. Tollsyle Furnace
11. Medieval iron site beneath the A21 bypass

National (NPPF 2019 paragraphs 184 -202) and local planning policies seek to protect and enhance both statutory and non-statutory heritage assets. Policies D7 and D8 reinforce this approach and set very demanding tests for any development resulting in harm or loss of these assets.





## Current Conservation areas in the Parish for the Village and The Down



## Policy D8: Parking

**“Ensure parking availability meets modern living needs.”**

### Policy Objective

All new developments should meet a minimum parking standard at a ratio of one car space per bedroom.

Parking within new residential development should be designed so it is conveniently located and overlooked from the development, avoiding informal parking that undermines the quality of the street environment. Parking should be unobtrusive, with garages set back from the building line. Street trees should be used to soften the visual impact of parked cars, particularly on the street.



## Evidence through parking survey

A parking survey was carried out as part of the character assessment in the first instance but also to support the NP Policy of one parking space per bedroom for all new builds. When one looks at pictures of the village which date back to the turn of the twentieth century before motor cars became the mode of transport for most families it is in complete contrast to what we see today. The problems which are associated with parking are appreciably worse in and around the older parts of the village where many households have no provision for parking.

Sixty of the one hundred and sixty one properties in the central Lamberhurst village area (37%) do not have any off-street parking at all. Additionally the developments in Hopgarden Close and Morland Drive (including Stair House) have an inadequate number of parking spaces for the size of properties and the ownership levels of cars caused by the lack of public transport and residents working outside the village.

Since the 1990s, the highways (KCC) and planning authorities (TWBC) have operated maximum parking standards in an effort to dampen down car

usage and prompt use of more sustainable forms of transport. However, average car ownership per household levels have continued to rise, particularly in rural areas where people have been forced to travel greater distances to access jobs, education, health and other community services, shopping and leisure. At the same time, rural bus networks have shrunk and services have become less frequent and more expensive. The result has been that many modern housing developments have failed to provide sufficient car parking and that parking pressures have often spilled out into surrounding streets, reducing road capacity and sometimes affecting road safety.



School Hill



Brewer Street



Town Hill



Pearse Place



## Chapter 10 Traffic & transport

### Objective

To address our traffic issues we must:

- Ensure the impact of traffic is considered in all development proposals;
- Facilitate safe and connected walking community including requiring developments to connect, where possible to existing PRow networks;
- Ensure that all proposals include adequate provision for on-site parking;
- Seek to improve public transport links and other sustainable transport initiatives;
- Initiate projects to address key issues not covered by policy, for example maintaining and improving the rights of way network and maintaining the existing highway network.

### Evidence base and support information

The Traffic and Transport Policies have been informed by the responses to the Resident's Questionnaire, the Visioning Workshop and the subsequent Transport Workshop held at the Elephant's Head Public House in Hook Green, on the 8th November 2018.

### Residents questionnaire

The main outcomes from the questionnaire, in respect of Traffic and Transport, were

- 43% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Parish's roads were adequate for the traffic currently using them whilst 43% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Key concerns (Graph 10.1) were: traffic speed, road maintenance, pedestrian safety, size of vehicles on local roads and noise pollution.

### Roads causing most concern at peak times

Peak time traffic concerns focus around:

- The A21 from the west end of the Lamberhurst By-Pass through Lamberhurst Quarter.
- Spray Hill to School Hill
- Town Hill to The Broadway

- Furnace Lane through Hook Green

- The crossroads on the Down

### On road parking concerns

The roads causing most concern because of on-road parking are:

- Brewer Street and Hopgarden Close
- Town Hill

### Road safety improvements

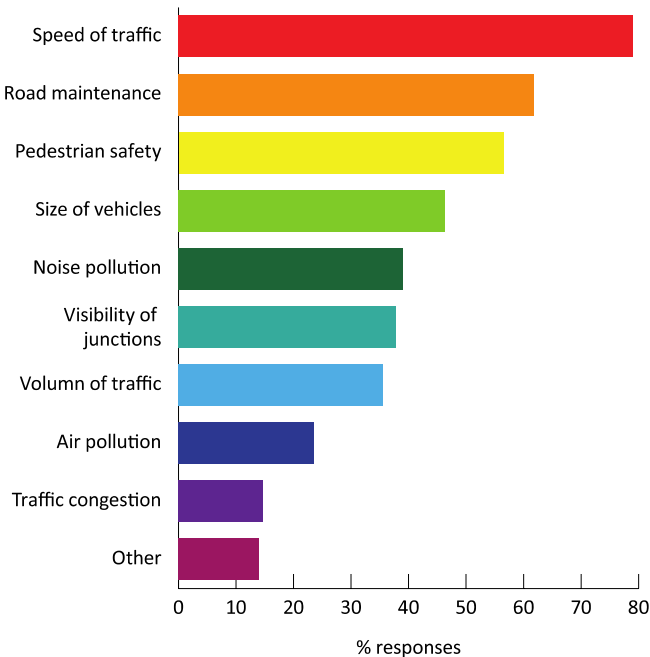
The three most popular road safety improvements would be:

- Reducing speed limits in the centre of the village
- Improved and more pavements
- Better positioned traffic calming.



Traffic concerns

Graph 10.1: Traffic concerns



Many respondents voiced concern that motorists passing through the Parish often abuse or ignore current traffic calming measures.

28% of respondents use the limited bus service through the Parish and many more claimed they would use buses if a more frequent service was available.

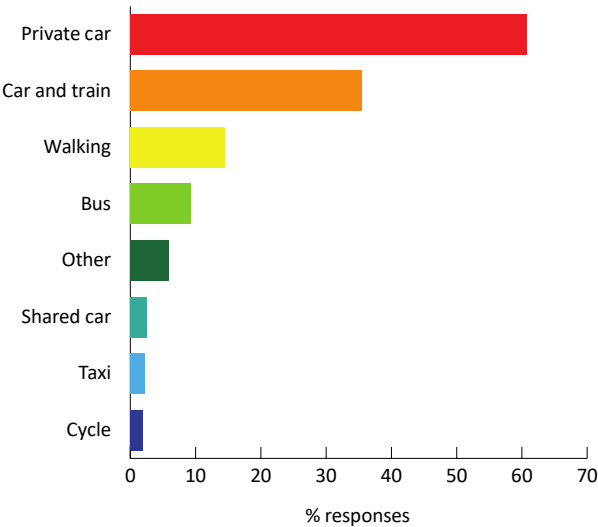


Working Group for character assessments

Transport to work

Graph 10.2 shows the types of transport used by respondents to reach their place of work or education, with private car or a combination of car and train being predominant.

Graph 10.2: Transport to work/education

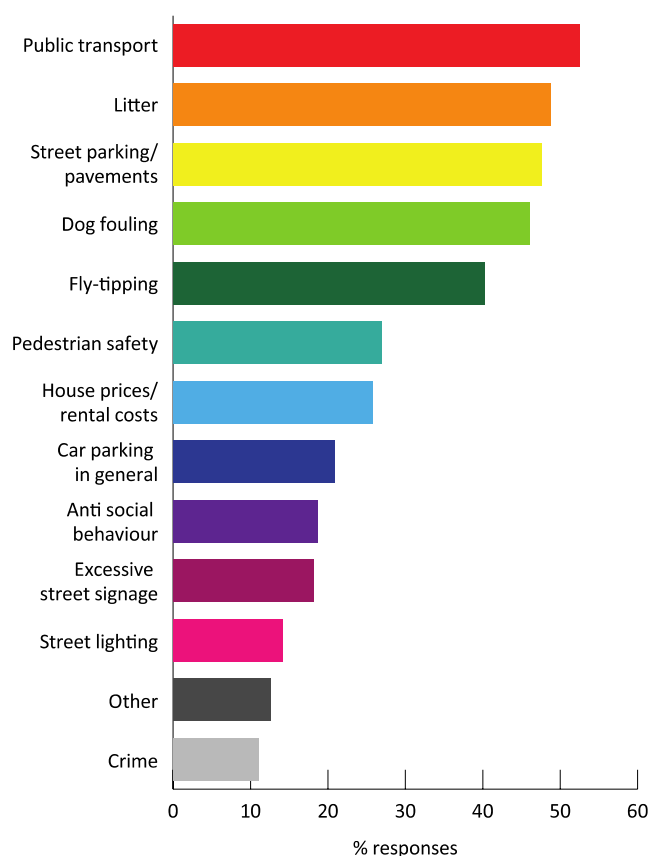


62% of respondents were in full or part-time employment, of which 19% were self-employed. 29% of respondents were wholly retired and 32% who work do so regularly from home. 79% of respondents, do however, work outside of the Parish.

Over 21% of respondents work or run a business from home, of those 59% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the telecoms infrastructure available to them compared to 31% who were satisfied or very satisfied.

Major concerns

Residents listed Public Transport as their primary concern (53%). Other traffic and transport issues scored highly with on street parking and parking on the pavements (47%), pedestrian safety (27% residents).

**Graph 10.3: Major concerns**

## Workshops

### Visioning Workshop

The Visioning Workshop, highlighted better public transport links, traffic management throughout the parish and pedestrian safety as key themes to be addressed.

### Transport Workshop

There was widespread public concern about speeding through the village and cars being parked on pavements. Three broad approaches to traffic and transport in the LNDP were suggested as a basis for discussion at the meeting, as follows:

### Desired improvements

#### A walking community

Connecting the various parts of the Lamberhurst community present and future, encouraging walking to the key focus points of the school,

surgery, Memorial Hall and local shop. Improved pedestrian links to the Scotney estate.

#### A well- designed highway network

Encouraging low vehicle speeds, safe for pedestrians, visually attractive and accommodates vehicle parking. Management of the existing highway network is the primary responsibility of the highway authorities.

#### A sustainable transport policy

Supporting walking, cycling, use of public transport and sustainable methods such as car sharing and electric cars.

### Workshop conclusions

These ideas were discussed at the meeting and the following points raised:

The Transport Workshop seeks policies that support the following:

- Make the village as “walkable” as possible by linking any new developments to the village centre and improving pedestrian facilities throughout the Parish.
- Increase parking provision in new developments to avoid additional pressures on street parking and already congested roads. There is support for more off-street car parks.
- Examine options to improve reliability and frequency of public transport.
- Better maintain the network of public footpaths and bridleways.
- Put pressure on KCC to maintain the existing highway network by mending potholes, controlling traffic speed, reducing on-street parking, designing more effective road junctions.



## Policy T1: Sustainable transport

**“To encourage a sustainable transport community and work on a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan.”**

### Policy Objective

Development should be served, where possible, by sustainable travel arrangements, providing for opportunities for walking and cycling and enabling active lifestyle.

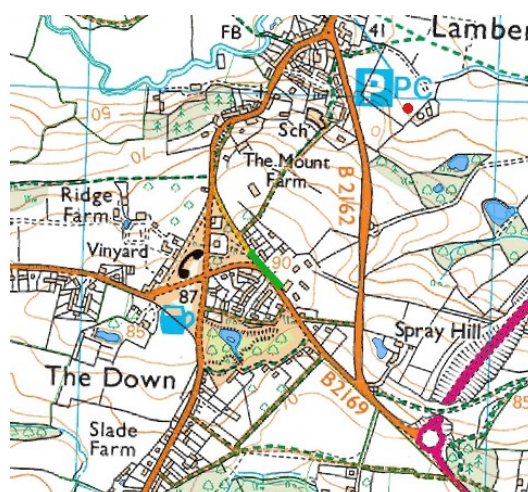
Development should, as far as practicable in a rural parish, be served by sustainable travel arrangements which:

- locates development where it can provide a choice of travel by walking, cycling and public transport, as well as by the private car and provide easy access to the community facilities listed in policy C1
- allows safe and convenient access not only by car but also to existing public footpaths or other rights of way for those on foot, bike or horse
- assists the viability of existing bus services, or the introduction of new services particularly to Pembury Hospital, Paddock Wood and Tunbridge Wells
- recognises the need for traffic management and speed calming, both within development sites and in roads serving them and, where appropriate design these in, or make arrangements for their provision via legal agreements attached to the grant of planning permission
- provide sensitively sited and designed car parking with sufficient spaces to meet the needs of the development’s occupiers and their visitors and avoid “overspill” of parking pressures into nearby areas (see policy D8).

### Well-designed highways

The look and feel of many local streets and lanes are dictated by the speed of moving vehicles and the preponderance of parked vehicles. Visitors add to parking pressures.

Introduce new paths to connect residents to the village with safety as a first priority.



#### Legend

potential right of way

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## Policy T2: Traffic management

**“Ensure that the impact of traffic is considered in all development proposals.”**

### Policy Objective

Developments that accord with the policies in the LNDP and result in improvements to, or do not hinder, the free flow of traffic in the parish will be supported, subject to compliance with all other relevant policies. The developers must submit traffic impact studies in support of their applications.

Proposals which seek to increase the number of access points, or which would involve an increase in traffic generation will need to demonstrate that they do not further inhibit the free flow of traffic or exacerbate conditions of parking stress, including conflict with larger vehicles, particularly in the following areas:

- Town Hill
- School Hill
- High Street
- Pearse Place
- Brewer Street
- Hopgarden Close

### Evidence & support information

Responses to the questionnaire and feedback from the Traffic and Transport Workshop cited the need to reduce traffic speeds throughout the village and on the country lanes in the Parish.

Vehicles are increasingly using routes through the Parish to avoid congestion on the Lamberhurst By-Pass and the A21 through Lamberhurst Quarter.

Respondents suggested improving traffic calming or installing speed guidance in the village to improve safety.

53% of respondents to the questionnaire stated that they would make greater use of public transport if services to Pembury, Paddock Wood, Wadhurst and Tunbridge Wells were more frequent and reliable.

Please also see parking survey on page 64 and 65.

## Chapter 11 Business & employment

### Objective

Sustain and grow Lamberhurst as a business-supportive Parish especially for home and farmstead-based “Small and Medium Sized Enterprises”.

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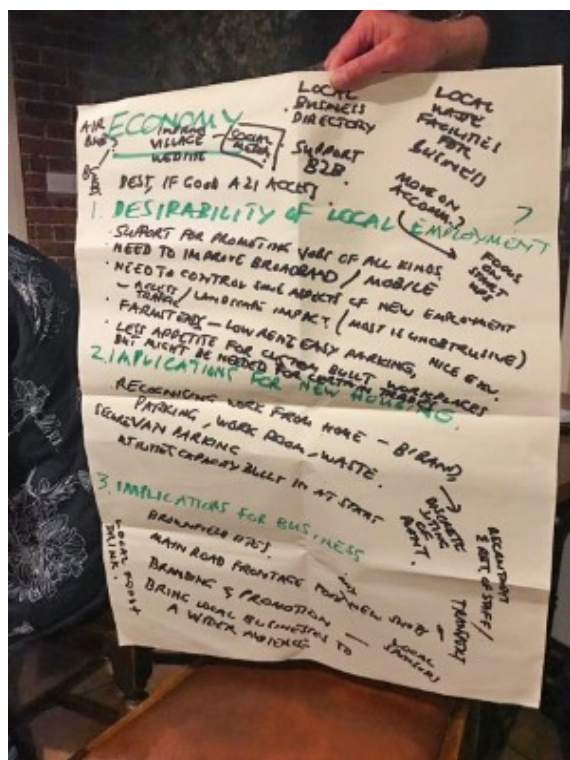
### Policy B1: Business and economy “To continue to develop the farmstead-cluster and home-based business models.”

#### Policy Objective

Developments that provide local employment opportunities will be supported where they are in accord with the LNNDP.

Developments that provide local employment opportunities – including small scale social enterprises, small and medium sized businesses, and live/work units will be supported where:

- they provide additional floor space for existing firms in the parish, or meet the needs of firms setting up or moving into Lamberhurst
- they are of a scale and design, and for a business use, which enables them to be accommodated without harm to the rural environment or to the amenities of any nearby residential properties, or help to bring vacant rural buildings back into use
- there is sufficient on-site parking to meet the needs of staff and visitors and they do not generate heavy lorry traffic on rural roads unsuited for that purpose
- they reduce out-commuting from Lamberhurst and the resulting peak hour pressures on the local road network



## Implications for Economy, Employment, Business and Housing

### Evidence base and support information

A specially designed business survey was devised to gather information about the commercial activities and structures of over 90 business organisations identified in Lamberhurst Parish. The following information is based upon a 67% response to the survey and from the opinions expressed by business leaders at a dedicated business focus group.

### Public meeting

A meeting was held on 27th November 2018 with business owners and other members of the parish community in order to discuss the survey findings and any other points of interest. An example of the output from the meeting is as shown in the image above.

### Business structure

#### Wide range of types of businesses across the Parish

Lamberhurst is often thought of as a dormitory parish with many residents commuting to work

each day. The parish is, however, home to a broad range of small and medium sized businesses across many different sectors of the economy.

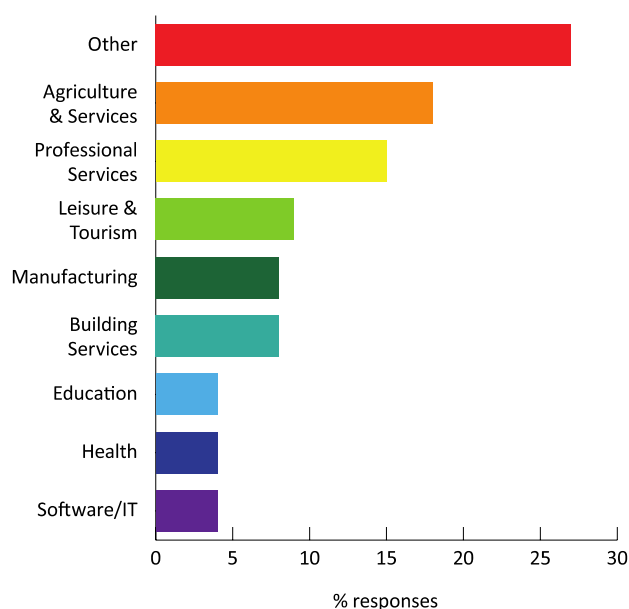
Amongst those surveyed there were 28 different types of business in total, agriculture and related services being the biggest single group.

There is clear support for measures to promote the local economy because local jobs lead to a more balanced and sustainable community.

### Business groupings

The main business groupings are:

**Graph 11.1: Major business types**



### Most businesses are based at farmsteads.

Businesses are distributed widely around the parish with over 33%

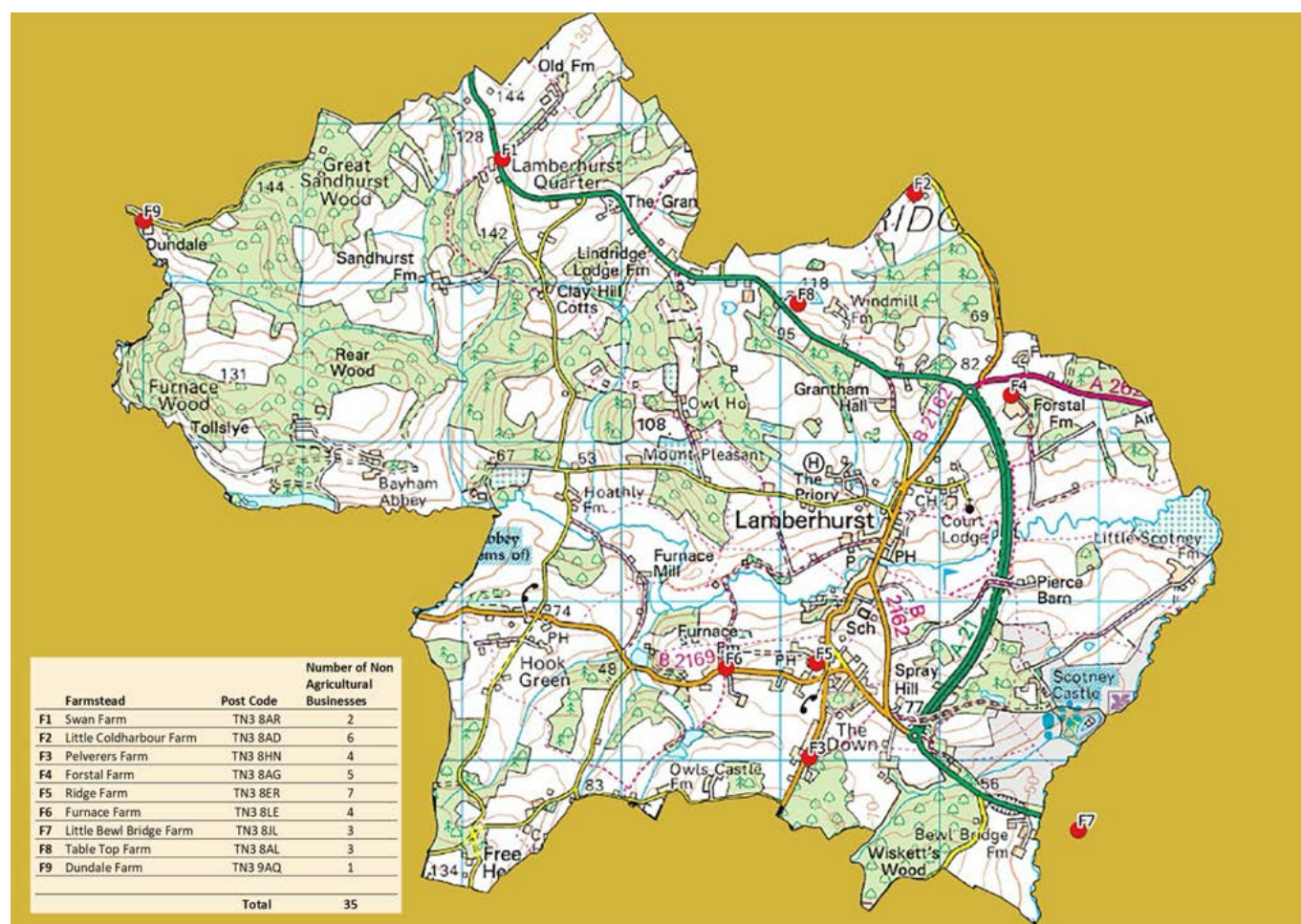
(35 in total) located in buildings previously used for agricultural purposes. These 35 businesses are located on 9 sites around the parish, most in excess of a mile from the village centre. This supports priority of conversion of agricultural buildings for business rather than residential use.

Of those who responded to the survey, 19 businesses were well outside the village curtilage and 12 within the centre of the village.



In addition to the established business units and facilities in the parish, more than 100 residents work regularly from home, at least one day a

week. These are a mix of independent business owners and people working for firms located elsewhere e.g. London.



Map B1 showing number of business sites across the Parish

### Home working

Home working is an important and growing part of the local parish economy and forms part of the green agenda, supporting the need for much improved broadband and mobile services across the parish. The Covid pandemic occurred after the evidence from the Business Questionnaire was collected but its effect demonstrates even more starkly the need for improved mobile and broadband communications within the Parish.

### Business development

#### Contain business growth within small scale units.

There is wide support for increasing the number of businesses and employment of all kinds in

Lamberhurst. The policy aims to facilitate business growth by supporting applications for a change of use for redundant agricultural buildings and brownfield sites. There is limited support for a large-scale business park.

#### Businesses across the Parish are run from a variety of independently owned premises.

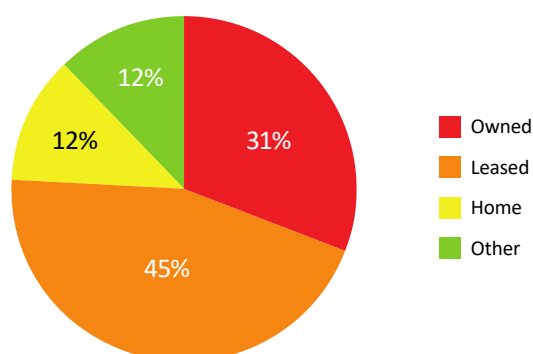
45% of respondents own their property including 12% of whom run their businesses from home.

This proportion matched almost exactly the number of respondents who gave “because I lived in the parish” as the reason why they located in the parish.



The other 43% leased or rented property from a landlord. The 3 key reasons these respondents gave for being located in the parish were availability of suitable premises, cost of rent, and good parking facilities.

**Graph 11.2: Work premises**



### **Businesses share the view that Lamberhurst should continue to grow businesses organically.**

Respondents were asked, in a multiple choice question, what type of business developments they would like to have included in the LNDP. Only 11% supported a dedicated business park; the remainder, further conversion of existing agricultural buildings, development on brownfield sites or change of existing use.

There is also a need for “move on” accommodation, without which successful growing firms may need to move out of the parish to larger conurbations in the Borough.

## **Employment opportunities**

### **Evidence**

35% of respondents supported the creation and maintenance of a Local Business Directory. Near unanimous support was given by those attending a special meeting held for local business leaders. Tourist, leisure and other commercial businesses, including local accommodation, pubs and restaurants, would also welcome such a directory – see Chapter 13.

Village meetings supported this idea and thought it would be a valuable tool to increase the awareness

of residents about business and local employment opportunities. It would also promote mutually beneficial business-to-business opportunities.

### **Growth in employment is expected in the next 5 years and beyond.**

Over 30% of respondents said they expected to increase numbers employed over the next five years.

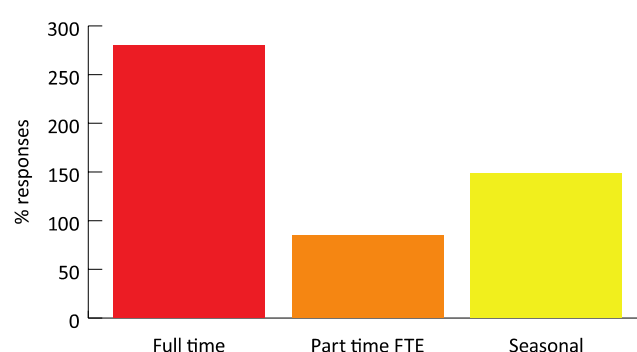
### **There is a significant number of people employed in the Parish.**

Respondents were asked how many of their employees lived in the parish. 20% of full-time employees and over 30% of part time lived in the parish.

The best estimate of employment in the parish is more than 400 full time and part time employees (shown as Full Time Equivalent; “FTE”).

There are, in addition, an estimated, 150 seasonal workers.

**Graph 11.3: Employment in Lamberhurst**



### **Employees per business range from 44 to many self-employed**

Amongst those who completed the survey the largest employer had more than forty employees on an FTE basis and there were 13 businesses with more than ten employees on an FTE basis. There were 18 businesses with only one employee.

### **Communications**

This issue was a recurring theme throughout the business survey, at village meetings and at a specific meeting of business leaders in the parish.

90% of respondents thought it was crucial to improve broadband and mobile communications.

The majority of residences and businesses in the centre of the village have adequate broadband speeds but anyone in excess of one mile from the village centre has serious reliability and speed issues.

This is a major impediment to the future growth of business and a major concern in the LNPD is to succeed. Mobile phone communications are also generally very poor throughout most of the parish.

To attract new businesses into the parish and facilitate growth of existing businesses, planning applications for new business premises will require a remedy to the provision of super-fast broadband. The Parish Council will be asked to consider the use of some of its financial reserves to support specific local broadband projects.

The Parish will endeavour to develop the best possible broadband and telecommunication links to support the community and business life of Lamberhurst.

## Policy B2: Tourism, hospitality and retail

“To continue to develop the farmstead-cluster and home-based business models.”

### Policy Objective

Development that improves the range and quality of existing tourist facilities, including visitor accommodation, attractions and eating places will be supported where they are in accord with policies set out in the LNDP.

Development that improves the range and quality of existing tourist facilities in Lamberhurst will be supported where;

- the siting, scale and design of the development has strong regard to the local character, and to the historic and natural assets of the surrounding area
- the design and materials are in keeping with the local style, reinforce local distinctiveness and a sense of place
- the planning application demonstrates a commitment to sustainable travel, environmental stewardship, and good site management practice

The loss of tourist facilities to other uses will not be permitted unless:

- it can be demonstrated that the tourist facility is no longer viable, having actively marketed for a period of twelve months via appropriate agents and suitable publicity,
- or the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits for the local economy and community.

### Evidence base and support information

Lamberhurst Parish sits within the Kentish High Weald – one of the country’s Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The countryside and our famous tourist attractions bring significant numbers of people here each year.

#### Lamberhurst is one of the Kentish High Weald’s most desirable tourist centres.

Lamberhurst Parish offers a number of places of interest and beautiful countryside for residents, visitors and tourists to enjoy.

They are able to take advantage of many miles of public footpaths throughout beautiful countryside and offer easy access to such famous locations as the National Trust’s Scotney Castle and English

Heritage’s Bayham Abbey as well as local pubs and restaurants.



**Scotney Castle**, owned by the National Trust: A moated 14th century castle ruins and 19th century 'New House'.



**Bayham Abbey**, owned by English Heritage: The ruins of a Premonstratensian Abbey founded during the early 13th century. Overlooked by the 'New House' of 1872.



**St Mary's Church:** Founded in 998, it has features from the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th centuries.

Magnificent displays of snowdrops in early spring and an ancient yew tree dated, by Kent Men of the Trees, at over 4,000 years old.

These important sites attract over 200,000 visitors a year.

### Nearby places of interest

Lamberhurst parish provides recreational activities as diverse as England's only dedicated ice-curling rink, equestrian facilities and rambling opportunities.

A long established and attractive 18-hole parkland golf course is located at the edge of the village. Established in 1890, it attracts, today, over 500 members from around Kent and about 2,000 other visitors and guests into the parish each year.

Other nearby attractions offering sporting and recreational facilities include Bewl Water (sailing; fishing; walking) and Bedgebury Forest (National Pinetum; cycling; walking; treetop routes). These sites, too, attract over 200,000 visitors each in a year.

### Local hostelries and accommodation

The parish has five historic public houses and inns, some offering accommodation. There are various types of holiday accommodation, including bed and breakfast, with a total capacity of about 50 beds.

Tea shops and cafes are to be found at several locations around the parish.

### Shops

The village has a general store with a post office.

## Chapter 12 Selecting sites for development

### **13 sites were identified in Lamberhurst through TWBC Call for Sites**

The LNDP is being developed in parallel with the TWBC Local Plan. As part of their planning exercise, TWBC issued Calls for Sites across the Borough in both 2016 and 2017. As a result of this exercise, thirteen potential development sites were put forward for consideration in Lamberhurst.

In developing the LNDP, we have not issued our own Call for Sites.

The Planning group has, however, developed a set of site assessment criteria against which we have reviewed all the sites in the Parish that were submitted to TWBC in their Call for Sites process. These criteria will now be used to assess any sites that are proposed for development in the future.

### **This plan defers site allocation to TWBC**

Whilst all sites were assessed by members of the LNDP Steering Group and Parish Council in August 2018, we will not be using this analysis to allocate sites for development within the LNDP. The results of our site reviews have been discussed in detail with TWBC over three separate meetings, and there was a general consensus on our findings.

We have therefore concluded that site allocation will be made by TWBC in their forthcoming Local Plan and there is little benefit to be gained from duplicating the process in the LNDP.

TWBC assessments of the sites will be published with the initial draft of the Local Plan, likely to be later in 2019.



## Chapter 13 Parish community action plan

### Community issues, aspirations and needs

In gathering our evidence, a series of issues, aspirations and needs were identified that cannot be delivered under land-use policies proposed elsewhere in this plan. This section of our plan expands further on those areas of need.

#### Project P1: Traffic, parking and road safety

Improving road safety in our Parish would significantly enhance the quality of life for residents. This plan proposes a series of working groups tasked to:

1. Describe the traffic issues we face across the Parish, research solutions, engage with the highway's authority to trial proposals and campaign to implement measures to relieve congestion and improve traffic flow;
2. Identify and recommend means of reducing the threats to road safety and campaign for them.
3. Ensure clear pathways are maintained adjacent to roads to enable safe walking and, where possible, cycling throughout the Parish and to nearby attractions.



4. The Parish Council will research traffic and safety issues around the parish and produce a "Highways Improvement Plan" (HIP) for submission to TWBC.

#### Project P2: Improving parish facilities

We have a number of established and thriving facilities within the Parish and we need to ensure they continue to flourish.

Community volunteers will:

1. Work in conjunction with the Trustees of Lamberhurst War Memorial Hall to implement a regeneration plan in order to improve capacity and facilities. The Trustees have developed a plan to make better use of the space available and expand the building within its existing footprint.
2. Work alongside the Trustees of the Playing Fields Association to explore possibilities for wider community use and examine the viability of building a pavilion to extend the season and support youth activities.
3. Explore, with the Parochial Church Council, options for increasing the number of burial plots at St. Marys Church where it is envisaged that available plots will be fully used in the next 5 to 10 years. Additionally, there is likely to be a need for additional un-consecrated plots outside the Church's jurisdiction.
4. Work with existing groups like the Church to understand the care needs of both young and elderly residents and endeavour to improve care in the community.



### **Project P3: Making use of Developer Contribution**

Contributions from developers towards local infrastructure are collected primarily through two mechanisms, section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Section 106 planning obligations are development specific and are subject to statutory tests to ensure they are necessary, proportionate and directly related to the development.

CIL is a more standardised approach intended to be faster, fairer, more certain and more transparent. CIL allows authorities to set a fixed rate charge per square metre of new development used to address the cumulative impact of development in an area. TWBC have yet to develop a policy around CIL.

A series of actions have been identified for potential support from future CIL developer contributions. A working group will be set-up to review each of the proposals and identify ways in which they can be delivered. The activities are:

1. Extend Village Hall (see Project P2 above)



2. Create walking and cycling routes (see Project P1 above)
3. Construct a Bus Shelter in the centre of the Village
4. Improve signs and Interpretation boards.
5. Build a multi-use pavilion on the Sports field.
6. Restore the original Teise Bridge on Broadway to help reduce traffic speeds and enhance the look of the village centre.

7. Increase school capacity and facilities and improve drop-off and collection points to reduce the current parking problems.
8. Plant indigenous flora to enhance the look of the Parish all year round.
9. Promote improved broadband infrastructure and mobile communications throughout the parish.

### **Project P4: Set up a business directory and information portal**

Our survey of local businesses revealed a lack of awareness amongst parishioners and the business community about what businesses there are in the parish and what employment opportunities there might be.

A working group will be established to:

1. Establish and maintain an up to date directory of all businesses in the Parish
2. Establish a mechanism whereby parishioners can be made aware of local job opportunities when they arise
3. Provide a forum for business owners and managers to network and share information.

### **Project P5: Establish a common tourism communication platform**

The Parish is proud of its tourist attractions that bring many visitors to this part of the High Weald. The parish could support more hospitality venues than would be justified by the parish population alone. Similarly, its network of footpath and bridleways offering views of the scenic Kentish High Weald attract many walkers and riders. A working group will set up to consider:

1. Establishing a common communication platform to inform visitors about the range of activities available and encourage more tourists to stay in the area.
2. Providing information on the history, ecology fauna and flora of the Parish
3. Encouraging use of local hospitality facilities
4. Actively protecting the environment with particular regard to rare species and plant-life.

## Chapter 14 Parish feedback & implementation

### Feedback

Further to the Regulation 14 consultation of the Neighbourhood Development plan the steering group produced a Public Consultation Statement which will sit beside the Plan and the Basic Condition Statement to be found at <https://www.lamberhurstvillage.org/ndp-documentation.html>

### Implementation

The Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan will be delivered and implemented in two ways:

#### a. Through decisions on planning applications made by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, as the local planning authority:

When the Neighbourhood Development Plan is formally adopted, it will become part of the statutory development plan for the area, alongside the “saved” policies of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (2006), the Core Strategy (2010), the Site Allocations Local Plan (2016), and the emerging Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan, which will eventually replace them. As such, the Neighbourhood Development Plan will carry considerable weight in planning decisions.

**b. Community action:** The Plan will also be delivered and implemented through a range of community actions outside the planning system. This will include actions by the local authorities and government agencies exercising non-planning functions such as highways, transport, housing, public health and education, and local action by the Parish Council and the community in Lamberhurst.

### Assessing progress

It is important that we regularly check whether the Plan is delivering the Vision we have set out for

Lamberhurst in 2036 and whether it needs to be reviewed to respond to changing social, economic and environmental conditions.

TWBC prepares an “Authority Monitoring Report” which will give a high level report on changing conditions across the district. This may need to be supplemented by some local work to get a more detailed picture for Lamberhurst.

Amongst the things that will need to be monitored are:

- The pattern of planning applications submitted in Lamberhurst and decisions on them.
- How housing needs in the parish are evolving and the extent to which they are being met
- Factors affecting the prosperity of the rural economy.
- Maintenance of local community facilities.
- Whether the condition of key features of the historic and natural environments are stable, improving or declining.

### Evidence Base

The NDP has utilised evidence from the following sources:

#### A. National and Regional

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government, London, February 2019
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government, London, Online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> : regularly updated since 2014
- [Census 2011 Office for National Statistics](#)

- Planning for the Future Department for Housing Communities and Local Government, London, August 2020
- The 25 year Environmental Plan, Department, or Environment, Food and Rural Affairs London, January 2018
- High Weald AONB Management Plans 2019-2024 (4th edition)
- High Weald Design Guide for Housing High Weald AONB Unit, 2019
- Kent CC ROWIP
- Sports England Design

■

#### **B. Local Authority: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council**

- Development Constraints Study
- Tunbridge Wells BC Landscape Character assessment
- Tunbridge Wells BC Biodiversity evidence base September 2019
- Tunbridge Wells BC - Green Infrastructure Framework - August 2019

- Habitat Regulations Assessment
- Historic Environment Review - Part 1 January 2018
- Historic Landscape Characterisation 2017
- Interim Habitat Regulations Assessment
- Local Green Space Assessment Draft - July 2019
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment: This study provides an assessment of the extent to which the character and quality of the landscape is susceptible to change as a result of development.

#### **C. Lamberhurst Parish:**

- Lamberhurst Housing Survey
- Lamberhurst Landscape Character Assessment
- Lamberhurst Car-parking Survey, p. 64
- Lamberhurst Values views
- Lamberhurst Green Spaces surveys p.21
- Lamberhurst ecology survey p. 84.
- Lamberhurst Business Survey

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – sources & useful definitions

### Sources

The analysis, objectives and proposals highlighted in the LNDP draw on a variety of sources.

#### Data on:

\* **Population, employment, housing, deprivation and car ownership** were obtained largely from the Office of National Statistics and from a Parish profile provided by Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)

\* **Housing need** was obtained from an independent Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council and run by Action for Rural Communities in Kent (ACRK), the TWBC housing register, local estate agents, and public consultations.

\* **Views on village life** were obtained from the Lamberhurst Village Appraisal (1987), the response to the questionnaires, public consultations, workshops and meetings with key service providers, including schools.

\* **The Landscape Assessment** was developed by a volunteer team and backed by the following:

- A Revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough, Kent, October 2007, produced by the Weald and Down Ancient Woodland Survey team.
- The Parish of Lamberhurst, Historic Landscape Characteristics (HLC). a revision of Kent HLC 2000
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan, Local Green Spaces Designation Methodology, July 2019

\* **Flood risk** was obtained from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

\* **Geology, water and environmental assessment** was sourced from High Weald AONB.

\* **Lamberhurst and The Down Conservation Area Appraisal** by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in partnership with Lamberhurst Parish Council, Lamberhurst Society and other local representatives – July 2002.

More detailed information on this extensive evidence base, including reports on the village consultations and workshops, can be found on [www.lamberhurstvillage.org](http://www.lamberhurstvillage.org)

### Useful definitions

#### Affordable housing:

Encompasses social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. Full definition can be found in the NPPF 2019.

**Social rented housing:** Owned by local councils and registered providers such as housing associations. The distinguished feature is that rents are set by reference to the Government's 'National Rent Regime'.

**Affordable rented housing:** Similar to above but the rents are not set nationally but are assessed at a maximum of 80% of local market rents reflecting local incomes and demand.

**Intermediate Affordable Housing:** Provided by Housing Associations for part purchase, part rent normally equity share arrangements where



there is an obligation to offer the property back to the association before offering it publicly.

### **Public Right of Way (PRoW)**

A way over which the public have a right to pass and repass, including, Public Footpaths, Public Bridleway, Restricted Byways and Byways Open to all traffic.

Rents are above those of social rents, but below market prices or rents.

### **Ancient woodland:**

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

### **Design code:**

A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

### **Permitted development rights: (PDR)**

Residents have rights to carry out certain limited forms of development without planning approval. There are limited PDR rights in conservation areas and in the AONB.

### **Area of outstanding natural beauty: (AONB)**

A protected area similar to a national park and green belt. The NPPF 2019 protects the AONB and only allows for major development on an AONB in exceptional circumstances. Para 115 NPPF 2019 states “Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads, and AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty”; Para 116 continues “Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas, except in exceptional circumstance and where it can be demonstrated the development is in the public interest and its benefits outweigh the adverse impacts resulting from the developments.”

### **Sustainable development:**

Ensures that people now can satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a good quality of life without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. An interpretation of this is that all new housing should be adjacent to existing facilities and services.

### **Local green spaces:**

Areas which are local in character, reasonably close to the community and hold particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, history, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife etc.

## Appendix 2 – LNDP work group contributors

Graham White	Leighanne Martin
David Hurst-Brown	Jo Outram
Sam Nicholas	Camellia Taylor
Clive Stott	Bonita Backhouse
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Barbara Uren	Dawn Beeby
Rolf Smith	Rachel Nicholas
Steve Cannella	Lucinda White
John Francis	Alastair Lawton
Linda Osborne	James Boot
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## Appendix 3 – Supporting documents

### Bio Diversity

Lamberhurst Parish has a wide range of habitats, including ancient and PAWS woodland, unimproved pasture, meadows, Sites of Special Scientific interest (SSSI), and a nature reserve, The Gravel Pit, as well as a large amount of commonland. This mixture of habitats reflects the historic components of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with which the Parish sits in. These rich habitats allow biodiversity to thrive as long as an effective management plan is in place.

### Survey of Invertebrates

#### Lamberhurst Down. August 6th 2018

After many years of unsympathetic management, the large triangle of common land near the Vineyard public house is now being managed to allow the existence of invertebrate wildlife.

The survey was carried out in the middle of the day. The conditions this year follow an unusually prolonged period of hot dry weather which has had an adverse effect on insect populations generally. Previous surveys of the site have given slightly higher population numbers but even so, this year's results are most encouraging.

Insects that fly into and over the site are especially important if likely to pass the larval stage on plants growing there, but visiting insects are, of course interesting. Other flying insects observed were as follows:

**Bees:** included mostly honey bees. Bumble bees were surprisingly few and limited to *Bombus pascuorum*, *B. lucorum/terrestris* (2 similar species), *B. lapidarius* and *B. hortorum*.

**Butterflies:** Common Blue and Holly Blue (many of both), Gatekeeper (aka Hedge Brown), Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Large and Small Whites, Peacock and Comma

**Hover flies:** Many types, but few in number, including *Volucella inanis*, *Chrysotoxum cautum*, *Helophilus pendulus*, being the most spectacular.

**Other flies:** A single ichneumon fly, *Amblyteles*; several *Tachina fera* (sometimes called the Sun fly).

**Wasps:** Common (*Vespa* species) and also, *Dolichovespula media*.

Almost certainly of greatest interest are the Orthopterans – Grasshoppers and Crickets:

**Grasshoppers:** Three types were recorded, all quite numerous – Meadow Grasshopper (*Chorthippus parallelus*), Field grasshopper (*Chorthippus brunneus*) and Common Green grasshopper (*Omecestus viridulus*).

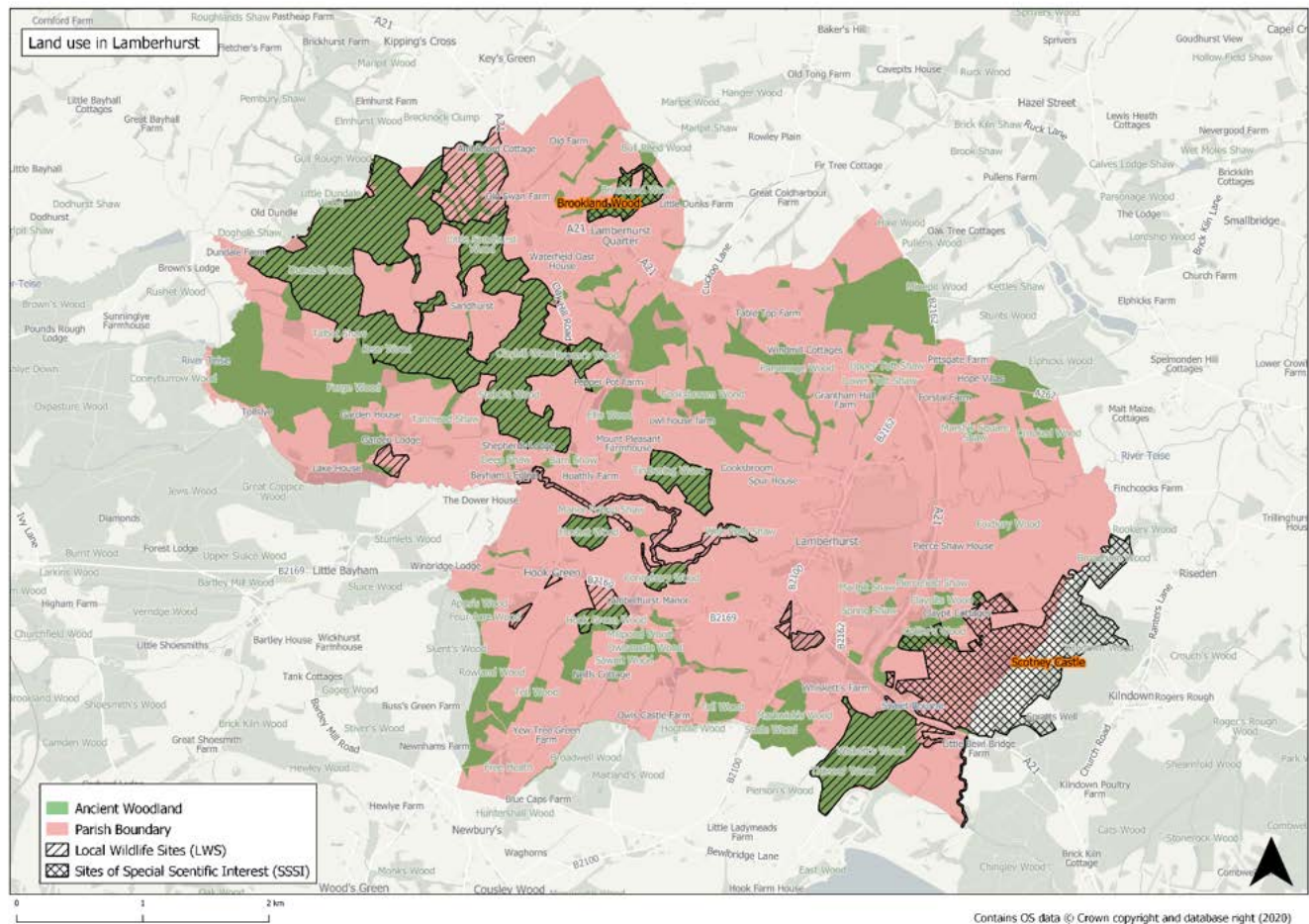
**Bush Crickets:** Included the Dark Bush-cricket (*Pholidoptera griseoaptera*); Roesel's Bush-cricket (*Metrioptera roeselii*); the Speckled Bush-cricket (*Leptophyes punctatissima*); Long-winged Conehead (*Conocephalis discolor*) – a recent arrival in the area, a few years ago.

The grasshoppers and crickets are probably the greatest beneficiaries of the present management system which has clearly improved the biodiversity of the site. None of these creatures would survive a return to the mowing regime of the past. They all benefit from the more varied flora now abundant

Hook Green commonland along Free Heath Road



Chorthippus parallelus





## Appendix 4 – Planning context

### Starting points for the Neighbourhood Plan

The Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be prepared in general conformity with both national and local planning policy. At the national level, these policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in February 2019. At the local level, the “saved policies” of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2006), Tunbridge Wells Borough LDF Core Strategy (2010), Tunbridge Wells Borough Site Allocations Plan (2015), various supplementary planning documents on detailed matters, the emerging Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Kent Waste and Minerals Plan (2016)

The neighbourhood plan also has to take account of a range of statutory planning designations which give legal protection to a number of features of the natural environment, and the built heritage, in Lamberhurst parish.

### The National Planning Policy Framework 2019

The NPPF 2019 is the national planning policy framework for England. All local plans and neighbourhood plans are expected to have regard to it, and it also forms a basis for determining planning applications. At its core, the NPPF 2019 has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. One definition of sustainable development is “meeting today’s social and economic needs without narrowing the choices open to future generations”. Sustainable development has three dimensions: social, economic and environmental. The national policy is that this will be achieved in rural areas such as Lamberhurst by:

- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Building a strong, competitive economy

- Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Supporting high quality communications
- Making effective use of land
- Achieving well-designed places
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

4.4 Detailed guidance on application of the NPPF 2019’s policies is provided in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which is available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

### Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2006) – “saved policies”

This local plan was produced under old legislation superseded by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and later legislation. However, some detailed policies in the plan were saved by approval of the Secretary of State in March 2009. Others were rendered obsolete by the adoption of newer planning policies in 2010 and 2016 (see below). However, some “saved” policies are still used today in determining planning applications, although the weight attached to them is diminished by time and newer national and local planning policies. A list of the “saved policies” is at:

[http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0013/130027/Local-Plan-2006-Remaining-Saved-Policies-at-2016.pdf](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/130027/Local-Plan-2006-Remaining-Saved-Policies-at-2016.pdf)



These “saved policies” include policies relating to development in villages and the surrounding countryside, particularly policy LBD1 which defines built confines for Lamberhurst.

### **Tunbridge Wells Borough Core Strategy (2010)**

The Core Strategy comprises a long-term spatial vision and objectives for the Tunbridge Wells Borough area for the period 2006 to 2026, and a set of core planning policies by which they will be delivered. It is used in the determination of planning applications, along with some of the more detailed planning policies in the 2006 document above.

The following Core Strategy policies are of particular relevance in Lamberhurst parish:

- **Core Policy 1:** Delivery of Development
- **Core Policy 3:** Transport Infrastructure
- **Core Policy 4:** Environment
- **Core Policy 5:** Sustainable Design and Construction
- **Core Policy 6:** Housing Provision
- **Core Policy 7:** Employment Provision
- **Core Policy 8:** Retail, Leisure and Community Facilities Provision
- **Core Policy 14:** Development in the Villages and Rural Areas

### **Tunbridge Wells Borough Site Allocations Plan (2016)**

The main purpose of the Site Allocations document is to allocate land for housing, employment, retail and other land uses to meet the identified needs of the communities within Tunbridge Wells Borough to 2026 and beyond. The plan follows the strategic objectives and sustainable development objectives set out within the Core Strategy. The document also identifies safeguarded land and areas requiring continued protection from development. Most

of the plan’s allocated development sites are in the larger towns and villages of the borough. There are no allocations in Lamberhurst parish.

### **Supplementary planning documents and guidance**

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) are non-statutory documents that are used to supplement policies and strategies set out in other statutorily produced documents, such as Local Plans. The Borough Council has produced a wide range of such documents, which are relevant to Lamberhurst parish, which include the following:

- Affordable Housing SPD (October 2007)
- Alterations and Extensions SPD (June 2006)
- Lamberhurst and The Down Conservation Areas Appraisal (July 2002)
- Contaminated Land SPD (September 2016)
- Farmsteads Assessment SPD (February 2016)
- Green Infrastructure SPD (August 2014)
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment (December 2017)
- Noise and Vibration SPD (November 2014)
- Recreation and Open Space SPD (July 2006)
- Renewable energy SPD (April 2007, updated 2016)
- Rural Lanes SPD (January 1998)
- Planning Obligations Good Practice Guide (undated)

The emerging Tunbridge Wells Local Plan was published for public consultation between September and November 2019. It attracted a large number of comments which are being assessed prior to consideration by the Borough Council in winter 2020/2021. Further consultation on a revised plan is expected in

Spring 2021 with a public examination expected late in 2021 and formal adoption in 2022

The Government published its proposals for radical reform of the planning system in England in August 2020 which are the subject of public consultation. It is expected that this will lead to the introduction of draft legislation for consideration by parliament in 2021

### **The emerging Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2019**

The new local plan looks forward to 2036 and seeks to apply the latest national planning policy to the Borough, including provision of a higher level of future housing development. A draft plan is expected to be published for public consultation in August 2019. The new plan will attract increasing weight in planning decisions as it proceeds towards examination by an independent inspector and formal adoption.

When adopted, the new Local Plan will supersede the policies contained within the Tunbridge Wells Core Strategy 2010, the Site Allocations Plan 2016, and the “saved” policies of the Local Plan (1998) and the associated supplementary planning guidance.

### **The Kent Waste and Minerals Plan (2016)**

The County Council is the local planning authority for development associated with waste disposal and processing, and with the extraction, processing and transportation of minerals in Kent. The plan, which was adopted in 2016, sets the overall planning strategy for these types of development up to 2030. A Minerals Sites Local Plan, identifying sites to give effect to the strategy is in preparation, and a draft was considered by KCC in December 2018, prior to public consultation. The Kent Minerals Site Plan was adopted in September 2020. It allocates specific sites for mineral extraction, but none of these are in Lamberhurst parish

### **Neighbourhood plans in adjacent parishes**

The adjacent parishes of Horsmonden and Goudhurst are also preparing neighbourhood plans. Neither parish has yet submitted a plan to the Borough Council for formal consultation, examination and referendum.

### **Statutory designations**

**The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** covers some 560 square miles in the counties of Kent, East and West Sussex, and Surrey. It includes the whole of Lamberhurst parish. The designation was confirmed by Government in 1983 and gives national recognition of the quality of the landscape, and the importance of conserving and enhancing it, in decisions by public bodies. The NPPF 2019 (paragraph 172) states that “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in ... AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”. The AONB is overseen by a Joint Advisory Committee, which has produced an AONB Management Plan, setting out a vision for the AONB and recommended actions for partner bodies, for the period 2014 -2019.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**

are the UK’s most important sites for wildlife and geological interest. Designation identifies their special interest, gives statutory protection, and lists a range of activities – not just development, but also land management operations- which need to be notified to Natural England (The Government agency responsible for nature conservation) prior to commencement. In Lamberhurst Parish, there are three SSSIs at Scotney Castle Estate; Brookland Wood, Lamberhurst Quarter and Upper Chalybeate Wood, near Kilndown.

**Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)** give local planning authorities control over the felling, topping or lopping of designated trees, groups of

trees, or woodlands without prior consent. There are a large number of TPOs in place to protect trees and woodlands throughout the parish. In addition, the designation of conservation areas (see below) confers interim protection on all trees within them, allowing the local planning authority to consider whether it should impose a formal TPO prior to any tree works

**Conservation Areas** are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Designation imposes a test on all new developments to “conserve and enhance” the special character or appearance, as it is defined in the designation statement. Lamberhurst parish has two conservation areas: Lamberhurst village (designated 1971 and extended in 1992 and 2005) and The Down (designated 1992 and extended in 2002), which adjoin each other. The Borough Council has assessed the special character of the two conservation areas in a 2002 document (see above)

**Listed buildings** are buildings of special architectural or historical interest, listed by the Government on the basis of national selection criteria. Designation confers additional controls over demolition, alteration or extension, or works affecting their wider setting. There are 141 listed buildings in Lamberhurst parish covering a wide range of the local built heritage including barns, farmhouses, walls, bridges, pubs, oast houses, and churches. Three buildings have the very highest (Grade 1) status: St Mary’s Church, Scotney Castle and Scotney Castle ruins.

**Scheduled Ancient Monuments** are a national designation for the statutory protection of ancient buildings, ruins and archaeological sites. They are designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, to whom any applications for works affecting them are addressed. Lamberhurst has two scheduled ancient monuments at Scotney Castle and Bayham Abbey.

**KCC Rights of Way Implementation Plan (ROWIP)** setting out a strategic approach for the protection and enhancement of PROW.



## Photographic Competition

# Winning Entries to the Lamberhurst Parish Photographic Competition

Category: Favourite Lamberhurst Icon – Joint Winners



St Mary's Church by Vicky Berry



War Memorial by Charlotte Bellingham

Category: **Under 16**



Scotney Castley by Isabella Capone

Category: **Favourite Lamberhurst View**



School Hill & Brewer Stree by David Fordham