

# **Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park**

## **Rural Settlement Study**



**January 2013 – Version 2**



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## **Section One – Main Report**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 This Rural Settlement Study updates an earlier version published in March 2011. Since that time, the Coalition Government have introduced significant changes to the planning system, including the introduction of neighbourhood planning described later in the study. In addition the District Council has gathered further evidence in respect of the environmental context of many of the settlements and this has been set out in a Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) which is further detailed in Section 2 of this study.
- 1.2 Government requirement to produce a strategic level plan remains and work on the Lewes District and South Downs National Park Authority joint Core Strategy continues. Once adopted the Core Strategy will form the Lewes District Local Plan - Part 1 and development management and site specific allocations document when produced and adopted, will form Part 2.
- 1.3 As well as setting out the overarching land use and development strategy for the District, the Core Strategy will identify the level of housing and employment development that will take place in the District from the present time till 2030. Also the document will set out the approach that will be taken on key issues, such as what level of affordable housing can be achieved and how employment needs can be met.
- 1.4 All policies in the Core Strategy need to be supported by evidence. Hence, a number of evidence base studies have been undertaken that will help inform the policy stance being taken. This Rural Settlement Study is one such evidence base study. It is expected to initially inform the content of the Core Strategy, although it may also be utilised to inform 'Part Two' of the Local Plan.
- 1.5 This study applies to the whole of Lewes District, 56% of which is within the South Downs National Park. Therefore the study has been written in consultation with the South Downs National Park Authority as well as individual parish and town councils.
- 1.6 It has been written with full consideration of current and emerging Government guidance and in consultation with the District's Parish Councils.
- 1.7 The aim of this study is to:

1. document and seek a greater understanding of the District's' rural settlements
2. identify a rural settlement hierarchy based on the sustainability of each settlement to be considered in the development of the Local Development Framework
3. identify sustainable social, environmental and economic elements of the rural settlements within the Lewes District

1.8 This will be achieved through the following objectives of the study:

- To identify the rural settlements within Lewes District to be subject of this study,
- To identify key services and facilities within each of the settlements,
- To identify less frequently used services and facilities which support village life,
- To provide contextual and demographic information for each rural settlement,
- To identify the relationships between the District's settlements particularly in terms of whether they rely on each other for the provision of key services and facilities,
- To identify housing and general community needs within each settlement,
- To identify the economic role and needs of each settlement,
- To identify any environmental issues and constraints from the natural and built heritage,
- To score each settlement against a list of criteria so to identify a settlement hierarchy.
- To identify appropriate levels of growth for the rural settlements

The study is presented in two parts: '**Section One**' containing the Main Report and '**Section Two**' which sets out individual assessments of villages.

## **Background**

- 1.9 In September 2006 the Council produced the background report 'Sustainability of Settlements in the Lewes District' which sought to assess the sustainability of each settlement in the District to inform the Lewes District Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' also published in 2006.
- 1.10 Due to a number of reasons, this Preferred Options document was never progressed any further and in 2009 the District Council started afresh in preparing a Core Strategy document.

- 1.11 Given the time lapse in the progression of the Core Strategy, it was decided to revisit the earlier work on the sustainability of the settlements, to update information on the villages and include information on local needs and aspirations. This information was published in the Lewes District Council Rural Settlement Study 2011.
- 1.12 This Rural Settlement Study seeks to assess the sustainability of the District's rural settlements and recommend a settlement hierarchy. This will inform the Council's approach for an overall spatial strategy for development and change within the District.
- 1.13 To help determine the sustainability of the settlements a range of indicators has been assessed, such as the availability of services, facilities, employment, accessibility to larger settlements and impacts on environmental designations and landscape character. Cumulatively this information provides a picture as to which settlements may have the potential for development in terms of being the most sustainable locations for growth within the rural areas.
- 1.14 The study seeks to portray a picture or 'spirit of place' for each settlement, to highlight its unique character that has evolved through the location of the settlement, growth of built form, its social history and economic legacies. This wider picture of what makes each village unique and distinctive and where local needs and priorities lie will assist in formulating planning policies which can address specific needs and issues.
- 1.15 The study also seeks to highlight local housing and community needs that Parish Councils have identified as being required. This information will feed into the Core Strategy as well subsequent plans and policies developed at the District and local level.

### **Sustainable development and rural communities**

- 1.16 As identified in the introduction, sustainable development is a core principle underpinning planning.
- 1.17 Government thinking in respect of sustainable development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (see chapter 2), which states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental, which give rise to the planning system performing a number of roles, briefly:
- **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by amongst other things identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
  - **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations.....with accessible local

services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 1.18 As a background document, the Rural Settlement Study identifies the economic, social and environmental aspects of the villages in the Lewes District. Aspects such as; the availability of key facilities and services, the ability of residents to access employment, shops, health facilities and recreational opportunities and identifies environmental and landscape factors which make each settlement unique.
- 1.19 Having a range of key facilities close at hand is seen as a more sustainable way of living by promoting good health and social, economic and environmental wellbeing by amongst other things, minimising the need to travel by car (thereby reducing carbon dioxide emissions and protecting the environment) and increasing opportunities to exercise and contribute to community life and social cohesion.
- 1.20 It is recognised that there are many other factors that are important in creating a sustainable rural community and one where people are happy to live. Elements such as the availability of community activities and groups, access to the countryside or open spaces are such examples.

### **Issues relating to the rural areas**

- 1.21 Although each village is unique and distinct as evidenced by the village appraisals, the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) provides a current overview of general characteristics of rural areas and rural living in their Rural Statistics Digest, reporting that nationally<sup>1</sup>;
- 19.3% of the population of England live in rural areas
  - 86% of England's landmass is rural
  - Rural is defined as settlements with populations of fewer than 10,000
  - Much of rural England is essentially 'peri'-urban with more than half of the rural population living within 6 miles of a town of 30,000 people or more

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/201209-rural-stats-digest.pdf> (last accessed 12th November 2012)

- Economic indicators show, on average, rural areas are performing well, usually on a par with or better than urban areas
- Rural areas are some of the least affordable places to live in the country. Latest figures show that the lowest house prices in rural areas are 7.6 times the lowest annual earnings, compared to 6.7 times the lowest annual earnings in urban areas, but in some locations, the differential can be much higher.
- Educational attainment is, by and large, higher in rural areas
- On average, people in rural areas live longer, have better health outcomes, and enjoy healthier lifestyles
- Rural communities are on average older than urban areas, and the average age is increasing at a faster rate. It is expected that by 2030 the proportion of the national population over 60 will exceed 26%. In rural areas, this proportion was reached in around 2006.
- On average people living in the most rural areas travelled 45% further per year than those in England as a whole and 53% further than those living in urban areas.

1.22 Many of these national trends are reflected at the local level in the rural parishes of Lewes District, as evidenced by data collected such as; housing affordability issues; an ageing population; poor accessibility to services for those without cars; and fast traffic growth. There may be emerging or more hidden generic issues for the rural areas of Lewes District, which may come to light through any community led planning carried out by parish and town councils.

1.23 Recent work carried out by Action in Rural Sussex (AIR's) highlighted the fact that rural populations are ageing, with 22.7% of pensioners' living in rural areas and of those 18.6% are living alone. Key drivers of the ageing population are identified as:

- a rise in the average age of the population by the increase in average life expectancy
- extensive in-migration of older people
- out migration of younger people

1.24 The increase in the percentage of older people in a community may highlight shortfalls in public transport, health and social care provision, appropriate housing and local services and facilities. The joint Core Strategy identifies a decline in the number and range of local services and limited public transport for the rural areas which have the potential to have a greater impact on the older and younger members of the District.



- 1.25 In July 2012, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation<sup>2</sup>, a charity which amongst other things seeks to understand the root causes of social problems published their latest report on the minimum income standard – what you might need to survive, according to where you live and your personal circumstances. Evidence of the rural/urban split in cost of living is stark: a young adult living in a village is likely to require an annual income of **£19,820**. The urban equivalent is **£16,383**.
- 1.26 Specific data at parish level relating to young people's views is not available, however the East Sussex Youth Cabinet publication 'Staying in Touch', set out the results of the 'Big Vote' 2009 (the 'Big Vote' was the means by which young people elected the county's Youth Cabinet). The vote process included identifying issues of concern to young people in East Sussex. In respect of young people's views in the rural and urban areas of the Lewes District, of most concern is the issue of the environment, with availability of transport being the second area of most concern.
- 1.27 The East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan 2011 – 2014<sup>3</sup>, sets out the shared priorities of the Children and Young People's Trust. Children's views have fed into this report and include the fact that children and young people don't always feel safe in their communities and there is a perception that having more things to do for young people would increase safety. In addition children and young people want a range of activities available to them that are affordable and accessible.
- 1.28 For children and young people living in rural areas, access to activities is likely to be an important issue and the availability of public transport is seen as an important element when calculating the sustainability of the settlements.

## **2. National, Regional and Local context for the Rural Settlement Study**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

- 2.1 Since the publication of the first version of the Rural Settlement Study in early 2011, Planning Policy Statements which set out Government policy were replaced in 2012 by one document, the National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out the Government's approach to planning and provides a framework within which local people and local authorities can produce local and neighbourhood plans which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.jrf.org.uk/focus-issue/minimum-income-standards> - accessed November 8th 2012

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/a0c12eca-6f89-453d-945e-24d3fd84d4fe/0/cypp\\_draft.pdf](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/a0c12eca-6f89-453d-945e-24d3fd84d4fe/0/cypp_draft.pdf) - last accessed 2nd November 2012

- 2.2 With specific reference to the rural areas, the NPPF identifies as a core planning principle, that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. In terms of economic prosperity the document states that planning policies should support economic growth in order to create new jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. This includes promoting the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- 2.3 These elements have been identified in the sustainability matrix at appendix 1 and are considered to be important in contributing to a sustainable rural settlement.

### **Localism Agenda**

- 2.4 The Coalition Government want to empower communities, through its 'localism' agenda, by allowing them to have more control over the future of the places in which they live. For planning, this was made clear in the Localism Act 2011, which signalled the introduction of a neighbourhood planning tier into the planning system.
- 2.5 The Localism Act was followed by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Regulations set out how communities could produce three different types of Neighbourhood Planning documents, namely:
- Neighbourhood Development Plans,
  - Neighbourhood Development Orders, and
  - Community Right to Build Orders
- 2.6 Neighbourhood Planning gives local communities the opportunity to have a greater influence in deciding amongst other things; where new shops, offices or homes should go and what green spaces should be protected. In essence the new legislation has devolved greater power to a more local level, thereby creating opportunities for people to influence and decide what happens in their local area.
- 2.7 Early in 2011, Ringmer Parish Council was successful in its bid to become a 'Neighbourhood Planning Frontrunner' a government initiative to incentivise parish councils to produce a neighbourhood plan.
- 2.8 Since then, Hamsey and Newick Parish Councils have decided to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and all three Parish Councils have Neighbourhood Area Application designations, which is the first formal step in producing a neighbourhood plan.
- 2.9 As the communities of these three parishes become more involved in the process, information on local needs and aspirations will become

available and this information will provide further understanding of these settlements that can be fed into Section 2 of this study.

### **National Context – The Rural Statement 2012**

- 2.10 The Rural Statement<sup>4</sup> produced by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) provides details on how the Government is supporting the rural areas, underling its commitment through the broad range of policies from across different Government departments. The introduction provides the context of rural areas at the national level and identifies that rural areas are home to one-fifth of the English population (nearly 10 million people) and make up 86% of the country, and with more than 505 thousand businesses, or 28% of England's total.
- 2.11 Specifically the Statement sets out the Governments new agenda for rural England based around three key priorities:
- **Economic Growth** – so that rural businesses are able to make a sustainable contribution and receive the benefits of national growth
  - **Rural Engagement** – so that rural communities can see that Government is on their side; and
  - **Quality of Life** – to ensure that rural people have fair access to public services and to be actively engaged in shaping the places in which they live.
- 2.12 The document sets out the sorts of activities that will help achieve these priorities and highlights the Government funding that has been set aside, to deliver them.

### **National Context - The Rural Challenge**

- 2.13 The 'Rural Challenge'<sup>5</sup> is a non statutory document published by the Rural Coalition (the Rural Coalition was formed to bring together a number of organisations with rural interests to highlight rural needs and issues). The document has an overriding objective to help achieve a lasting legacy of sustainable rural development. The document is directed at informing governance at national and local level on measures that need be taken to support rural communities, in order that they may withstand challenges and flourish.
- 2.14 This includes creating communities in which people enjoy living and working; which are vibrant, distinctive and in keeping with the character of their surroundings, with a full range of good quality local services;

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2012/09/12/rural-statement-2012/> - last accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2012

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/6264/The-Rural-Challenge-achieving-sustainable-rural-communitites-for-the-21st-century-Rural-Coalition-2010.pdf> - last accessed 29th November 2012

and which enhance local landscapes, heritage and biodiversity while meeting the challenges of climate and economic change.

- 2.15 One of the propositions by the Rural Coalition to meeting these objectives is that Local Authorities draw up local plans and strategies which are based on a thorough understanding of local rural economies and society and a genuine incorporation of community led plans and aspirations. The Rural Settlement Strategy is one such document which will help inform emerging policies for the rural areas.

### **Regional Plan - The South East Plan**

- 2.16 The Coalition Government has committed to revoking regional spatial strategies (RSS) with the aim of streamlining the planning system. The two-stage process of abolishing RSSs commenced with the Localism Act. This ceased the preparation of new regional spatial strategies. The actual removal of existing regional strategies requires secondary legislation which is not yet in place.
- 2.17 To date, the South East Plan (SEP) remains part of the planning framework, although its revocation may be considered a material consideration to decision makers when determining planning applications or appeals.

### **South Downs National Park**

- 2.18 Some 56% of the District and twenty one of the thirty four villages and hamlets identified in Part 2 of this study, fall within the South Downs National Park boundary. Figure 1 shows the extent of the national park within the District.

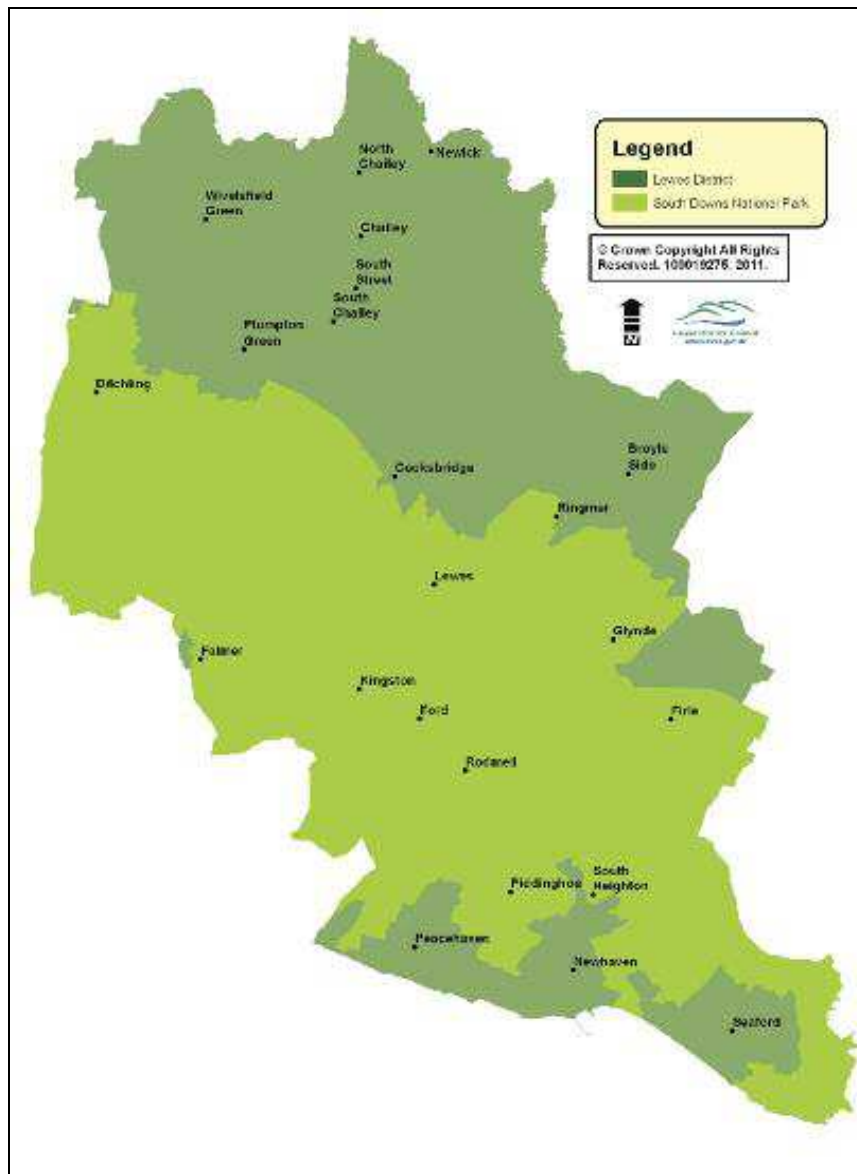


Figure 1 – The location of the South Downs National Park in the Lewes District

2.19 The South Downs National Park Authority took up its statutory responsibility for leading and planning the future of the South Downs National Park on 1st April 2011, which includes being the sole planning authority for all the area within the National Park designation. The twin purposes of the National Park are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public<sup>6</sup>.

2.20 In delivering these purposes the Park Authority has a duty to: *'seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities'*

<sup>6</sup> These purposes apply to all National Parks and are specified in the Environment Act 1995

*within the National Park*'. The role of the South Downs National Park as a Planning Authority is to control and influence the development of land and buildings within its boundaries. To do this effectively the SDNPA has to balance the statutory duties and purposes of the National Park, safeguarding the natural environment and existing built heritage, with the needs of individuals, the local population, supporting rural communities and local businesses.

- 2.21 The National Park Authority will eventually prepare its own policies including a National Park Management Plan and Core Strategy which is anticipated to be published in 2014 and 2016 respectively. This Rural Settlement Study may be used as part of the evidence base in the production of both these documents.
- 2.22 In the meantime, the South Downs Management Plan 2008-2013, will remain relevant and continue to require that conservation and enhancement of the landscape lie at the heart of all decisions affecting the future of the South Downs.

### **East Sussex County Council Local Transport Plan**

- 2.23 The Local Transport Plan produced by East Sussex County Council is the mechanism by which transport authorities deliver the Governments transport objectives and seek funding to maintain and improve the local transport network. It provides a framework for the delivery of an integrated transport strategy and is linked to national transport priorities and local objectives through a series of programmes.
- 2.24 East Sussex Local Transport Plan 3 covers the period from 2011 to 2026. The Plan identified that in respect of public transport, the needs of rural areas and small market towns are less well served and that without a car, residents can experience social exclusion as well as difficulties in accessing work. The challenge is seen as providing affordable, sustainable and safe travel choices to enable residents and visitors to access services they need and which support the local economy.
- 2.25 These accessibility issues for the District's rural communities are widely recognised and the needs of young people in terms of accessing employment, education and entertainment facilities were also identified as a particular challenge at the Lewes District Parish Council conference in October 2010. The appraisal of the settlements has identified transport/access availability as being important issues for a number of rural communities.

## **Lewes District Council Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), Local Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Needs Surveys**

- 2.26 Undertaking a Strategic Housing Market Assessment is a key requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Lewes District SHMA was undertaken in 2008. The SHMA provides evidence of the economic and demographic drivers of the housing market, evidence on the stock and supply of housing within housing markets and the implications in terms of house prices and affordability.
- 2.27 Information in the SHMA was augmented by a Local Housing Needs Assessment carried out by consultants in 2011. This assessed the potential amount of housing required in the District (including the part within the National Park) to support the future population, based on a range of economic and demographic trends and forecasts. Examining a number of different scenarios, the report has demonstrated that significant new housing will need to be delivered in the District in order to meet demand over the coming 20 years.
- 2.28 The report also notes that delivering very little housing development over the coming years could have a “substantial impact upon the population structure, with a major reduction in economic activity caused by an ageing population and also potential housing market outcomes such as overcrowding, concealed households and declining affordability<sup>7</sup>.” It is likely that such impacts would be more keenly felt in rural locations in the District.
- 2.29 The main drivers that have influenced the housing target identified in the Lewes District Joint Core Strategy are;
- the local housing need and demand;
  - the potential capacity for housing in the District,
  - the level of housing which is needed to deliver the vision and aspirations for the District and its constituent parts.
- 2.30 A number of Parish level housing needs studies have been carried out by Action in Rural Sussex (AIRS) and where figures are available these have been integrated into the appraisals for the respective villages. However most of the Parishes do not have such a survey and so the numbers of households on the Household Register administered by the Housing Department, have been set out in the study to give an indication of need in terms of affordable housing.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Study (SHLAA)**

- 2.31 The SHLAA is an evidence based document which highlights the potential of land for residential development. The document does not

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<sup>7</sup> See paragraph 5.5 of the Lewes District Assessment of the Local Need for Housing



allocate land for development but assesses sites for their suitability, availability and achievability for residential use and based on these considerations, sets out whether or not sites identified are deliverable or developable for housing. It is updated on a yearly basis (the latest being 2012) with sites being identified for consideration by a variety of sources including Parish/Town Councils and private individuals.

- 2.32 The evidence within the SHLAA will serve an important role alongside other evidence based documents, in influencing the location and delivery of new housing development in the District.

### **Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development Study 2010**

- 2.33 This study was carried out by consultants, AECOM, to develop an evidence base to inform the development of carbon dioxide reduction and renewable energy policies to be included in the Core Strategy. The study also sought to provide wider evidence, regarding the future potential for appropriate renewable energy developments.
- 2.34 The study concluded that the emerging Local Development Framework would be an opportunity to ensure that plans for development could drive forward the delivery of low carbon opportunities. Also where low carbon opportunities are identified that this should be a key criterion in looking at the various options for growth in the District. Opportunities for generating energy from renewable and low carbon resources were identified for the rural areas of the district. Such opportunities included wind power and biomass.
- 2.35 In the rural areas, opportunities for certain decentralized energy systems will be less viable based on the smaller scale developments that are likely to be yielded. For example, development incorporating combined heat and power (which integrates the production of usable heat and power in one single efficient process) is viable where it is integrated with uses that have large and constant demands for electricity, such as hospitals or supermarkets.

### **Employment Land Review (ELR) 2010 and update 2012**

- 2.36 This study primarily focuses on employment space needs relating to office space, general industrial and storage and distribution uses as well as the current value and availability of existing employment premises.
- 2.37 The report suggests that in the rural area there is a significant provision of employment space across the northern part of the District and that this area has strong ties to Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Lewes town. Continued demand for employment space is considered likely in this area. However most of the lower quality sites lie in the rural areas of the District, away from the strategic road network.



- 2.38 The study also identifies potential new employment sites through an identification process and highlights two sites on the edge of Ringmer. These sites have been referred to in the site appraisal for Ringmer, but further work is required to consider landscape and wider sustainability impacts of any development on these two sites.

A partial review of this study was carried out in Summer 2012 in view of the changed economic outlook, however the update stated that the economic position is broadly unchanged from the 2010 ELR.

### **Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004**

- 2.39 The National Planning Policy Framework highlights the importance that open spaces, sport and recreation are in contributing to the health and well-being of communities. It states that Local Authorities should undertake a robust audit and assessment of the existing facilities to allow local authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficits or surpluses.
- 2.40 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 audited the number of playing pitches in the District and highlighted key issues, recommendations and priorities for the future at Town and Parish level. The methodology of the review looked at pitch provision for football, rugby union, hockey and cricket. The appraisal of the villages, in Section 2 of this document, refers to the Outdoor Playing Space review calculations, as to where there are or likely to be deficiencies.
- 2.41 It is recognised that this review was carried out eight years ago and that some information may therefore be out of date. A further audit and assessment of play space will be carried out in the near future, to further inform the Rural Settlement Study.

### **Landscape Capacity Study 2012**

- 2.42 The aim of the Landscape Capacity Study (LCS) is to help inform the Core Strategy, a future site allocations development plan document to be produced by LDC and future planning decisions. In particular it will help in identifying where development might be accommodated within the District without unacceptably impacting on the landscape.
- 2.43 The LCS looks at the areas surrounding the towns and villages across the District, where it is considered that there are likely to be future development pressures. Not all settlements identified in this study have been addressed in the LCS, but where there has been an appraisal, this is referred to in Section 2 of this study under the relevant settlement profile.

### **Lewes District Shopping and Town Centres Study 2012**

- 2.44 This study assessed the main shopping and smaller village/rural centres to amongst other things; fully understand how the local shopping market operates, assess the overall need for new shopping floorspace, assess where deficiencies exist in the provision of local convenience shopping and identify the shopping hierarchy of the District.
- 2.45 Although the study did not focus on the smaller retail centres within the District, the rural settlements of Ringmer, Ditchling and Newick were identified as having Local Centre status in the retail hierarchy. In particular Ringmer and Newick were identified as having a not insignificant top-up shopping function for their immediate catchment populations. The study also identified that smaller rural settlements such as Barcombe, Firle, Glynde, Chailey, Wivelsfield Green and Plumpton Green have a single village store that are vital to the local population.
- 2.46 Policy recommendations in the study relating to rural shops, is that these facilities provide a valuable local shopping and social function and that the Council should seek to retain and enhance these existing facilities.

### **Parish Plans**

- 2.47 Even though Parish Councils are now able to produce neighbourhood plans which will form part of the District Council's development plan and have legal weight, parish councils can still produce a Village or Parish Plan.
- 2.48 Parish Plans set out key priorities and future actions needed to meet the aspirations of the community. Although such plans are informative and can guide planning approaches, they have no legal standing. The appraisal of each settlement in the Rural Settlement Study includes a section on identified community needs, some of which have been highlighted from Parish Plan.
- 2.49 The following parish councils have produced parish plans/surveys:
- Barcombe 2009,  
 Chailey 2009  
 East Chilmington 2004,  
 Hamsey (which includes the villages of Cooksbridge and Offham) 2004,  
 Ringmer 2003, (Employment Strategy 2006, Housing Strategy 2009)  
 Newick 2006,  
 Plumpton 2008,  
 Kingston 2007,  
 Ditchling 2004,  
 South Highton 2008

- 2.50 Whilst each of these Parish Plans is individual and responsive to local needs, they highlight a number of common themes such as the need for affordable housing, housing for the elderly, improved bus services; improved footpath/pedestrian access between/within settlements, improved recreational facilities and car parks.

### **Action in Rural Sussex: Access to Services Survey**

- 2.51 This survey has helped identify which services contribute to the sustainability of settlements and is based on resident feedback. Between October and December 2007, Action in Rural Sussex (AIRS) conducted an on-line survey focused on identifying the key issues for access to services within the county. The primary focus for this public survey was to determine those services that rural residents identified as being those that they would like to access, those that they did access and the major barriers preventing access.
- 2.52 The results of the survey identified that at that time rural residents primarily utilised the post office, shop, village hall and primary school where these facilities existed. When asked which services residents would most like to use that were not available in their community they identified the following: doctor's surgery, daily bus service, bank or financial services, petrol station and pharmacy.
- 2.53 In seeking to identify those settlements that are most sustainable, the Rural Settlement Study records the number of services that rural residents primarily utilise or would most like to see and these are identified as key services. Although petrol station counts towards the total score, it has not been identified as a key service however, as it is not seen as essential in supporting the self sustaining elements of a settlement.

### **Parish Council Planning Workshops**

- 2.54 Between the 26<sup>th</sup> April and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2010, Lewes District Council ran five workshops all with the same content for groups of Parish and Town Councils. The purpose of these workshop meetings was to provide an update on the proposed work of the Rural Settlement Study and the emerging Core Strategy and seek the Parish Council's views on the following:
- What are the issues for your settlement?
  - What are the priorities and needs for your settlement?
  - Will these priorities and needs address the issues?
- 2.55 The Parish Councils that attended identified local needs and priorities and this feedback is highlighted in the respective village appraisals in Section 2 of this document.

- 2.56 In March 2012 a workshop for all parish and town council's in the District was held to provide an overview of the opportunities presented for local democracy through the neighbourhood planning process. A follow up meeting took place in December 2012 for all parish and town councils, which provided examples of emerging neighbourhood plans and community engagement examples and experiences.

### **3. Methodology and Data Collection**

#### **Definition of Rural Settlements**

- 3.1 The Rural Strategy produced by the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2004 set out a definition of rural areas and definition of settlements with under 10,000 population. The Commission for Rural Communities in their paper 'What is Rural?' commented that all settlements with a population over 10,000 are regarded as urban, so by default suggests that any settlement with less than this figure is rural. More recently in 2007 DEFRA reinforced this view with a hierarchy of settlements taken as:
- Urban (over 10,000 population)
  - Rural Town
  - Village
  - Dispersed (hamlets and isolated dwellings)
- 3.2 DEFRA also identify the settlement type by considering how residentially dense the existing development is and the rate and distance the density changes from the centre of the rural settlement.
- 3.3 Conversely the South East Plan defines villages as settlements with a population of less than 3,000.
- 3.4 **For the purpose of the Rural Settlement Study 'villages' are areas of development which have a contiguous built form, a population of 100 or more people and which lie outside of the towns in the District which are Lewes, Seaford, Newhaven, and Peacehaven.**
- 3.5 This minimum population figure has been identified on the basis that some settlements which have a relatively small population still have key elements of sustainability. Glynde is such a settlement with a population of approximately 135 people, which has elements of sustainable living such as a village shop, post office and railway station.
- 3.6 The largest settlement appraised within the study is Ringmer, which has a settlement population of approximately 4,000 (including the neighbourhood of Broyleside). Despite the population size, Ringmer has characteristics of a village such as a village green, proximity to the countryside from all parts of the village, key village facilities such as

main village hall and one main area of shops (i.e. no secondary shopping area).

3.7 All villages listed below have a population of over 100 and have a detailed appraisal in Part 2 of this study. The villages in bold below lie wholly within the National Park although parts of their parish boundaries may lie outside of the designation:

- Barcombe Cross
- Broyleside
- Cooksbridge
- **Ditchling**
- **Falmer**
- **Firle**
- **Glynde**
- **Iford**
- **Kingston**
- Newick
- North Chailey
- **Piddinghoe**
- Plumpton Green
- Ringmer
- **Rodmell**
- South Chailey
- South Street
- South Heighton
- Wivelsfield Green

3.8 Figure 2 below identifies the location of all of these settlements.

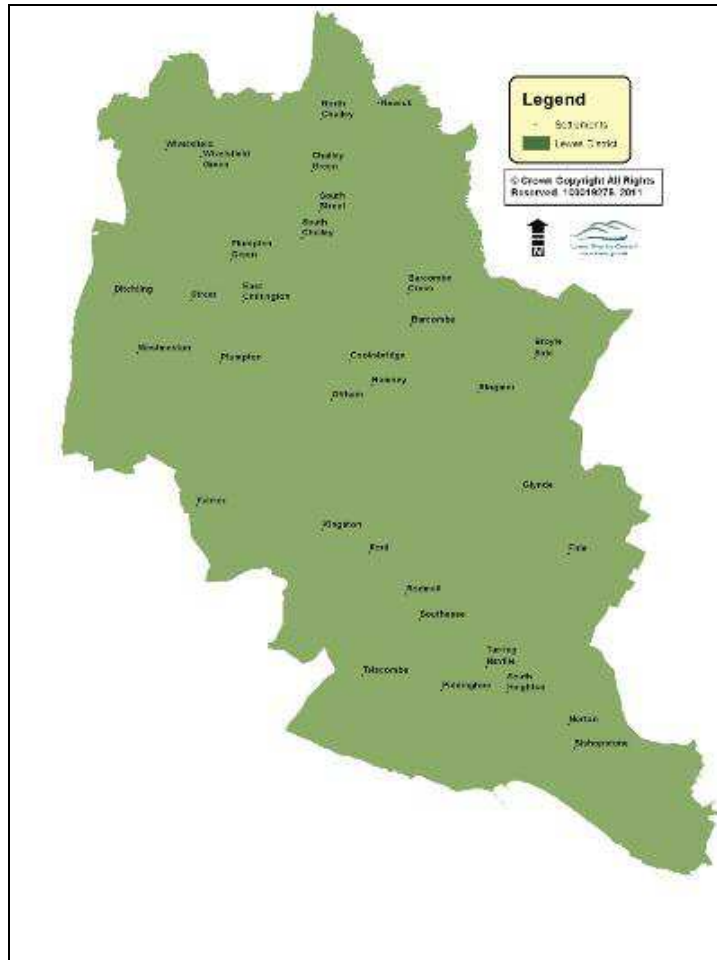


Figure 2 – Location of settlements within the Lewes District

3.9 Hamlets are an important part of the rural character of the Lewes District and are considered to be those settlements that have a population of less than 100 people. The small population of hamlets as a rule are not able to support local services which are economically driven such as shops, although public houses and churches/church halls are located in some of the Districts hamlets drawing people in from a wider catchment area. Many of the hamlets are not on a bus route and so reliance on the car is high.

3.10 The expansion of these ‘hamlets’ would be contrary to the government’s planning objectives, contained in the National Planning Policy Framework such as the need to manage patterns of growth to make fullest use of public transport and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. A short description is given for the following hamlets in Section 2 of this study and those in bold lie within the National Park designation:

- Barcombe (as opposed to Barcombe Cross)
- **Bishopstone**
- Chailey Green
- East Chilmington
- **Hamsey**

- **Norton**
- **Offham**
- **Plumpton (as opposed to Plumpton Green)**
- Streat
- **Southeast**
- **Southerham**
- Tarring Neville
- **Telscombe Village ( as opposed to Telscombe Cliffs)**
- Westmeston
- Wivelsfield (the early settlement located in Church Lane)

### **Data Collection**

3.11 In order to keep the study manageable, key services and a range of other facilities have been quantified, but no additional score has been given where there is more than one service, i.e. where there may be 2 public houses rather than just one. Also additional scores have not been given for the quality of services, as this may be subjective to the recorder and be subject to change. Seven main datasets have been collected and each appraisal has disseminated this information under the following headings:

- Services and facilities
- Accessibility
- Population Profile
- Housing Needs
- Community Needs
- Economic Role and Needs
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Lewes District Local Plan
- Environmental and Landscape Factors.

### **Datasets Collected/Contextual Information**

#### **Services and facilities**

3.12 Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recognises that rural services are the heart and soul of rural settlements. They are often points of contact in areas which can be isolated and so are key elements which go to make up successful and sustainable communities.

3.13 In order to assess the level of service provision in the rural communities, a list of key services and facilities has been identified, each of which are considered to be important for day to day living. The key services have been identified through work carried out by Action in Rural Sussex in 2007, which sought amongst other things to determine those services that rural residents identified as being those that they accessed most regularly and those that they would most like to access

that were not currently available. The following services and facilities were identified;

- doctors surgery
- chemist
- primary school
- convenience store
- post office
- community hall

3.14 Other services and facilities that are seen as contributing to sustainable living are:

- secondary school
- library (static or mobile)
- public house
- place of worship
- sports pitch
- informal play space
- play areas
- dentist
- nursery
- cash point/bank
- petrol station

3.15 The availability of these services can reduce the need for residents to travel further afield. Certain sections of the community such as the young and elderly may have more reliance on public transport and therefore rely more heavily on local services. Also whilst it is appreciated that internet shopping has increased significantly and is set to increase further, not all people have access to the internet and the services that can be accessed by them (approximately 73% of people in the District have internet connection at home)<sup>8</sup>

3.16 Information has been obtained from visits to each of the settlements and verification from the respective parish councils. The availability of these services in each settlement is identified in each of the village appraisals as well as the spreadsheet at Appendix 1 which ranks each settlement in terms of its sustainability.

### **Accessibility**

3.17 Where there is a deficiency in services, facilities and employment opportunities the existence and frequency of public transport is seen as vital. Therefore settlements which have good public transport access to higher order centres are seen as more sustainable, as they provide

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<sup>8</sup> Figures obtained from East Sussex in Figures



residents with travel choices and improved accessibility to jobs, services and facilities to meet day to day needs.

3.18 Information has been obtained from bus and train timetables.

### Rail Services

3.19 There are five train stations within the rural area of the District outside of the towns and all that provide a 'frequent' service. In the context of the rural areas a frequent service is taken as one where there is at least one train per hour. Stations are located at;

- Cooksbridge
- Falmer
- Glynde
- Plumpton Green
- Southease

3.20 Wivelsfield train station despite the name is not located at the settlements of Wivelsfield or Wivelsfield Green but is on the northern fringes of Burgess Hill.



Figure 3 – Location of main roads and rural train stations

## Bus Services

- 3.21 All the settlements that have a full appraisal are on bus routes. Infrequent services are taken as those that run less than four services before and after mid-day and do not provide transport to enable people to reasonably commute to their place of employment to work normal office hours.
- 3.22 Frequent services are available at;
- Broyleside
  - Chailey Green
  - Cooksbridge
  - Falmer
  - Kingston
  - Newick
  - North Chailey
  - Piddinghoe
  - Ringmer
  - Rodmell
  - Southease
  - South Chailey
  - South Street
  - Wivelsfield Green
- 3.23 Infrequent bus services are available at;
- Barcombe Cross
  - Ditchling
  - Firle
  - Glynde
  - Plumpton Green
  - South Highton
- 3.24 Appendix 1 identifies those settlements that have train and/or bus services. Those settlements that have a more frequent train or bus service have been given a greater value in the scoring system than those that provide an irregular service. The availability of public transport is seen to be an inherent factor when determining the sustainability of each settlement

## **Population Profile**

- 3.25 The population data taken from East Sussex County Council's data (East Sussex in Figures or ESIF) is broken down into seven separate age groups 0 -14, 15-29, 30-44, 45-64, 65-74, 75-84 and 85 plus. This information can be used with other population data to identify potential needs that may be required in the respective settlements in the future.

- 3.26 These can include facilities such as play areas or housing needs, such as warden assisted housing where there is a greater population in the older age ranges, or more affordable housing where there are proportionally more young people.
- 3.27 Whilst this information may not feed directly into considerations as to the sustainability of each settlement, this information is useful in helping to build an overview as to the character of each of the settlements.

### **Affordable Housing Needs**

- 3.28 As identified under the relevant policy section of this report, national and emerging local strategic policies recognise the importance of assessing local housing need when considering the overall option of housing provision. The National Planning Policy Framework specifically states that local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances, particularly for affordable housing.
- 3.29 Getting on the housing ladder in recent years has become more of a challenge, not least because house prices have grown faster than wages. In rural areas the problem can be exacerbated by a more limited supply of land that is suitable for housing development and affordability.
- 3.30 The Lewes District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012 highlights that average house prices in the Lewes District are higher compared to the averages for East Sussex, the South East and England.

### **Community Needs**

- 3.31 Community needs can relate to a wide range of services and/or facilities such as recreational provision, improved village halls or the presence of a GP surgery. The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Therefore seeking ways of meeting the community needs identified by the parishes is seen as essential in maintaining and creating the sustainability of the settlements.
- 3.32 The community needs that have been identified in the village appraisals have come from a range of sources. Parish Plans completed have identified community needs and in some cases, actions to support their provision. In addition meetings with Parish Councils in Spring 2010, and consultation on the Emerging Core Strategy has provided opportunities for the members to express any needs and these have been recorded in the village appraisals.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

- 3.33 Rural areas are dynamic communities which contribute significantly and proportionately to the national economy. The Lewes District Employment Land Review 2010, carried out by consultants identified that in the rural area, there is a good demand for conversions of redundant agricultural buildings to provide small scale, high quality office or workshop developments, and a significant level of current provision.
- 3.34 It was also identified that most of the lower quality sites are in the more rural areas of the District. There are examples throughout the District of small scale employment uses located within converted redundant agricultural buildings.
- 3.35 The travel to work data is collected at ward level and is not disaggregated to settlement or parish level. As a result it is not possible to have a clear indication of the working population that travel out of their respective villages to work and those that travel in.
- 3.36 As a generalization it has been noted that there are more employment opportunities in settlements where there is a larger population. An example of this would be the settlement of Ringmer with over 4,000 residents and a wide range of employment opportunities including a number of small business sites.

### **Local Plan Policies**

- 3.37 The Lewes District Local Plan adopted in March 2003 included site specific policies and proposals relating to a number of the settlements and a range of issues. Many of these policies are still relevant as under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 many of the Lewes District local plan policies have been saved, reviewed and if appropriate renewed annually as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 3.38 Many of these policies in time will be superseded by policies contained within the emerging Lewes District Local Plan.
- 3.39 The village appraisals identify Local Plan policies for the respective settlements where they have been saved and are still relevant.

### **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

- 3.40 This section identifies environmental designations and aspects of built and rural landscape character that impact on the respective settlements. The existence of environmental designations may limit the opportunity for future development and growth of the settlement due to potential negative impacts on ranges of habitats, flora and fauna.



### **Areas of Flood Risk**

- 3.44 The appraisals identify which settlements are subject to flood risk. There are a number of settlements affected by fluvial and tidal flooding, as well as flooding from other sources, such as groundwater. This may impact on the development of certain sites and therefore the capacity for certain settlements to grow. Such constraints therefore may impact of the sustainability of certain settlements.

### **Areas of Archaeological Importance**

- 3.45 Archaeology includes buried remains of all periods from the prehistoric to the modern, as well as the standing remains of historically significant buildings and structures. Sites of Archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and the people and cultures that made them. PPS 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* states that, 'Planning has a central role to play in conserving our heritage assets and utilising the historic environment in creating sustainable places'.
- 3.46 A number of settlements have been assessed which have designated Areas of Archaeological Importance, and these are identified in Section 2 – Village appraisals.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)**

- 3.47 Sites of Special Scientific Interest are sites of national significance designated to protect flora and fauna. They are notified by Natural England and areas designated are subject to statutory protection. Sites that are close to designated sites may also be unsuitable for development, due to potential impacts on the habitats identified in the designation as being of special scientific interest.
- 3.48 There are a number of settlements in the assessment which have SSSI's in close proximity, such as the land at Chailey Common to the north of North Chailey and land at Ditchling common.
- 3.49 Local Nature Reserves are statutory designations that are for both people and wildlife and are of special interest locally. There are four LNR's in the Lewes District with only the designated site in North Chailey located within a rural settlement within the District. This site comprises of heathland with a wide range of heathland species.
- 3.50 Special Areas of Conservation are protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of flora and fauna and their habitats and are an important element in efforts to conserve bio-diversity. There are two SAC's



within the Lewes District and both are open downland sites and do not encroach into any of the villages in the District.

### **Conservation Areas**

- 3.51 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character of appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. Such designations introduce a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings. In addition they provide the basis for policies, designed to preserve and enhance all the aspects of character and appearance that define the special interest of an area.
- 3.52 Conservation Area appraisals play a role in making informed and sustainable decisions about the future of an area. There are 35 Conservation Areas in the District, 15 of which relate to the villages with an in-depth assessment and 10 relating to hamlets within the District.

### **East Sussex Landscape Assessment 2006**

- 3.53 This study has been produced by the County Council as a way of describing and recording what makes a place distinctive or different and what is special about it. The study is concerned primarily with landscape character, rather than of quality or value although these factors can be of great importance when the study is used to inform decisions on land use.
- 3.54 This document has been useful when seeking to build a general overview of the setting of each of the settlements appraised. Further information on the landscape characteristics have been gained by site visits and this will be augmented in due course by a Landscape capacity study.

## **4. Establishing a Settlement Hierarchy**

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of rural areas the document states that sustainable development would ensure that housing be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- 4.2 It is therefore recognised that identifying a settlement hierarchy is a significant part of the widely used policy approach to identifying Service Centres and those settlements that are most sustainable locations for new development. This is not to say that as a tool it provides the blueprint for the approach for rural settlement planning.
- 4.3 Contemporary village living is complex and diverse, with residents often by choice having varying degrees of reliance on the community

within which they live. This element of choice will continue to raise an unpredictable factor when seeking to wholly understand how a village functions.

- 4.4 However it is considered that identifying a settlement hierarchy and combining this with contextual and needs data, provides a broad, balanced and holistic overview of the settlements within the District, which will assist in formulating the preferred development option for the villages.
- 4.5 The type of services and facilities scored to determine the hierarchy of settlements have been identified in Chapter 3 of this report (para 3.12), and those available in each settlement are recorded in the respective village appraisals in Part 2 and also are set out in the matrix at Appendix A.
- 4.6 The matrix gives a total score for each village on the basis of the number of services and facilities within it and the availability of public transport to other shops, schools and employment.
- 4.7 Services/facilities that are considered to be key to the community and have a greater contribution to the sustainability of the settlement have been highlighted and given a double score, as have public transport modes that are frequent (frequent in the rural context is taken as having more than 4 services before noon and four after noon).
- 4.8 The overall scoring of the criteria identified has enabled a hierarchy of the settlements in the District to be developed, with four discrete categories; Rural Service Centres, Service villages, Local villages and Hamlets as described below.
- 4.9 The NPPF states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, for example development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 4.10 For the purposes of highlighting those settlements that form part of a group and considering the dispersed settlement pattern of the District, it is considered that services and facilities of an adjacent village, need to be within 1¼ miles (2 klm) of a nearby village, if it is to support its services and vitality.
- 4.11 The reason for this is this distance does not rely on the use of a car and will enable a person walking at the average walking speed of 3 miles per hour (5 klm per hour), to be within an approximate 25 minute walk (or just under a 10 minute bike ride) from additional services. This is considered to be a reasonable distance to travel to services without being too onerous or requiring a vehicle to travel. Appendix B lists the settlements appraised and highlights other villages that are within a 1¼ mile walk (or 2klm).



- 4.12 It is recognised that there may be many opportunities or reasons that villages have links and associations with one another. It may be that they lie within the same parish, have community groups that draw in people from other villages, share churches, share routes of access or are contained in the landscape by the same topography.
- 4.13 Such an example of this would be the settlements in the Lower Ouse valley. These settlements fall within differing parishes but are all accessed from the C7 and are contained within the River Ouse valley floor. Collectively they form part of an association called POLO (Parishes of the Lower Ouse) which involves representatives from the respective parish councils (Kingston, Iford, Rodmell, Southease, and Piddinghoe) who meet twice a year, to share information and attempt to co-ordinate on mutual concerns.
- 4.14 However although administratively and geographically the settlements in this example function as a 'group', the lack of a range of key facilities and distance from one another means that collectively the villages do not function as a sustainable Service Centre for the purposes of this study.

### **Settlement Hierarchy Categories**

- 4.15 The establishment of a settlement hierarchy will help direct new development to the most sustainable settlements, that is, those locations that are well supported with existing services and facilities. When considering the capacity of the rural settlements to accommodate development, the settlement hierarchy will need to be considered in tandem with the contextual data of the villages in Part 2 of this study.
- 4.16 The four categories of settlements in the study are listed below, along with the villages that lie nearby, taking into consideration Government advice in the NPPF, on the relationship of settlements with one another where there is a level of interdependence.
- 4.17 **Rural Service Centres**\_– Are those settlements with all 6 key services, a frequent bus or rail service and a total score of 20 or above. Such settlements will be self sustaining in that they can provide, or give frequent access to, services and facilities that the community will need on a frequent basis and will attract people from a wider hinterland, who are not looking for comparison goods found in towns. These villages have potential to absorb a reasonable level of development and could sustain an element of sustainable growth.
- 4.18 Following this criteria the Rural Service Centres in the District are:
- **Ringmer**
  - **Newick**

4.19 **Service Villages** – Are those settlements that have 3-5 key services (one of which is a convenience store or walking distance to such a store), a total score of 14 – 19, and have bus or rail services. These villages offer a more basic level of provisions that are normally needed on a frequent basis but still have a wide range of less essential services that provide opportunities for people to meet and have day to day contact. A level of growth in these villages will help sustain local services and may support or encourage the development of new services. Service Villages have been identified as:

- **Barcombe Cross**
- **Ditchling**
- **Glynde**
- **Firle**
- **Plumpton Green**
- **Wivelsfield Green**

4.20 **Ditchling** is within 1¼ miles of Keymer & Hassocks (in adjoining Mid-Sussex District) with its wide range of shopping facilities and services. Ditchling a service village on its own merits but fulfils the criteria for a Rural Service Centre in the settlement heirarchy, considering its grouping with Keymer & Hassocks. However it is within the South Downs National Park boundary which will be a constraint to development.

4.21 Although Cooksbridge qualifies as a Service Village by the total number of services it has to offer, it only has 2 key services and therefore falls within the 'Local Village' category of the heirarchy.

4.22 **Firle is** within 1¼ miles of Glynde, although a walk from one to another will require walking along quiet country lanes with no public footpath and crossing a major trunk road, without any pedestrian crossing facilities. Similar services can be found in both settlements although Glynde has a railway station and Firle has a primary School. Cumulatively these two settlements do not score as a Rural Service Centre as they do not have all six key services. These two villages are located within the South Downs National Park.

4.23 **Local Villages** – These are settlements that have up to 2 key services, a total score in the service and facility provision spreadsheet of up to 14 and more than 100 population. A small level of growth in these villages will help to support local services or meet an identified local need. Villages in the local village category are:

- **Broyleside**
- **Cooksbridge**
- **Chailey North**
- **Chailey South**

- **Falmer**
- **Kingston**
- **Piddinghoe**
- **Rodmell**
- **South Street**
- **South Heighton**

- 4.24 **Chailey South** is within 1¼ miles of **South Street** with its Post Office and Convenience Store and therefore together they could be considered to be a 'cluster'. Cumulatively they have 3 key services and a total score of 19 so could be considered to be a Service Village in the hierarchy.
- 4.25 The built forms of **Chailey North** and **Newick** are within 1 mile of each other, although the services in Newick are located just over 1¼ miles away. There is a pavement that links the two settlements together but whilst the wide range of services in Newick, are likely to attract the community from North Chailey it is unlikely that the services in North Chailey attract a reverse flow to the same extent, due to there being fewer services.
- 4.26 **Broyleside** on its own merits is categorized as a Local Village but is located within 1 mile of **Ringmer**, a Rural Service Centre. Broyleside has no key or general facilities apart from recreation ground but has many opportunities for local employment in the business units located on the south side of Broyleside.
- 4.27 **Piddinghoe** is within 1¼ miles from the edge of **Newhaven**. Despite this proximity however, development in **Piddinghoe** will be constrained by its location within the South Downs National Park boundary and location on the floor of the Ouse river valley.
- 4.28 **Hamlets**\_– Are those settlements with less than 100 in population. Despite the small populations of the hamlets, they all have historic elements to their core such as a church, which contributes to their 'sense of place' despite lacking in social infrastructure.
- **Barcombe**
  - **Chailey Green**
  - **East Chiltington**
  - **Hamsey**
  - **Streat**
  - **Southeast**
  - **Wivelsfield**
  - **Westmeston**
- 4.29 Identifying a hierarchy of settlements will help inform the Core Strategy as to where the more sustainable locations for development are located in the District. This however is only one source of information to

help identify the council's preferred options for the distribution of development and the range of growth for each of the towns and villages.

- 4.30 As well as taking into consideration information contained in other background documents referred to in section 2 of this study, potential locations for development will be appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal process which will rank proposed locations for development against a series of sustainability objectives to support and help create sustainable communities.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 Section One has demonstrated that the rural villages within the District can reasonably be identified as falling within one of four distinct categories of settlement type. These four categories form a hierarchy which is based on the level/proximity to services and facilities and the accessibility by public transport to other villages and towns.
- 5.2 As well as considering the position of each village in the settlement hierarchy, further evidence collected in Section 2 of this study appraises each settlement individually and seeks to gain an understanding of local housing and community needs and identifies the social, economic and environmental elements that are unique to each village.
- 5.3 As part of the monitoring process of the Authority Monitoring Report, the Rural Settlement Study will be reviewed and the reporting of local needs, facts and figures updated accordingly.

## SECTION TWO - VILLAGE APPRAISALS

### Introduction

The survey work carried out in this section highlights local environmental factors individual to each settlement in combination with other assessments relating to accessibility, levels of housing/community need, economic role and need and demographic profile. This will help to identify which of the settlements within the District have potential to accommodate and may benefit from growth in principle.

### 6. Barcombe Cross



### Introduction

- 6.1 The Parish of Barcombe is referred to in the Domesday Book, where it states “Bercham – hath three and half mills and a church”. Approximately half the population of the parish of Barcombe live in the village of Barcombe Cross, which is located in the centre of the parish there are however other groupings of houses within the parish at Barcombe to the south, Barcombe Mills to the east, Spithurst to the north and Town Littleworth to the north-west of the parish..

- 6.2 Barcombe Cross has a quiet, rural feel, due to being off the main transport routes with limited through traffic, although at peak times traffic increases as drivers use the country lanes including the village's high street as a way to avoid heavy traffic in the town of Lewes. The village is centred on the convergence of High Street and School Hill/Barcombe Mills Road and is located on the route of an old railway line which previously ran from Lewes to East Grinstead.
- 6.3 (The earlier settlement of Barcombe to the south, lacks a cohesive built form, has a population of less than 100 and only has one key service. Its characteristics are therefore defined under the 'Hamlet' section of this study).

### **Services**

- 6.4 At Barcombe Cross, commercial activity generally takes place in the high street which includes a general store/post office, public house, shoe shop and an electrical shop.
- 6.5 The primary school is located within the main confines of the settlement. The net capacity of the school is 140 pupils although there are currently (2011) 141 pupils enrolled. St Francis of Assisi Church is located in the centre of the village. A new village hall is nearing completion on the eastern outskirts of the settlement.
- 6.6 There is a recreation ground with sports facilities including adult and junior football pitches, a cricket pitch, tennis courts, bowling green and equipped children's play area. The mobile library visits the village once a week. The village has a retained fire station unit which provides support for several villages including Ditchling, Newick, Plumpton, Sheffield Park and Wivelsfield Green.

### **Accessibility**

- 6.7 The settlement is accessed by car via narrow country roads and Lewes is the nearest centre for comparison shopping. A bus service number 125 to Lewes and Alfriston is infrequent with the last bus arriving in the village from Lewes at 6.00pm.
- 6.8 The nearest railway station is at Cooksbridge some 2½ miles away and provides a weekday morning and evening service to Lewes, Haywards Heath, Gatwick and London. The village of Ringmer, with its small range of convenience goods stores, is within 3½ miles of Barcombe Cross.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 6.9 At a parish level, there are a higher percentage of residents in the 45-64 age group (34.3%) compared with the District average (29%). The percentage of

residents in the 15-29 age group (13.7%), is also slightly higher than the District's average (13.4%).

### **Housing needs**

- 6.10 A housing need survey was carried out in March 2007. Questionnaires were sent to each household in the parish and 52 forms were completed, a response rate of 8.7%. 36 of these 52 households were in housing need. A further analysis of the information provided by these households concluded that 25 households were in need of affordable housing in Barcombe Parish.
- 6.11 There are currently 43 households within Barcombe Parish on the Housing Needs Register.
- 6.12 Twelve affordable dwellings have recently been constructed in the village by the Hastoe Housing Association.

### **Community needs**

- 6.13 A community led Action Plan has been developed by the Parish Council which included the distribution of a questionnaire to every household. Respondents stated aspirations such as increased recreational space for families as well as the elderly and disabled, increased services and facilities, more frequent public transport and traffic calming. There was also general support for affordable housing and accommodation for the elderly.
- 6.14 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 that there would be a shortfall of informal playspace of 0.4 ha, equipped play space of 0.1 ha and adult football of 0.3 ha. It also suggested that should the opportunity arise, capital funding should be sought via developer contributions from section 106 agreements for an additional football pitch.
- 6.15 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities. In the case of Barcombe Parish it was advised that there is a need to expand the recreation ground and a need for smaller housing and housing for older people so that local people can stay in the parish. It was also highlighted that there is a lack of synchronicity between the bus timetable and train service at Cooksbridge.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 6.16 There is a wide range of small businesses in the village and nearby, although these tend to be run by individuals who are likely to have few employees. Bevern View, a home for profoundly disabled people, employs some 40 people.

- 6.17 Barcombe Cross is within 2.5 miles of Cooksbridge station with its commuter train service to employment opportunities to towns on the Lewes to London line.

### **Local Plan Policies**

- 6.18 The Local Plan identifies a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 6.19 Local Plan Policy BA1 states that on land to the south of the recreation ground, planning permission will be granted for an extension to the Barcombe Cross Recreation Ground, subject to compliance with all appropriate District-wide policies.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 6.20 Barcombe Cross is situated on clays and loams with alluvium abutting the settlement to the north highlighting the proximity of the village to the River Ouse to the east and its tributary the Bevern stream, which runs to the north. These soils give rise to the softly undulating landscape that surrounds the village and approaching the settlement from the south and the north its location on a gentle ridge is noticeable.
- 6.21 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area, a low lying clay vale that stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald to the north. The area is characterised by abundant trees and hedges, which combined with an undulating landform creates a sheltered and secluded countryside.
- 6.22 A conservation area designation covers the core part of the village where there are a variety of historical styles, as well more peripheral green spaces which provide the village context.
- 6.23 Development within the main confines of the village is close knit and therefore views out of the settlement from its core are limited, but glimpses of the wider landscape can be seen from the area around the crossroads out to the north and east.
- 6.24 Beyond the centre of the village along the undeveloped frontage to the east, views northward across the surrounding countryside reveal long distant views over fields edged with trees and hedges.
- 6.25 Trees on the northern edge of the village provide a strong visual boundary, before the landscape levels out to a low lying, open and riparian landscape designated within an area of flood risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3b).



6.26 To the south, the location of the village on a gentle ridge is most evident and despite this elevation, the landscape is more contained from wider views. The trees that border the old railway line contribute to this sense of enclosure.

## Conclusion

6.27 Barcombe Cross has many attributes of a sustainable community with four key services, the primary school, a convenience store, post office and community hall, although public transport access to wider services and facilities is constrained by an infrequent bus service. Representations made in the Parish Action Plan highlighting the community aspirations for an improved bus service and traffic calming have been forwarded to East Sussex County Council, as the leading authority on transport matters.

6.28 The affordable housing recently completed at The Willows on the north eastern side of the settlement will contribute to meeting the identified affordable housing needs of the parish. The need for elderly accommodation identified in the Village Action Plan will need to be explored, in the preparation of the Local Development Framework (although a significant need still exists).

6.29 The slightly higher level of people in the 45-64 age group within the village, may translate within the lifetime of the Local Development Framework, for a demand for housing for the elderly or assisted living.

6.30 Any new residential development within the village in the future has the potential to contribute through 106 developer contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy towards affordable housing and improved recreational facilities for the community.

## 7. Broyleside



## Introduction

- 7.1 By the 13<sup>th</sup> century the Broyleside was already a well-developed daughter settlement of Norlington, in Ringmer parish, established along the western edge of the 2,000 acre Broyle common and deerpark. This settlement was expanded in the 1920s by the construction of the first Chailey R.D.C. council estate, in the 1940s by a prefab development and again in the 1960s and 1970s by further public and private sector estates. It is now the second largest settlement in Ringmer parish. It is approximately ½ mile east of Ringmer, 4 miles north-east of Lewes and 7 miles south-east of Uckfield.
- 7.2 There were formerly several local shops within the settlement, but the last shop closed in the 1970s. The Green Man public house on the B2192 is outside the settlement but within walking distance.
- 7.3 The Broyle Business Area makes up the southern part of the settlement, and is the largest employment site in Ringmer parish. This was originally the base for the Ringmer Building Works, a major local employer until it closed in the 1980s. The business area has been progressively extended and now houses a substantial range of small and medium sized businesses, including an East Sussex C.C. Highways Department office and a large agricultural equipment supplier with a retail arm.
- 7.4 The B2192 Lewes to Heathfield road runs through the settlement, dividing the residential area to its north from the employment site to its south. The B2124 forms the southern planning boundary of the settlement. The Southdown Hunt kennels and a ribbon of residential development are on the south side of the B2124, but outside the settlement planning boundary in the Lewes District Local Plan.
- 7.5 Local knowledge has highlighted that part of the residential area of the Broyleside settlement has a long history of recurrent flooding from the Norlington Stream and that this has been exacerbated by increasingly rapid run off from the developed Business Area. About 40 houses here were flooded in 2000.

## Services

- 7.6 There are no key services and few services of any kind in the Broyleside settlement, except for children's play facilities. Residents rely on services at Ringmer located some 1 mile away or elsewhere.
- 7.7 There is no community meeting place, so the Broyle Community Association meets in the Village Hall at Ringmer.
- 7.8 Immediately north of the settlement are a group of narrow country lanes (Broyle Lane, Norlington Lane and Green Lane) and a footpath network that are much valued for recreational walking. These lanes

have specific policies to protect their recreational use in the parish council's Ringmer Village Plan.

### **Accessibility**

- 7.9 The Broyleside does not have a train station. The nearest stations are at Glynde approximately 3½ miles away and Lewes some 4½ miles away.
- 7.10 Bus route 28 provides frequent services to Lewes & Brighton.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 7.11 In Ringmer Parish, the 45-64 age group is the most populous with 35.6% of residents falling within this category. The percentage of people within the 65+ age range is 22.9% slightly less than the District average of 24.8%.
- 7.12 Despite the existence of the primary and secondary schools and the availability of family housing which are factors that would encourage families, the percentage of young people from 0 – 29 is similar to the average for the District as a whole. The 30-44 year old age group makes up 13.4% of the population which is less than the average of the District of 15.7%.
- 7.13 The parish council Ringmer Village Plan (2003) identified the low proportion of young families with children in the parish as an issue to be addressed. Since then the proportion of such families, and recruitment into the primary school, has doubled. If recruitment is maintained even at its present level, the primary school at Ringmer will shortly reach its maximum capacity.

### **Housing Needs**

- 7.14 There is no current housing needs study for Ringmer parish. The 2003 Ringmer Village Action Plan commented that 41.9% of those who responded to the Parish Council questionnaire (with an overall response rate of 42.8%), thought that there should be an emphasis on affordable housing, especially for local people. There was very strong opposition to additional market housing in the parish, as this would further increase commuting and exacerbate the pressures on the inadequate local road network.
- 7.15 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities. It was considered in the case of Ringmer parish that more affordable housing is required to enable the next generation to stay in the village, although concern was raised about the capacity of infrastructure.

- 7.16 There are currently 69 people in housing need on the housing register (Ringmer parish).

### **Community needs**

- 7.17 This settlement currently has no key services and very few services of any kind. The parish council comment that a community meeting place is an urgent need.
- 7.18 The parish council have advised that travel between the Broyleside and the services at Ringmer village (other than Ringmer Community College), is overwhelmingly by car. There is no safe cycleway between the two settlements.
- 7.19 The car-dependence of village life, coupled to the fact that many Broyleside houses were built when local employment was the norm, and most others built in the 1960s and 1970s provided little in the way of off-street parking, has resulted in on-road car parking becoming a major issue in many parts of the settlement. The development of the Broyle Business Area without sufficient parking has led to overspill parking in the residential roads of the settlement, resulting in some road safety problems and insufficient parking spaces for residents.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 7.20 The Broyle Business Area is the largest employment site in Ringmer parish and offers a diversity of employment opportunities. The parish council have advised that, since the closure of the Ringmer Building Works, very few of positions at the business area have gone to residents in the settlement.
- 7.21 The Broyle Business Area is identified both in the Ringmer Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) and in the Employment Land Review (2010, site P11) as having some potential for eastward expansion.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 7.22 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted north of the B2192 and of commercial development south of the B2192.
- 7.23 Policy RG4 identified a small parcel of land on the north-western edge of the settlement, to be appropriate for recreation/community uses.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 7.24 Much of the settlement is built upon underlying clay or greensand. This has created a relatively level topography allied with the lack of peripheral trees, makes part of the built form quite visible in the landscape, especially when viewed from the east. The Broyle Business

Area is relatively well screened by mature trees, and has less impact on the wider landscape than the residential section.

- 7.25 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area, which essentially comprises of a low lying vale, which stretches from the foot of the downland scarp to the south and to the High Weald to the north.
- 7.26 To the west the settlement is separated from Ringmer village by a swathe of agricultural land. North of the settlement are small fields, hedges and pockets of ancient woodland which create a more intimate landscape character. To the east the landscape undulates, and the large hedged fields and straight, wide-verged enclosure roads create an open landscape in direct contrast to the downland landscape visible to the south.

## **Conclusion**

- 7.27 In the settlement hierarchy, Broyleside is identified as a local village due to the lack of services and facilities, however it is within 1¼ Miles of Ringmer and therefore for the purposes of defining its ranking in the settlement hierarchy, it is considered to be a 'cluster' village with a Rural Service Centre.
- 7.28 Site RG4, identified in the Local Plan for development of leisure and community facilities has potential to provide a much-needed meeting place for the settlement. The parish council have identified a need for affordable/low cost housing to meet the needs of younger families in the parish, and sites for affordable housing may in the short term be identified through the mechanism of 'rural exception policy'.
- 7.29 The Village Plan Employment Strategy (2006) and the Lewes Employment Land Review (2010) both noted some potential for the eastward expansion of the Broyle Business Area, though they differed in the priority to be given to this site and the scale of development. As commuting to this employment site is overwhelmingly by private car, and existing employee parking has been an ongoing local issue, it is essential that sufficient car parking is provided for employee parking.

## 8. Cooksbridge



### Introduction

- 8.1 Cooksbridge lies within the parish of Hamsey. It is located 3 miles north of Lewes on the A275, Lewes to Chailey road, south of Cooke's bridge which is situated over a tributary of the river Ouse. The bridge was named from the Hamsey family of Coke who it is believed built the first bridge in the early 1500's.
- 8.2 The early settlement grew at the junction of the A275 and Deadmantree Hill which leads to Barcombe. Here there are a number of listed buildings including The Rainbow Inn public house and this area is within a Conservation Area. A draft Conservation Area Appraisal has been prepared, but yet to be finalised.
- 8.3 The larger, more recent, settlement lies some half a kilometre to the south and grew as a result of the arrival of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It now has the largest residential area of Hamsey parish.
- 8.4 The settlement is notable by the railway line which dissects the settlement, running at right angles to the main road and creating a level crossing. The west side of the road is dominated by the timber yard, car parking and the railway station itself. The settlement has good links to Lewes by car and rail.

### Services

- 8.5 The village has a primary school, a nursery school, a village hall, a cafe, car parking, and recreation field comprising adult and junior football pitches, a cricket pitch, adult and junior rugby pitches and allotments. The Rainbow public house lies a half mile to the north,

although there is a derelict public house adjacent to the railway station. The mobile library visits the village once a week.

- 8.6 The nearest doctors' surgery is in Lewes and the nearest grocery store is at Barcombe Cross, with the shops and facilities of Lewes being a similar distance.

### **Accessibility**

- 8.7 Cooksbridge has a train station with a frequent weekday only service to Lewes and London.
- 8.8 The village is served by numbers 121 and 125 buses which provide a frequent service to Lewes on weekdays and an infrequent service at weekends.
- 8.9 Hamsey and Offham lie within a 1.5 mile walk, although these settlements have little in the way of services. Barcombe Cross and Lewes are within 3 miles.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 8.10 In Hamsey Parish, the 45-64 age group is the most populous, with 33.7% of residents falling within this grouping and this figure is the same as the District average. Some 17.8% lie within the 30-44 year old age group and this proportion is one of the highest of all the rural areas in Lewes District.

### **Housing Needs**

- 8.11 There is no up to date Housing Needs Survey for the settlement. There are currently 8 households in Cooksbridge on the Housing Needs Register.

### **Community Needs**

- 8.12 An Action Plan was produced by the Parish Council in 2004, which identified a number of aspirational community needs. These included aspirations for a safe cycle path/pavement along the A275 linking the village with Lewes and Chailey, a similar dual path along the B2116 Ditchling Road, a pedestrian crossing on the A275 and there was also a desire for increased frequency of trains and buses.
- 8.13 Anecdotal evidence has reaffirmed that these needs are still required. Also of particular concern is the lack of a footpath from the village to the new village hall in Beechwood Lane that requires hall users, including children from the local school, to walk along a narrow country road.

- 8.14 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.2 ha of childrens' informal playspace in the parish of Hamsey.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

- 8.15 The timber yard is the biggest local employer although the school will offer opportunities for local employment. There are also a number of small businesses, run by individuals, which may provide opportunity for local employment.
- 8.16 The train station within the village and the proximity of Lewes provides opportunities for access to local employment, and further afield.

### **Local Plan Policies**

- 8.17 There are no site specific saved policies which relate to Cooksbridge in the Local Plan. The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

### **Environment and landscape**

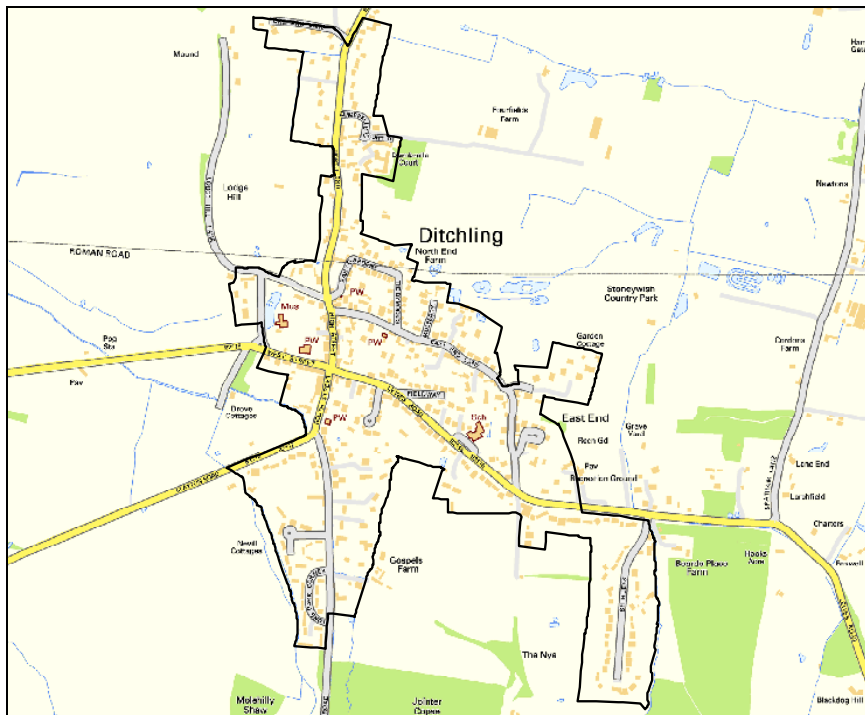
- 8.18 The settlement is located on silty loam and clay with chalk lying to the south. The South Downs National Park boundary runs to the south and west of the built form of the settlement with the settlement falling just outside of the designation.
- 8.19 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies just within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale that stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald.
- 8.20 Despite the low weald character of a gently undulating landform around Cooksbridge, the scarp of the Downs is a feature of the wider area to the south, but from the village the silhouette of the Downs is interrupted by trees and high hedges.
- 8.21 The southern edge of the settlement is well defined by existing trees and hedges, with land on the western side of the A275 being parkland like in character with the existence of a number of mature exotic trees.
- 8.22 The built form of the northern edge of the village is partly obscured by an established line of mature trees. Here the landscape levels out corresponding with the existence of the stream and the large fields and lack of road side trees provide a contrast to the rising and wooded landscape further to the north.
- 8.23 The area north of the settlement adjacent to Coke's bridge is designated within an area of flood risk (flood zones 2 and 3b).



## Conclusion

- 8.24 Cooksbridge has good public transport facilities and is one of the highest scoring settlements under the 'local village' category, although it only has 2 key services. The train and bus services however give residents relatively easy and sustainable access to services, facilities and employment opportunities in nearby Lewes, although the Parish Action Plan have identified community aspirations for these to be improved, as well as the desire for pedestrian access to be provided to other settlements.
- 8.25 East Sussex County Council as the lead authority on highway matters have been informed of the aspirations of the community for designated pedestrian access to the village hall along Beechwood Lane and on the other desired highway improvements.
- 8.26 Any new residential development within the village in the future has the potential to contribute through 106 developer contributions/ community infrastructure levy towards the provision of children's informal playspace, the need for which was identified in the Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004.

## 9. Ditchling



## Introduction

- 9.1 This historic village was known as 'Diccelingas' in Saxon times and has records going back to 756. It is an example of a Saxon Strip Parish and

was once part of a royal estate belonging to Alfred the Great. The oldest building here is the Church of St Margaret of Antioch which dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The village lies on well drained greensand between weald clay to the north and chalk to the south.

- 9.2 The core of the village is centred on the crossroads of the B2116 and B2112, which links the village to Wivelsfield and Burgess Hill to the north, Brighton to the south, Lewes to the East and Keymer to the West. As it is a point of convergence, that the roads get congested with traffic, especially at peak times and this level of traffic does seem out of keeping with the narrow and historic streets. At the historic core of the village are several shops, cafes and pubs.
- 9.3 The village is surrounded by open countryside and is in the shadow of Ditchling Beacon which, at 248 metres, is the third highest point on the South Downs. The historic character of the village and its proximity to the visually outstanding countryside attracts visitors and tourists to the village as evidenced by the existence of tea shops and gift shops.

### **Services**

- 9.4 Ditchling has a wide range of services that falls under the service centre category, although it does not have a convenience store.
- 9.5 Other facilities include; 4 churches, doctors surgery, 2 public houses, 1 recreation ground (2 adult football pitches, 1 cricket pitch, 1 adult rugby pitch), allotments, public car park, bakery/café, newsagents, 2 gift shops, 2 estate agents, jewellers, 1 hairdressers, framing shop, a farm shop, craft workshops and a museum.
- 9.6 The Primary School has a net capacity of 140 (138 pupils are enrolled), the mobile library visits the village once a week and the village green provides informal playspace.
- 9.7 The proximity of Keymer and Hassocks suggests that the community of Ditchling may have an element of dependence on this nearby village where a mainline train station, convenience stores and specialist shops exist.

### **Accessibility**

- 9.8 Ditchling is within a 1 mile walk from Keymer and is 2 miles away from Hassocks, with its frequent train service to Brighton and London. Convenience goods can be bought from these nearby settlements and this is particularly relevant to Ditchling which lacks shops selling staple food.
- 9.9 The 41 bus gives infrequent public transport access to the village from Brighton on Saturdays and the 824 service gives an infrequent Monday – Friday service connecting the village with Lewes and Burgess Hill.

- 9.10 The 2001 census indicates that car ownership is high, with approximately 90% of residents in the parish having access to a car.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 9.11 The most populated age group in Ditchling Parish is the 45-64 group, with (34.4%) of residents falling within this grouping. Some 9.% of the population are within the 15-29 age range less than the District average of 13.4% and 12.3% are in the 30-44 age group less than the average of 15.7%.
- 9.12 The figures for the 65+ age group is above the average of 24.8% for the District. As the proportion of the ageing population in the Parish is high, there may be implications for the village in the future, particularly in ensuring adequate provision is made for assisted living housing.

### **Housing Needs**

- 9.13 There are currently 15 households on the Housing Register for Ditchling Parish.
- 9.14 A Housing Needs Survey for the village was carried out in 2009. It identified that there are a high proportion of detached dwellings in the parish and that there are a higher number of detached properties and semi-detached properties within Ditchling compared to District wide numbers. The summary of need identified that 21 households in housing need have a local connection but cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market in the village.
- 9.15 Ditchling Parish Action Plan was published in 2005. It stated that although 73% of the respondents to the survey did not want to have additional housing in the village, that 83.1% of those that did want additional housing, wished to have low cost housing and as a second choice, small family homes.
- 9.16 Ditchling Parish Council has set up a housing sub-group and is currently considering the issue of affordable housing need.

### **Community needs**

- 9.17 The existing car park in the village is located to the rear of the village hall, but often is full. The Parish Council have indicated that a further area for car parking is needed to meet the local and tourist demand (this has also been identified in the Ditchling Local Area Transport Strategy – see below). The shortfall of parking spaces in the village was previously identified in the Lewes District Council Local Plan, which highlighted the impacts of traffic congestion and on-street parking on the village character and the potential environmental benefits that additional car parking would bring. The Parish Council

have raised concern that there will be even more pressure on the existing off and on street parking, with the designation of the village within the National Park.

- 9.18 In response to Parish Council concerns about the traffic issues within Ditchling a number of traffic surveys were carried out in the village in July 2006. The surveys showed that on an average weekday some 10,882 journeys are made in Ditchling between 7am and 7pm and that 91% of these were through movements.
- 9.19 Subsequently the Ditchling Local Area Transport Strategy was published setting out how the transport system should be developed in a sustainable way for the benefit of local people and visitors to the village. However the intense use of traffic on the roads (many of them narrow country lanes) that converge on Ditchling continues to be an issue with impacts on safety, air quality and the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 9.20 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review identified a shortfall of 0.1 ha of equipped childrens' play space and a 3.7 ha cricket pitch area.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 9.21 The most recent figures regarding commuting are from the 2001 Census and are only available at ward level (Ditchling and Westmeston). They indicated that 311 residents lived and worked in the ward, while 735 commuted in and 552 commuted out.
- 9.22 The balance of these two figures is unusual for a rural parish, where commuting out, normally exceeds commuting in. This is likely to be as a result of a number of factors including a range of light industrial units within the parish, retail and office opportunities, a garden centre, leisure and recreational facilities as well as the relatively high number of retired people within the parish. Westmeston is a small village with no opportunities for large employment and would not account for this figure.
- 9.23 The 2001 Census indicated that Ditchling as a parish has one of the highest percentage of people working from home (21.9%).
- 9.24 The Employment Land Review identified the Tidy Industrial Estate on Ditchling Common in the assessment of existing sites. It was noted that there is no space for increasing the number of units on site without redevelopment of the existing older units or expansion of the site to the north. The site has 30 recently developed flexible units which appear to be 50% vacant.

### **Local Plan Policies**

- 9.25 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 9.26 There are no saved Local Plan Policies relating to specific sites in Ditchling.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 9.27 The whole of the village is located within the South Downs National Park and as such has the highest status of planning protection, in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
- 9.28 The East Sussex Landscape Assessment identifies Ditchling as being within the Western Low Weald area, a low lying clay vale that stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald AONB. Characteristics of this area include frequent uninterrupted views of the scarp of the Downs with small attractive villages and their flint churches on higher ground, particularly along the greensand ridge such as in Ditchling.
- 9.29 Views of the scarp slope of the Downs are visible and prominent from many parts within the village, whilst generally the immediate and surrounding small scale and intimate landscape of woods, hedgerows and fields is largely hidden from view due to the consolidated form of development within the settlement.
- 9.30 Approximately 2 miles north of the village lays Ditching Common Country Park, a more open landscape which comprises of 76 hectares of a range of habitats, including grassland, scrub and woodland and most of the park has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 9.31 The centre of the village is designated as a conservation area and the historic character of the village is evidenced by the number of listed buildings. The village is also designated as having archaeological interest.

### **Conclusion**

- 9.32 Ditchling has a wide range of services and is classed as a Service Centre based on the range of facilities, although the and many of the although it has no shop selling convenience goods and the village scores poorly for public transport availability. However the proximity of the village of Keymer will mean that such goods are available a short distance away.
- 9.33 The special character of the village with its quantity of buildings listed for their historic and architectural interest, allied with its setting in a pastoral landscape with views of the South Downs has been key to the tourist activity experienced in the village. This has influenced the

number and type of retail units with a selection of gift shops, restaurants and tea rooms.

- 9.34 Whilst there are a number of small greenfields in close proximity to the core of the village that could reasonably be developed for residential development without having a material impact on the wider landscape, a major constraint will be the capacity and suitability of the local road network and the location of the village within the South Downs National Park.
- 9.35 However the need for local housing has been identified through a recent housing need survey and the parish council are currently considering available sites on the edge of the village.
- 9.36 There are clearly also a number of recreational needs that would improve the quality of life for residents of Ditchling and financial support for these may be forthcoming through section 106/community infrastructure levy agreements which could come forward as part of a planning approval.
- 9.37 The provision of additional car parking in the village may be more difficult to provide by developer contributions due to such development being outside of the remit of charging schedules and unrelated directly to the sponsoring development.
- 9.38 The Ditchling Local Area Transport Strategy states that parking will be addressed by undertaking a review of on-street parking restrictions by 2014 and introduce any changes by 2016. It is not clear at this present time as to how the South Downs National Park Authority will address the situation of additional visitor numbers to areas located within the park.

## 10. Falmer



## **Introduction**

- 10.1 Falmer is a small settlement with a population of approximately 140 and lies just under 1 mile beyond the eastern edge of the Brighton and Hove City Council border and 3 miles west of Lewes. The settlement was recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Falemere', a name of Saxon origin. In 1978 road widening works to the A27 meant that the village was effectively cut into two parts.
- 10.2 The two parts of the village are connected by a road bridge and have their own distinctive characters. Falmer (south) is located adjacent to the University of Brighton and the football stadium (currently under construction). Despite the proximity of these buildings, due to the orientation of the dwellings and slope of the Downs at this point, the village retains its historical and self contained character which is enhanced by the picturesque setting of the Church of St Lawrence (built in the mid 1800's) adjacent to a large pond.
- 10.3 Falmer (north) lies adjacent to the University of Sussex, is more loosely knit with dwellings with large open garden areas, parts of which are hidden by mature trees. Both parts of Falmer retain their village atmosphere, despite being in such close proximity to the busy trunk road and the extensive university campuses.

## **Services**

- 10.4 At the northern part of the village is a public house, and at the south, a farm shop which sells a range of essential fresh foods.
- 10.5 The nearest primary school is in Moulsecoomb (approximately 2 miles away), which lies within the administrative area of Brighton and Hove. There is also a primary school nearby at Kingston (just over 3 miles away) with a capacity of 140, though there are currently 155 on the school roll. The nearest secondary school is Falmer Secondary School in Brighton, approximately 1 mile away. There is a nursery school mornings only in the village hall.
- 10.6 Recreational facilities are available for hire at Sussex University. The facilities includes a sports complex, 3 adult football pitches, 2 junior football pitches, 1 cricket pitch, 1 adult rugby pitch and a hockey pitch. There is informal recreational space around the village pond.
- 10.7 The nearest doctor's surgeries are available in Moulsecoomb, Lewes or in Woodingdean (2½ miles away).

## **Accessibility**

10.8 The village is well served by transport links. The A27 and Falmer railway station are close by. There is a very regular train service providing easy access to Lewes and Brighton. There are also a number of bus services which provide frequent services to Lewes and Brighton. There is a cycle route from Falmer to Lewes which runs parallel with the A27.

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

10.9 The 45-64 age group is the most populous in the parish, with 27.8% of residents falling within this grouping, although less than the average for the District of 29%. The 65+ age range constitutes 27.8% of the population, more than the 24.8% average for the District.

## **Housing Needs**

10.10 There are currently 17 households in Falmer Parish on the Housing Needs Register and there is no recent Housing Needs Survey. The parish council have commented that there is plenty of affordable housing in the village in that half of the 70 properties are rented, however most of these are privately rented.

## **Community Needs**

10.11 No other needs have been raised by the parish council.

10.12 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.1 ha of informal childrens' playspace.

## **Economic Role and Needs**

10.13 The village is essentially a residential dormitory village but there are many opportunities for employment locally with the 2 universities and the Sussex Innovation Centre adjacent to the settlement as well as very good public transport links to the city of Brighton. The universities and the City will be key drivers therefore to the local economy.

10.14 Brighton's new football stadium at Falmer is currently under construction and is due to be operational from late summer 2011. This has the potential to create a significant number of local jobs.

## **Lewes District Local Plan**

10.15 The Lewes District Local Plan did not identify a planning boundary for the settlement, where the principle of residential development could be accepted.



10.16 Policy FL1 was a specific policy relating to land west of Falmer and allocated land at the University of Sussex, for the expansion of academic and related teaching use.

### **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

10.17 Both parts of the village lie within the South Downs National Park, the boundary of which runs to the west of the built form of the village. The village as a whole is designated as a Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological Interest which includes the medieval church, the gravel pond and Court Farm.

10.18 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Downs character area which, around Falmer, is typified by wide rolling ridges. Falmer pond is seen as a special feature of this character area.

10.19 The village lies on the lower slopes of downland, straddling north and south facing slopes. The downland expansive landscape is prominent from most parts of the south side of the village while trees feature more in the northern part and these give a sense of enclosure.

### **Conclusion**

10.20 Despite the proximity of the village to Sussex and Brighton Universities, the new Brighton Stadium and excellent public transport linkages, future development will be constrained in both parts of Falmer due to its location within the South Downs National Park and the Conservation and Archaeological designations.

10.21 The village has only one key service and overall has no service role to play in the locality.

10.22 Affordable housing may be appropriate where there is an identified need.



## **Accessibility**

- 11.5 The village is situated within 1 mile of the A27 trunk road. The village of Glynde with its railway station is within a 2 mile walk and Lewes is 4.5 miles away. A bus service (number 125) provides an infrequent Monday to Friday service.

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 11.6 The Parish has a significantly higher percentage of residents in the 45-64 age group (38.5%) compared with the District average (29.%). Only 1.4% of the Parish population is within the 15-29 age group, which is the lowest percentage in the entire District and conversely 22% within the 0-14 year old age group which is one of the highest percentages in the District. Also it has the highest percentage of residents in the 30-44 year old group, 23.6% compared to the District average of 15.7%.

## **Housing Needs**

- 11.7 There are currently 6 households on the housing register for Firle Parish.

## **Community Needs**

- 11.8 No community needs have been identified by the Parish Council.
- 11.9 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.1 ha of informal children's' playspace.
- 11.10 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities. Here it was highlighted that there is a need for a hard surface play area as children currently play on the roads substantiating the need highlighted in the Playing Space Review.

## **Economic Role and Needs**

- 11.11 Within the parish there are a number of small businesses offering local employment such as the pub, the local shop and the school. Firle is an 'Estate Village' and local employment is likely to be available from domestic, commercial and agricultural roles within the estate.
- 11.12 Lewes is within a 10 minute car journey time and is perceived to be a source of employment for the local community as well as providing public transport to other destinations.

## **Lewes District Local Plan**

11.13 The Lewes District Local Plan did not identify a planning boundary for the settlement. There are no specific Local Plan policies that relate to the settlement.

## **Environment and Landscape Factors**

11.14 Firle lies wholly within the South Downs National Park.

11.15 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Downs character area, with Firle and Bishopstone Downs offering a spectacular area of Downland between the Ouse and Cuckmere valleys. The north facing scarp rises above the village and culminates in Firle Beacon.

11.16 The village lies at the foot of the Downs, and although it is in a prominent location it is well screened from the open downland landscape by mature deciduous trees.

11.17 There are areas of archaeological interest to the west and east of the village (a Roman Villa and deserted medieval village respectively). Firle Place Gardens is designated as a Historic Park and Garden that envelopes the village on its northern and eastern sides.

11.18 The historic core of the village is a designated Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Interest. A large proportion of the dwellings are listed for their architectural or historical interest.

## **Conclusion**

11.19 Even though Firle has three of the potential six key services as well as a church, pub, sports pitch and mobile library, a fundamental constraint to residential development in the future will be the location of the village within the South Downs National Park. Any future need for affordable housing may be met through the mechanism of exception housing policy.

11.20 The need for informal play space is accentuated by the relatively high percentage of the population being 14 and under.

## 12. Glynde



### Introduction

- 12.1 Glynde is an 'estate village' located 4 miles to the east of Lewes and just under 3 miles south of Ringmer. The village lies within the shadow of Mount Caburn, one of the iconic hills of the South Downs at 146 metres high. The name Glynde is thought to have evolved from Glind meaning fence of enclosure.
- 12.2 The settlement is principally linear in form with development mainly concentrated along the north-south running road.
- 12.3 The village contains many listed buildings and of particular note is Glynde Place, a grade 1 listed building located within an historic park and garden.
- 12.4 The settlement is on the Lewes -Eastbourne railway line and is close to the main A27 trunk road.

### Services

- 12.5 The village has a church, village stores and a post office, hairdressers, public house, allotments and recreation ground with children's play area, cricket pitch and 2 pavilions. A nursery school runs from the reading room on the south side of the village and the nearest primary schools are at Firle and Ringmer.

## **Accessibility**

- 12.6 Glynde has a train station with a regular service to Eastbourne, Lewes and Brighton.
- 12.7 An infrequent bus service with a journey time of 10 minutes, gives access to Lewes.

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 12.8 34.7% of Glynde Parish lie within the 45-64 age range, which is one of the most populous in the District. The greater part of the population is weighted in the younger age ranges and some 21.3% are within the 15-29 year old age group, which is the highest percentage in the District's parishes. The percentage of people over 65 is 10.9% considerably less than the District average of 24.8%.

## **Housing Needs**

- 12.9 There are currently 2 households in Glynde Parish on the Housing Needs Register

## **Community needs**

- 12.10 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 identified a shortfall of 0.1 informal childrens' playspace, 0.4 ha of adult football and 1.5 of cricket pitch provision. It suggested that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section106 agreements for a new cricket pitch and a new football pitch.

## **Economic Role and needs**

- 12.11 Within the parish, there are a number of small businesses that offer local employment.
- 12.12 In addition as Glynde is an 'Estate Village' local employment is likely to be available from commercial and agricultural uses within the estate as well as opportunities afforded from Glyndebourne Opera House.
- 12.13 The proximity to Ringmer and Lewes means that there will be a wide range of employment opportunities within a 5 minute car journey or 10 minute journey on public transport.
- 12.14 The Employment Land Review in the assessment of existing sites identified the employment site at Balcombe Pit on the south side of the village. The report describes it as a low profile rural site but less attractive to market demand as a result of adjacent occupiers. It suggests that the run down appearance could be improved by new development, but that it is a small site with difficult access entrance.

## **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 12.15 Saved Local Plan Policy BG1 relates to land at Balcombe Pit, (an old chalk quarry), which lies on the south eastern side of Glynde. It allocates land at the pit for (a) Business Uses or (b) General Industry, subject to compliance with a number of criteria although this policy has never been implemented.
- 12.16 The Lewes District Local Plan did not identify a planning boundary for the settlement.

## **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 12.17 Most of the village lies within the South Downs National Park apart from the most south eastern corner of the village at Barcombe Pit.
- 12.18 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Downs character area, with the Lewes Downs to the west of Glynde having no dip slope, so there are steep slopes on all sides of the adjacent hills.
- 12.19 Mount Caburn is the most well known hill and is a notable landmark with its wooded lower eastern slopes overlooking Glynde village and the parklands of Glynde Place and Glyndebourne to the east and north.
- 12.20 The downs around Firle Beacon are prominent in the landscape to the south of the village and gaps in the linear settlement pattern of the village gives opportunities for wider views of the surrounding high quality landscape.
- 12.21 At the southern end of the village the road crosses over Glynde Reach, a narrow river that feeds into the River Ouse to the west at Beddingham. The area around this water way is designated within Flood Zones 2 and 3b and the landscape of water meadows and mixed deciduous trees is in contrast to the bare downland beyond.
- 12.22 At the western side of the settlement, a narrow lane which is largely undeveloped runs parallel with the lower slope of Mount Caburn. A short distance outside the confines of the village along this road is an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 12.23 The setting of Glynde Place is registered as a Historic Park and Gardens of special historic interest by English Heritage.
- 12.24 The historic core is a designated Conservation Area and an area of archaeological interest covers this area and land to the east and south, including Balcombe Pit.





the Church and the 14<sup>th</sup> Century public house, 'The Juggs'. Juggs Road on the northern side of the village is a public bridleway and an ancient routeway, so called as it was used by fisherwomen from Brighton carrying jugs of fish to Lewes.

- 13.3 The village started to expand in the 1920's with the majority of development taking place on the western side of Ashcombe Lane, the main road that runs through the village linking the A27 to the north and the C7 Lewes to Newhaven road to the east.

### **Services**

- 13.4 The village has a primary school (with 155 pupils on roll and with a net capacity of 140), pre-school nursery, parish church, public house, allotments church, three village greens, one of which contains formal recreational facilities including a junior football pitch, cricket pitch and tennis courts. This area also contains a new community pavilion with changing facilities, kitchen and toilets. There is car parking adjacent to the public house in Juggs road and an equipped childrens' play area on the green adjacent to this. The nearest doctors' surgery is in Lewes.
- 13.5 Although there is no village shop, a local company delivers a range of foodstuffs from staple to speciality products once a week to households in Kingston.
- 13.6 Due to the proximity of Kingston to Lewes, convenience and comparison stores can be accessed relatively easily.

### **Accessibility**

- 13.7 The nearest train station is in Lewes which is approximately 2 miles away. The 123 bus provides a frequent bus service to Lewes and Newhaven although the last bus from Lewes is at 5.54p.m. Love Lane and Juggs Lane provide pedestrian access to Lewes, approximately a 30 minute walk from the village. The South Downs Way long distance footpath runs to the south and west of the village.
- 13.8 The Local Area Transport Strategy for the C7/C324 (Wellgreen Lane) area suggests in the short term investigate traffic calming measures to reduce through traffic on the C324, a 20mph zone in the Street outside Kingston School, a safe crossing point for the South Downs Way and Juggs Way and speed reduction measures at the junctions of the C7/C324.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 13.9 Kingston Parish has a higher percentage of residents within the 45-64 age group at 39.2% considerably higher than the District average of 29%. Only 6.3% of the Parish's population are aged between 15 and 29, significantly less than the average for the District (13.4%).

Conversely, the 65+ age group is the same as the District average of 24.8%.

### **Housing Needs**

- 13.10 There are 9 households on the Council's housing register. There is no up to date evidence on the housing need for the parish.
- 13.11 The 2007 Kingston Parish Action Plan aimed to establish the need for affordable housing in the village, although no need has yet been confirmed.

### **Community needs**

- 13.12 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 identified a shortfall of 0.1 ha of equipped children's' play space and 0.4 ha of adult football playing area. It suggested that should the opportunity arise developer contributions be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new football pitch at Kingston.
- 13.13 The 2007 Kingston Parish Action Plan identified a number of actions that would improve community life for residents, including seeking improvements to the bus service including a Sunday service and co-ordination with other transport services, and the provision of a shop and post office.
- 13.14 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities.
- 13.15 Here it was identified that broadband is a problem throughout the Ouse Valley which potentially impacts on home working and may put additional pressure on transport infrastructure.
- 13.16 In addition it is considered that the local bus service needs improvement with more frequency, later buses and a Sunday service.
- 13.17 An opinion was also raised that due to the lack of development in the past in the Ouse Valley villages, there has been a loss of services and a reliance on larger settlements. It was suggested that the expansion of the villages and the encouragement of a younger demographic may be a remedy to this situation.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 13.18 There is a low level of economic activity generated in Kingston although there are some, mainly rural enterprises, such as the fruit farm, local tea rooms and caravan site. The primary school and garden centre also offer opportunities for local employment. Lewes,

with its employment opportunities and access to other areas of employment, is a short car journey away as is Brighton.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

13.19 The Local Plan identifies a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

13.20 Policy H12 in the Local Plan identifies land on the north east side of Kingston as being an area of special character, where applications for development will be required to retain the existing character of the area in terms of spaciousness, building heights, building size and site coverage, building lines, boundary treatments, trees and landscaping.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

13.21 Kingston lies within the South Downs National Park in a slight valley, virtually surrounded by downland to the north, west and south which gives the village a strong sense of enclosure. Here the chalk downs meet the underlying greensand which gives rise to many springs in the area.

13.22 In contrast to the smooth ridges of the adjacent hills, the lower slopes are well treed and this intensifies the sense of containment in the village. The historic core around The Street is a designated Conservation Area.

13.23 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Downs character area of rolling downland and large expanses of chalk grassland. West of the village the Downs are high and expansive with winding dry valleys and to the east, the Ouse Valley landscape wide open and flat floored, offers a stark contrast and much of this area is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

### **Conclusion**

13.24 The location of Kingston within the National Park will be a future constraint to development and in addition the village does not score highly for the level of services and public transport available.

13.25 The population profile indicates an aging population in the village and this may have consequences for the retention of some services in the future such as the primary school. The provision of housing to accommodate younger people may help retain such services.

13.26 The delivery of recreation facilities through 106 legal agreements may not be a reliable funding stream although housing delivered through exception housing policy could make a contribution to improving community facilities and a route which may provide housing for younger people.

13.27 East Sussex County Council as the lead authority on transport matters will be alerted to the desire of the parish council to improve public transport.

## 14. Iford



### Introduction

- 14.1 Iford is a small community located 2 miles south of Lewes and positioned between to the C7 Lewes to Newhaven road to the west and The Brooks, an open area that forms part of the floodplain of the River Ouse.
- 14.2 A number of Saxon settlements appear to have been established in the area, and at this time the Ouse valley would have been tidal. It is recorded that Iford or *Niworde* later becoming *yford* at the time of the Norman Conquest was given to William de Warenne, builder of Lewes Castle and founder of the Cluniac Priory. St Nicholas's church is the oldest building in the village being early 12<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 14.3 The settlement pattern is dispersed with field boundaries, agricultural buildings and sections of flint walling which gives the village a private and remote character.
- 14.4 Many of the buildings and much of the land is owned by the Robinson family although it is not a typical 'estate village' in that one large house dominates the setting of the village, as there are a number of large prestigious dwellings.

## **Services**

- 14.5 Iford has few facilities apart from the early church, village hall and playground. An old barn within the village has recently been converted for use as a Spa which will attract people from the surrounding area.

## **Accessibility**

- 14.6 The nearest train station is 2 miles away at Southease, although Lewes train station has a more frequent service just over 2 miles away.
- 14.7 The 123 bus service provides a frequent daytime service between Lewes and Newhaven, with the last bus from Lewes arriving around 6pm.
- 14.8 The village lies nearby to the South Downs Way, a long distance footpath that runs between Winchester and Eastbourne.
- 14.9 A Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS) for the C7 include proposals over the short term to reduce the speed limit along the C7, in the medium term to investigate traffic management/speed restriction at appropriate locations and develop an agreed programme for junction improvements and traffic management measures to be implemented over the long term (the C7 runs nearby to the village and entrance to the settlement requires its use).

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 14.10 Iford Parish has a higher percentage of residents compared with the District average within the 30-44 and 45-64 age groups at 20.8% and 48.8% respectively. The 15-29 year old age group at 4.8% is significantly less than the 13.4% average and the 65+ age group at 8.3% is significantly less than the 24.8% District average.

## **Housing Needs**

- 14.11 No housing needs have been identified by the Parish Council. Iford lies within the parish of Kingston which has 9 households on the housing register.

## **Community Needs**

- 14.12 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities.
- 14.13 Here it was identified that broadband is a problem throughout the Ouse Valley which potentially impacts on home working and may put additional pressure on transport infrastructure.

- 14.14 In addition it is considered that the local bus service needs improvement with more frequency, later buses and a Sunday service.
- 14.15 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of informal play space in Lford of .1 hectares.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

- 14.16 Farm buildings to the north of the village have been converted to high quality office accommodation but due to the lack of services and facilities, local employment is likely to be from domestic or agricultural roles although there are 3 schools in the Ouse Valley, which will provide employment opportunities slightly further afield.
- 14.17 However both Lewes and Newhaven are in close proximity, providing access to opportunities for employment.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 14.18 There are no policies or proposals which relate to specifically to Lford Parish

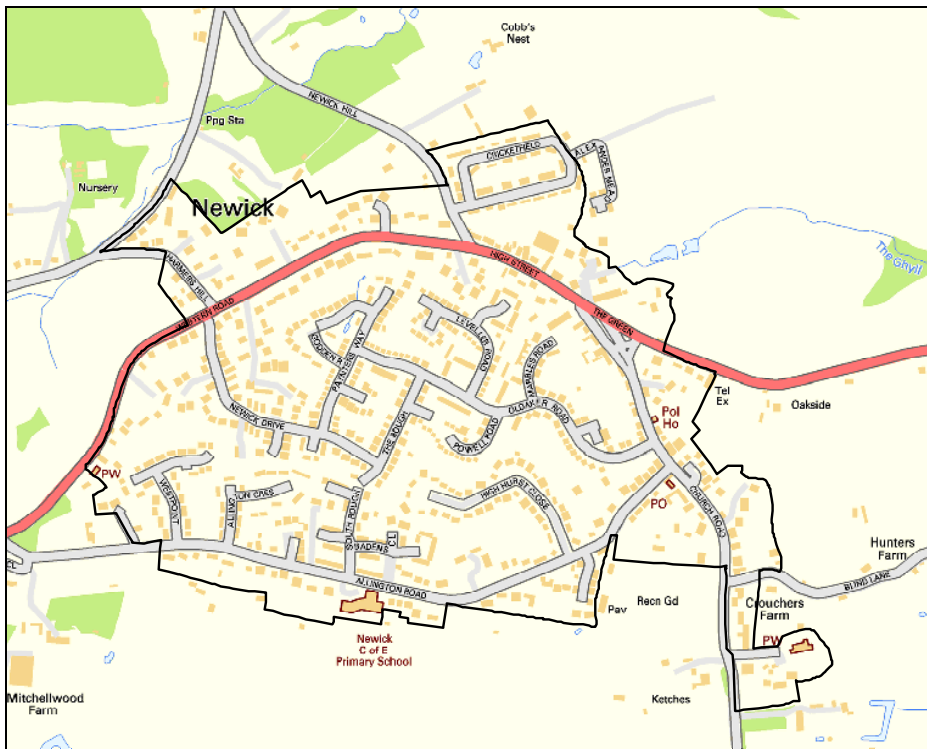
### **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

- 14.19 The village is wholly within the South Downs National Park and the ridge line and the smooth scarp slope of this section of the Downs dominates the setting to the west of the village while the river landscape of flat meadows to the east, offers a contrast.
- 14.20 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Downs character area of rolling downland and large expanses of chalk grassland. The study recognises that west of the village the Downs are high and expansive with winding dry valleys and to the east is the Ouse Valley landscape wide open and flat floored, which cuts through the Downs to the sea.
- 14.21 The study also recognises that the area of land known as 'The Brooks' east of the village is of major wildlife importance and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest containing many invertebrates.
- 14.22 A Conservation Area designation covers the built form of the settlement, and includes important trees and tree groups and open spaces that form integral parts of the setting of the village. Land within and on the edge of the settlement has also been designated as an area of archaeological interest.
- 14.23 Land to the east of the village is identified as an area of flood risk (flood zone 2) and land to the north and east is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

## Conclusion

- 14.24 The location of the village within the South Downs National Park will be a constraint to development and although affordable housing has been identified as a District wide problem, no such need has been raised for Iford. The low percentage of 15-29 year olds currently in the village may mean that such a need does not evolve in the short to medium term.
- 14.25 Added to this the quiet and private character of Iford allied with the lack of services and facilities and small population of approximately 100 people, again suggests that development will be inappropriate in this location other than that related to an identified need.

## 15. Newick



## Introduction

- 15.1 The name Newick has its origins in the Old English (Saxon) and its meaning is 'new farm'. Newick is a nucleated settlement within a largely open rural landscape.
- 15.2 It is located some 9 miles north of Lewes and straddles the A272, which links the village to Haywards Heath to the west and Uckfield to the east.

- 15.3 The early settlement centred on two areas: around the village green and the church, the origins of which are 11<sup>th</sup> Century. These two areas are now designated as conservation areas. Modern development has, in the main, been concentrated to the south of the A 272, although there are pockets of recent development on the northern side.
- 15.4 Many of the village services are located around its large green. This provides an attractive setting for the historic buildings that surround it, as well as an important public open space.

### **Services and facilities**

- 15.5 Newick village is well equipped with a wide range of community needs. Services include two local shops and a post office, a car show room and garage with a single petrol pump, a bakery, a butcher, two estate agents, a hairdressers, a restaurant, two churches, a primary school, pre-school nursery, a doctors surgery, a pharmacy, 3 public houses, a community centre, a village hall, a church hall, a scout hut, a reading room, a sports pavilion, a recreation field with adult football pitches, cricket pitch, a skateboarding and children's play area and a rugby pitch. The mobile library visits the village once a week.
- 15.6 The secondary school at South Chailey some 3.5 miles away, is accessible by public transport.

### **Accessibility**

- 15.7 Two train stations are available similar distances away at Uckfield (6.5 miles) Haywards Heath (7 miles) and Cooksbridge (6.5 miles) although Haywards Heath offers by far the most frequent and fast service to Gatwick, Croydon, London and a range of Sussex coast destinations.
- 15.8 There are hourly day time bus services to Lewes, Uckfield and Haywards Heath and one service a week to Brighton.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 15.9 33.2% of the Parish's population lie in the 45-64 age group and is the most populated age group. The 65+ age group is 20.9% less than the District average of 24.8% while the 0 -14 age group constitutes 18.3% a little more than the District average of 17.1%.

### **Housing Needs**

- 15.10 There are 44 Households on the Council's housing register. There is currently no up to date Housing Needs Survey for the parish.
- 15.11 A community consultation exercise commenced in June 2010 in respect of affordable housing proposal supported by Newick Parish Council on the north eastern edge of the village at Alexander Mead.



The scheme received community support and a planning application was approved in November 2010.

### **Community needs**

- 15.12 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review identified a shortfall of 0.2 ha of informal childrens playspace, 0.1 ha equipped play space, 1.6 ha of cricket pitch and 0.1 ha of adult rugby pitch areas. It was suggested that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new cricket pitch at Newick. It was also identified that improvements should be made to the changing accommodation and pitch surface at the King George V playing field.
- 15.13 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities.
- 15.14 In the case of Newick Parish, it was advised that additional car parking for the village is required and that an improvement of the bus service would reduce the need for people to use their cars.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 15.15 There are local businesses which will offer local opportunities for employment including a local hotel and conference centre as well as the shops and services mentioned above. The 2001 census identified that some 12.5 % of people work mainly at or from home within the parish which is just over the District average of 11.4%.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 15.16 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement, within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 15.17 Saved Local Plan policy NW1 states that planning permission will be granted for the extension of the present Newick recreation area south of Allington Road westwards to the boundary of the primary school playing fields.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

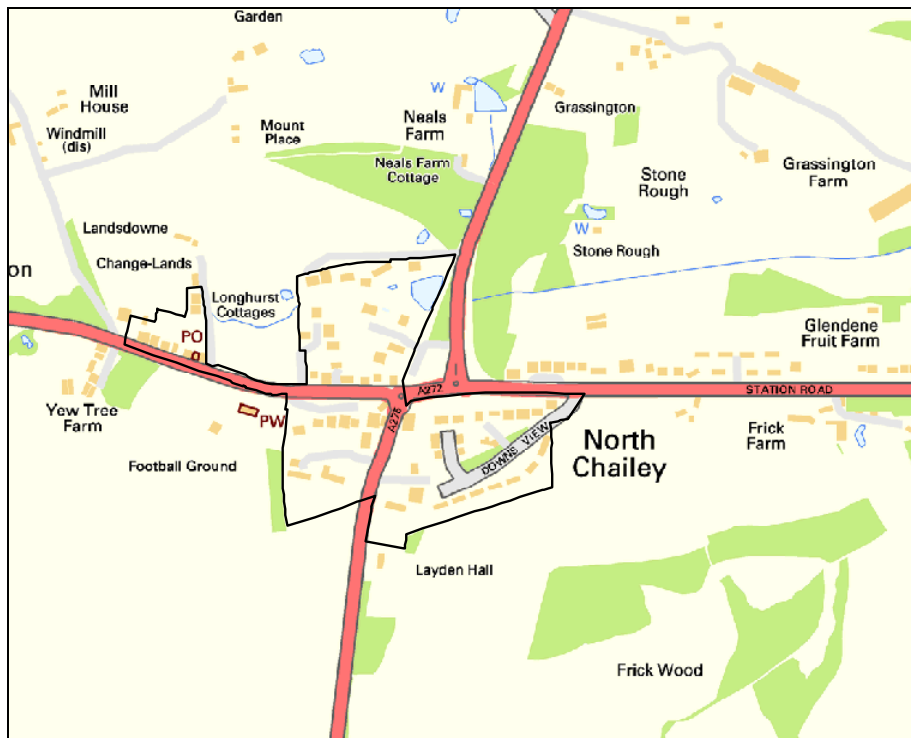
- 15.18 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Upper Ouse Basin of the High Weald Character Area. It is described as a gently sloping landscape of low ridges and wider valleys covered by an intricate pattern of streams and woods.

- 15.19 The area is characterised by the use of traditional local building materials as evidenced by the buildings that stand within the conservation areas of Newick. It identifies that special features of the area include the parkland settings of large houses such as Newick Park, which is located south of the settlement.
- 15.20 North of the village trees predominate in the landscape which gives a more intimate character to the countryside. North east, the larger field sizes and less dense tree cover provide a contrasting context for the village where there are longer views towards the high ground of the Ashdown Forest.
- 15.21 South of the village the form and density of development largely prevents views out of the village but here the landscape is gently undulating and interspersed with hedgerows, small woods and fields.

## **Conclusion**

- 15.22 Newick village has many aspects of sustainable village life with a wide range of services and facilities. The village is ranked as a Rural Service Centre in the settlement hierarchy exercise.
- 15.23 In landscape terms despite the location of the village on a gentle ridge, the lightly wooded character of the surrounding landscape means that many locations within or adjacent to the village are not readily visible from the wider landscape. There are no environmental designations which would prejudice residential development in principle.
- 15.24 Therefore existing circumstances suggest that Newick be considered further for residential development. The relatively high level of people in the 75 – 84 year old age group may translate in an increase need for warden assisted or sheltered housing in the village. In addition new development would need to be mindful of any potential impacts on the two conservation area designations.
- 15.25 Development would have the potential to provide funds for any additional recreational facilities and car parking as needed for the village. The desire for an improved bus service has been relayed to East Sussex County Council as the leading authority on transport matters.

## 16 North Chailey



### **Introduction**

- 16.1 Within the parish of Chailey are the four settlements of North Chailey, Chailey Green, South Street and South Chailey. The name is descriptive of the locality deriving from the Anglo Saxon 'chag' meaning broom or gorse and 'ley' meaning open space, clearing or meadow, in other words an area with much uncultivated land. Chailey Common was recorded in the Domesday Book.
- 16.2 The four settlements are separated by open countryside, so are appraised individually but are all linked by the north/south aligned A275.
- 16.3 North Chailey is located at the junction of the A272 and A275, approximately 8 miles north of Lewes. The majority of the dwellings are located near this junction, although there is ribbon development which extends eastwards out of the village along the A272 and a short stretch of sporadic development west of the village core.

### **Services and facilities**

- 16.4 There is a petrol filling station that also sells convenience foods and is located at the road junction, as are the public house, the dentist surgery and tea rooms. Chailey Heritage School is a charitable special school for children with physical disabilities and is located just outside the confines of the main settlement to the west, as is the church. The

primary school is located just over 1 mile south, on the A275. There is also a recreation ground with play area, football pitches and cricket pitches.

### **Accessibility**

16.5 Newick with its small range of shops and facilities is located within a 1.5 mile walk and South Chailey with its secondary school is 2.5 miles away. The nearest station is at Haywards Heath some 5 miles away although there are other stations at Plumpton which is 8 Miles away and Wivelsfield, Burgess Hill at 7 Miles. There are frequent bus services that link the village on an almost hourly basis, to Lewes, Haywards Heath and Uckfield with the last bus arriving in the village around 7pm.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

16.6 The population figures are for the Parish population as a whole and therefore include the other 3 settlements. The most populated age group lies within the 45-64 range with 36.1% of residents falling within this grouping. 12.6% of the population lie within the 15-29 year old age group, which is just below the average for the District. 13.9% of the Parish lie within the 65+-year old age group, which is considerably lower than the District wide average of 24.8%.

### **Housing Needs**

16.7 There is no up to date Housing Needs Survey for the Chailey Parish. The Housing Register indicates that there are currently 31 households in housing need, within the Parish.

16.8 The Parish Council carried out a survey in 2009 as a joint venture with Action in Rural Sussex, with 10% of the residents replying. In respect of housing, over 40% expressed a preference for starter homes for young adults and small family homes, 20% to 30% supported small groups of flats or terraced properties and Warden Assisted Housing.

### **Community Needs**

16.9 The Chailey Parish Survey 2009 stated that accessibility improvements such as footpaths, cyclepaths and pedestrian crossings would be welcome between the settlements to enable children to walk to school and facilitate movement generally between the four settlements in Chailey Parish. It was indicated that enhanced public transport provision would also help residents to access existing local services. The need for more allotments was also highlighted

16.10 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review predicted that, by 2006, there would be a shortfall in 0.6 of informal playspace, 0.1 ha equipped play space, 0.7 ha cricket pitch. It suggested that should the

opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section106 agreements for a new cricket pitch at Chailey. It also stated that the existing recreations pitch needed improvement as it is uneven and that there should be investigation, with leisure providers such as schools/parish council, into the possibility of developing tennis or multi-use games areas.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

- 16.11 Chailey Heritage School, Chailey Primary School and St Peter and St James Hospice provide opportunities for local employment as does Chailey Brickworks. There are also small industrial units at the former Hamsey Brickworks Site as well as a number of smaller businesses in the vicinity which provide a small number of local jobs.
- 16.12 Haywards Heath with its wide range of job opportunities is within a 15 minute drive. However, one of the key findings of the Chailey Parish Survey was that more local jobs are required.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 16.13 The Lewes District Local Plan identified two planning boundaries for the settlement, one at the junction of the A272 and the A275 and the other covering the Chailey Heritage School site which lies a short distance to the west of the main settlement. These boundaries identify the areas within which the principle of residential development is accepted. There are no site specific allocations for North Chailey in the Local Plan.

### **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

- 16.14 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Upper Ouse Basin of the High Weald Character Area. It is described as a gently sloping landscape of low ridges and wider valleys covered by an intricate pattern of streams and woods. One of the special features of this area is Chailey Common, which is one of the largest heathland commons in southern England.
- 16.15 The settlement is built on a low ridge of land that runs east to west. Looking north and south out of the village, the views are shortened by woods but there are glimpses of the wider landscape through gaps east and west of the village along the A272. North west of the centre of the village and set apart is The Chailey (St George's) Conservation Area, which is dominated by the St Georges building, a former school now converted into residential use and a windmill dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 16.16 North, west and south of the settlement is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and is a good example of the English heath habitat. This area is also part of a local nature reserve and common

land which is formally managed. A Natural England survey conducted in 2010 indicated that 72% of the SSSI was in unfavourable condition and declining, 20% in a favourable condition and 8% in an unfavourable condition.

16.17 East of Downs View and on the eastern side of the village is an area of archaeological interest.

## **Conclusion**

16.18 Although North Chailey has little in the way of local services and facilities, the proximity of Newick some one and a half miles away and with a regular bus service between the two settlements, suggests that many of the facilities in Newick could be used by residents of North Chailey.

16.19 Although much of the landscape adjacent to the core of the village is enclosed by trees and undulations of the landform and therefore is hidden from the wider landscape, much of this land is designated as sites of special scientific interest or archaeological interest which will be a constraint to development in these areas.

16.20 For the Parish as a whole there are identified recreational needs, the provision of which could be financially supported through section 106/community infrastructure levy payments brought forward with any new development.

16.21 The identified need for starter homes for young adults, smaller family homes, small terraced properties and Warden Assisted Housing will be addressed in the Local Development Framework when considering the housing mix for new development. This work will be further evidenced by Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the Lewes District which will inform policies aimed at providing the right mix of housing across the whole housing market – both market and affordable. The current SHMA written in 2008 for Lewes, is due to be updated mid 2011.

16.22 East Sussex County Council as the lead authority on highway issues have been advised of the Parish's desire for improved pedestrian linkages between the settlements within the Parish.

## 17. Piddinghoe



### Introduction

- 17.1 Piddinghoe village is located on the banks of the River Ouse which is tidal and nestles at the foot of the downland scarp to the west with the flat river floodplain to the east. The name is Saxon in origin meaning spur of land (either hill or jutting into water) belonging to Pydda's people.
- 17.2 The village is on the C7 (B2193) just over 1 mile north of Newhaven. St John's Church is located centrally within the village, built on a pagan place of worship, and is one of only three East Sussex churches which have a round tower. There is a large pond located on the western side of the road.
- 17.3 The houses within the village range from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraces cottages, individual 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century dwellings with the 'the green' approximately 13<sup>th</sup> Century (part of the old vicarage).
- 17.4 The C7 bypasses the village and the built form is sandwiched between the road, river and floodplain.

### Services

- 17.5 The settlement has a church, allotments, a village hall and a recreation ground with tennis court. The nearest local primary schools are at Rodmell (just under 2 miles away) which has 62 pupils on the school roll, but with a net capacity of 56 pupils and Meeching Valley Primary School at Newhaven, just over a mile away which has 175 pupils on the school roll with a net capacity of 210 spaces. The nearest doctor's

surgery is in Newhaven. Although there is no village shop, a local company delivers a range of foodstuffs from staple to speciality products once a week to households in the Ouse valley, including Piddinghoe.

- 17.6 There is a private marina used for sea anglers and to the east of the settlement is a large pond used for tuition for sailing.

### **Accessibility**

- 17.7 Southease and Newhaven Town train stations are approximately 2 miles away and provide a frequent service.
- 17.8 The 123 bus service provides a frequent service with the last bus from Lewes arriving at 6.01pm.
- 17.9 The village lies adjacent to the South Downs Way, a long distance footpath that runs between Winchester and Eastbourne.
- 17.10 The Local Transport Strategy has developed a programme of schemes and measures to improve safety along the C7. These include proposals over the short term to reduce the speed limit along the C7, in the medium term to investigate traffic management/speed restriction at appropriate locations and develop an agreed programme for junction improvements and traffic management measures to be implemented over the long term. (The speed limit on the whole of the C7 is 50 mph except in Rodmell which is 40 mph).
- 17.11 Specific to Piddinghoe in the short term, is the consideration of the viability of making the northern approach entrance to the village a 'no entry', in order to stop 'rat running' through the village at peak times.
- 17.12 The South Downs Way is about 2.5 klm to the north of the settlement

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 17.13 Piddinghoe Parish has 39.9% of residents in the 45-64 age group compared with the District average of 29%. Around 2.7% of the population lie in the 15-29 age group one of the lowest percentages in the District.

### **Housing Needs**

- 17.14 There are 5 households on the housing register. There is no up to date Housing Needs Survey for the parish.



## **Community Needs**

- 17.15 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities.
- 17.16 Here it was identified that broadband is a problem throughout the Ouse Valley which potentially impacts on home working and may put additional pressure on transport infrastructure.
- 17.17 In addition it is considered that the local bus service needs improvement with more frequency, later buses and a Sunday service.
- 17.18 An opinion was also raised that due to the lack of development in the past in the Ouse Valley villages, there has been a loss of services and a reliance on larger settlements. It was suggested that the expansion of the villages and the encouragement of a younger demographic may be a remedy to this situation.

## **Economic Role and Needs**

- 17.19 There is little in the way of employment within Piddinghoe, although Newhaven is a short distance away and offers employment opportunities while public transport provides access to wider employment opportunities in Lewes and Brighton.
- 17.20 The proximity to the South Downs Way is likely to increase demand for tourism related services such as 'Bed and Breakfast'.

## **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 17.21 The Local Plan identifies a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 17.22 There are no site specific allocations for Piddinghoe in the Local Plan.

## **Environment and Landscape Factors**

- 17.23 The village is within the South Downs National Park and much of the settlement is a designated Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Interest.
- 17.24 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Lower Ouse Valley character area a wide open and flat floored valley that cuts through the Downs to the sea. A characteristic of this area are the historic villages with churches, which occupy higher ground near the river.

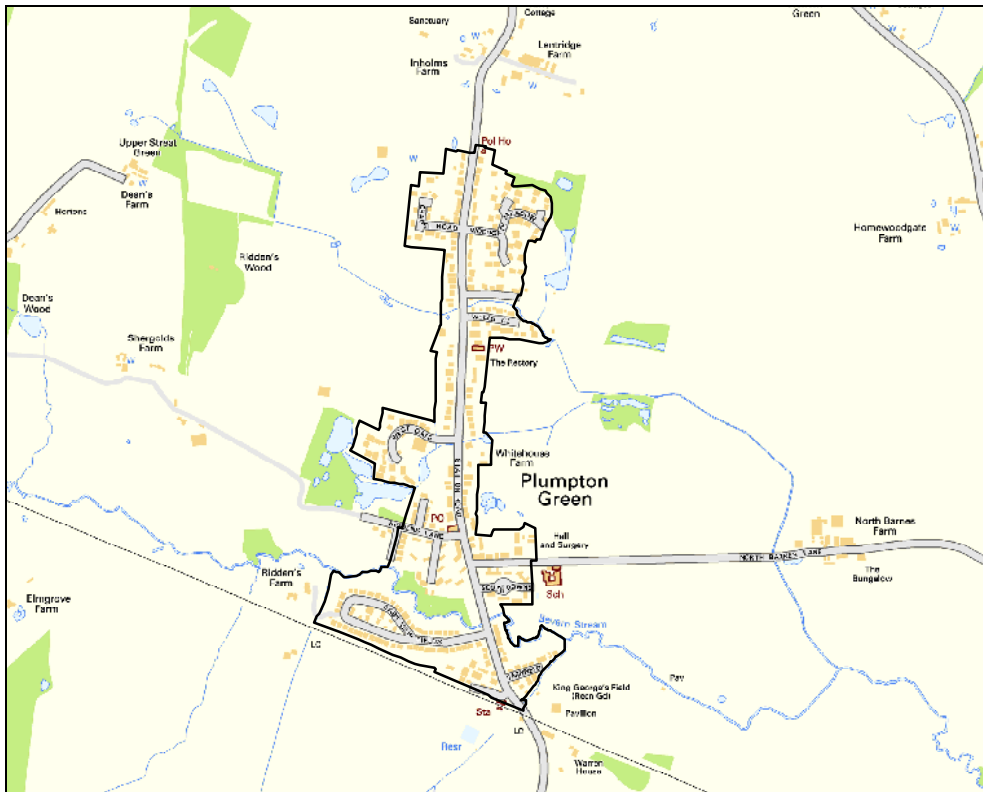
17.25 Piddinghoe is one such village which is slightly elevated above the flood plain on its eastern side, (although the church lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3b), while the exposed downland rises on its western side. Dwellings near the church are close to the flood plain.

## Conclusion

17.26 The village does not score highly in terms of its services and facilities and even though it is located within 2 miles of Newhaven and therefore could be considered to have the benefits of a cluster village, there are considerable constraints to development not least due to the location of the settlement within the National Park and the identified areas adjacent to the village that are at risk from flooding.

17.27 East Sussex County Council has been informed of the aspiration for an improved bus service for the villages in the Ouse Valley.

## 18. Plumpton Green



## Introduction

18.1 Plumpton Green lies in the west of the District, approximately 5 miles north west of Lewes and in the Low Weald Area, which lies to the north of the South Downs. The village is linear in form and just under 1 mile long running north to south with the core running from the shop to the village hall.

- 18.2 The settlement is a Victorian extension to the earlier and smaller settlement of Plumpton which is located approximately 4 km to the south.
- 18.3 The Domesday Book written in 1086 refers to the earlier settlement to the south of Plumpton Green as *Pluntune* and at this time it appears to have been a thriving farming community. The name is thought to be Saxon in origin and could relate to plum orchards or the Old English word *plumpt* meaning 'positioned under' (the original settlement lies under the scarp of the Downs).
- 18.4 The well known Plumpton Racecourse is located to the south of the village.

### **Services and Facilities**

- 18.5 Within the built up part of Plumpton Green there are a range of local services including a village shop and post office, 2 public houses, one church, a village hall, a playing field providing a range of recreational facilities including football pitches, tennis courts, cricket pitch and childrens play area and a primary school. The primary school currently has 128 pupils on the school roll with a net capacity of 140 pupils. There is no longer a doctor's surgery working from the village hall, although the surgery room is still in existence. The mobile library visits the village once a week.
- 18.6 To the south of the village is the Plumpton Agricultural College.

### **Accessibility**

- 18.7 Plumpton Green has a train station situated at the southern end of the settlement which is on the main Eastbourne to London line. Countryliner and Compass bus services operate services to Plumpton Agricultural College, Ditchling, Hassocks, Lewes, Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath, Wivelsfield and East Chilmington. However, the services are irregular in frequency.
- 18.8 East Sussex County Council has recently provided kick start funding to support a Plumpton voluntary car scheme, which provides transport to and from medical appointments.
- 18.9 The village is relatively isolated from other settlements with only Westmeston and East Chilmington within a 2 mile walk and Cooksbridge and Offham within a 3 mile drive.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 18.10 In Plumpton Parish, the 45-64 age group is the most populous, with 31% of residents falling within this category. Some 18.4% are within the 15-29 year old age group which is the second highest percentage

of all the parishes and one of the highest proportions of 0-14 year olds at 21.6%.

### **Housing Needs**

- 18.11 There are 9 households currently on the housing register.
- 18.12 A Housing Needs Survey Report was carried out in 2010 for Plumpton Parish which concluded that there are 42 households in housing need who have a local connection and who cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market. Three of the 42 households with a local connection, who indicated a housing need are on the housing register.
- 18.13 Currently Plumpton Parish Council is assessing potential 'exception' sites within the parish which may be appropriate for affordable housing.

### **Community Needs**

- 18.14 The Village Action Plan produced in 2008 had exceptional community involvement with an over 80% response rate. It set out a number of actions, which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the community.
- 18.15 Most respondents (90%) indicated that an expansion of the built form of the village is not supported but should development take place the preference was for starter homes, small family homes, houses for the elderly and housing for local people.
- 18.16 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted a shortfall by 2006 of 0.5 ha of informal childrens' play space, 1.2 ha of cricket and 0.5 of adult rugby playing areas. It suggested that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new cricket pitch. The study also stated that the pitches at King Georges Field needed improvement, due to the existing slope and unevenness.
- 18.17 The Village Action Plan Survey asked residents what they thought of the recreational facilities. 239 respondents thought that the sports pavilion was excellent/good, 25 thought it poor. In respect of the playing field, 323 respondents thought that that it was excellent/good and 11 poor. 237 thought that the children's play area was excellent/good with 34 thinking it was poor.
- 18.18 The parish council has recently been awarded S106 monies to help update the playing area. Plumpton parish council consider that the cricket pitch is adequate. Only 96 respondents felt that additional leisure facilities should be provided in Plumpton.

18.19 Some anecdotal evidence suggests that a return of the doctor's surgery would be welcome although the Village Action Plan Survey identified that 88% of respondents did not have problems getting to the doctors surgery. A Voluntary Driver Scheme helps older residents' access doctor's surgeries in locations in Burgess Hill, South Chailey or Ditchling.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

18.20 There are a number of small businesses which provide a small range of local jobs as well as employment generated from the primary school and the racecourse. The existence of the railway station will provide a sustainable means by which the local community may access employment further afield.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

18.21 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

### **Environment and Landscape Factors**

18.22 The East Sussex Landscape Assessment identifies Plumpton Green as falling within the Western Low Weald area, a low lying clay vale that stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald AONB. Characteristics of this area include frequent uninterrupted views of the scarp of the Downs and a gentle, relatively low-lying countryside.

18.23 In many vantage points within the village the silhouette of the Downs is visible, whilst the more immediate landscape is largely hidden from view along Station road, the main road through the village.

18.24 The northern boundary of the village is open to the adjacent fields and there is little in the way of vegetation to conceal the hard edge of development from the wider level landscape, while the railway line runs along the southern edge of the village effectively creating the boundary edge to this part of the settlement.

18.25 To the east and west of the village, small fields, hedges and shaws of deciduous trees abut the built form while some of the more dense woods form a sense of enclosure to these parts of the village.

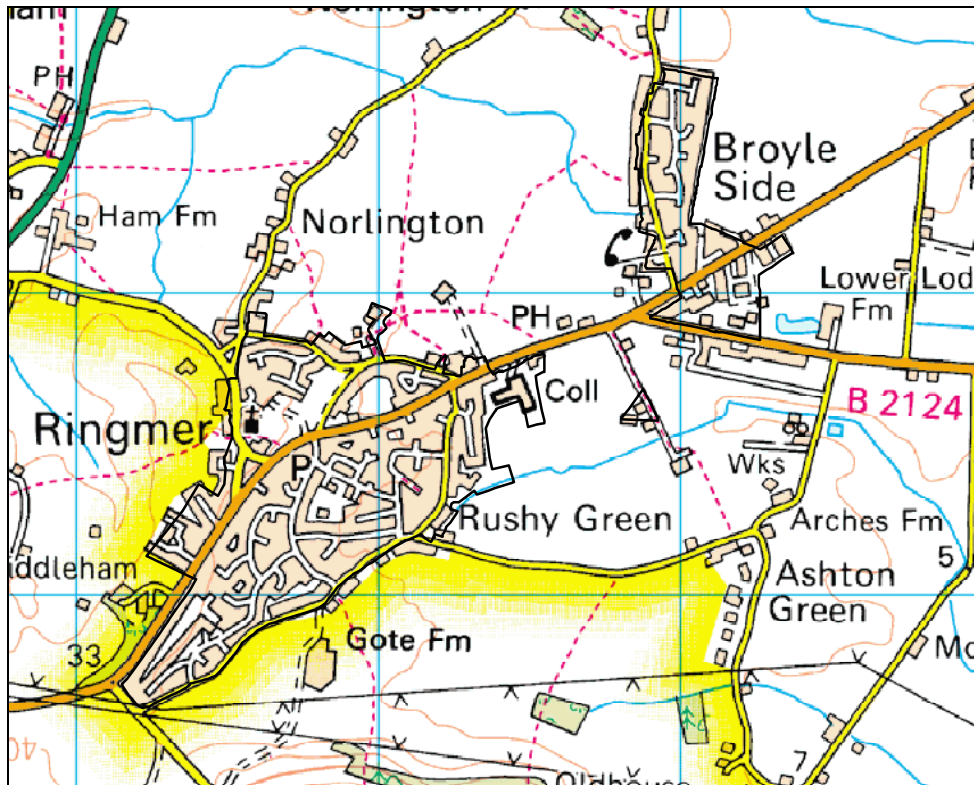
18.26 The southern end of the village is located within Flood Zone 2. Land at Ridden's Farm west of East View Fields and Norlands and Whitehouse Farm east of Station Road are designated as having archaeological interest.

18.27 The boundary of the South Downs National Park is to the south of the racecourse (the race course is outside of the designation).

## Conclusion

- 18.28 Plumpton Green is identified as a Service Centre given the range of facilities and the existence of a train station. The environmental designations relate to small pockets of the village and given the character of containment in certain parts of the village there may be potential subject to other planning considerations for residential development to take place without detrimental impact on the wider landscape.
- 18.29 The Playing Space Review identified shortfalls in a number of recreational facilities however results from the Village Action Plan did not substantiate these findings. Should the need for further recreational facilities be identified by the community at a later date then new development could help finance such needs through 106 agreements/community infrastructure levy attached to any planning approval.
- 18.30 Given the weighting of younger people in the parish, the availability of affordable housing is likely to be an issue in the plan period of the Local Development Framework and the recent findings of the Housing Needs Survey for the parish is further evidence to this.
- 18.31 The other three Service Centre settlements within the District have a doctor's surgery and whilst Plumpton Green has the lowest settlement population, access to the nearest surgeries in local villages is not viable by using public transport. Any future residential development has the potential to financially contribute to health care provision through a 106 legal agreement/community infrastructure levy if the local community highlight a local need.

## 19. Ringmer



### Introduction

- 19.1 Ringmer is the largest settlement in Ringmer parish, and the largest rural village in Lewes District. It is approximately 3 miles north east of Lewes and 6 miles south of Uckfield. The name evolved from 'Ryngemere' and is thought to have derived from *hring*, circular or ring and mere or pool, or 'ring of pools'.
- 19.2 The rising downland to the south dominates the village landscape and to the north and east are undulating agricultural fields which provide long views over the surrounding landscape.
- 19.3 Adjacent to the B2192 Lewes to Heathfield road that cuts through the centre of the village, a large Village Green provides a village focal point and reflects the traditional feel of the village. The village has a good range of services, facilities and local activities. There are a range of employment opportunities in Ringmer parish, with many being just east of the village at Broyleside.
- 19.4 The early open field settlements of Wellingham, Norlington, Gote, Middleham and Ashton contain the oldest surviving houses in the parish and the main present settlement around the village green and the Church is later (probably 13<sup>th</sup> Century) in origin.

- 19.5 Whilst Ringmer grew progressively through the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the earlier settlements reduced to dispersed farming communities. The exception is the medieval settlement at Broyleside, which also expanded considerably in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, to form a second settlement within Ringmer parish.
- 19.6 Although Ringmer is in close proximity to Lewes, the village is distinct from the county town and has its own sense of identity and of place, supported by the facilities which contribute to its character of self containment.
- 19.7 Extensive development in the late 1960s changed Ringmer from a largely self-sufficient village to a commuter settlement. Residents also travel to Lewes, Uckfield and beyond, to access supermarkets and comparison goods.
- 19.8 Commuting has become two-way, as many Lewes residents are employed in Ringmer, or choose to use facilities such as the bank and post office in Ringmer in preference to those in the town due to easy accessibility and parking. Many students from Lewes attend Ringmer Community College. Rush hour traffic queues now run in both directions from the bottlenecks of Earwig Corner and Malling Hill.

## **Services**

- 19.9 There are a wide range of services at Ringmer including a: new doctors surgery, chemist, dentist, nursery school, primary school, secondary school, children's centre, church, village hall, small library, bank, convenience store/newsagents, post office, butchers, greengrocers/plant sales, launderette, fish and chip shop, pet shop, bakers/café, hairdressers 2 public houses (1 of them lying just east of the village lying equi-distant from Ringmer Village and Broyleside), veterinary surgery, restaurant, estate agents and service station. The mobile library visits the village once a week although there is a small library in the village hall. (Planning permission has been granted for the extension to the village hall to enlarge and improve the existing facilities, though at present at the beginning of 2011, funding remains to be raised). There are two sets of private allotments within the settlement, and public allotments between Ringmer and Lewes.
- 19.10 The Parish Council advise that not all these services are currently adequate. The primary school is under significant pressure, due to the recent increase in numbers of children. Nation Health Service dentistry is not currently available, and the present dental surgery has no room for expansion, so many residents must seek this service elsewhere.
- 19.11 The services at Ringmer also serve the Broyleside settlement, residents in several other rural communities to the north and east, Lewes residents attracted by cheap and safe parking and people working in Ringmer.



- 19.12 Recreation facilities are located at various locations around the village providing an adult football pitch for Ringmer F.C., cricket pitch and pavilion, play area, skateboard ramp, croquet pitch and bowling green. Ringmer Community College also has sports facilities available for some community use, including swimming pool, 2 adult football pitches and 2 junior football pitches.
- 19.13 The small shopping centre currently has a number of empty shops, and in recent years several shops, a service station and a former post office along the B2192 have closed. However this is not necessarily representative of the vitality of the village, and may be due more to, restrictive leases.

### **Accessibility**

- 19.14 Ringmer does not have a railway service. The nearest station is at Glynde just over 2 ½ miles away, but the parish council report that it is rarely used by Ringmer residents, as there is no bus service to there, no station parking and a limited train service. Although within cycling distance, cycling on the narrow connecting lanes can be hazardous especially as the route can be used like a rat run by car drivers, wishing to avoid traffic congestion at Earwig Corner and the Culfail Tunnel in Lewes. Access to Lewes train station is some 3½ miles away, although some London commuters prefer to use Uckfield station (6 miles away), due to cheaper fares and parking.
- 19.15 Bus routes 28 and 29b provide frequent services to Lewes, Brighton, Uckfield and Tunbridge Wells. There are additional services to Ringmer Community College. Bus services to Eastbourne exist, but are infrequent and indirect.
- 19.16 The 2001 Census identified that 71.1% of people travel to work by private motor vehicle which is above the average of 62% for the rural areas as a whole.
- 19.17 The Ringmer section of an intended Lewes-Ringmer cycle path provides safe passage for cyclists from Gote Lane along the B2192 towards Lewes but currently terminates at the Ringmer parish boundary.

### **Population profile (2012)**

- 19.18 In Ringmer Parish, the 45-64 age group is the most populous with 35.6% of residents falling within this category. The percentage of people within the 65+ age range is 22.9% slightly less than the District average of 24.8%.
- 19.19 Despite the existence of the primary and secondary schools and the availability of family housing which are factors that would encourage

families, the percentage of young people from 0 – 29 is similar to the average for the District as a whole. The 30-44 year old age group makes up 13.4% of the population which is less than the average of the District of 15.7%.

- 19.20 The parish council Ringmer Village Plan (2003) identified the low proportion of young families with children in the parish as an issue to be addressed. Since then the proportion of such families, and recruitment into the primary school, has doubled. If recruitment is maintained even at its present level, the primary school at Ringmer will shortly reach its maximum capacity.

### **Housing Needs**

- 19.21 There is no current housing needs study for Ringmer parish.
- 19.22 Ringmer parish council has published a Village Plan Housing Strategy (adopted 2009). A factor of very high importance to most Ringmer residents was maintaining a 'village feel', which it felt would be compromised in this already large village, by further large scale market housing development beyond the existing planning boundaries. There was also strong local opposition to any further executive commuter housing, but a higher level of acceptance of an element of new affordable housing, especially to meet local needs.
- 19.23 The parish council 'Housing Strategy' develops policies to deliver affordable housing to meet identified needs, without the development of open market housing located outside of the existing planning boundaries. The parish council state that the strategy would enable Ringmer parish to make a contribution to the overall District housing needs proportionate to its size.
- 19.24 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities. It was considered in the case of Ringmer parish that more affordable housing is required to enable the next generation to stay in the village, although concern was raised about the capacity of infrastructure.
- 19.25 There are currently 69 people in housing need on the housing register (Ringmer parish).

### **Community needs**

- 19.26 The Ringmer Village Action Plan 2003 identified the need for tennis courts which have yet to be delivered. The Ringmer Village Plan Leisure Strategy (under development) has identified a number of other needs for both outdoor and indoor recreational facilities (Policy RG3 in the Lewes District Local Plan allocates land to the east of Ringmer Community College for comprehensive development of sport and

recreational facilities)). Ringmer Football Club has a football ground in Ringmer, but A.F.C. Ringmer currently plays home games at Falmer. The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review suggested that there should be investigation, with leisure providers such as schools/parish councils, into the possibility of developing tennis or multi-use games areas.

- 19.27 The Parish Council also reports that there is a need for more allotments (with a current waiting list) and they currently have the prospect of securing additional land for this use. They also identify that there is a need for play equipment for children and young adults ages 12 and above, additional informal recreation space and the provision of designated paths for cycling and horse riding. The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 identified that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.2 ha of equipped children's' play space.
- 19.28 Planning permission has been given for an extension to the village hall and fundraising is underway to finance it.
- 19.29 The car-dependence of village life, coupled to the fact that many homes have minimal off street parking, has resulted in on-road car parking being a major issue in many parts of Ringmer.
- 19.30 Completion of the Lewes section of the Lewes-Ringmer cycleway is seen by the parish council as a priority, to enable people commuting between Lewes and Ringmer, to travel more sustainably and safely.

### **Economic Role and needs**

- 19.31 There are a number of employment premises within Ringmer, such as the core retail area, the community college, the primary school, the care homes and one employment site (Diplocks Yard). In addition, there is a large employment site east of the village at Broyleside (Broyle Business Area) and other commercial premises located in the countryside within Ringmer parish such as Glyndebourne, the Ringmer Business Centre, Chandlers yard, Broyle Place Farm, Upper Stoneham Farm, Marlie Farm and two business areas at Clayhill.
- 19.32 In 2006 the Parish Council published a Village Plan Employment Strategy for Ringmer, the purpose of which was to set out a strategy for the maintenance and continued expansion of employment in Ringmer. The document set out the local context and detail of the current employment provision within the parish and twelve policies which set out the parish council's preferred approach to employment generating development within the parish. One priority was to retain, and protect from redevelopment for alternative use, current employment sites especially those within, or within walking distance of Ringmer village. This strategy also identified current employment sites that it was considered to be capable of more intensive development, and a potential for eastward expansion of the Broyle Business Area (a cluster

of purpose built employment uses with different occupiers within the Broyleside settlement).

- 19.33 The Lewes District Council Employment Land Review (ELR) also assessed some of these existing sites, including the Broyle Business Area which is greenfield land sandwiched between the B2192 and B2124 and comprises approximately 8.8 hectares of land. However the scale of development envisaged in this document is different from that identified by the Parish Council Employment Strategy which also considered that the site not a priority for new enterprises.
- 19.34 Two other sites within Ringmer parish were identified in the assessment of potential sites in the ELR; land to the South of Gote Lane, on the south side of Ringmer (site P12) and land near Earwig Corner (site P1).
- 19.35 Both these sites are bounded on three sides by open countryside and are within the South Downs National Park. The ELR recognises that site location within the National Park could be an effective barrier to developing the site for employment use. The parish council advises that it has identified alternative sites elsewhere in the parish with good road access, far lower landscape impact and are outside of the National Park. The ELR sites will be subject to the plan making process and will not necessarily be allocated in the emerging Local Development Framework.
- 19.36 At the Parish Council meeting that took place in the Spring referred to in the 'Housing' section above, it was noted that there is much out-commuting and that the provision of local employment opportunities would improve the sustainability of the settlement and that any new development would need to be matched with additional services and facilities to ensure that the existing, are not overstretched.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 19.37 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 19.38 Policy RG1 allocates land at Caburn Fields for residential development.
- 19.39 Policy RG3 allocates land to the east of Ringmer Community Collage for development for sports and recreation facilities.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 19.40 Much of the settlement is built upon underlying clay with chalk loams to the immediate south and loams and greensand to the north. The downland scarp to the immediate south of the village is a dominant feature to the setting of Ringmer, and the boundary of the South

Downs National Park runs along the south-eastern and south-western boundaries of the village.

- 19.41 Ringmer church lies on a low ridge, and from the ridge there are distant views out of the village towards the Ouse valley near Barcombe and across the Weald to Uckfield, Crowborough and Heathfield. The main part of the village to the south of the church is hidden from the north and north-west in a gentle valley between the Downs and this ridge, much reducing its landscape impact. Some recent development does spill across the ridge, and this is much more prominent in the landscape, especially at night from light pollution.
- 19.42 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies on the southern edge of the Western Low Weald character area, which essentially comprises of a low lying vale, which stretches between the foot of the downland scarp to the south and to the High Weald to the north.
- 19.43 North of the village small fields, hedges and tree groupings create a more intimate character. To the east, a swathe of agricultural land separates the main village from the Broyleside settlement.
- 19.44 The village green, church and its environs are a key feature of the centre of the village and this is evidenced by a conservation area designation which includes the open green spaces, as much as the built form at its edge. Much of the village north of Lewes Road (B2192) is designated as an area of archaeological interest, as is the land immediately north of the village. The principal interest is Ringmer's medieval pottery industry, whose epicentre lay to the immediate north and east of the village green.
- 19.45 East of Chamberlaines Lane the land is designated within Flood Zones 2 and 3b.

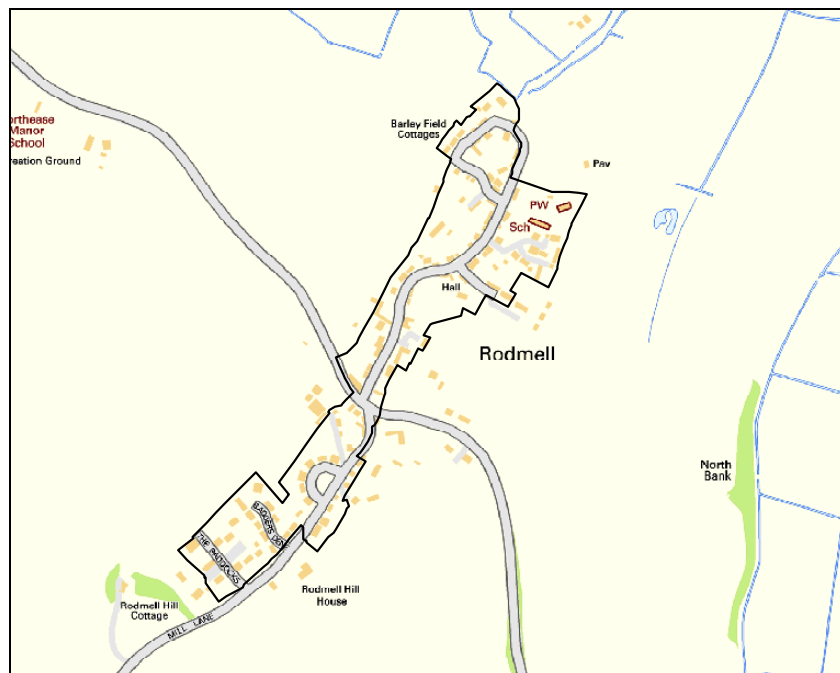
## **Conclusion**

- 19.46 Ringmer scores highly in terms of the number of services and facilities and is one of only three villages in the district that has all the key services. In addition its close proximity to Lewes and the frequent bus service further enhances its role as a sustainable settlement.
- 19.47 Ringmer also appears exceptional in the volume of employment opportunities that it has to offer and those of nearby Broyleside, notwithstanding the potential for the provision of additional employment land, as highlighted in the Employment Land Review.
- 19.48 The designation of the land west and south of the settlement within the National Park is likely to constrain development in these areas on landscape grounds; however there may be opportunities for development to the north and east of the settlement, subject to further

evidence work on landscape impacts/capacity, transport and infrastructure provision.

19.49 There are clearly also a number of recreational needs that would improve the quality of life for residents and further infrastructure needs may be required as a result of any further development. Financial support for these may be forthcoming through developer contributions which could come forward as part of a planning approval for residential or employment development.

## 20. Rodmell



### Introduction

- 20.1 The name Rodmell is thought to have derived from 'Mill on the road', although there is no mill in the village today. In the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, there is reference to the village's old name 'Rodmill'.
- 20.2 The settlement lies 4 miles north of Newhaven and 4 miles south of Lewes, within the South Downs National Park. The village straddles the C7, with the eastern section having a more consolidated number of historic buildings, many being built of flint and some with thatch roofs.
- 20.3 The settlement has a small number of key services and is widely known for having within it a National Trust property (Monks House), the home of the author Virginia Wolfe. The village therefore has an amount of tourist traffic and has a small car park for those visiting the National Trust property.

- 20.4 A group of buildings including a residential school with a Tudor hall licensed for civil ceremonies and a farm lie to the north-west of Rodmell in an area known as Northease.

### **Services**

- 20.5 The settlement has a Norman church, a village hall, a pub, a primary school (with a net capacity of 56 and 62 on the school roll) and a recreation ground with 1 junior football pitch and 1 cricket pitch and pavillion.
- 20.6 The western side of the village has a small amount of informal open space in front of 'The Dicklands'. There is also a small equipped children's play area by the school and church. The nearest doctors' surgery is in Southover, Lewes or in Newhaven.

### **Accessibility**

- 20.7 The nearest train station is at Southease a small hamlet one and a half miles to the south, although Lewes train station has a more frequent service. A footpath linking Rodmell to Southease has recently been opened, which will enable people to walk safely away from the C7.
- 20.8 The 123 bus service provides an almost hourly daytime service between Lewes and Newhaven, with the last bus from Lewes arriving at 6.01pm.
- 20.9 The village lies adjacent to the South Downs Way, a long distance footpath that runs between Winchester and Eastbourne. Rodmell and Southease together comprise a staging post for walkers being mid-way from the nearest settlements of Alfriston and Falmer on the South Downs Way and midway between Lewes and Newhaven.
- 20.10 A Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS) for the C7 include proposals over the short term to reduce the speed limit along the C7, in the medium term to investigate traffic management/speed restriction at appropriate locations and develop an agreed programme for junction improvements and traffic management measures to be implemented over the long term. Included in this strategy is a longer term aim to make safer provision for cyclists.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 20.11 The 45-64 age group is the most populous in the combined parishes of Rodmell and Southease, (figures available combine both parishes), with 30.8% of residents falling within this grouping. Some 12.1% of the population are within the 15-29 age group, slightly below the District average (13.4%).

## **Housing Needs**

- 20.12 The Council's Housing Register identifies that there are 17 households on the register for Rodmell.
- 20.13 The Parish Council have identified that priority should be given for low-cost housing for younger families, key workers and smaller dwellings for single people moving out of the family home.

## **Community needs**

- 20.14 The Parish Council identify that road safety is an issue for the village, especially at the junction of the C7 which runs through the settlement. The issue of the severance effect of the C7 has been highlighted in a Local Transport Strategy (LATS) for the C7.
- 20.15 The Parish Council have also highlighted that parking near the school leads to traffic congestion, damaged verges and access problems and so additional off street parking in the village may alleviate the problem.
- 20.16 The need has also been identified for additional open space to be provided in the lower (historic) village.
- 20.17 Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities. Here it was identified that broadband quality is a problem throughout the Ouse Valley. This impacts on home working and may put additional pressure on transport infrastructure.
- 20.18 In addition it is considered that the local bus service needs improvement with more frequency, later buses and a Sunday service.

## **Economic Role and needs**

- 20.19 The economy of Rodmell is founded on farming and this still plays a role in the community with food production although now it employs not many more than a dozen people in two major farms and two small holdings.
- 20.20 Rodmell Parish Council comment that there are currently 100 or more people employed within the parish with 70 or more working in the primary school and the residential school at Northease.
- 20.21 The public house and 2 bed and breakfast businesses service the tourist trade which has the potential to increase with the South Downs National Park designation.



- 20.22 The parish council have recently set up a business forum which amongst other things aims to facilitate a supportive forum for local businesses and create a business register for the parish.
- 20.23 Lewes, Newhaven and Brighton are in relatively close proximity, providing access to opportunities for employment.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 20.24 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 20.25 The village is located within the South Downs National Park and the historic core is a designated Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological interest. The early part of the settlement is located on the river valley floor and built upon deposits of silty loam with the more recent developments to the west on the rising ground of chalk.
- 20.26 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Lower Ouse Valley part of The Downs Character area. This is the largest valley of the East Sussex Downland and is wide, open and flat floored, cutting right through the chalk Downs to the sea. One of the characteristics of this area, are the string of attractive villages on drier ground, with their distinctive tree/flint-brick/church compositions. When viewing the Ouse valley settlements from a distance, they can be located by the dense forms of tree planting within and around the villages, which is in stark contrast to the otherwise open vista of the valley landscape.
- 20.27 The area of the village situated on the north side of the C7 gently slopes down towards the northern edge of the village and areas prone to flooding beyond.
- 20.28 The southern section of the village is more elevated being on the lower slopes of the downland and at its southern edge there are long distant views towards Newhaven and the sea.

### **Conclusion**

- 20.29 The location of Rodmell wholly within the South Downs National Park will be a constraining factor to development in the future although the parish council have identified a need for affordable/low cost housing to meet the needs of those leaving the family home and younger families. Sites for affordable housing may in the short term be identified through the mechanism of 'rural exception policy' where residential development is permitted as an 'exception' to normal planning policy. The designation may also present challenges and opportunities in

respect of increased visitor numbers and how these may impact on local communities.

20.30 The community identified the need for road safety improvements for the area where the C7 cuts through the village. Representations have been made to East Sussex County Council to alert them to the continued concerns of the parish council on the safety of pedestrians crossing the C7.

## 21. **South Highton**



### **Introduction**

21.1 South Highton is a historic settlement located 1 mile north east of Newhaven and 7 miles south of Lewes. It originated as an Ouse valley farming village and the name Highton means 'high farm or settlement'. It is located on the flank of the Downs on the eastern side of the Ouse valley. The southern part of the settlement is contiguous with the relatively high density development of Denton which reads as a suburb of Newhaven.

21.2 Despite this, once within the village, owing to the number of historic buildings in relatively large plots and its location on the valley side, the character is that of a downland settlement, quiet, with little in the way of through traffic and where at certain points in the village, views of the surrounding high quality landscape can be seen.

## **Services**

- 21.3 The village has 2 public houses, 2 churches, a primary school and village hall. There is also a recreation ground with a football pitch and childrens play area. Denton Community School is the nearest primary school approximately half a mile away, which has a net capacity of 308, although currently it has only 210 on the school roll. The proximity of Newhaven town centre and the retail park at Denton means that there are a range of services and facilities within walking distance.
- 21.4 North of the settlement is a caravan park.

## **Accessibility**

- 21.5 The village lies adjacent to the A26 so there is easy vehicular access to Newhaven with its train station and the A27 trunk road to the north. Bus services 92a and 92b are school buses to Tideway School in Newhaven, while the 145 service gives an infrequent service into Newhaven where other buses and a train service can be accessed.
- 21.6 Despite its proximity to the town of Newhaven, there is not a frequent bus service, but without a car, walking would be a viable alternative.

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 21.7 The most populated age group in the parish is the 45-64 year old age group at 26.4% which is less than the average for the district of 29%. The 0-14, 15-29 and 30-44 age groups are higher than the averages for the District indicating a relatively young population, whilst averages for the 65+ year groups are significantly lower than the District average.

## **Housing Needs**

- 21.8 The March 2010 figure indicated that there were 19 households on the Council's Housing Register.
- 21.9 A housing needs survey carried out in 2009 concluded that there were 20 households in housing need who had a local connection but who cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market. 50% of these were families with children.
- 21.10 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.3 ha of children's informal playspace and 0.5 ha of junior football playing area. It suggested that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new football pitch.

## **Economic Role and needs**

- 21.11 North of South Heighton is a small industrial park and there are many businesses at Denton and Newhaven which will offer employment in a range of sectors.
- 21.12 Given the proximity of the settlement to Newhaven, with its transport links to Lewes, Brighton and Seaford, opportunities for accessible employment are available.

## **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 21.13 The historic part of the settlement, north and east of the Hampden Arms public house lies outside of the planning boundary, while the more recent development to the south falls within the extensive planning boundary around Newhaven.

## **Environmental and Landscape factors**

- 21.14 The South Downs National Park boundary abuts the settlement to the east and west and the built form of the settlement lies outside of the designation.
- 21.15 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies at the junction of the Lower Ouse Valley character area characterised by a wide open and flat floored valley that cuts through the Downs to the sea and the Firlie and Bishopstone Downs character area, here forming arable dipslope, largely concealed from the within the settlement.
- 21.16 Within the historic part of the settlement high vegetated banks, historic boundary walls many of flint and historic farm buildings predominate, with long distant views over the Ouse Valley when looking westwards.
- 21.17 The northern part of the settlement is designated as a conservation area. Much of the existing built form and land to the north is designated as an area of archaeological interest.
- 21.18 The area of the village that is located on the valley floor, including the recreation ground lies within an area of flood risk (flood zones 2 and 3a).
- 21.19 To the north of the caravan park, two parcels of land are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.

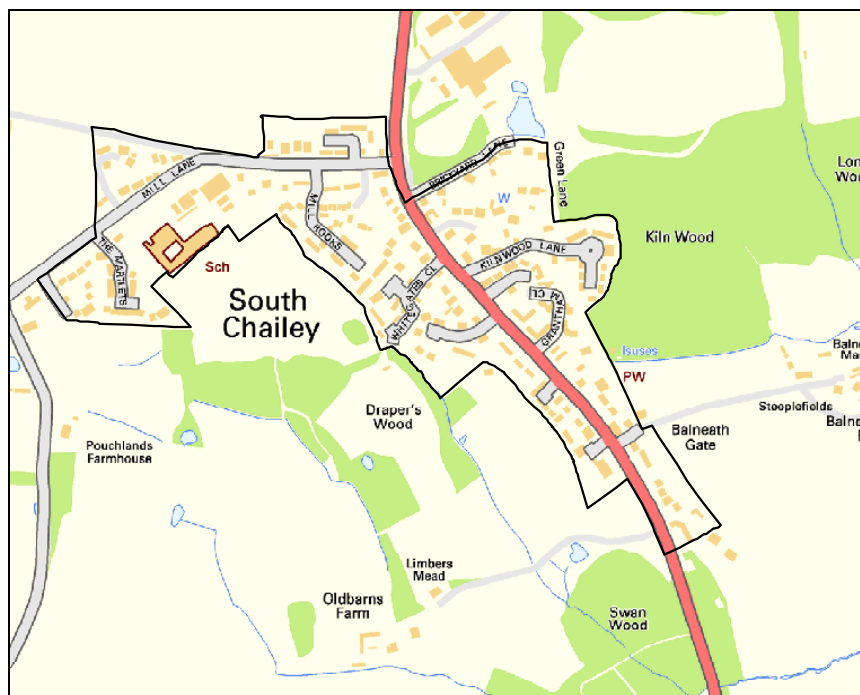
## **Conclusion**

- 21.20 South Heighton is constrained by development to the east and north by the risk of flooding and to the east by the boundary of the National

Park. The southern boundary of the village abuts the intensively developed area of Denton.

- 21.21 These constraints will have implications for the delivery of affordable housing or any other development in terms of appropriate sites available, even though the village is in close proximity to Newhaven with its wide range of services and facilities. Therefore funding for additional recreation facilities may need to be financially supported from other funding streams than developer contributions, as suggested in the Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004.

## 22. South Chailey



### Introduction

- 22.1 South Chailey is located some 6 miles north of Lewes and is a similar distance east of Burgess Hill. The settlement is located on clay soil and this has been a raw material used for pottery, tile and brick making in the area for centuries. Chailey brickworks is a large mineral and brick making site on the eastern side of the village still being worked and in production.
- 22.2 The settlement is essentially L shaped in form, straddling the A275 and Mill Lane which runs west of the north south main road through the village. There are a variety of building styles and although there are a couple of examples of listed buildings, most of the buildings were built in the last century. In recent years, there have been a number of cul-

de-sac developments which has changed the earlier ribbon form of development in the settlement, creating more in-depth development.

- 22.3 The Lewes Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement, which identified the area within which, new development should be contained.

### **Services**

- 22.4 South Chailey has a secondary school, nursery, doctors surgery, church and 2 play areas. The food stores/post office and public house are at South Street approximately half a mile to the north. The mobile library visits the village twice a week.

### **Accessibility**

- 22.5 Chailey Green and its school are within a 2km walk. North Chailey, Barcombe Cross, Plumpton Green (and its train station) are all within a 5 km drive. Wivelsfield train station is approximately 9 km away. There is a frequent bus service (number 121) that runs from 8.30am to just after 7pm on an almost hourly basis, linking the village to Lewes.

### **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

- 22.6 The population figures are for the Parish population as a whole and therefore include the other 3 settlements. The most populated age group lies within the 45-64 range with 36.1% of residents falling within this grouping. 12.6% of the population lie within the 15-29 year old age group, which is just below the average for the District. 13.9% of the Parish lie within the 65+ year old age group, which is considerably lower than the District wide average of 24.8%.

### **Housing Needs**

- 22.7 There is not an up to date Housing Needs Survey for the Chailey Parish. The Housing Register indicates that there are currently 31 households in housing need within the parish which includes the settlements of Chailey Green, South Street and North Chailey.

### **Community Needs**

- 22.8 The Parish Council carried out a survey in 2009 as a joint venture with Action in Rural Sussex, with 10% of the residents replying. In respect of housing over 40% expressed a preference for starter homes for young adults and small family homes, 20% to 30% supported small groups of flats or terraced properties and Warden Assisted Housing. 50% of respondents thought that dwellings should be built in individual locations or in small groups of less than 10.

- 22.9 The Survey also stated that accessibility improvements such as footpaths, cycle paths and pedestrian crossings would be welcome between the settlements to enable children to walk to school and to facilitate movement generally between the four settlements in Chailey Parish. It was indicated that enhanced public transport provision would also help residents to access existing local services. It was also highlighted that a site for allotments was needed for allotments in South Chailey.
- 22.10 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review identified that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new cricket pitch at Chailey. It also suggested that there should be investigation, with leisure providers such as schools/parish councils, into the possibility of developing tennis or multi-use games areas.
- 22.11 Chailey parish council are actively looking for land for allotment and informal play space use.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

- 22.12 Chailey Heritage School and St Peter and St James Hospice will provide opportunities for local employment as does Chailey Brickworks and there are small industrial units at the former Hamsey Brickworks Site. There are also a number of smaller businesses in the vicinity which provide a small number of local jobs. However one of the key findings of the Chailey Parish Survey was that more local jobs are required.
- 22.13 The Employment Land Review identified Chailey Brickworks in its assessment of existing sites. It identified that it is in active use by a single operator and that it would likely need to be redeveloped for beneficial use by other uses. The study commented that there is good opportunity to intensify employment use and due to a range of factors B1c and B2 workshops would offer potential.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

- 22.14 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.
- 22.15 Policy CH1 in the local plan relates to land at Chailey Brickworks which lies just outside the planning boundary to the north. The policy states that in the event of the cessation of the existing use of the brickworks, that planning permission will be granted for business/industrial purposes (B1 and B2) on the area of the main building, car parks and clamping sheds.

## **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

- 22.16 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald. There are a number of key characteristics of this landscape type that present themselves in South Chailey such as a 'rich landscape, secluded with a sheltered feel due to a combination of gentle relief and abundant small woods'.
- 22.17 Surrounding South Chailey is a number of woodlands, which give the sense of enclosure within various parts of settlement and to the east are larger tracts of ancient woodland and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.
- 22.18 North of the village, road side hedges and trees provide a tunnel of green which emphasis the separation of South Chailey from South Street

## **Conclusion**

- 22.19 South Chailey is in close proximity to South Street and therefore residents have the opportunity to use the convenience store, post office and public house of this small adjacent village and it is likely that the two villages are interdependent for their services and facility needs.
- 22.20 The bias in the population for the parish of younger people suggests that the provision of affordable housing may be an issue within the lifetime of the LDF, however at the present time there is no housing needs survey for the parish. Also the general need for additional recreational facilities in Chailey parish could be provided adjacent to the 3 other settlements within the parish if land is not suitable available or achievable in South Chailey.
- 22.21 Owing to the generally well screened and secluded landscape there may be opportunities for further development on the edge of this settlement which will not have an adverse impact on the wider countryside and will contribute to the vitality of community life.



## 23. South Street



### Introduction

- 23.1 South Street is one of four settlements within the parish of Chailey and is located just quarter of a mile north of the larger settlement of South Chailey on the A275.
- 23.2 The settlement has a mix of dwelling types and, judging by the number of Victorian and Edwardian cottages, a settlement has been here for some time. It has expanded over the years with a considerable number of dwellings being mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many of the earlier dwellings front onto the A275, while later expansion took place along Green Lane that runs parallel.
- 23.3 The Lewes District Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement, within which, any new development should be contained.

### Services

- 23.4 Within the settlement there is a shop/post office and public house.
- 23.5 South Chailey lies just half a mile to the south and has a secondary school, doctors surgery, church and 2 play areas. The mobile library visits the village twice a week. The primary school is at Chailey Green approximately 1 mile away.

## **Accessibility**

- 23.6 Chailey Green and its school are within a one and half mile walk. North Chailey, Barcombe Cross, Plumpton Green (and its train station) are all within a 3 mile drive. Wivelsfield train station is approximately 5 miles away. There is a frequent bus service (number 121) that runs from 8.30am to just after 7pm on an almost hourly basis, linking the village to Lewes in the south and Newick in the north.

## **Population Profile (2012 estimates)**

- 23.7 The population figures are for the Parish population as a whole and therefore include the other 3 settlements. The most populated age group lies within the 45-64 range with 36.1% of residents falling within this grouping. 12.6% of the population lie within the 15-29 year old age group, which is just below the average for the District. 13.9% of the Parish lie within the 65+ year old age group, which is considerably lower than the District wide average of 24.8%.

## **Housing Needs**

- 23.8 There is not an up to date Housing Needs Survey for the Chailey Parish. The Housing Register indicates that there are currently 31 households in housing need within the Parish. This includes the settlements of Chailey Green, South Street and North Chailey.

## **Community Needs**

- 23.9 The Parish Council carried out a survey in 2009 as a joint venture with Action in Rural Sussex, with 10% of the residents replying. In respect of housing, over 40% expressed a preference for starter homes for young adults and small family homes, 20% to 30% supported small groups of flats or terraced properties and Warden Assisted Housing. The Survey also stated that accessibility improvements such as footpaths, cyclepaths and pedestrian crossings would be welcome between the settlements to enable children to walk to school and to facilitate movement generally between the four settlements in Chailey Parish. It was indicated that enhanced public transport provision would also help residents to access existing local services.
- 23.10 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review identified that should the opportunity arise, developer contributions should be sought via Section 106 agreements for a new cricket pitch within Chailey Parish. It also suggested that there should be investigation, with leisure providers such as schools/parish councils, into the possibility of developing tennis or multi-use games areas. Meetings were held in spring 2010 to ascertain from Parish Councils if there were any local priorities and/or needs which if carried out would improve the quality of life for the respective communities.

23.11 In the case of Chailey Parish it was advised that currently there are no sports provision/pitches and that it is not possible to use the school (contrary to the suggestion of the Playing Space Review). Also the need for land for allotments was highlighted and that there is a desire to improve the footpaths and cycle tracks between the settlements in the parish to improve connectivity.

### **Economic Role and Needs**

23.12 Chailey Heritage School and St Peter and St James Hospice provide opportunities for local employment as does Chailey Brickworks and there are small industrial units at the former Hamsey Brickworks Site. There are also a number of smaller businesses in the vicinity which provide a small number of local jobs. However, one of the key findings of the Chailey Parish Survey was that more local jobs are required.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

23.13 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

### **Environmental and Landscape Factors**

23.14 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald. There are a number of key characteristics of this landscape type that present themselves in South Street such as a 'gently undulating and relatively low-lying countryside with abundant trees, small woods and hedges'.

23.15 To the west of South Street are views over low hedges to the wider undulating landscape with wooded areas to the north, south and east giving a sense of separation and enclosure to the settlement.

### **Conclusion**

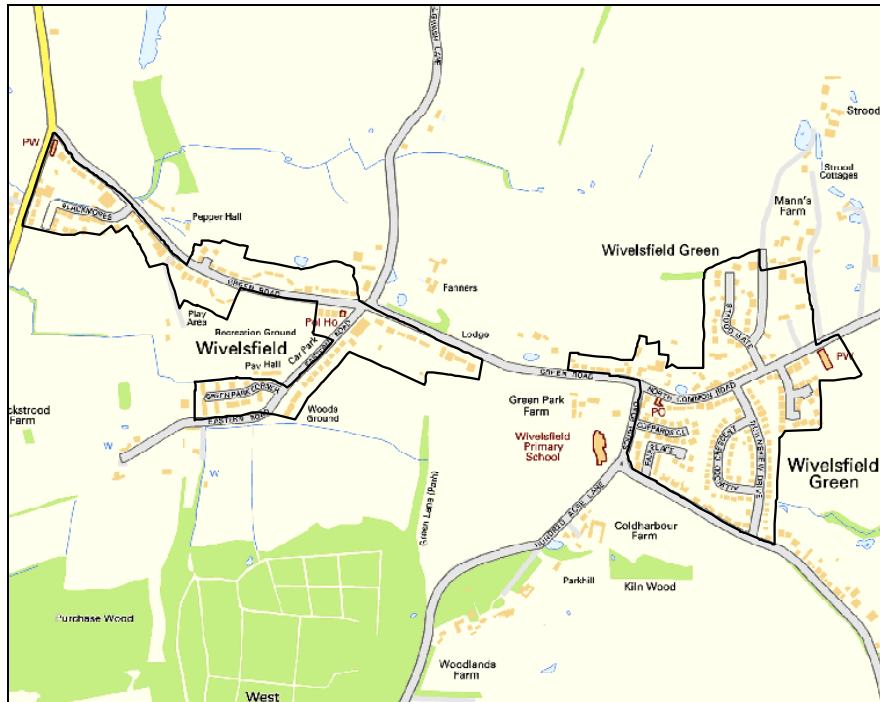
23.16 South Street with its convenience store, public house and post office is a small village, visually isolated but with community links to South Chailey due to the proximity. The facilities at South Chailey namely the secondary school and doctor's surgery therefore are readily available for the residents of South Street and it is likely that the two villages are interdependent for their services and facility needs.

23.17 The built form of South Street has largely taken place within land bounded by the A275 to the west and green lane to the east with a small number abutting the east side of green lane.

23.18 The bias in the population for the parish of younger people suggests that the provision of affordable housing may be an issue within the

lifetime of the LDF, however at the present time there is no housing needs survey for the parish. Also the general need for additional recreational facilities in Chailey parish could be provided adjacent to the 3 other settlements within the parish if land is not suitable available or achievable in South Street.

## 24. Wivelsfield Green



### Introduction

- 24.1 Wivelsfield Green is located in the north-west corner of the District, just under 3 miles south east of Haywards Heath (in West Sussex) and just over 3 miles north of Ditchling.
- 24.2 Wivelsfield is the earlier settlement and lies to the west of the B2112 Haywards Heath to Ditchling road and is where the early parish church is situated. The Anglo-Saxons recorded the name of the village 'Wivelsfelda' in an 8<sup>th</sup> Century Charter. The original settlement is designated as a conservation area and as the population is less than 100 and has only one key service. It is covered in the hamlet section of this study.
- 24.3 Wivelsfield Green lies to the East of the B2112 and is a relatively modern settlement. Development has taken place in two almost separate areas and there is a wedge of open and undeveloped land that separates the east and west parts of the village. The eastern part of the settlement has the majority of the services.

## **Services and facilities**

24.4 Within the main confines of the village there is a convenience food store/post office, a hairdressers, a public house, a primary school (with a net capacity of 140 although there are 142 on the school roll) and a recreation ground with adult football pitch, cricket pitch, car park and play area. There is also a village hall and a petrol filling station with a small shop. A Mormon Church is located to the east of the settlement. The nearest doctors surgery is in Burgess Hill, approximately 3 miles away. The mobile library visits the village once a week.

## **Accessibility**

24.5 Burgess Hill is within a 2 mile walk by public footpath and a 3 mile drive. Wivelsfield Train Station is on the London to Brighton line though is not located in Wivelsfield, but in a northern neighbourhood of Burgess Hill. This too is within a 3 mile drive.

24.6 A bus service links the village with Lewes, Plumpton, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill. It is a frequent service, with the last bus into the village from Haywards Heath arriving at 6.32pm.

24.7 Given the relative close proximity of both Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill to Wivelsfield Green, higher order services and facilities as well as a wide range of retail outlets are reasonably accessible.

24.8 The Sussex Border Path (a 150 mile long footpath) follows the inland borders of East and West Sussex and runs through the settlement.

## **Population profile (2012 estimates)**

24.9 The most populated age group in Wivelsfield Parish is the 45-64 group, with 31.6% of residents falling within this grouping. Some 21.8% of the population lie within the 0 – 14 age group and 13.7% are within the 15-29 age group, both figures being similar to the District averages of 17.1% and 13.4% respectively. Conversely, 13% of the population lie within the 65+ year old age group, which is significantly less than the District average of 24.8%.

## **Housing Needs**

24.10 There are currently 11 households on the Council's housing register.

24.11 The most recent Housing Needs Survey was carried out in 2007 which looked at those in housing need only. The survey concluded that 24 households were in need of affordable housing and that all of these had a local connection (those households forced to leave as they are

unable to afford normal market housing in the village, those having family connections or whose employment is considered to be key to the local economy).

24.12 The survey also concluded that 38 households will require re-housing within 5 years time. This figure includes the 8 households who will require housing in more than 5 years time.

24.13 The survey recommended that there is a need to provide for an additional 17 units of social housing for rent. One shared ownership property is also recommended.

### **Community needs**

24.14 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.6 ha of children's' informal playspace, 0.7 ha of adult football playing area and that should the opportunity arise, that developer contributions be sought via 106 agreements for a new football pitch at Wivelsfield.

### **Economic Role and needs**

24.15 Locally, there are a range of small businesses within the village such as Travis Perkins builders' merchants, as well as places of employment such as small and medium sized industrial units at Ditchling Common. A local manufacturing company within the settlement is one of the main local employers but in view of the relative proximity of the village to the large towns offering employment opportunities and regular train services to locations such as Brighton, London and Gatwick, many of the local residents commute out of the village.

### **Lewes District Local Plan**

24.16 The Local Plan identified a planning boundary for the settlement within which the principle of residential development is accepted.

### **Environmental and Landscape factors**

24.17 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald.

24.18 Much of the area is gently undulating with areas of cover from hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small woods and this describes the typical scenery to be found in Wivelsfield Green. Larger tracts of woodland lie to the eastern and southern sides of the settlement, some of which are designated as ancient woodland. These shorten some of the views southwards and provide an element of containment from the wider landscape.

- 24.19 Much of the existing settlement pattern of Wivelsfield Green is fragmented and dispersed, created with the gradual merging of two discrete areas of development. The western part of the village is predominantly linear in form transitory in character and largely centred around the recreation ground, while the eastern side has developed with the infilling of land between two roads and feels more central due to the built form and the location of many of the villages facilities.
- 24.20 The flood plain runs to the west of the village beyond the B2112 and this road creates an existing boundary to the western side of the village. Small pockets of land are designated for their archaeological interest within the settlement.

### **Conclusion**

- 24.21 Wivelsfield Green has four key services and is identified as a local service centre. It has adequate services for day to day needs and also is in such close proximity to the large towns of Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath that inevitably there will be a heavy dependence on this town for wider service and employment needs that can be accessed by frequent public transport.
- 24.22 The population profile of the villages indicates an above average profile of young people (0 – 29 years) which may translate in the short, medium and long term, a need within the community for low cost/affordable housing.
- 24.23 The countryside always feels close by in Wivelsfield Green with small fields abutting the road although wider views are constrained by trees and woods which offer a level of containment.
- 24.24 Any development could bring forward affordable housing to meet local needs and additional recreational facilities could be provided through developer contributions.

## **25. Hamlets**

- 25.1 It is recognised that throughout the rural area, there are many hamlets which form an important and integral part of the character of the low weald and downland landscapes in the District.
- 25.2 For the purposes of the Rural Settlement Study, hamlets are those settlements that have a cohesive built form but less than 100 population. All the hamlets identified below are historic settlements, often located on slightly higher and drier ground and located adjacent to a historic church.

### **Barcombe**

- 25.3 The Parish of Barcombe is referred to in the Domesday Book, where it states “Bercham – hath three and half mills and a church”. Local evidence exists however of earlier occupation in the area with a roman road crossing the northern part of the settlement, and the remains of a roman villa and roman baths in the vicinity.
- 25.4 The area around the church is a conservation area that comprises of a small number of properties. There are no services other than the church and associated hall while the nearby working farms and agricultural use of the surrounding fields give Barcombe Village its wholly rural character.
- 25.5 The area has a strong rural character where small fields, hedgerows and wooded areas provide the setting and backdrop for a rich variety of dwelling types and styles.
- 25.6 Large areas of land within the conservation area and to the north east and south are identified as having archaeological interest.

### **Bishopstone**

- 25.7 Bishopstone was referred to in the Domesday Book as being the land of the Bishop of Chichester and was for centuries an area of retreat for the Bishops who would stay here till the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The settlement was once adjacent to a waterway which linked it to the sea and water would have flowed to the centre of the village.
- 25.8 It is located within the South Downs National Park approximately 2 miles to the west of Seaford and approximately 1 mile from the sea. The hamlet is approached by a narrow country road and despite being in close proximity to the urban areas of Seaford and Newhaven the village feels isolated and remote and is surrounded by open downland.



With just over 30 dwellings and a population less than 100, it has the character of a hamlet. Much of the settlement is designated as a conservation area and an area of Archaeological interest.

- 25.9 Within the settlement is a church and village hall but there no public transport although regular buses run along the A259 just under a mile away.
- 25.10 Land to the east of Bishopstone is within an area subject to flooding and Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the zoning covers the access road to the south. Both hamlets are similar in that they both have conservation areas and have areas of archaeological interest.

### **Chailey Green**

- 25.11 Chailey Green was the early settlement in Chailey parish and within living memory had a village shop, butchers, tailors, a post office and a smithy. These have now disappeared but the historic settlement remains intact, without any modern additions and consists of an attractive grouping of dwellings and a church set against a village green area.
- 25.12 Adjacent to the green is a public house, small hall and church, informal recreation ground Reading room The primary school is located .5 klm north of Chailey Green
- 25.13 Newick with its small range of shops and facilities is located 4 klm walk and South Chailey with its secondary school is 2klm away. The nearest station is at Haywards Heath some 6 miles away although there are other stations at Plumpton (8 Miles) and Wivelsfield, Burgess Hill (7 Miles). There is a frequent bus service (number 121) that runs from 8.30am to just after 7pm on an almost hourly basis, linking the village to Lewes.
- 25.14 The Parish Council carried out a survey in 2009 as a joint venture with Action in Rural Sussex, with 10% of the residents replying. In respect of housing over 40% expressed a preference for starter homes for young adults and small family homes, 20% to 30% supported small groups of flats or terraced properties and Warden Assisted Housing. 50% of respondents thought that single dwellings should be built in controlled locations and small groups of dwellings of less than 10.
- 25.15 The Survey also stated that accessibility improvements such as footpaths, cyclepaths and pedestrian crossings would be welcome between the settlements to enable children to walk to school and facilitate movement generally between the four settlements in Chailey Parish. It was indicated that enhanced public transport provision would also help residents to access existing local services.

- 25.16 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald. In the case of Chailey Green, the landscape has a sheltered character due to the combination of gentle relief and abundant small woods, trees and hedges. Views from the hamlet, of the wider countryside is contained by these elements.
- 25.17 The village is designated as a conservation area and this designation extends northwards to include the primary school and southwards to include The Five Bells public house. Much of the conservation area is also an area of archaeological interest. North of the green at right angles to the A275, runs land designated within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

### **East Chiltington**

- 25.18 East Chiltington is a sparsely populated rural parish. The settlement of East Chiltington is located some 5 miles north-west of Lewes and comprises of a loose cluster of houses, many of which are listed. The church has origins in the early 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries although it has more modern additions.
- 25.19 The nearest primary school, doctors surgery and train station are located at Plumpton Green just under 3 miles away. The settlement has a public house, playing field, children's play area, adult football pitch and church.
- 25.20 The village is accessed via narrow country roads and is over 3 miles from the nearest 'A' classified road. The nearest train station is at Plumpton Green approximately 3 miles away. The village is served by the 824 bus but this is restricted to one bus on Mon/Wed/Fri to Burgess Hill and one on Tue/Thurs to Lewes. The turn around times are short leaving only 2 hours in the respective towns. The infrequent 166 bus runs just over 1 mile south of the village, giving access to Lewes and Haywards Heath.
- 25.21 There are currently 4 households in East Chiltington Parish who are on the Housing Needs Register.
- 25.22 The Parish Action Plan reported that just over half the respondents to a community questionnaire thought that there was a need for affordable and rented housing in the parish.
- 25.23 The Parish Council published a Parish Action Plan in 2004. This indicated that additional recreational facilities would be desirable for young people and in particular a hard surface area for games and a skateboarding track. The question of building a village hall brought an inconclusive response.

- 25.24 There are several small local businesses such as a blacksmith and stables but most of the land is in farming use. There have been no employment needs highlighted by the Parish Council.
- 25.25 The settlement lies within the South Downs National Park and the area around the church is a designated Conservation Area. The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale that stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald. The ridge line of the Downs feels ever present in this area and the narrow county lanes in combination with the sheltered landscape of woods, undulating fields and hedges gives the area a secluded and remote character.

### **Hamsey**

- 25.26 Hamsey is located 3 miles north of Lewes and consists of a small scattering of homes and farm buildings including the grade 1 listed church (St Peters). The name is probably derived from the Anglo Saxon *Ham ie* or the settlement on the island. The settlement was originally located on a mound that is slightly elevated in the middle of the Ouse valley but was abandoned during the period of the Black Death and the population moved to the west of the valley and settled on higher ground at Offham.
- 25.27 The village is accessed via narrow country lanes some only a cars width wide and despite its close proximity to Lewes feels remote and peaceful. The nearest villages of Offham and Cooksbridge are both just over a mile away, which between them have a school, café, 2 public houses, recreation facilities, village hall and allotments.
- 25.28 There are no services other than the church at Hamsey.
- 25.29 The majority of the dwellings in the settlement are located within the South Downs National Park the boundary of which runs along The Drove and Whitfeld Lane. The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald.
- 25.30 Wet grazing land and riparian habitats are characteristic of this area and the flat and relatively open river landscape around the dispersed settlement forms a contrast to the wooded scarp slope of the Downs, which is prominent in the landscape to the south west.
- 25.31 Much of the land in the vicinity is subject to flooding and within flood zones 2 and 3b. There are also parcels of land that are of archaeological interest. The area around the church is designated as an area of Special Nature Conservation Importance and to the west

adjacent to the railway line is an area designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

### **Norton**

- 25.32 The settlement of Norton which developed around Norton Farm lies about half a mile north of Bishopstone approximately 2 miles from Seaford. It comprises of a few dwellings loose knit in layout, a working farm and ancillary buildings most of which are included within a conservation area designation.
- 25.33 The hamlet is surrounded by open and rolling downs to the north, east and west and has a feeling of great isolation and remoteness. The hamlet is within an area of archaeological interest for its importance in relation to a shrunken medieval settlement.
- 25.34 Like Bishopstone the hamlets is approached via a 'no-through' road which adds to the secret and isolated character of the settlement.

### **Offham**

- 25.35 Offham is located within the parish of Hamsey on the A275, 2 miles north of Lewes. Development is scattered either side of the road. The village is wholly within the South Downs National Park.
- 25.36 In the 1800's lime from the chalk pit was transported on a funicular railway, through tunnels beneath the road to the River Ouse some 400ft below.
- 25.37 The Lewes District Local Plan did not identify a planning boundary for the settlement, within which new development could be contained. There has been little new development at Offham over recent years.
- 25.38 Within the settlement is St Peters Church, allotments and 1 public house (another public house is located to the south of the village). Hamsey Parish School is located in Cooksbridge just under a mile away and has a net capacity of 84 with 75 pupils currently on the school roll. The nearest doctors' surgery and convenience goods stores are in Lewes. The local garage, within half a mile away to the north of the settlement, sells a few essential goods though at the time of writing the garage has closed but planning consent has recently been given for a new building and upgrading of the site.
- 25.39 The A275 which dissects the settlement provides access to the town of Lewes.
- 25.40 The 121,125,166 and 824 buses offer a frequent service to Lewes and infrequent service to Haywards Heath, with the last bus arriving in the village from Lewes at 7.04pm.

- 25.41 There is a pavement that runs from Lewes to Offham although it is narrow and almost non-existent in places.
- 25.42 Hamsey Parish Council published the Hamsey Parish Action Plan in 2004, which covered the settlements of Hamsey, Offham and Cooksbridge. The information within the plan was produced following a questionnaire that was distributed to every resident within the parish.
- 25.43 Of those that completed the survey with reference specifically to Offham, 82% said they would like a late evening bus service from Lewes to Chailey stopping at Offham, 68% said they thought that Offham needs a small car park for residents, hikers and churchgoers whilst 38% thought that a pedestrian crossing was needed at Offham.
- 25.44 The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review 2004 predicted that by 2006 there would be a shortfall of 0.2 ha of childrens' informal playspace in the parish of Hamsey.
- 25.45 The short car journey to Lewes and the availability of public transport means that local employment in Lewes is easily accessible.
- 25.46 In the East Sussex County Landscape Assessment, Offham lies within The Downs character area which is characterized by close cropped turf and sporadic woodland. The village is designated as a conservation area and an area of archaeological interest. In addition, the settlement lies within the South Downs National Park.
- 25.47 Land identified in the floodplain of the River Ouse ( Flood Zones 2 and 3a) lies to the east of the village and land to the south of the settlement is designated as a SSSI.

## **Plumpton**

- 25.48 The early settlement of Plumpton is located five miles north-west of Lewes south of the larger village of Plumpton Green. The word *plumpt* is from the Old English meaning 'positioned under', reflecting the position of the settlement under the South Downs. The early church of St Michaels dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The settlement is dispersed but now is notable due to the large agricultural college that is located near the church.
- 25.49 The settlement lies within the Downs character area in the East Sussex County Landscape Assessment adjacent to the highest part of the East Sussex Downs which culminates at Ditchling Beacon. Distinctive in the area are the North-South drove routes from the scarp of the Downs into the lower weald.

## **Streat**

- 25.50 Streat is a sparsely populated rural parish. The hamlet itself is a small group of houses located around Streat Place manor house and Streat church. The hamlet is located near the foot of the scarp slope of the Downs and is located on Streat Lane, which runs north – south and the ridge which runs east towards Plumpton.
- 25.51 The nearest convenience stores are at Ditchling and Plumpton Green, although there is a farm shop at Westmeston.
- 25.52 The Parish Meeting in April 2010 invited parishioners to complete a questionnaire which included questions on community needs. The respondents (5) commented that the Parish needed more low cost housing although those that completed the questionnaire were not aware of any need.
- 25.53 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald
- 25.54 The southern part of the parish including the settlement of Streat lies within the South Downs National Park.

## **Southeast**

- 25.55 Southeast is a small settlement on the eastern side of the C7, close to the River Ouse. It has an attractive Saxon church at its centre. The hamlet was first mentioned in a Saxon Charter of 966 when King Edgar granted the church and manor here to Hyde Abbey in Winchester.
- 25.56 Southeast is relatively well served by public transport, having a train station with trains to Newhaven, Lewes and beyond. There is also a bus service which runs along the C7 the road adjacent to the hamlet. In addition recently a path has been However, there are no other services in the settlement.
- 25.57 The hamlet lies within the South Downs National Park and has a Site of Nature Conservation Importance and Site of Special Scientific Interest to the east.
- 25.58 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Lower Ouse Valley character area which notes that “there are a string of fine villages with attractive historic churches that occupy higher grounds on both sides of the river”.

## **Southerham**

- 25.59 Southerham is located on the south eastern side of Lewes just at the junction of the A27 and A26 to the south of the Cuilfail tunnel. Despite its proximity to Lewes and the trunk road, the small hamlet remains largely unseen due to the topography of the land and the screening from mature deciduous trees. It consists of a small grouping of dwellings and buildings two of which are listed for their historic interest.
- 25.60 The hamlet is designated as an area of archaeological interest and lies within flood zones 2 and 3. To the north are areas of Special Scientific Interest and a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.
- 25.61 Southerham is notable by the large quarry that is located north-west of the settlement. It was last worked in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries when a railway was used to transport the chalk to the kilns in Southerham works. Relict pieces of this railway were finally removed when the A26 was constructed in the late 1970's.

## **Tarring Neville**

- 25.62 The small settlement is located 5 miles south of Lewes within the South Downs National Park. The area was settled in the Iron Age with tumuli and settlements behind the village on top of the downs at Itford Hill.
- 25.63 It now comprises of a few cottages, a couple of farms and a church, but at one time was a larger area of habitation and was recorded in the Domesday Book as a place of shipbuilding and salt production.
- 25.64 The parish church is a Grade 1 Listed Building and was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, with a 14<sup>th</sup> Century font.
- 25.65 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the area falls within the Lower Ouse Valley character area where the river valley is wide, open and flat floored and historic churches occupy higher ground on both sides of the river.
- 25.66 From the A26 an open green area provides the foreground to the settlement and the attractive grouping of historic buildings. Looking out of the settlement are views across the Ouse valley towards Piddinghoe.

## **Telscombe Village**

- 25.67 Telscombe Village is set in a valley within rolling downland. The origins of the village can be traced back to 966 when it was mentioned in an Anglo Saxon charter.
- 25.68 A Conservation Area designation covers the built form of the settlement and the buildings are tightly arranged around the road which gives the

hamlet a compact feel. There is a mixture of house types, sizes and uses of buildings such as a village hall, a farm, youth hostel, church and residential accommodation.

- 25.69 Collectively the buildings appear as a harmonious grouping allied with the flint walls that run throughout the hamlet. Viewing the settlement from the downland adjacent, the mature trees that surround and thread the built form are in direct contrast to the surrounding open countryside.
- 25.70 The hamlet has a sense of isolation and remoteness, despite its close proximity by footpaths and bridleway to the urban coastal development of Saltdean, Telscombe Cliffs and Peacehaven.
- 25.71 The settlement can be accessed by car from the C7 Lewes to Newhaven Road, along a long narrow country lane.
- 25.72 The entire hamlet is included in the County Council's designated 'Archaeologically Sensitive Area'.

### **Westmeston**

- 25.73 Westmeston is a small hamlet located some 6 miles west of Lewes and wholly within the South Downs National Park. The Clayton to Offham escarpment lies to the south some 800 ft high and forms a dramatic backdrop to the settlement.
- 25.74 The hamlet has a church, St Martins' which dates back to 1100 (with later additions) a newly built parish hall and a cricket field..
- 25.75 The hamlet is relatively dispersed with a short section of contiguous development where Underhill lane joins the B2116. In this area many of the houses are built with local materials and allied with the architectural detailing provide a picturesque grouping in an outstanding setting.
- 25.76 The B road links the settlement with Ditchling and Plumpton Green some 1.5 miles and 4 miles away respectively, which offer a range of services and facilities including a primary school, doctor's surgery and shops.
- 25.77 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies at the junction of 'The Downs' and Western Low Weald character areas and the study highlights that the scarp foot villages like Westmeston are very much of the Downland scene. Parts of the settlement have much tree cover and this is in stark contrast to the smooth and rounded ridges of the Downs.
- 25.78 Land and buildings straddling the B2116 are designated within a Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological Interest covers this



area and includes land along Underhill Lane. The area around the church is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance and the Downland to the south is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

### **Wivelsfield**

- 25.79 Situated west of the B2112, Wivelsfield village lies in the low weald and is the original historic settlement of Wivelsfield Parish.
- 25.80 The settlement is home to St Peter and St John the Baptist church, thought to be built around 1100 which has a church hall. There is also a day nursery and a car park on Church Lane.
- 25.81 The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment indicates that the settlement lies within the Western Low Weald character area which essentially comprises of a low lying vale which stretches from the foot of the Downland scarps to the High Weald
- 25.82 The core area is a designated Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological Interest. The latter designation includes land to the south-west and east of the hamlet.

