



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 1

The new working party, with several new faces, has begun to meet at the Piddle Inn to talk about the way ahead.

The main subjects for study are confirmed and focus groups created to take each aspect forward by looking at the experiences of residents and talking to them about the way they see the future character of the Valley settlements develop in the next 10-15 years.

We shall be present at the various village meetings to listen to the local points raised by residents and discuss any concerns they may have in more detail. This is an essential part of the process of information gathering for the Neighbourhood Plan.

So far we have four or five people in each of these focus groups so if you feel able to join them, we would welcome your help.

Focus Groups

- **Environment, landscape + farming**
- **Transport, communications + infrastructure**
including roads, cycleways, footpaths and bridleways
- **Housing + sustainable development, redundant buildings conversion**
with emphasis on designing for low energy use
- **Renewable energy for community use, its generation and distribution**
- **Business and community facilities, employment and tourism**

Village Meeting dates

Alton Pancras	to be confirmed	
Piddlehinton	11th March	7.30pm
Piddletrethide	to be confirmed	
Plush	to be confirmed	

Future dates will be posted on village noticeboards and www.piddlevalley.info

Contact the Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348981
email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk

John Browning

john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk
neighbourhoodplan@piddlevalley.info



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Help make the
Vision
for our future

Newsletter 2

Work on our Neighbourhood Plan has been moving apace in the two months since the last report. The January meeting of the volunteer working group saw the setting up of five focus groups (each of five/six people, now growing) to look in more depth at the way we all live and how we can direct change for the next ten or fifteen years. We see the Valley continuing to remain a conserved environment. Many problems and difficulties will be raised but they can be addressed in positive and imaginative ways, shaping development with the means of achieving the highest priorities for community benefit. The direction of the focus groups is becoming clearer so this is a summary:

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

Establishing a keynote in landscape protection, views into and out of the Valley, protection from new development, green publicly accessible areas, footpath routes and the settings of pubs and eating places, encouragement for farming diversity, limiting light pollution by planning, and restoration of traditional fingerposts.

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

Walks around all village settlements to understand and record the character, shape of each community, likely need for housing, *particularly for local people*, empty property, proportion weekend residents, possible sites at village centres, support for current activities, sustainable building, variation of development boundaries.

Business and community needs

led by Ian Messer elizabeth.ian.messer@gmail.com / 01300 348580

Detailed study of Enterprise Park development policy, existing buildings, new building and landscape enhancement, level of small business activity in the Valley, demands for young people and existing residents needing new business space or live/work units to develop current small scale activities.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easy.net.co.uk / 01300 348280

Comparison of the different energy sources : coal, coke, wood, straw/dung, biofuels, solar versus gas and mains electricity. Water turbines, development of community solar farms and community woodland, recycling and insulation initiatives and involvement of the School in research.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert *sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479*

Broadband situation, public transport facilities, bridleways, footpaths and cycleway network, maintenance, parking ideas and traffic speed reduction studies combining pinch points with pavement improvements and possible funding methods.

An overall programme has been set out for research and discussion with residents, local groups and societies. The plan boundary for study has now been officially approved and advertised and a date set for the next issue of News and Views on 1st July when we expect to set out the key areas we see forming the basis of our Plan. We shall be including a pull-out section for you to add your own comment and feedback to widen discussion with everyone able to offer a view – we hope that you will all join in for that.

This is becoming an absorbing and surprisingly inclusive and sociable activity for all who have become involved so far, but we would like to see even more people coming forward for information gathering. We meet for the various discussion groups in various houses and pubs around the Valley; it is great fun, so do look at the website, get in touch with group leaders and join in – a warm welcome awaits you !

Contact Working Group Chairman, John Browning

telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk

neighbourhoodplan@piddlevalley.info



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 3

Progress in the last two months has widened significantly now that we have more people contributing in the various focus groups. This is giving us a much more comprehensive impression of the future needs of Valley residents so if you feel you can add more to what we are gathering you are very welcome to do so by speaking to the group leaders or direct to me either by email or telephone. Every contribution is welcome and all will be carefully recorded.

We have been noting all your comments and conversations at the various village meetings and Fetes from our small white marquee – you can't miss the large banner!



Read here how each focus group has been working to identify the key areas. The Business group has been recording all the commercial activities that many would not know are going on in our midst and evaluating what is needed to allow more employment to be provided, particularly for young people, as well as more suitable space for community uses, available to more people and much better located. Both the Housing and Environment groups are looking much more specifically at where redundant buildings could be put to good use in the future by conversion and adaptation, and new sites identified for low cost and open market housing in small areas of infill where they can support the present village fabric and infrastructure. Energy is concentrating on renewable sources, particularly from the river as the earlier mills would have done and possible future management of woodland for fuel combining with conservation objectives. The schoolchildren too have been enthusiastically contributing to energy and transport topics under their energetic head Tracy Jones. Transport has been a lively subject looking at traffic speed control measures, footpaths and the upgrading of the riverside bridleway for use as a cycleway alternative to the road.

Please read the reports below and get in touch with one of us if you can.

Contact Working Group Chairman, John Browning

telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk

neighbourhoodplan@piddlevalley.info

Business and community needs

led by Ian Messer elizabeth.ian.messer@gmail.com / 01300 348580

We have been collecting information about the present situation in the Valley and we have run a survey in Piddlehinton, Piddletrenthide, Alton Pancras and Plush comparing the present activity with that of 20 years ago.

We found 20 years ago

- there were double the number of shops
- more farms
- more small businesses
- more pubs

But we found NOW

- there are more Bed and Breakfasts
- more second homes (20 years ago there were none)
- more leisure activities

We have also been looking at the present situation in the Enterprise Park to see how it can be improved for the benefit of those living in the Valley. Our work will now focus on the future and some of our ideas are

- finding a suitable place for small business work units largely to encourage young local people to set up here
- exploring disused buildings which could be converted for the use of work units, or a covered space for village events such as farmer's markets, garden shows, craft fairs, art exhibitions, dances, dog shows, and for use by young people in the village etc.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Our concentration has been focussed on the potential for renewable energy sources through the Valley, exploring community woodland options, their management and viability of hydropower and solar. A visit to Enterprise Park highlighted companies already leading the field utilising renewable solutions.

Fuel

An invitation to walk an ancient 11 hectare woodland and adjacent woods confirmed there **is** potential to harness wood for fuel ie chippings, logs and pellets for open fires and stoves; chippings with 30% moisture content burn for half the cost of oil. Further discussions are planned with landowners and foresters to identify other woodland and how it could be managed and the fuel made available for the community.

A visit to Bournemouth Renewable Energy Marketplace and discussions with a range of exhibitors confirmed pellets for biomass boilers some 2/3s the cost of oil so to be considered in any new building.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Hydropower

Investigations have established the viability of generating energy from the River Piddle - historically, there were seven water driven mills on the River Piddle located between Alton Pancras and Piddlehinton. The Environment Agency (EA) provided river flow data for two locations, South House, Piddletrenthide and Little Puddle, Piddlehinton, so the highest, lowest and average flow rates have now been established. We have evaluated two Case studies from Hydropower installers - the conclusion that it **is** potentially viable to generate energy utilising hydropower on the River Piddle, using either turbine or waterwheel generation techniques.

The NP Energy Focus Group arranged for the EA to visit Piddle Valley School on Monday 17th June to present and lead activities with the children on different aspects of water flow, purity, flooding and water life. We hope this will be both educational and enjoyable and will continue with groups monitoring water flow etc. into the Autumn Term.

Mole Valley Feed Solutions + Eco Sustainables

Following a recent visit to the Bourne Park feed mill, Mole Valley Farmers were invited to contribute an article to inform local residents of the history of the mill, where it fits within the current Mole Valley Feeds business; and the progress and future development of running the mill with renewable energy sources.



Originally built by Hanford PLC as a grass drying plant in the late 1960's with a key raw material for feeding farm livestock already being manufactured, the decision was taken to extend the factory and manufacture commercial ruminant

diets, concentrating on larger dairy units and promoting their products as green feed.

Several years later Hanford's sold the mill which has over a period of 14 years had a succession of owners. For the last 8 years the mill has been operated and owned by Mole Valley Farmers trading as Mole Valley Feed Solutions and produces about 80,000 tonnes of livestock feeds each year servicing South and South East England.

Piddlehinton Feed Mill, one of four within Mole Valley Farmers feeds operation has a combined output of over 350,000 tonnes each year. The feed mills complement the overall business of Mole Valley Farmers which includes 50 retail outlets with SCATS in Dorchester and Mole Valley Farmers in Yeovil local to the mill.

The Mole Valley Farmers business is always looking at ways to reduce the mill costs of production, which in turn helps to make us competitive in the marketplace. This keeps the price of feed affordable to our members and farmer customers.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Eco Sustainables

One option for reducing costs was to produce renewable energy on the Piddlehinton site. In 2010 Mole Valley Farmers and Hanford's, in partnership with ECO Sustainables, decided to build an "anaerobic digester". This was to supply the mill with both gas and electricity; with the additional output supplying the main grid. The digester came on stream in September 2012. Neither party wanted a digester that needed to use crops specifically grown to fuel the digester and the decision was made to use domestic and catering food waste, which in the main would come from doorstep waste food collections - food waste is liquefied using either pig slurry from nearby pig units or water drawn from a bore hole, then pumped to digester.



Methane gas is produced to run the engine that produces the electricity, with an additional pipe line installed to the mill where the gas is used to run a boiler; this in turn produces the steam for use in the production process. The waste product from the digester is then pumped through a pasteurizing unit into a holding tank where farmers collect the product with tractors and tankers to spray back onto the fields as fertilizer.

In addition to the digester the feed mill is also drawing electricity from the new Photovoltaic site (solar power) in the adjoining fields. This is another joint venture managed by Hanford and as with the digester this source of power generation is in the process of being expanded.

With the combined power from the renewable energy resources on the site i.e. electricity from the digester and the photovoltaic plants, gas generated from the digester and water for the plant all sourced from local bore holes, Mole Valley Feed Mill at Piddlehinton will become the only feed mill in the country to be run entirely on green energy and anticipate that the total energy generation from the site will be in excess of 10 Megawatts by the year 2016.

The Energy Focus Group is exploring further renewable energy initiatives on Enterprise Park to benefit the wider Piddle Valley community.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

Whilst we realise how fortunate we are to live in the Piddle Valley environment our surroundings must inevitably be subject to a degree of change if the community is to develop and prosper. The aim of our focus group is therefore to pull together policies which will protect and enhance the environment and at the same time develop and promote policies that will cater for all age groups and different interests.

Approximately 90% of the land forming our Neighbourhood Plan area consists of farmland, 3% woodland and the balance buildings, roads, etc. By any standards we live in a very rural area, a position we would not wish to change. Farms are mainly large-scale, well structured and efficient hence viable over the long-term. Woodland by contrast, although relatively small in area is mainly unmanaged thereby offering the possibility of providing employment and a source of timber for fuel, etc. The Piddle Valley also has a substantial number of areas of grassland designated as Sites of Local Importance for nature conservation – mainly wildflower pastures. Some are in good condition, others deteriorating due to lack of grazing, a matter requiring attention.

The Group is currently walking the Neighbourhood Plan area in order to assess priorities for the future. Issues identified to-date include woodland, hedgerows, nature conservation areas, the need to protect green open spaces within each of the five communities, redundant farm buildings, business sites, possible sites for development - particularly affordable homes and sites for renewable energy development. If you have any additional aspects you feel the Group should address we shall be very pleased to hear from you.

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people
led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

The members of the Housing group have completed a full visual appraisal of all the villages to better understand existing housing and other buildings and to identify potential development sites. It is recognised that in many cases the landowners may be unlikely to want developments to take place. However the intention is to recommend open land or small plots with good potential access and where development would have a positive impact on village topology and continue or complete existing runs of housing. Should the identified land be made available at some future date the Neighbourhood Plan would support its development.

Issues of affordable and open market housing, accessibility, transport facilities and village facilities such as pubs, shops and halls are being reviewed in considering community development.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

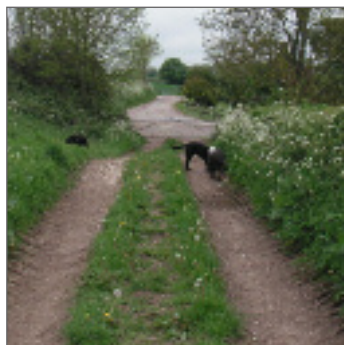
A Walk to School

One morning in May 2013 members of the Transport Focus Group, set out to walk from Piddlehinton to All Saints Church, Piddletrenthide, along the bridleway to look at the feasibility of converting it to an all weather cycleway, with a possible extension to Alton Pancras.

En route to Piddlehinton to begin the walk we came across children from the Piddle Valley CE First School walking in the opposite direction along the B3143 on their way to school, having started their walk at the Thimble Inn in Piddlehinton. The children do what they call the "walking bus" on a regular basis as part of advertising healthy life-styles and also to remind road users of the legal speed limits when using our small rural roads. The children were supervised by Mrs Claire Hudson and CPC Vickey Hedges, along with many parental and Governor volunteers. All adults and children wore fluorescent jackets to ensure that they were highly visible and safe at all times.



In contrast, the bridleway walk back towards Piddletrenthide was incredibly quiet, very few people about and totally different from the amount of traffic that morning on the B3143. These photographs show children adjacent to South House on the B3143, and the empty bridleway at nearby South Farm Cottage, only 150 metres apart - what a difference!



The January 2013 Piddle Valley School Travel Plan is very interesting; one of the actions is to establish a link with Piddle Valley Parish Council to raise awareness of the condition of the bridle path and investigate the creation of an all-weather surface. It is also noted that many families do walk to school using the off road pathways when the weather is good and would do so more often if a permanent surface was in place. The travel plan also states that many adults and children would prefer to walk or cycle to school but find this difficult due to the volume, speed and type of traffic that uses the local roads during peak times.

The 2012 Piddle Valley Parish Plan showed strong support for an off-road all-weather bridleway running from Piddlehinton to Alton Pancras; 74.9% of respondents to the questionnaire being in favour and 18.2% against. All respondents were agreed that motor vehicles must be excluded and there were some reservations concerning cyclists. By far the most frequently cited concern was the state of the roads - their condition and the problems caused by heavy traffic using them - which contributed to fears concerning road safety. It was felt that an off-road bridleway linking the villages could provide a partial solution.

The Transport Group are looking at the feasibility of converting the bridleway into an all weather cycleway, which would not only give schoolchildren the option of using it to travel to school, but also provide local residents and the general public with a viable alternative to the valley road.

Piddle Valley First School have recently run a poster competition concerning traffic and safety and the winner is being awarded the privilege of being the first to hold a speed gun on the B3143, adjacent to the school.



Traffic Survey

A visual recording of traffic movements in Alton Pancras was carried out between 7 am and 10 pm during June 2013. The total number of vehicle movements recorded in the 15-hour period was 1,109, of which 750 involved cars and 211 vans. More vehicles travelled south (593) than north (516); a total of 18% of van drivers (39) and 15% of car drivers (110) appeared to exceed the 30mph speed limit.

Traditional commuter and school traffic : 52 vehicle movements between 7 - 8 am and 86 between 8 - 9 am, while the evening period between 5 - 6 pm produced 85 movements, 6- 7 pm accounted for 61 movements.

Because of the impossibility of safely overtaking moving vehicles on this stretch of road, there were frequent incidences of short vehicle 'convoys', their speed dictated by that of the lead vehicle. Frequently convoys were led by a larger vehicle travelling within the speed limit. Speeding drivers generally were not in a line of traffic but making their own decisions on choices of speed which might suggest that if residents travelled through the villages of the valley – including Buckland Newton – at 30mph or less, thus ensuring following vehicles did the same, this would be a better regulator of traffic speed than a fixed-site speed camera.



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 4

Progress continues as members of our focus groups generate much more specific evidence and begin to outline the main subjects which are emerging as the issues that residents would like to see included for incorporation in the future Neighbourhood Plan to serve the five villages for the next 15 years or so.

The main subjects of interest remain traffic speed and danger along the main road, a valley cycleway, affordable housing and a village centre to serve the whole valley population.

Although we do now have a good number of people involved in what are becoming very interesting studies, we would still welcome more of you to come forward and join the discussion at the regular meetings, usually once a month for each group when they plan actions to be undertaken for the period ahead.

We also have a need for a computer-literate secretary to the main working group for their monthly meetings to help record and distribute notes and information to those involved which helps them plan the work they undertake.

Do get in touch with me if you feel able to help in any of these spheres.

**John Browning
Working Group Chairman**

*telephone 01300 348981
email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk
npchair@piddlevalley.info*

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

We have been consulting and meeting with individuals and representatives across the community to gain ideas and support for the Neighbourhood Plan and have now identified various sites in the valley that may be suitable for a variety of uses including :

- low cost housing
- open market housing (or a mixture of the two)
- live/work units
- social facilities for the valley

If you know of a site that you think might be suitable for any of these uses please do get in touch as we need input from as many residents in the valley as possible.

We are currently organising a Housing Needs Survey to try to determine the housing needs for the valley over approximately the next ten years. This will not only look at the need for low cost housing but should indicate what other types of housing are wanted by the valley residents. The survey will be delivered to all households in the valley in the autumn and we would ask that everyone takes the time to look at it and complete and return, so that we can have a true picture of the housing needs.

Business and community needs

led by Ian Messer elizabeth.ian.messer@gmail.com / 01300 348580

We have carried out a survey of village businesses, leisure and tourism activities and an assessment of the companies and their work at the Piddlehinton Enterprise Park. The ongoing tenor of opinion we have gathered from the community suggest a range of objectives that need to be addressed :

- small business units and live/work dwellings to enable young local people to set up here in the Valley
- some additional holiday cottage units for growing tourism needs
- a survey of disused, underused workshop and industrial buildings and redundant farm buildings which can be converted, upgraded or replaced to provide accommodation for the future

- a large, covered area, central to the Valley villages to provide a much needed multi-purpose resource for community use, preferably with a green open space and parking nearby to help avoid some of the current expense of marquee hire, eg fetes and craft fairs, Garden Club shows, concerts, film nights, drama productions, dance, art exhibitions, farmers' market, Scouts, Guides, Brownies, dog shows, fitness classes, indoor sports and hiring out for revenue
- complimenting the above, a secondary meeting space in each village for smaller groups to assemble such as a parish room

This is a focus group which still needs more help from interested residents, particularly in the next few months, so if you feel able to contribute some time, this will be much appreciated by the rest of the team. Please contact John Browning on 01300 348981.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Realising renewable energy generation opportunities in the Valley continues the main objective and its conservation to reduce running costs. Some progress and recommendations have been achieved but we would welcome help from more members of our community in this important subject for the future. Our objectives :

Hydropower

Potential locations on the River Piddle have been identified and visits to established hydropower projects are arranged to establish viability of our smaller river.

Solar

While the siting of the proposed Bourne Park solar array applications has minimal visual impact in the wider landscape, the capacity of the grid to accommodate further extensive photovoltaic arrays in the Valley is limited.

- include guidance in specifying and siting solar panels for domestic, business and live/work units

Reducing energy costs

- guidance and recommendations for residents on reducing heating and power costs

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Fuel from Woodland

Discussions continue with the Environment Group, the users and owners of woodland to achieve a community policy to generate fuel as logs or chippings for use within the community with visits in September to similar community projects elsewhere in Dorset which are up, running, viable and benefitting their neighbourhoods.

- create, if this proves viable, a management plan for the production of a community energy resource in conjunction with landowners and local employment, perhaps using a Valley co-ordinating body or trust

Wind turbines

It is clear that any large scale wind turbine application would gain little support, though it is recognised that individual owners may opt for a turbine if their siting is appropriate. Those interested in this subject should make contact with Dot Browning .

- include evidence for any small scale operation required in specific locations

Recycling initiatives

The Anaerobic Digester (AD) and Mole Valley Feed Mill take in commercial, organic and animal waste and the photovoltaic array applications generate power at Bourne Park, leading the way in energy terms. We continue to explore possible community energy and recycling initiatives.

- establish whether any spare capacity can be taken up at Enterprise Park
- provide a collection point for plastic lids from milk and beverage cartons in large quantities for their reuse and reduce the amount of waste to landfill.
- encourage use of horse manure for allotments, gardens or brick production for biofuel stoves managed with woodland fuel.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

The work of this focus group is well under way and has identified issues we need to set out for the Neighbourhood Plan :

- all future building development should be situated in the Valley bottom, in or adjacent to the existing development forming the five communities

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

- protection of specific long distance views from future development areas where development may be appropriate for uses such as private and low-cost housing, business and recreational facilities
- future uses for redundant attractive and historic buildings where they can be protected by conversion for new, sustainable uses
- protection of green open spaces which add to the quality of the environment in which we live
- farming in the Piddle Valley is mainly well-structured in size and scale of enterprise; we need to recognise that additional buildings may be needed to allow expansion of farm activity and facilitate technological development; new buildings should be environmentally sustainable and designed in sympathy with their landscape setting
- prevent as far as possible, farm fragmentation that results in unviable businesses to avoid unnecessary damage to the landscape
- encourage the longer-term management of under-utilised woodland as a potential energy source and a valuable asset in protecting our landscapes
- encourage protection, management and replacement where necessary, of hedgerows as valuable wildlife corridors and important features of the landscape
- require the highest level of management to ensure protection of our 21 sites of Local Nature Interest, some of which are in good condition but others are deteriorating in their range of plant species
- set out ways to protect and enhance public access that increases visitor numbers and encourages business activity
- encourage restoration of fingerpost direction signs where necessary and remove unnecessary signage

Responses to these proposals for priorities, and any other aspects you may feel we should address, and will be much appreciated and help to ensure we have wide acceptance of the Plan as it emerges.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

We are collecting broadband speeds for comparison so we would be glad if you can check and report your speed to Neil Herbert at sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk. – see the website : <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast-dorset/check-broadband-speed>

Traffic speed, volume and danger to other road users is of great concern to many using the B3143 valley road. A draft report has been prepared using responses from the Parish Plan, the School Travel Plan and comments from village fetes and other events. It includes results of traffic surveys by Dorset County Council at Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide at the end of 2011, a recent survey by a resident of Alton Pancras and accident statistics from Dorset Roadsafte for the whole 15 mile length of the road from 2003-2013. A traffic survey for Rectory Road, Piddlehinton is to be carried out shortly by Dorset County Council.

A significant factor in relieving some of this risk will lie in the achievement of an upgraded bridle / cycleway along the Valley. This was one the most popular subjects mentioned in the Parish Plan attracting 74.9% support. It may not be generally realised that a bridleway shares the same designation as a cycleway and can be used by either mode but in its present state, its use is limited to dry periods and mountain bikes. Upgrading will not mean seeing tarmac or any other impervious material but one suited to ordinary bicycles, pedestrians and disabled scooters but not mechanically-propelled vehicles other than mobility units for disabled use - it would not be a BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). A meeting is scheduled in late August with Dorset County Council to discuss the feasibility of such a cycleway from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide with possible extension to Alton Pancras and beyond.

It appears that the main objectives of the Plan will be :

- the upgrading of the present bridleway to be more suitable for ordinary bicycles, not just for children but also for adult users and disabled people
- Initiate action, with evidence for the Plan, in the mounting of warning speed signs along the road, produced by Children living here in the valley, training and initiating other residents in a Speedwatch monitoring campaign in conjunction with police to encourage observation of the 30 mph speed restriction along the B3143

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

- generate financial backing for a traffic management study of the B3143 by the traffic engineers responsible for the recent Roads in Dorset Villages Report; the intention being to produce worked evidence for measures to calm traffic at sensitive locations by environmental enhancement
- to bring forward improvement of broadband service speeds to all villages so far as it is technically feasible to do so

Much of the means for managing traffic speeds lies outside the control of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group but it is an issue which many people feel strongly about and we will do whatever we can to see that this is addressed.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Timeframe

Responses from residents on first outline of Plan	September / October 2013
Preparation of Draft Plan by focus groups	October / December 2013
Final Draft Plan to residents	February 2014
Submission to West Dorset District Council	April 2014
Consultation period 6 weeks	May 2014
Adjustment period	June 2014
Independent Examination	July / August 2014
Further adjustments (if needed)	September 2014
Notification period for Referendum	October 2014
Referendum	November / December 2014



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 5

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

This month we would like to reserve our main message for the subject of our Housing Needs and Land Survey which gives us an invaluable snapshot of wishes, needs and resources throughout the Valley settlements.

You will find the Housing Survey with this copy of News and Views but if you need more copies, photocopy a blank one. It should not take long to complete and give us a much clearer understanding of the present position. All forms should be sealed in the accompanying envelope and handed to one of the individuals who have agreed to collect them, for onward delivery to our office. This needs to be done by the end of the month of November 2013 for a summary to be prepared for publication in the next issue of this magazine.

The form is fairly general in coverage at this stage but once we are able to assemble our summary, we shall be in touch with all those who have contributed for a discussion in enough detail for us to show ways in which these needs can be met. It will give us the best possible basis for including specific policies in our plan and help designate possible sites in an area in which external surveys of Dorset have shown is most in need of help. To put minds at rest, we do not envisage significant blocks of housing appearing anywhere but rather better use made of existing land and buildings, possible new workplaces for individuals and the attraction of more, enterprising young people to live and start a business or provide more facilities for visitors and tourists.

We live in a beautiful environment but we need to make it sustainable for the future. The Neighbourhood Plan will be the over riding document in terms of the development and protection of the Piddle Valley over the next 10 to 15 years so we must make every effort to get it right.

John Browning
Working Group Chairman

telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston malcolm.johnston@zaffre.co / 01300 34869

It is likely that readers of PVNV would assume a neighbourhood plan is about where houses are built and little else and we hope the regular reports published here have demonstrated that there is much more than this involved. However, housing will be a central plank of the plan and this report will update you on our thinking.

The plan offers the great opportunity for us to decide how we want housing in the valley to develop over the next 15 years. It will change, whether there is a plan or not, as can be shown by looking back at changes over the past 15 years and we need to ensure that the beneficiaries of future change are the whole community. Young families who need to have a larger house; older people wanting to downsize; land owners wanting to build for their families or others; people who need to work and live in the community; people wishing to offer tourist accommodation and in so doing will help the local economy. And, of course, people wanting to move into the area to enjoy its wonderful countryside and resources. An 'open market' approach to development will serve some of these needs satisfactorily but many people who need to be in the area for family or work reasons, will not be able to afford commercial prices. In consequence, part of our plan will be to identify ways in which the building of lower cost housing can be supported.

The NP Housing Group has reviewed current and future West Dorset District Council housing plans and walked around all our villages. We have seen exactly where current defined development boundaries lie (limiting areas within which development may be allowed) and where there are clear opportunities for some houses to be built should landowners wish to do so. Our remit is to protect the integrity of villages and where appropriate enhance their future viability by generating plans for growth without this damaging their character. The stages of our work are:

- Understand development areas as just described.
- Understand central government requirements placed on the District Council for future housing numbers.
- Understand the existing housing stock – we are compiling plans for each village identifying whether houses are owner occupied, let, etc.
- Understand the local demand for housing. Enclosed with this edition of PVNV, is a Survey asking you to respond if you have a need for or a wish to build housing whether low-cost or not.
- Investigate ways in which low cost housing can be developed and prevented from subsequently entering the commercial market.
- Identify demand for live/work accommodation and potential locations.

We need all the feedback we can get to inform our work, so please do respond to the Survey, come to the Housing Focus Group Open Meeting on the 25th November and please do write to us if you wish to comment on what we are doing.

Business and community needs

led for the time being by John Browning 01300 348580 / or as above

Progress in this area has been cut short by the loss of several members involved who, for reasons quite unrelated, are unable to help us forward. As a result we have been in touch with several other residents to see if their experience and knowledge of community needs, new business opportunities, workshop and office space for local employment can take us forward in this important area. While we are shorthanded in this area, we shall ensure this important aspect is not forgotten in considering other areas of focus where progress is now more detailed.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Hydropower + Woodland fuel - advice from Pete West (leader DCC Renewable Energy Strategy) and Rupert Lloyd (Climate Adaptation Officer) suggests

- funding available for a pre-feasibility to confirm the viability and potential of the identified Piddle Valley locations. With the permission of landowners, a full feasibility on the recommended locations can follow.
- mechanism for managing community woodland for fuel, the need for specific storage and drying facilities.

Solar voltaic panels, reducing energy costs + recycling - advice is being compiled and the new waste arrangements from 2014 include wider collection of plastic items. See <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/recycle-for-dorset/recycling/plastics>

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

The group is now in the final stages of the walks over the Piddle Valley landscape with only Piddlehinton outstanding.

In Newsletter 4, we detailed 11 aspects to be addressed; our forthcoming report will form an important part of our Neighbourhood Plan. We have no doubt that with our local knowledge we can prioritise particular aspects of our landscape and therefore afford greater protection than offered by the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. This covers a wide area and cannot by definition cover all the aspects we feel makes the Piddle Valley a very special area in which to live.

It will be most helpful if the community can identify their specific interests and aspects for particular attention. Suggestions might range from areas on which future development could take place, to areas already with protection that could be enhanced by improved management eg woodland and hedge planting, improved supervision of wild flower pastures, Rights of Way etc.

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

Broadband Speed

Very limited feedback from residents so please check and send me your broadband download speed to enable us to produce an accurate report by checking : <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast-dorset/check-broadband-speed>

Traffic on the Valley Road (B3143)

Sixteen 'KEEP US SAFE' boards produced by children from Piddle Valley CEVA First School, and endorsed by Dorset Police, have been erected along the road so we shall hope drivers take notice and drive accordingly. As a result of feedback to the Neighbourhood Plan Group, a separate group is starting a 'Community Speed Watch' to cover the B3143 from Piddlehinton through to Buckland Newton. A traffic survey of Rectory Road, Piddlehinton is currently in operation by DCC and will be added to the B3143 report. See website : <http://www.dorset.police.uk/default.aspx?page=6983>

SatNav

Transport Group members are checking routes in the area to establish preference in routes being taken through the valley.

Rights of Way

Representatives from Dorset County Council and the Transport Group met on 16th September and walked the whole route of the existing bridleway from Rectory Road, Piddlehinton to Church Lane, Piddletrenthide in order to view the route and discuss the feasibility of an all-weather surface suitable for all users, including horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians. DCC officers intend to carry out further surveys and investigations, reverting to the Transport Group when these have been completed.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Timeframe

Responses from residents on first outline of Plan	September/ October 2013
Preparation of Draft Plan by focus groups	October / December 2013
Final Draft Plan to residents	February 2014
Submission to West Dorset District Council	April 2014
Consultation period 6 weeks	May 2014
Adjustment period	June 2014
Independent Examination	July / August 2014
Further adjustments (if needed)	September 2014
Notification period for Referendum	October 2014
Referendum	November/December 2014



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 6

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

The Housing Survey forms are in, so thanks to all who took part and for attending our meeting at the school in November. Progress continues in all areas but it is housing on which we concentrate most space again this time.

Just over a year ago, our MP, Oliver Letwin, joined a meeting of our working group and gave us an encouraging start. This exercise was repeated recently when he came again to look at our progress and gave us very helpful advice. He suggested our survey questions might have limited the response so we shall compare our findings with those received from neighbouring communities at Cerne Abbas and Buckland Newton. We have still to include data collected by the District Council. He could see that second homes are affecting communities, particularly Plush.

It was reassuring to hear we can be as specific as we wish in the type, character, size and specification of housing and free to locate housing where needed and appropriate, and in small groups as necessary. Redundant farm buildings have been the subject of debate for a long time but it is now becoming possible to see them converted where appropriate to residential use, workshops or for local community needs. He accepted that the contour restrictions set out in the Village Design Statement will avoid intrusion into the wider landscape.

Land, as well as redundant structures, have been offered by several landowners. We shall be discussing this in more detail with them to help build the overall picture for what is available in the Valley and could go a long way towards what we eventually turn out to need. The procurement route for low cost housing as well as community facilities may well be best achieved through the medium of a community land trust, not unlike the scheme utilised at Buckland Newton. Another useful route might be the setting up of self-help groups where the efforts of individuals can be channelled into the shared objective of building sustainably. These can be exciting options that will bring residents into the latest techniques of energy saving passive construction.

John Browning
Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston malcolm.johnston@zaffre.co / 01300 34869

The Housing and Land Survey Questionnaire distributed with the November edition of Piddle Valley News and Views led to 18 responses, 6 were proposals for land use and the remainder gave information about housing needs.

The meeting held on 25th November to discuss the survey was attended by 25 people and led to some very useful discussion which helped the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Group better understand people's needs. The overwhelming number of comments related to the problems local people face in affording housing whose prices have been driven up by market forces. Among the points discussed around this topic were:

- 1 The negative connotations of the commonly used description 'affordable housing' with its implication that people are poor, and the terms 'local' or 'low cost' were offered as better.
- 2 The possibility of a Piddle Valley Housing Trust being established to build 'local' housing whose prices or rental charges would be lower than open market.
- 3 The possibility of land being made available for self builders – potentially to be administered by the Housing Trust.
- 4 Whether house owners without relatives would consider bequeathing their homes to a Housing Trust.

The housing information provided in the survey responses is shown in this chart; the need for 'low cost' housing clearly demonstrated and emphasised by those who stated that costs prevent them moving. There is a demand for larger houses, but perhaps surprisingly, a greater need stated for smaller houses - this concern relates particularly to those over 50.

An analysis of the responses suggests that 13 houses would be needed to satisfy the respondents' needs but this does not include the number (43) already registered with West Dorset District Council housing officer for the Piddle Valley.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

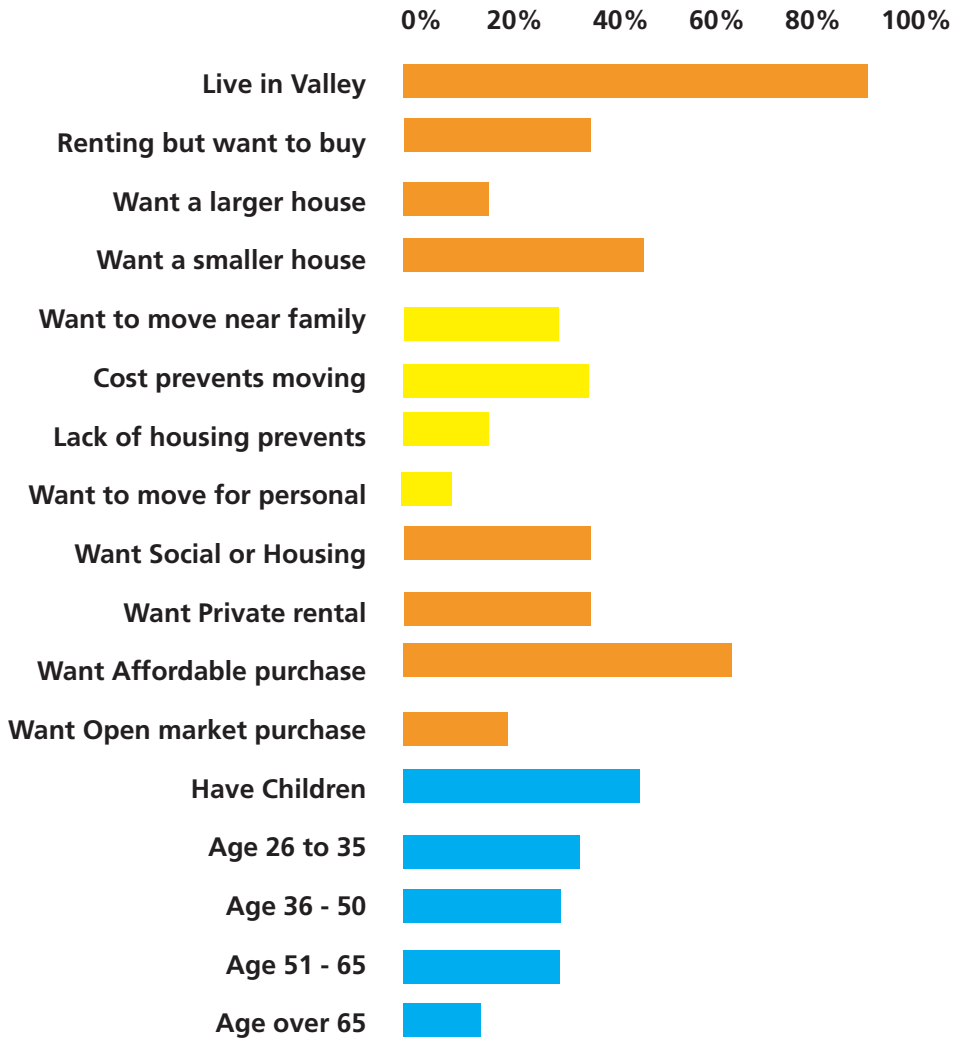
Following advice from South West Regen, a Forestry consultant will be assessing opportunities for further discussion with owners.

Business and community needs

led for the time being by John Browning 01300 348580 / or as above

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Responses to Housing Survey, Housing Requirements



Note not all respondents completed all relevant boxes.

Responses to Survey - Land questions

Of the six respondents offering land for potential development, half had land only and the other half land with existing industrial or farm buildings. Analysis suggests that up to 25 houses could be built on this land.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Hydropower

After the session with Pete West, leader of DCC Renewable Energy Strategy and Rupert Lloyd, DCC Climate Adaptation Officer, Energy Group members have met a hydro consultant to discuss feasibility of a hydropower turbine on the River Piddle. Data relating to river flow rates obtained by the Energy group suggest that a hydro scheme is viable subject to some initial survey work by members before a professional feasibility study can be carried out.

Further hydro related matters were discussed, including Environment Agency involvement, impoundment / abstraction licences, and various funding mechanisms. Site visits to existing local hydro schemes are being arranged to widen our knowledge of viability levels.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

Broadband Speed

More checks needed from residents please, by using:

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/broadband/technical-information/speed>

So far speeds vary : 2.80 - 3Mbps Piddletrenthide (Egypt); 5.40 - 6.00 Mbps (Piddle/Poachers); 1.80 – 2.00Mbps in Plush; 3.75Mbps Piddlehinton; 3.40 - 4.70Mbps Alton Pancras. The average speed for Dorset is 8.70Mbps with 14% less than 2.00Mbps. Superfast Broadband should deliver 24Mbps by summer 2016 to 97% of properties in Dorset as a whole.

Traffic on the Valley Road (B3143)

The KEEP US SAFE posters from local children have been well received by residents and are moved around to refresh them. The Rectory Road traffic survey is complete and results being collated and added to the draft report on the B3143 Valley Road.

SatNav

Any useful data depicting routes along the Valley Road would be helpful for our records.

Rights of Way

The all-weather route from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide for horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians has been well received by DCC but is not likely to be included in next years allocation for funding but more likely for the 2015/16 programme.



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 7

During a period when we have been only too aware of the fragility of the valley infrastructure, we have been taking note of your comments and advice in seeing how our Neighbourhood Plan can incorporate additional measures to help make the landscape of the Valley more sustainable in these extreme but perhaps recurrent conditions, by managing the power of the water, run-off and soil drainage, planting and natural absorption. This clearly affects housing design but this is not new so we need to work with the authorities to develop this programme and include plans within our new policies.

Housing, community and business needs continue otherwise to provide the greatest focus otherwise for our attention in view of the complex issues surrounding these subjects but we believe that real progress is being made and this enables us to concentrate on formulating policies that will underpin the basic structure of our Plan.

At the same time as this all moves forward, we still address the effects of fast moving traffic and alternative, safer means of circulation within our countryside. The schoolchildren's 'Keep Us Safe' placards still encourage drivers to keep speeds within limits, particularly now that speed monitoring is also in operation. High Speed Broadband has come to a more informed head recently; we now know what people manage with at the moment and what is planned for 2016, if in a less than complete way and two years ahead, but it may be possible to bring a scheme forward earlier and more comprehensively. A private technology company is operating effectively elsewhere in Dorset and might work here. You will find a form in this issue inviting you to express your initial interest in exploring this further.

The community energy investigation is now combining with landscape and climate change considerations to outline a way forward by giving this whole subject some backbone for future plans. More will be available soon on this subject.

John Browning
Working Group Chairman

telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

Broadband Speed

As reported in previous editions of PVNV Superfast broadband should be available to the majority of properties in the area by September 2016 and will deliver speeds of at least 24 Mbps.

It is currently understood that the following postcodes will only receive improved broadband, which will be available for those who have a download speed of less than 2Mbps :-

- DT2 7QZ – Egypt area of Piddletrenthide
- DT2 7RW – Alton Pancras south of Keepers Cottage
- DT2 7UA – Enterprise Park, Piddlehinton

A local rural Internet Service Provider (ISP) based in North Dorset has made us aware of their interest in providing an alternative super-fast fibre & wireless Internet service coverage to the Piddle Valley area. We understand that this ISP is fully operational in the Lyons Gate and Glanvilles Wooton area and have recently commenced installations in Ansty and Melcombe Bingham.

Their service is based on an installation cost (dependant on the number of users in an area) plus a monthly rental.

We now ask residents to let us know of their possible interest in this alternative service by filling in and returning the form enclosed with this issue of PVNV, to the PVNV Postbag at the Piddletrenthide PO Stores. Depending on the response, we will arrange a meeting with the provider and invite all those interested if they wish to attend.

Traffic on the Valley Road (B3143)

The results of the traffic survey carried out by Dorset County Council at Rectory Road, Piddlehinton have now been received and are currently being analysed.

Business and community needs

led by Colin Dean colinsuedean@btintemet.com / 01300 348524

It is still early to identify specific trends and needs and compare them with potential space that might become available but this is now ongoing and further reports will keep you informed. It may be enough to say that the interests of current users of Enterprise Park are incorporated as well as current business and community functions in the Parish as a whole. It has been noted that there is a demonstrable need for new small business units within the villages to allow small firms and workshops to develop and provide future employment and to provide for a wider range of community activities.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

There can be little doubt that Valley residents greatly appreciate the surroundings in which we live, although most of us would be hard pressed to identify all the factors which contribute to the enjoyment of living here.

Change in our environment is inevitable but properly structured can be a force for good. The Focus Group is working on the basis that a Neighbourhood Plan developed within the community provides the opportunity to bring together policies more sensitive to our needs than distant National, County and District Plans.

Building in the five communities has, with a few exceptions, taken place very close to the Valley bottom. Our splendid Valley landscape consists of relatively steep slopes and higher level areas which were determined by geology and today's appearance results primarily from the development of agriculture over many generations. Fortunately, our farming can still be described as mixed in terms of the combination of livestock and arable enterprises with its contrasts of grassland and arable crops – far more attractive than the monoculture of the eastern counties. Within the five communities green open spaces are also important features we need to protect. The substantial area of woodland combines relatively small woods and is another factor adding to the value of our landscapes. Appropriate management can increase the contribution this makes and as a source of fuel. There are many Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Land of Local Landscape Importance for which we can encourage additional protection.

The Valley environment is enhanced by amenities: an excellent school, shop, four public houses, well structured farms, shooting syndicates and business activities at Enterprise Park, Piddlehinton. Developing appropriate policies to protect and enhance aspects of the environment we appreciate, will also attract visitors who could generate additional income within the Valley, as well as for our own present needs.

Our Neighbourhood Plan must be inspirational to be acceptable to the community. Objectives can be supported by protection and enhancement of our landscapes, containing future development within natural boundaries.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Hydropower

Outstanding survey work on the River Piddle and visits to hydro schemes have been put on hold due to local water level and flows and significant flooding.

Woodland energy

By agreement with landowners, an assessment of Valley woodlands is to be undertaken by an experienced woodland consultant and will include the potential for wood fuel. Existing models for wood fuel generation are being studied and a plan will be put forward showing how a community scheme could operate enabling logs and kindling to be available for purchase in the Valley.

We have accepted a Woodland Trust invitation to take part in a training event in Bristol to better understand the opportunities for managing woodfuel for the community.

Reducing energy costs

Guidance for existing, listed and new buildings with sustainability advice to

- reduce the energy required
- avoiding throwing energy away
- switching to renewable or low carbon energy
- use of air thermostats

Climate Change Workshop

Following National Climate Change Week 2014 (3 - 9 March), DDC are offering a workshop for residents in the Piddle Valley to explore the possible local impacts of severe weather associated with climate change and then identify possible solution. Please do get in touch with me by email or telephone if you would like to attend. Once we have an agreed date (7th,8th 9th April are possible) and venue, full details will be advised to all registering an interest and will also be included on www.piddlevalley.info

Recycling

A reminder that the new refuse arrangements commence through the Valley on Friday the 7th March. Plastic bottle tops from cartons as well as plastic bottles can now be included in your Recycling wheelybin (green lid). See

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/recycle-for-dorset/recycling>

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston malcolm.johnston@zaffre.co / 01300 34869

Our work over the past two months has been primarily concerned with gaining better understanding of the present Defined Development Boundaries and future developable sites. The former provide an outline around areas within villages that are considered to be suitable to allow development, subject to normal planning applications and procedures. Developable sites can be designated within or outside these boundaries and are where applications to build will be assessed positively provided they comply with defined environmental and design restrictions which will be similar to those being adopted for Neighbourhood Plans emerging in other areas of the country. We are also reviewing the natural boundaries of the villages as they meet the countryside and their relationship to previous Defined Development Boundaries.

In considering potential developable sites we have been identifying land that might well be considered appropriate for building with regard to likely services availability, vehicle and pedestrian access and, most importantly, the factors of visual impact, availability of services and building density. Owners of land in these sites may have no current interest in development but as the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted over 15-20 years there will be potential for future use of this land. Others have identified land they own for consideration in this regard. To provide a degree of objectivity we are developing the assessment criteria which we shall propose in order to establish whether a piece of land is appropriate and graded within such designation during the plan period

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Timeframe remaining

Information gathering ends	March 2014
Drafting Plan Policies ends	May 2014
Strategic Environmental Assessment	June 2014
Statement and Summaries by end	July 2014
Liaison with WDDC ends	July 2014
Approval from Parish Council	August 2014
Community Consultation for 6 weeks	September 2014
Independent Examination	October 2014
Further adjustments	November 2014
Submission to WDDC	December 2014
Referendum	January 2015

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 8

The busiest parts of the Neighbourhood Plan work in this last month have been in housing, communications and community energy fields about which you will read more in these centre pages but we are working towards producing informative material for residents to discuss with the Working Group at the summer fetes, now not far away.

Two presentations from the Wessex Community Land Trust Project team of Steve Watson and Alison Ward with Paul Derrien from the WDDC have shown how low cost local housing can be provided in the next 15-29 years. The Community Land Trust concept is becoming popular all over the country which is why this advisory group has been set up. Such a Trust could be formed outside the Neighbourhood Plan operation and can be a very helpful vehicle to achieve what is needed, with local people involved, and can be used in time to take on many other local roles, such as in protecting the future management of housing (successful at Buckland Newton), amenity land and the future of the shop and pubs as a few examples. Our vicar Tony Monds has taken an interest in this beneficial initiative so if you feel you might wish to join him, please get in touch with us so that work can get started.

Many have been interested in the activities of Wessex Internet after they spoke about the future of high-speed broadband at our public meeting in the School recently; now 62 people have returned their expressions of interest on the forms in the last edition of the PVNV. Elsewhere this week we have made an inspection study of six areas of local woodlands, an initiative supported by the owners. We commissioned a specialist forestry advisor to carry this out and he is now preparing a report for the Plan, soon to be available for public view and copies sent to landowners involved. The focus is on management of woodland for sustainability, managed regeneration, fuel generation, climate change plantings, community access and amenity protection, all as part of our energy and environmental objectives under the Plan.

John Browning
Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348981

email john.browning@regenerationpartnership.co.uk npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert sherbetnj@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

Broadband

- More than 60 completed forms were returned from local residents and businesses in response to our article regarding an alternative superfast broadband Internet Service Provider (ISP) in the March/April edition of PVNV. A meeting was arranged at Piddle Valley First School in Piddletrenthide on Tuesday 8 April 2014 with Wessex Internet, a local Internet Service Provider (ISP), to which everyone who responded was invited. Notices advertising the event were also placed in various village locations.
- Wessex gave an account of their company background, their operating system and the areas of Dorset/Wiltshire they currently operate in. They said it was possible that work to install their system could begin at Piddlehinton Enterprise Park “within weeks” and that they would consider how the other parts of the Piddle Valley could be accommodated. To enable them to progress this, they require certain information, particularly post codes, so please register your interest via their website <http://www.wessexinternet.com/register>

Traffic on the Valley Road (B3143)

- DCC carried out a traffic survey over a 24 hour/5 day period between Wednesday 9 and Sunday 13 October 2013 at Honeypuddle, Rectory Road, Piddlehinton.
- Over 6,000 traffic movements were recorded over the 5 day period, with almost 1,400 average weekday movements and over 1,000 at weekends. Traffic travelling north east towards the B3143 constituted 50% of all traffic, with 50% travelling south west towards Charlton Down.
- Cars and small vans made up 87% of the traffic, larger vans and small lorries 10%, with HGV's, Buses and Agricultural Traffic totalling 3%. 30% of traffic travelled below 30mph, 26% at 30–35mph, 37% over 35 with 7% “anomalies”.
- A weekday average of some 900 motorists exceeded the 30 mph speed limit on this section of Rectory Road, with over 500 drivers exceeding 35 mph.

Rights of Way

- The extract below regarding the Piddle Valley Treasure Trail is from the “visitdorset.com” website - note particularly the final few sentences !

Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide are two small English villages in the heart of Thomas Hardy Country in rural Dorset, six miles from the County Town of Dorchester and 13 miles from the coast. The Trail starts in Piddlehinton with a two and a half mile walk to Piddletrenthide, finishing at the Piddle Inn, an ideal end to your Trail. There are a few different walks back to your car or you could just retrace your steps. This Treasure Trail takes you along one of the many bridleways in the beautiful Piddle Valley. The River Piddle or Trent is a fairly small rural Dorset river which rises next to Alton Pancras church, which is about a mile further along the valley. The Trail is about 2.5 miles and takes approximately 3.5 hours. This is a walking Trail but it is possible to drive between the clues. As the walking trail takes the bridle path it is therefore unsuitable for both pushchairs and for wheelchairs. However if driven the trail would be suitable for both. The bridle way can get very muddy in wet weather conditions - you may need your wellies!

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston malcolm.johnston@zaffre.co / 01300 34869

We have been awaiting information from West Dorset District Council about the numbers of people on their housing lists that require accommodation in the Piddle Valley. This will be available by the end of April and will be combined with the results of our own survey to give a clear picture of local housing requirements (note, all information provided by the Council will be anonymous). Anticipating the need for a good number of housing units (first discussions with the District Council indicate it could be as many as 40), the Working Party has been investigating the ways in which a Community Land Trust might be set up in the Valley to ensure both the initial provision of low cost housing and its continuation in the future. More information about Community Land Trusts may be found at www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk. We do not propose large housing developments as have been carried out by some Community Land Trusts but to use infill spaces between existing housing groups for small clusters of houses (eg 3 or more) and would welcome any suggestions from readers for potential locations across the villages.

We will shortly be meeting with the members of the Environment Group to compare and combine our proposals for housing locations, protected areas of land, protected views and land use policies. These will be combined onto a large map of the valley with the intention that it can be presented to the Working Party and subsequently be available for viewing by all at this summer's village fetes.

The group has also reviewed the Piddle Valley Design Statement (produced in 2005) which will form part of the supporting evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan. We have identified items from the report to be incorporated into the Housing chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

The topography of the Piddle Valley together with the combination of arable and live-stock units results in landscape contrasts and this together with the long distance uninterrupted views give the area its distinct and outstanding character. The location of the five communities, all situated in the Valley bottom together with virtually no development on the higher landscape, is an important factor in protecting the environment of the AONB.

The Neighbourhood Plan area embraces 26 Sites of Nature Conservation Interest of which 20 are in the northern area; these sites are monitored by the Dorset Wildlife Trust, some remain in good condition, others have deteriorated due to lack of grazing.

Uncontrolled grass growth stifles out the plant species which have a low growth habit. There is an opportunity within the Plan to raise the profile of this problem within the community and thereby trigger the possibility of grazing the affected sites with animals from adjacent farms, particularly youngstock.

Over many years farming within the Valley has gone through a period of restructuring resulting in smaller farms being absorbed by larger and more efficient units. While it is frequently claimed that larger farms are responsible for the reduced diversity of our landscapes and wildlife habitats, in reality there is sound evidence to show that larger farms have the area of land and ability to address these problems and participate fully in Environment Stewardship Schemes.

We must ensure that building developments on farms are grouped together rather than fragmented and by appropriate siting, good design and the use of sympathetic materials, their impact on the landscape can be greatly reduced. A problem associated with larger units consisting of blocks of fragmented land divorced from the main farming enterprise, is the increase in the number of tractor movements within the Valley. This has a major impact on noise levels, damage to road surfaces and the environment and will only be resolved by economic pressures together with appropriate policies to allow investment in new facilities.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

Woodland energy

The recent inspection of 6 woodlands confirmed not only the diversity and richness of our woodland but the potential for woodland fuel enabling logs and kindling to be available for purchase in the Valley. The sheer extent of fallen trees could generate significant tonnage of logs now and a managed approach would ensure a continued stock for future decades. We await the full report and discussion with owners to take this forward.

Climate Change

DCC Climate Adaptation Officer Rupert Lloyd gave an overview of anticipated changes to weather patterns and the impact on the Piddle Valley. There was confirmation that measures taken at high contour levels could reduce the run off and flooding experienced this year in the Valley bottom.

Solar

The Plan will include design criteria for domestic solar panels with residents encouraged to see if gardens could accommodate low-level panels. There are opportunities for smaller solar farms but a detailed study of potential sites will be needed.



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 9

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

I have recently taken over the chairmanship of the Neighbourhood Planning Group from John Browning. I would like to thank him for all the work he has achieved over the last 18 months, since the inception of the group, to bring us to where we are now. He proposed that the chairmanship should rotate every six months, so his has been a sterling effort.

John steps down having guided us to a point where our research and ideas are forming nascent policies. These policies, based on the feedback you've already given us are outlined in the following pages.

We have identified a need for smaller homes, both for those who want to buy their first homes and those looking to downsize. Do you think these should be built, and if so, where ?

I think it worth reiterating that the Neighbourhood Plan is about the future. If accepted by you, and ratified by the inspectors, the policies within it will become the planning policies for the Valley for the next 15 years.

The Piddle Valley plan could include a policy that

No public house should be given change of use into a residential property

If that were so and the Plan were in place now, that would be the case. But we live in the present and the Piddle Inn has just ceased trading. If you want to keep the building as a pub, please come and talk to us at the fetes. As soon as more information is available, it is hoped a village meeting can be arranged open to the whole Valley, at which the community could make representations.

photo © Neil Herbert



Paul Johns

Working Group Chairman

telephone 01300 348154

email suevasha@aol.com / npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

The number of households who have close family or work ties with the Valley and are seeking accommodation (as identified from our survey and West Dorset District Council housing lists) totals 50. This is a high figure and greater than any other similar areas in the district, going to show how keen people are to stay in our beautiful valley and close to families. The number is higher than can be housed in the near future but does indicate the importance of more local (affordable) housing being built to meet demand over the next 15 years (the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan).

It has also become apparent that there is a very large demand for small one and two bedroom dwellings, which could be provided by houses or flats. The Working Party will soon be debating housing targets over the period.

A joint meeting held with the Environment, Landscape and Farming group demonstrated that we have both developed very similar approaches to the use of land and allowed us to endorse the sites identified for potential building. These are being shown on maps at the summer village fetes.

Our policies for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan are crystallising and will include:

- The need to develop opportunities for the building of local housing to allow local people to remain in the valley.
- The need to protect the quality of the built environment and ensure there is no impact on the beauty of the valley.
- Protection of designated green or wooded spaces within and around villages to maintain community resources and historic features.
- The need to protect certain views as seen from public rights of way.
- The drawing up of village boundaries to control growth.
- Criteria for accommodating new housing within villages.
- Identification of sites where houses may be built without damaging the character of the villages.
- Support for conversion of historic or older buildings for housing where they have no other agricultural or community use.
- Support for replacing existing large houses, or older housing, of poor design quality with modern eco friendly dwellings which make better use of the land available.
- Criteria to assist in the design of new buildings being sympathetic to those around them.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert *neilherbert45@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479*

The Neighbourhood Plan will support new ways of managing traffic along the B3143 (the valley road) by :

- Supporting local and strategic traffic management to reduce HGV vehicles through the Piddle Valley in order to minimise their adverse impact, whilst managing new development so that they do not have an unacceptable traffic impact on local residents.
- Encouraging pedestrian and cyclist safety through lower traffic speeds and volumes.
- Creation of an all weather surface to the existing bridleway from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide, with possible extension to Alton Pancras for use by cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders and disabled users.
- Encourage the introduction of faster Broadband speeds to all Valley communities.

Draft policies

- Initiatives which promote improved traffic management by reducing traffic speeds and volumes; improve safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists in a way which respects the amenities of the neighbourhood.
- Initiatives which improve local and strategic traffic management through routing of HGV traffic away from the valley roads will be supported.
- Where appropriate, new initiatives will make provision for pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed all weather bridleway.
- Pursuing the extension to Alton Pancras of the existing bridleway from Piddlehinton to Piddletrenthide.
- Encouraging faster Broadband speeds to all communities in the Piddle Valley; all future developments should consider connectivity requirements at an early stage.

Reasons for our policies

Residents expressed concern regarding transport and traffic issues to the NP Working group at 2013 village fetes, in the 2012 Piddle Valley Parish Plan questionnaire and the 2013 Piddle Valley First School Travel Plan. The main issues were speeding traffic, the impact of HGV traffic along the valley road, risks to pedestrians and cyclist safety, so our traffic policies are designed to manage traffic, including that arising from new local development and to improve access to alternative forms of transport.

As the community wishes to encourage cycling and walking as safe options, the NP aims to improve highway safety, minimise conflicts between road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians through the creation of the all weather bridleway.

HGV vehicles pass daily through the Piddle Valley (in connection with farming); we seek to minimise those heavy movements not connected to local businesses.

Good telecommunications is increasingly important in the modern world, so Broadband is even more important in our isolated rural area.

Environment, landscape and farming

led by Peter Chance peter_chance@btinternet.com / 01300 348311

The following aspects are a brief description of our policy areas :

- Protect and enhance the environment of the Piddle Valley.
- Protect the higher landscapes and fine long distant views.
- Develop a policy to manage the Valley woodland in order to enhance it's contribution to the landscape.
- Improve protection of the Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs).
- Ensure a high standard of management and effective Rights of Way signposting.
- Minimise light pollution – Enterprise Park, etc.
- Encourage re-use of redundant farm buildings for housing and small businesses.
- Contain new housing within the existing boundaries of the five communities.
- Ensure high standards of design and materials for all development.
- Designate green open spaces within each community.
- Ensure farm building developments minimise environmental impact and take advantage of improved design and new, more sensitive materials.

If the above does not include aspects which you feel are important or wish to raise any other points, please do be in touch.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

The Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan will support a range of energy initiatives to benefit residents, businesses and community facilities :

- A hydropower scheme utilising the River Piddle to generate power for use by Piddle Valley First School.
- A woodland management scheme to generate woodland fuel and bi-products using fallen and storm damaged trees, the reintroduction of coppicing and new planting to enable woodfuel generation into the future.
- A solar advice scheme enabling creation of small solar fields to benefit community facilities.
- Guidance on the specification and positioning of solar tiles and panels and the opportunities for low level installations.
- Climate Change measures to limit flooding and run-off.
- A Community Land Trust as a vehicle to procure and manage community projects.
- Guidance on energy saving measures for residential buildings.



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 10

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

Planning rules are changing - nationally and locally. A new draft version of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, is about to be adopted. (These are the guidelines upon which planning officers make their decisions and can be found on the Dorset for you website.) There is a lot of press coverage about the national shortage of housing. The Government is 'relaxing' planning in order to encourage building, and this is being reflected locally. No longer will villages be discouraged as housing sites and development will be concentrated on sites with good transport facilities around main roads and railway lines.

So what can a village do if it wants to protect views or areas from development? Define those areas in a Neighbourhood Plan that if accepted will become part of local planning law. But to be credible and to pass scrutiny we have to provide housing somewhere in the Valley. Where should we build? We all know the answer to that - 'anywhere but next door to me'.

Over the past months people have suggested sites within the Valley that may be appropriate for new housing. We have collated these suggestions and the plans are now open for all of you to comment on. They appear on the following pages and we need you to tell us what you think, especially if you are in favour of any of the identified sites. These are not definitive, they are a first draft; it is fine if you want to object to a site but please don't stop there, suggest an alternative. In the autumn we will be holding separate meetings in each of the five villages so that we can receive further specific feedback, after all it is the residents of their village that should decide where in their village is developed and what is preserved. .



The Neighbourhood Planning Group is made up of people who eighteen months ago volunteered to take the project on, many of whom come from Piddletrenthide and Plush. We need fresh ideas and more help, especially from the other villages. So if you are interested in playing a more active role then please get in touch.

Paul Johns, Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348154

email suevasa@aol.com / npchair@piddlevalley.info

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

During the summer months the Housing Group has been concentrating on telling people about our proposals for planned housing development in the Valley over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan. Our emphasis continues to be identifying sites for Local housing with some 50 across the Valley appearing to be possible at this stage.

We have been showing maps at the village fetes and asking for comment and ideas. At the Alton Pancras Fete on May 24th the map showed the whole Valley with the proposed village boundaries marked. These boundaries will allow the Plan to have policies for housing and other building development inside and outside villages. As a result of comments received the positions of some boundaries were changed.

At the Piddletrenthide Fete on 22nd June the map showed the boundaries and also the sites within the villages, which we have identified as having the potential for new housing during the 15 year life of the Plan. Comments were generally favourable and led to discussions that were valuable in improving our knowledge of the Valley.

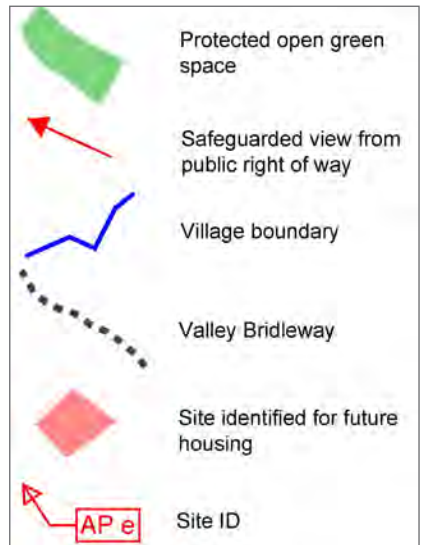
At Piddlehinton fete on 19th July we showed the same map and again received helpful and informative comments. Some residents were unhappy about what they saw and eight emails were subsequently sent and to which I responded on behalf of the Housing Group, explaining our thinking and clarifying some misunderstandings. We will be holding an informal meeting with those involved to discuss the sites further.

At the Gardens Club Show on 16th August the maps initiated generally supportive discussion with one concerned comment recorded.

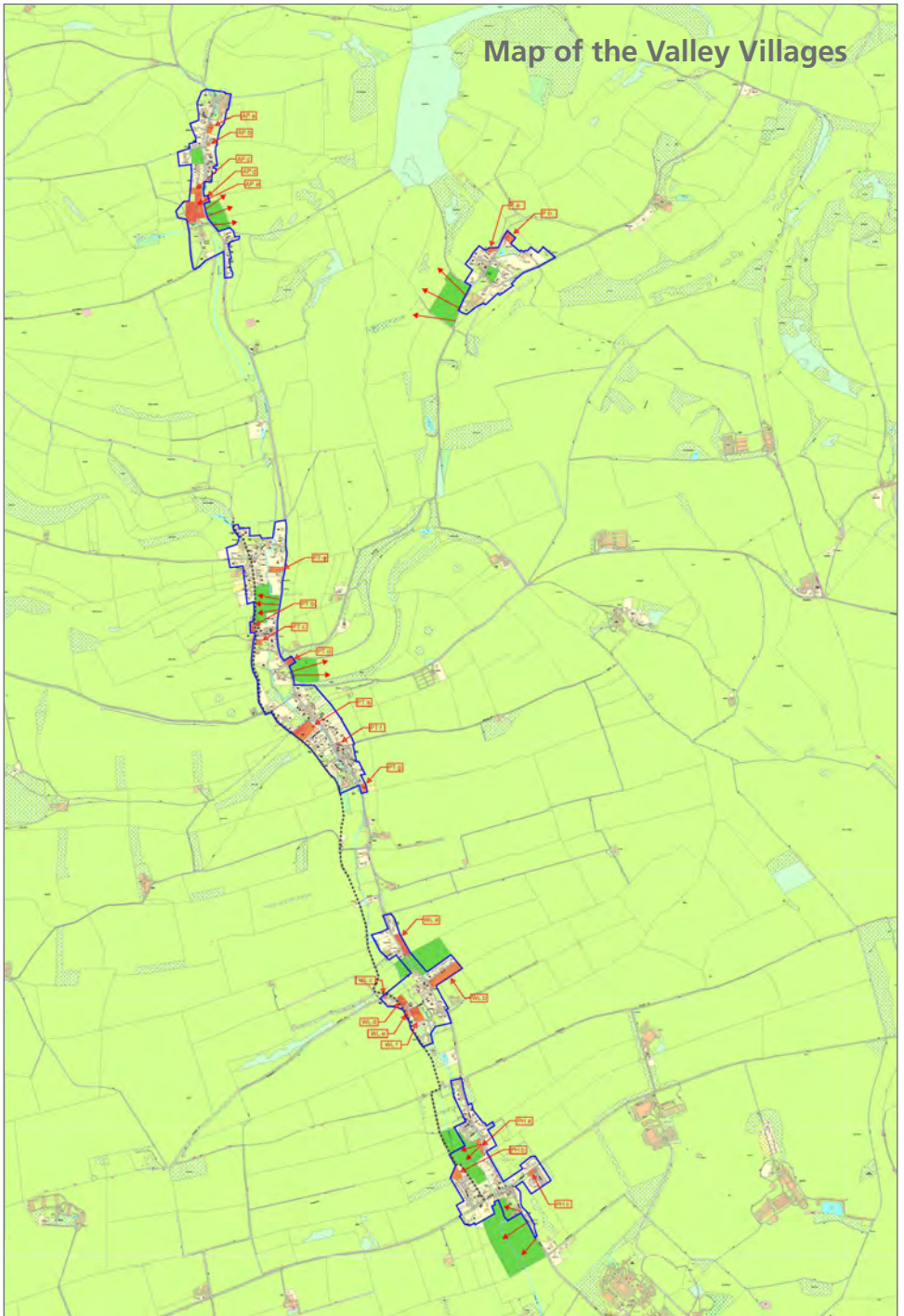
The maps are reproduced on the following pages.

This legend explains the symbols etc that we have used on the maps. Opposite is a view of the whole Valley. The enlarged maps of each village are then shown at the same scale.

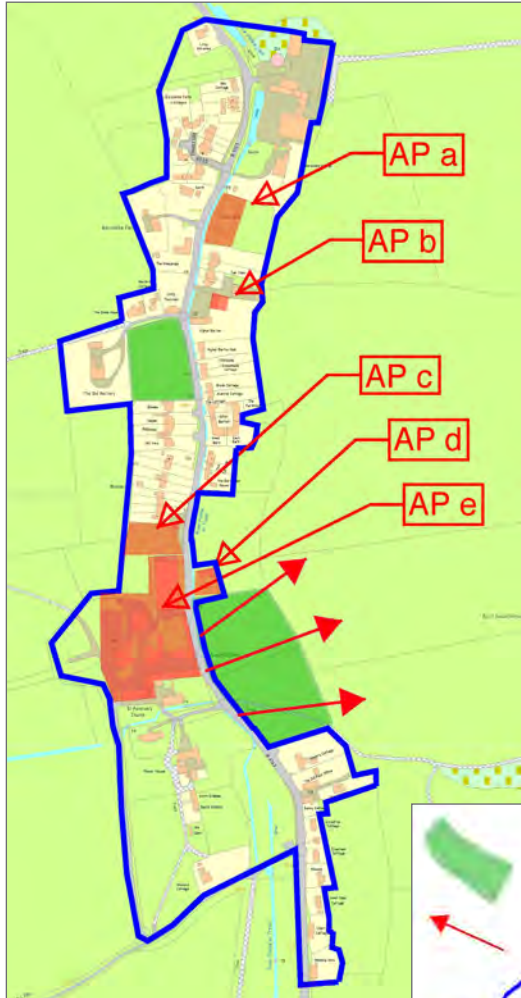
If you wish to see the maps online please go to www.piddlevalley.info



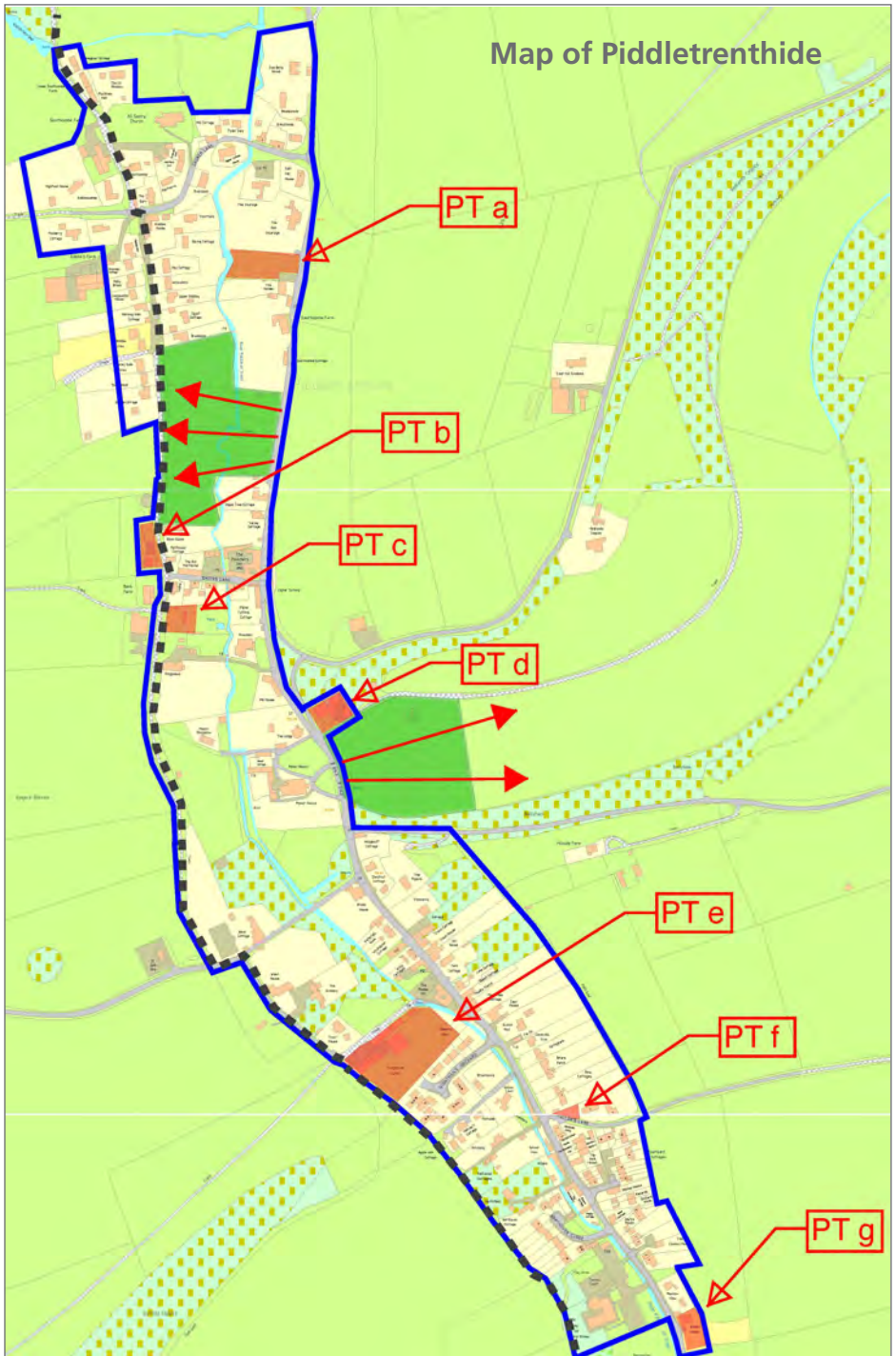
Map of the Valley Villages



Map of Alton Pancras

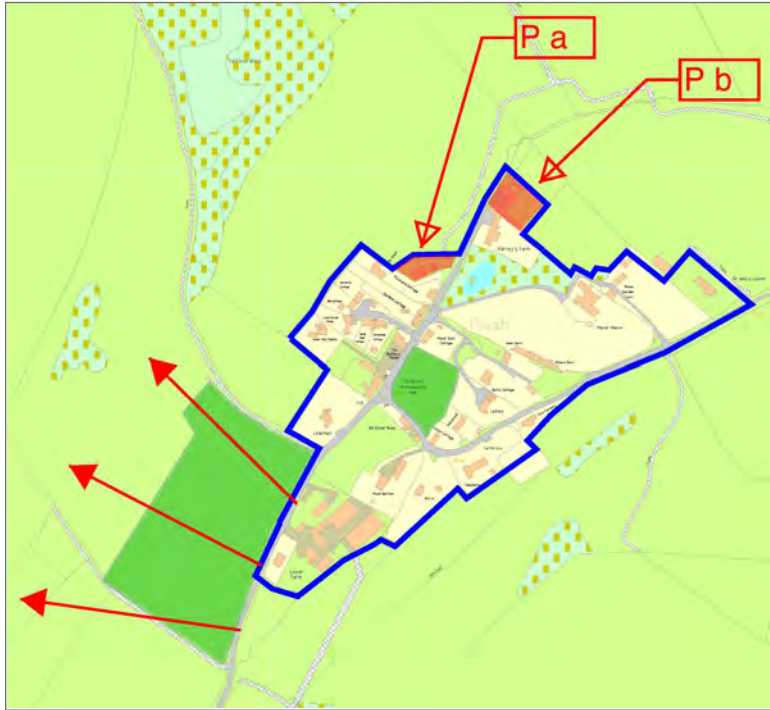


Map of Piddletrenthide

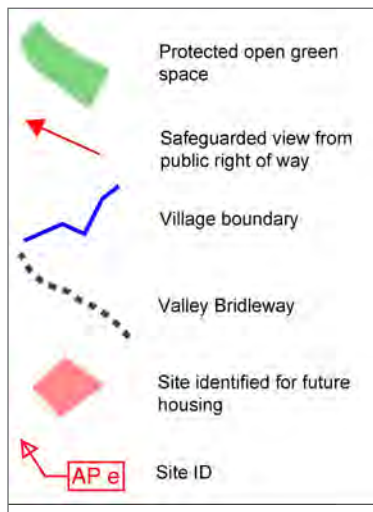
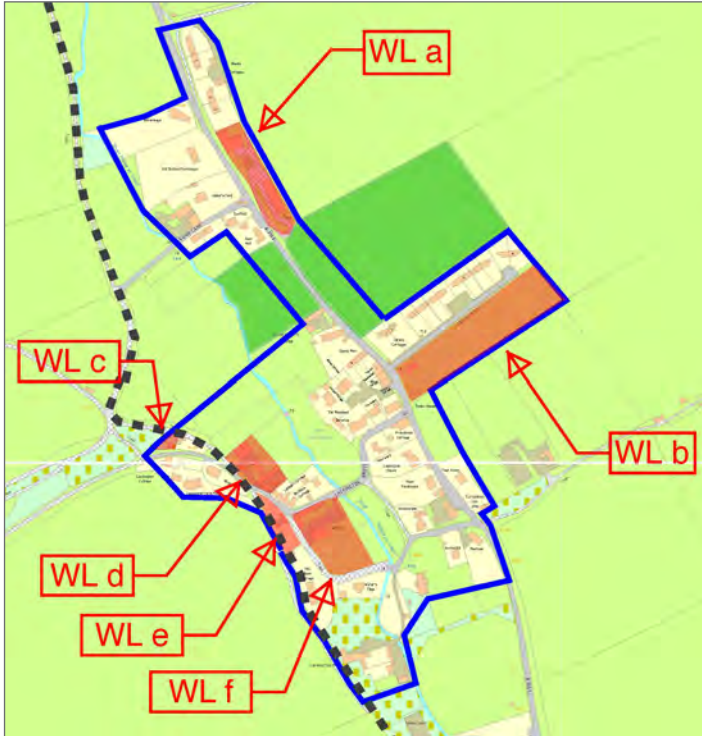


Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

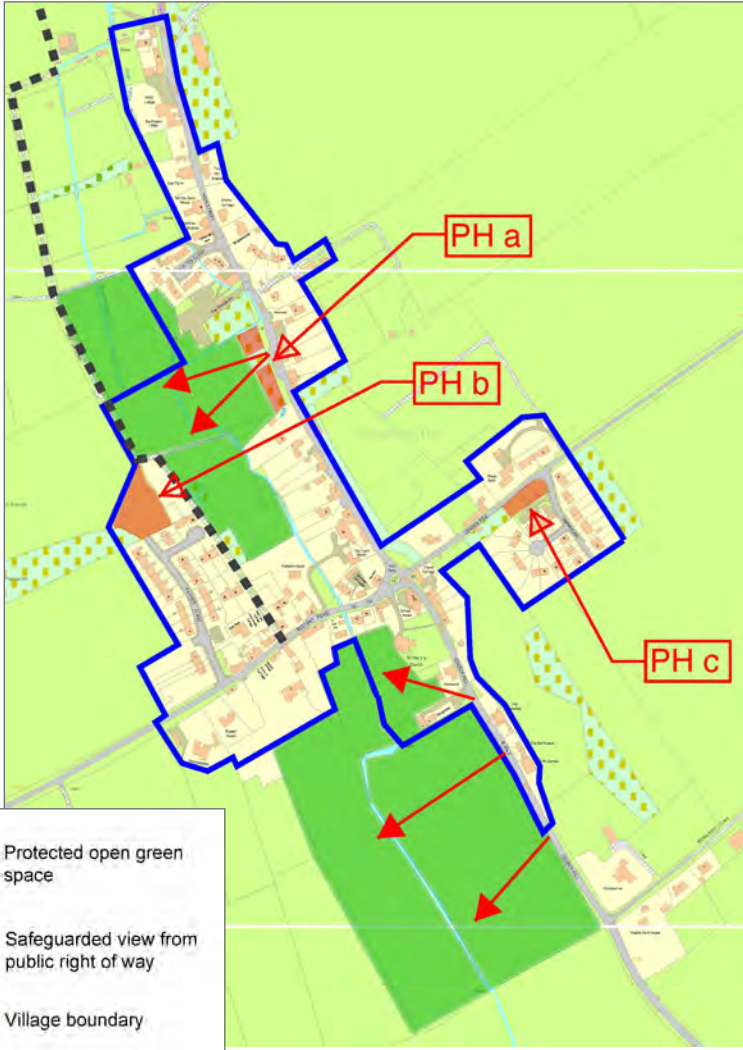
Map of Plush



Map of White Lackington



Map of Piddlehinton





Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 11

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

I hope that you have seen the ideas of the Neighbourhood Plan that have been published in previous issues of News & Views, and also displayed at each of this year's fetes. We now need to gather your views further, especially about housing, to see whether or not you are in agreement. To that end five meetings have been arranged, one for each of the communities within the Valley, details of which are later in this section. Please try and come because the Neighbourhood Plan should be what the majority of you want. The volunteers working on it are here solely to facilitate your views.

Last month we had a lively and encouraging "dress rehearsal" for these meetings in Piddlehinton. After that meeting there is some background to the Neighbourhood Plan that I think is worth reiterating. The Government and the opposition both want to encourage more houses to be built and make it easier for these to be bought. They are changing planning policy to make it easier to build and there is a presumption in favour of building affordable homes. This means that there will be development in the Valley in the coming years.

What then is the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan? It is so local people can influence the location of the sites and the number, type and size of housing each contains. More importantly to many people, the Neighbourhood Plan can protect green spaces and views so that they are not developed in the next 15 years, the life of the Plan. There is a balance; for the Plan to be accepted it cannot only designate protected green spaces it has to offer some housing sites in return. There are other benefits that can come out of the Plan. Conditions can be attached that can have other benefits to the community such as the provision of a new village hall.

We know from the survey we carried out last year that there are people born, brought up and now working in the Valley who would like to live here, but cannot afford it. There are also people living here, who brought their families up here but whose houses and gardens are now too large for them, that would like to downsize. These are the people we are trying to help. So please try and come to the village meetings, especially if you have or know of a need for local housing.

Paul Johns, Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348154

email suevasha@aol.com / npchair@piddlevalley.info

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

VENUES, DATE & TIMES FOR EACH VILLAGE MEETING

It is hoped that all residents will attend their Village Meeting to contribute view and comments and discuss the developing Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

ALTON PANCRAS
St Pancras Church
Wednesday 19th November
7.30 pm

WHITE LACKINGTON
Piddle Valley First School
Thursday 20th November
7.30 pm

PIDDLEHINTON
Village Hall
Wednesday 26th November
7.30 pm

PIDDLETRENTHIDE
Piddle Valley First School
Thursday 27th November
7.30 pm

PLUSH
The Brace of Pheasants
Wednesday 3rd December
7.30 pm

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people
led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

The main focus of our work during the past two months has been consideration of suggested sites for housing in Piddlehinton. The publication of these sites at the local fetes, and in the last edition of Piddle Valley News and Views, prompted some concerned and informative emails about the proposals and comments on the way they were selected. Consequently an informal meeting was arranged for the correspondents, and others interested, and this was held on 8th October in the Piddlehinton village hall. Over 80 residents attended and we were gratified that this represented more than a 20% turnout, an indicator of excellent local participation.

The role of the Neighbourhood Plan was described and the approach taken by the Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Housing group was described. There followed discussion of the group's working method and issues around the suggested sites for new housing. Full notes of the meeting may be found on the website www.piddlevalley.info

The Housing group has subsequently met to discuss the issues raised and modify proposals. The changes decided by the Housing group relate to the following sites in Piddlehinton :

High Street

Remove the site from our plans but refer it to the Village group for further consideration.

Paynes Close

Leave the site in our plans but ask the Village group to advise further.

London Row

Remove the site from our plans but refer it to the Village group for further consideration.

New Site

A new site at Dales Corner, south of the village, has been proposed for consideration and this has also been referred to the Village group.

In addition, an important outcome of the Piddlehinton meeting has been the formation of a group within that village to consider other potential housing options. I am delighted that Vicky Stevens, Alan Philips, Bob Cunningham, Paul White, Katrina Baker Copp and Vicky Miles have come forward to join under Piddlehinton group leader, Sara Milne (saramilne@gmail.com). This group will pass their ideas to the Housing group.

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Towards the end on November through to the beginning of December, a meeting for each of the Valley villages will be held. At each meeting the sets of policies proposed for building within and outside villages will be presented, in addition to the sites identified as having good potential for new houses (see maps in last edition of Piddle Valley News and Views or on our website www.piddlevalley.info).

It will be very helpful to have as many local people as possible at each meeting so we may learn your views and ideas.

Community energy generation and low energy design

led by Dot Browning dot.descon@easynet.co.uk / 01300 348280

The recently commissioned Woodland Report confirmed a significant stock of fallen and poor quality trees sufficient to supply logs and kindling through the Valley for many years to come. By agreement with woodland owners, Forestry Consultant Richard Preston (accompanied by Environment and Energy Group Leaders) inspected six woodlands in the Valley. Subsequent discussion with woodland owners confirmed the extent of activity and management. While a small portion of woodland is managed, the majority of woodlands are unmanaged and much of the woodland throughout the Valley is used by local Shoots.

The Report recommends greater management of woodland to `;

- ensure the flora and fauna natural habitat be better conserved and protected
- enable organised replanting
- encourage the reintroduction of coppicing
- convert fallen timber to logs and kindling

Woodland management can be self-financing and there are successful privately owned as well as community woodland enterprise models in Dorset. Furthermore woodland management would enhance the value of woodland and ensure its long term survival as well as contributing to the Valleys attractive landscape.

A Community Land Trust could be the mechanism for improving the management of woodlands and would enable 'local' logs and kindling to be purchased throughout the Valley.

- creating employment opportunities
- identifying suitable local storage facilities
- funding the machinery and equipment

We need to establish the demand for logs and kindling through the Valley and would appreciate your help by completing the Questionnaire enclosed with the PVNV November / December issue.

Transport, traffic speed, footpaths, cycleways and communications

led by Neil Herbert neilherbert45@yahoo.co.uk / 01300 348479

Broadband

Latest Superfast broadband update from "dorsetforyou" was issued on Wednesday 21 October 2014; see <http://mapping.dorsetforyou.com/superfast/availability/map> It would appear that most of the Piddle Valley area should have "Superfast Broadband" available by Spring 2015, with the Egypt area of Piddletrenthide and Alton Pancras following sometime later in 2015. Sadly the Enterprise Park area of Piddlehinton seems to be on the "back burner", with availability still in the development stage.

Traffic and Safety

During the village fetes in 2013 and 2014 we received lots of suggestions regarding traffic and safety issues, the majority of which were related to speeding traffic - the Piddle Valley Community Speed Watch was initiated as a direct result of the issues raised by residents, and has been operating in the valley since March 2014. Also, the schoolchildrens "KEEP US SAFE" signs have been erected in an attempt to persuade people to drive within the speed limits. Other ideas were to introduce "Traffic Calming" measures, such as "lower speed limits", "speed bumps" and "narrowing of roads" at various locations in the valley.

With the village meetings in late November / December 2014 it is essential that we get a realistic understanding of what you the residents want - for instance do we continue (or increase) the Community Speed Watch operation? Do we try to instigate the installation of "Traffic Calming" measures? Do we progress with both - **these decisions are yours!**

It must be noted however that persuading WDDC/DCC to install "Traffic Calming" measures could be difficult, if not almost impossible - the "dorsetforyou" website link below sets out the criteria for taking schemes forward :

<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/roads-and-driving/road-information/traffic-management/requesting-new-traffic-management-measures>

Rights of Way

As you are probably aware, we are looking at the feasibility of creating an all weather surface suitable for horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians along the existing bridleway from Rectory Road, Piddlehinton to Church Lane, Piddletrenthide.

What other issues are there in relation to Rights of Way in our area, for example what is the current position relating to "BOATS" (Byways Open to All Traffic) on our local bridleways ?

Village Meetings Please make a note of the Village meeting dates and come along and "have your say" – we really do want your input and views.



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan

*Help make the
Vision
for our future*

Newsletter 12

Happy New Year to you all.

At the end of last year we held a series of meetings in each of the villages to find out your views on the draft proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan. I found the meetings enjoyable and informative. It was gratifying to find that the vast majority of you are in favour of having a Neighbourhood Plan; however the devil is in the detail and there were different views on the Plan's content.

Thank you to all who came and filled in the Housing questionnaires. We have not yet had time to analyse these fully so unfortunately the results will be in the next edition of News and Views. (Because of printing deadlines I am writing this at the beginning of December with Christmas just two weeks away.)

We have proportionally far more feedback from Piddlehinton than the other villages. This is in part due to a form being delivered to each of their houses so that they could be completed by people unable to attend the meeting. We think this was a good idea and so this month we will be doing the same for the other villages. I encourage you to fill these out – it is your plan and we need to know what you think. These will be delivered separately from News and Views so that all villages are treated in the same manner.

A topic that was regularly brought up at the meetings were the existing problems with flooding and sewerage. Indeed it was the dominant issue for Piddletrenthide. The correction of the existing problems is out of scope for the Neighbourhood Plan which is about the future. But the Plan must not exacerbate these problems. It is clear that more information at a detailed level, only known by local people who experience the problems first hand, is needed to address this now and in the future, so we have included yet another questionnaire. We have enlisted the help of our MP Oliver Letwin who has agreed to visit the Piddle Valley later in January to inspect the problems that many continue to experience. Your response and supporting information will be greatly appreciated.

Paul Johns, Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348154

email suevasha@aol.com / npchair@piddlevalley.info

Housing - both for open market and low cost for local people

led by Malcolm Johnston mjz@btinternet.com / 01300 34869

Five meetings were held in November and December, one in each settlement, to consult on Neighbourhood Plan policies and housing suggestions and they were very helpful to the Working Party in providing many clear views and advice on our proposals. All were chaired by Geoff Wright an independent planning expert with extensive experience of Neighbourhood Plans. We are also very pleased that Jo Witherden recorded the meetings as she will be assisting us with the writing of the Plan and has very up to date knowledge of Neighbourhood Plan requirements having until recently been a senior planner in the WDDC Planning Department.

Attendance at the meetings was generally good with 42 at Alton Pancras (plus 10 members of the Neighbourhood Plan team), 39 at Piddletrenthide (plus 12), 27 at Plush (plus 12), 25 at White Lackington (plus 12) and 52 at Piddlehinton (plus 15).

A questionnaire seeking comments on the suggested development sites in each settlement was distributed at each meeting (with the audience being asked to take copies away for others) and the number of responses received to these (by the closing date of 8 December) was Alton Pancras 26, Piddletrenthide 14, Plush 7, White Lackington 8 and Piddlehinton 29. It should be noted that 70 responses have also been received from Piddlehinton residents from the questionnaires delivered to each address in that parish

With the exception of Piddlehinton, the NP Working Group consider that the number of responses received may not accurately represent residents thoughts, therefore they propose to hand deliver questionnaires to every address in Alton Pancras, Piddletrenthide, Plush and White Lackington early in 2015, which will give everyone in these settlements the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. An analysis of all comments received will be carried out and acted upon by the Housing Group. A report will be published in the next edition of News and Views.

Finance

led by John Cox, Chairman, Piddle Valley Parish Council

j.cox@madasafish.com / 01300 348454

With the impending village and settlement meetings planned for November and December 2014, the Working Group considered the benefit of an independent facilitator and recorder. This decision was taken to ensure that the control and reporting of the meeting would be completely unbiased and funded from monies the Parish Council has received to produce the Neighbourhood Plan from Locality, Dorset Community Action and West Dorset District Council. The major proportion of this funding had to be spent by December 2014 and failure to spend the funding would result in any unspent monies being returned.

Sewage/flooding

At the Piddletrenthide village meeting on 27th November, residents voiced overwhelming concern about both the sewage system backing up and flooding in the village. Whilst the Environment Agency does publish a map of flood risk zones the information is largely worked out by computer and may not reflect the real situation.

As a consequence, the Working Group decided to send you a further questionnaire (included with this issue of News & Views) to seek information from all valley residents about these important issues. This detailed information would be beneficial both for future development planning in the Neighbourhood Plan and for residents in order to work together to try to resolve immediate problems. This information can only come from those who live with the problems.

Subsequent to that meeting, a member of the Working Group contacted Wessex Water, and their query and Wessex Water's response is reproduced below. We have also requested a copy of Wessex Waters Operational Management Action Plan.

We are acutely aware of the sensitive nature of this topic to residents, however we believe it is a genuine issue, and hope residents respond with as much information as possible.

If you have any such knowledge, please would you complete the questionnaire, marking locations on the map, and sending any photographs or other documents you may have by the 16th January to

PVNV Postbag at Piddletrenthide Post Office & Stores.

If you would prefer to forward the questionnaire and supporting information by email, then please send to

npchair@piddlevalley.info

1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Query to Wessex Water, 28th November 2014 :

It is now some 11 months since my last communication, and with winter approaching I would like to know what works have been carried out in Piddletrenthide since the winter of 2013/2014 to mitigate the overflowing of the sewers, which has occurred here in the last two winters, necessitating the use of road tankers to remove the overflowing sewerage result in any unspent monies being returned.

2 Wessex Water Response, 8th December 2014 :

Thank you for your email of 28th November about our flood prevention work in Piddletrenthide. Since the construction of the combined sewer overflows in 2011, we are required to report to the Environment Agency on an annual basis and have continued to deliver an Inflow Management Plan. As part of this plan, we monitor the water quality in the receiving watercourse to confirm there is no detriment to the water quality from the screened overflows. This year we have recorded groundwater levels, sewer levels and water quality to monitor the performance of the sewerage system. We have carried out further sealing works where groundwater infiltration has been identified.

WS Atkins, acting as our consultants, are carrying out further modelling of the system to review the performance of the current overflows and identify possible locations for additional overflows which would relieve the system and provide further protection. This is in the early stages and any proposals would require approval from the Environment Agency.

As a direct result of the last two wet winters, an Operational Management Action Plan has been prepared which sets out the operational measures to be taken in circumstances of high groundwater levels. This has been issued to our Operations team. We have written to Dorset County Council to advise we will be objecting to further development in locations at risk of groundwater flooding and where no groundwater strategy is in place. We will be reporting again to the Environment Agency in April 2015, with an update on our work this year. I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Steinhausen, Customer Relations

Broadband

Most valley residents will have noticed the erection of new BT green cabinets at Wightmans Orchard in Piddletrenthide and The Cross, Piddlehinton, which are for the introduction of Superfast Broadband into most of the Piddle Valley area by Spring 2015, with the Egypt area of Piddletrenthide and Alton Pancras following in Summer 2015.

With regard to the Enterprise Park, we contacted the Superfast Broadband team asking them why the Enterprise Park area of Piddlehinton was excluded, and have now received the following request from the Superfast Team:-

"Following your enquiry I have raised the Enterprise Park with my Superfast Dorset and BT Openreach colleagues. We think it would be valuable to have a meeting with the managing agent or owner of the business park to clarify how the network operates in this area and discuss options for the future. Do you have contact details for someone we could get in touch with to represent you on this matter?"

We have responded, enclosing contact details as requested.

News Letter No 13 - 01/03/2015

To all residents and friends of the Piddle Valley

The Neighbourhood Plan is moving forward. In the last couple of months we have thought through all your much wanted ideas which have led to quite a big change in direction. Based on all the information received and what you have said, we have now begun to draft the Plan and its policies. We have the help of a professional planning consultant to help us to get this right.

The Aims we are trying to achieve are:

- 1 To protect the important green open and wooded spaces within and around the settlements, protect links and views of the wider countryside.
- 2 To protect the gaps between the different settlements which help keep their separate identities.
- 3 To protect the wider, open countryside, particularly the higher rolling landscapes which are largely undeveloped and offer important long distance views.
- 4 To protect and enhance the animal and plant biodiversity within the Valley, including the Piddle River and its characteristic chalk river habitats.
- 5 To avoid adding to the current groundwater problems and help provide solutions where possible for reducing surface water run-off from the surrounding slopes resulting in damage to properties.
- 6 To ensure that where building takes place sewerage provisions are fit for purpose and that no buildings are constructed that would exacerbate existing problems until a solution exists.
- 7 To avoid adding to the current traffic and parking problems and reduce the problems where possible.
- 8 To ensure new buildings are located and designed to complement and/or add to the local character of the Valley and their immediate surroundings.
- 9 To protect dark skies and prohibit light pollution from new developments.
- 10 To help make buildings environmentally sustainable and where possible use recycled materials.
- 11 To support leading edge communication with underground connectivity.
- 12 To provide in perpetuity more low cost housing for local people within the Valley. This will help local people stay or return to the valley who couldn't otherwise afford to buy or rent here.
- 13 To allow some open market housing, to provide opportunities for local people to down size, and to help bring in new people to the Valley to ensure a thriving community into the future.
- 14 To provide more opportunities for people to work locally, either from home or new live-work units.
- 15 To support changes to farms that would reduce the amount of large farm vehicles and tractors driving along the roads through the valley.
- 16 To keep, and if possible extend, the range of community venues that bring people together. These include the halls, churches, school, shops, pubs and sports and recreational facilities.

I hope you agree with these Aims but we do need to include more of what you think, so will be presenting the initial draft Neighbourhood Plan for your further comments on Saturday 25th April at Piddle Valley First School. The feedback from that day of consultation will go into a second draft. We will circulate more details of this meeting nearer the date.

First Consultation of Draft Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan.

Saturday 25th April 2015

10 am-4 pm

Piddle Valley First School, Piddletrenthide



Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2031

Newsletter 14

First Draft Plan Consultation ends Saturday 16th May 2015

We're getting there !

Based on what you've told us we have produced and published the first draft of the Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan. It is very different from the first ideas that were put forward at last year's village presentations. Is it right, does it say what you want? You now have the opportunity to review the document and tell us which parts you like, which you don't and why. The Neighbourhood Plan will designate which areas of the Valley might be developed over the next 15 years and importantly, which areas should be protected. The Plan carries no automatic rights; planning applications will still have to be submitted. This Plan, together with the West Dorset Local Plan, will be the documents that planning officers consult when considering future applications.

I hope you were able to come to the event at the School last month to see and discuss the Plan. If not, it is available on the Piddle Valley website www.piddlevalley.info. The full version contains background information and explanations of what the Plan is trying to achieve. The following pages contain the crucial parts, the policies and the maps. Please read these and then fill in and return the feedback form, as it is essential that we know what you think.

This is the First Draft of the Plan and is being made available for you to comment on. Where there is a consensus we will incorporate changes into a second draft. Later this year as part of the adoption process, the Neighbourhood Plan will need an official statutory 6 week consultation where it is also reviewed by Public bodies.

The goal is to preserve and protect the character and beauty of the Valley and the maps (pages 11-16) are key to how we are trying to achieve this - see notes and key on page 10. I hope the policies are self explanatory. "Policy 11- Development within the Settlement Boundaries" has replaced the identification of specific sites that was very unpopular. There still remain a few exception sites. These are the larger areas of land that could be used to provide a mix of open market and local housing together with additional village amenities. These developments may not go ahead; each will still be subject to all the normal planning application constraints such as highway considerations, sewerage concerns and conservation area restrictions. Please tell us what you think - it is important for the future of the Valley over the next 15 years. The Feedback form in the centre of this publication, should be returned to the Piddletrenthide Village Shop by **May 16th**. If there is not enough space on the form, please include your thoughts on extra paper.

Paul Johns, Working Group Chairman
telephone 01300 348154 email suevasha@aol.com / npchair@piddlevalley.info

Spaces and places protected from development

Policy 1 **Local green spaces**

Local green spaces, as shown on the Proposals Maps, are to be protected from development that would detract from their undeveloped character.

Policy 2 **Significant views from settlements**

Development that would noticeably detract from the character or enjoyment of significant views, as indicated on the Proposals Maps, will not be supported. Opportunities should be taken to improve or create new views of the river Piddle (and its tributaries) from public rights of way.

Policy 3 **The open and undeveloped chalk downlands**

Buildings or structures that would be visibly prominent or incongruous within the chalk downlands or on the valley slopes leading up to the chalk downlands will not be permitted, particularly where likely to be seen on the skyline or visible from public places.

Gaps between settlements

Policy 4 **Important gaps between settlements**

Development that would reduce the openness of the short gaps separating the settlements of Piddlehinton, White Lackington and Piddletrenthide (as shown on the Proposals Maps) will not be permitted. Removal of redundant buildings and structures in these gaps should be secured where possible.

Features of local wildlife or historic interest

Policy 5 **Improving wildlife areas**

Development proposals should, where relevant and reasonable, take opportunities to enhance biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area, through (for example) providing buffer areas to protected habitats, including new biodiversity features within the development and measures to improve the biodiversity of the River Piddle and its tributaries.

Policy 6 **Features of historic interest**

Buildings and other features of historic interest are important assets to the Valley and must be protected for future generations, in line with national and adopted local plan policies.

Where historic buildings and features are within the same site as a development proposal, their repair (if needed) and retention should be secured.

Community facilities

Policy 7 Important community facilities

Community facilities are important to local residents and should be retained where possible. Every effort should be made to work with the local community to investigate potential solutions before conceding that the loss of one of these important community facilities is not possible. Proposals will be supported that allow such facilities to be modernised and adapted for future needs.

Alton Pancras

**Field east of The Old Rectory
St Pancras Church**

Piddlehinton

**Millennium Green
Piddlehinton Gym in Enterprise Park
Piddlehinton Rugby Club and pitch
in Enterprise Park
Piddlehinton Village Hall
St Mary the Virgin Church
Thimble Inn PH**

Piddletrenthide

**All Saints Church (including car park)
Memorial Hall
Piddle Inn PH
Piddle Valley CE VA First School
(including playing field, play area,
tennis court)
Poachers Inn PH
Village Shop and PO**

Plush

**Brace of Pheasants PH
Former Church of St John the Baptist
Cricket ground
Jock's Paddock**

The Parish Plan highlighted that there is an appetite for a large, modern community hall that could cater for larger events including sports and leisure uses (to complement and not replace the smaller village halls in each settlement). This would need to be taken forward as a project by the local community. A possible site at Piddletrenthide for such a facility has been identified in this plan, but its delivery will depend entirely on local community support for such a project, to develop the business case and raise the necessary funds (see Policy 15: Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide).

Flooding and sewerage

Policy 8 Reducing Flood Risk and Sewerage Inundation

The need to avoid exacerbating current or adding new flood and sewerage problems is an over-riding objective for this plan, and development will not be allowed where it is likely that it would be at risk from flooding or sewerage inundation, or increase these risks to properties on that site or elsewhere.

All proposals for new buildings connecting to the public sewerage system will need to demonstrate that they provide appropriate mitigation to stop any groundwater inundation leading into the sewers from that development. Until such time that a groundwater management strategy has been agreed for the Valley, the appropriate level of mitigation will need to be demonstrated through an independent drainage plan for that site prepared by a suitably qualified drainage expert.

A flood risk assessment will be required for all proposals that are within 200m of either the flood risk zones 2 and 3 or indicative surface water flood risk areas (as shown on the Environment Agency maps). This should clearly assess the opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding below current levels, including:

- improvements to ground / soil permeability,
- increased floodwater storage,
- improvements to the sewerage network, and
- alleviating run-off from hills

and where these are feasible and appropriate, these opportunities should be taken.

Traffic and road safety

Policy 9 Reducing road safety concerns

Where development adjoins a public right of way, or is proposing a new access onto the highway network, the potential to improve road safety through

- the provision of safe and appropriate cycle and walking connections,
- or
- the design of development to encourage lower traffic speeds should be considered and where reasonable enabled in the design.

Policy 10 Car parking requirements

Development will be expected to provide sufficient parking on-site. In locations where there is a lot of on-street parking causing local problems, the parking for the site should be more convenient than parking on-street.

Settlement boundaries

Policy 11 Development within the settlement boundaries

Sites within the settlement boundaries (as shown on the Proposals Maps), will be considered to meet the need for new homes, businesses or community uses.

Development sites will generally be limited to small, well-defined plots of under 0.2ha, that would enable infill of up to three buildings, in a gap in a built-up frontage or in a manner otherwise well related to the street scene. Large sites with a developable area of 0.2ha or greater in size may be considered if brought forward as rural exception sites for local, affordable housing, or for employment or community uses. A masterplanned approach will be required, to make sure the proposals are comprehensive and provide an overall enhancement to the character of the area.

Open market housing will only be supported on a large site in order to cross-subsidise the provision of affordable housing, and provided the site has either been identified in this plan as a rural exception site or the site is on previously developed land, and in either case will comprise no more than 40% of the total dwellings. The provision of any open market housing will need to demonstrate that no grant funding will be required to deliver the affordable homes, and the affordable housing must be built at the same time or before the open market housing is built. Restrictions will be applied to ensure that the affordable housing remains affordable to local people in perpetuity. Any development within the settlement boundaries will need to be in accordance with all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan, in particular:

- the protection of important local green spaces and significant views
- the avoidance of visually prominent development extending up the valley sides
- the protection of important wildlife habitats and corridors
- the protection of important sites or features of historic importance, including their setting
- the avoidance of areas subject to flooding or sewerage problems, or where development would increase such risks to other properties
- the provision of safe access by car and sufficient off-road parking
- the existence or practicality of pedestrian access routes to the facilities in that settlement
- the protection of residential amenity
- the sympathetic design in keeping with the character of that settlement

Policy 12 Development outside of the settlement boundaries

Outside of the settlement boundaries the policy approach is focused on the need to respect the more undeveloped character of the countryside. Opportunities for new homes, businesses or community buildings will therefore be limited to those cases where a rural location is essential, or where the proposal is in relation to an existing developed site.

Rural exception sites

Policy 13 Land at Austral Farm, Alton Pancras

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps) is identified as a rural exception site to provide a mix of affordable and open market homes and small business units (either stand-alone B1 office / workshops or as part of flexible live-work units).

The proposals should be heritage led to respect the setting of the nearby Listed buildings and secure the long term retention and use of the model farm buildings. Any new buildings should be modest in scale and not detract from these heritage assets. The design and layout will also need to be informed by a full flood risk appraisal, and incorporate suitable measures to reduce the risk of flooding downstream. The layout of any vehicular access or parking areas within the site should be rural in character. Street or security lighting would not be appropriate in this location.

Policy 14 Land at West Cottage, Piddletrenthide

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps) is identified as a rural exception site to provide up to 10 homes in total. Vehicular access will be provided off the Cerne Road to the rear side of West Cottage. The hedge bank will be replanted to provide sufficient forward visibility whilst maintaining the rural character of this lane.

The development will require the provision of a pedestrian crossing point over to the track running behind West House and connecting to the B3143 at the Piddle Inn, and suitable upgrades must be made to this track to create a safe alternative pedestrian route into Piddletrenthide. These improvements will need to be in place before any new homes are occupied. Provision should also be made for a suitable public footpath / bridleway link through the site to form part of the proposed all-weather off-road pedestrian and cycle route along the Valley.

The hedgerow boundaries and landscaping around the site will need to be strengthened, and arrangements for their long-term maintenance agreed, to protect the setting of West Cottage and other Listed Buildings in the vicinity. The layout of any vehicular access or parking areas within the site should be rural in character. Street or security lighting would not be appropriate in this location.

The design and layout will be informed by a full flood risk appraisal, and incorporate suitable measures to reduce the risk of flooding downstream. Any built development should not intrude forward of the front façade of West Cottage, it should be modest in size and not more than 1½ storeys in height, and respect and be sympathetic to West Cottage as a locally important historic building. Opportunities to enhance the historic interest of West Cottage through suitable repairs or renovation work should be secured.

Policy 15 Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps) is identified as a rural exception site to provide up to 8 homes in total. The reuse and (where appropriate) replacement of the farm buildings may be considered for small-scale employment or community uses, with space reserved for the provision of a new community hall (and associated parking) of a sufficient size to accommodate sporting activities such as indoor badminton. If there is no demand for these facilities despite significant marketing and community consultation over a minimum period of 12 months, their re-use / replacement to provide further affordable and open market housing may be considered. Vehicular access will be provided off Wightman’s Orchard.

Opportunities to relieve the on-street parking congestion in Wightman’s Orchard should be secured if these can be reasonably accommodated on the site.

The design and layout will be informed by a full flood risk appraisal, to avoid developing in areas at risk from flooding and to incorporate measures to reduce the risk of flooding downstream. The potential impact on locally historic buildings, the amenity of nearby residents, and wider visibility of the development from the wider countryside will also strongly influence the design, scale and layout of the development and associated landscaping.

Open spaces which should remain free of built development as a result of these factors should be designed to provide wildlife, flood management and, where appropriate, community recreational opportunities as part of the comprehensive design. Arrangements will need to be agreed for the hedgerow boundaries and landscaping in and around the site to be maintained in the long term.

Policy 16 Land at South View, White Lackington

The site (as shown on the Proposals Maps) is identified as a rural exception site to provide up to 10 homes. The design and layout should ensure that built development does not creep up the slopes, which should be appropriately landscaped particularly on the eastern and southern boundary, to ensure development is not visible from wider views. The height of the new buildings should noticeably exceed the terrace of existing homes facing onto South View on the western side of the B3143.

The access and parking arrangements for the new homes will need to ensure that there is adequate access to the new development and that on-street parking problems are not exacerbated in the nearby roads.

Policy 17 Enterprise Park and Bourne Park

Enterprise Park and Bourne Park will remain important employment sites for the Valley and surrounding area, and the modernisation of existing buildings and external areas to enable employment uses will generally be supported. However the impact of development in these locations must not further degrade the area's character, and therefore:

- any new buildings and hardstanding should be limited to within the area shown on the Proposals Maps and deliver landscape and visual improvements, such as the removal of structures on the higher ground, and the removal of excessive security lighting
- the existing footprints and heights of buildings should not be significantly increased.
- the historic value of the remaining elements of the second world war camp should be respected
- no development will be permitted that would cumulatively generate an unacceptable level of large vehicle movements using the local highway network. Access to Enterprise Park must not be via London Road.

Farming in the Piddle Valley

Policy 18 New farm buildings

The provision of new agricultural buildings to improve the operational efficiency and long-term viability of farms and reduce the number of farm vehicle movements along the adopted roads in the Valley will be supported, subject to ensuring the siting and design does not lead to an unacceptable impact on landscape character, heritage, wildlife or residential amenity.

Where new agricultural buildings are proposed where there are redundant buildings within that farm holding (or the proposals will mean that existing buildings will become redundant), opportunities to remove those redundant units should be considered.

Policy 19 Re-use or replacement of redundant farm buildings

The residential, community or business re-use of a redundant agricultural building outside a settlement boundary that makes a positive contribution to the local character will be supported, provided that all of the following tests are met:

- the building is not in an isolated location,
- the building is not in an important gap,
- the building is not in an elevated or open location where the addition of external lighting, garden, parking areas etc would be clearly visible in wider views,
- the proposals would respect the fabric and appearance of the building and its redundant, and its setting in the wider landscape.

The replacement of a redundant agricultural building that detracts from the natural beauty of the area may be supported subject to the above tests and the following:

- the building has been in existence prior to 2000 and is shown to be genuinely redundant, and
- the proposed replacement building would provide an overall enhancement and its silhouette is no greater in height than the building it is replacing.

Where a large part of a farm complex is redundant (of 0.2ha or greater in size), a masterplanned approach will be required. Any such development will need to be in accordance with all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies in the adopted local plan.

Type and design of new development

Policy 20 The character and design of new development

Development, including extensions and porches, should have regard to the character of the surrounding area to which it relates, in terms of the plot size, density, scale and massing, and not significantly change the character through over-intensive development. The design should be sympathetic to the form, style and colour of nearby existing traditional buildings. It should respect but not necessarily copy the style of existing buildings. Imaginative designs using well-chosen materials that weather well will be supported. Traditional building materials such as stone, flint, brick, slate, timber and lime mortar and render are appropriate. The use of modern materials may also be appropriate because of their character (in relation to contemporary building designs) and sustainability credentials. To be fit for the future, the ability to adapt housing to allow people to work from home is supported. Where possible, ducting (that can accept fibre optic cabling or its future equivalent) should be provided to the public highway or other suitable point of connection.

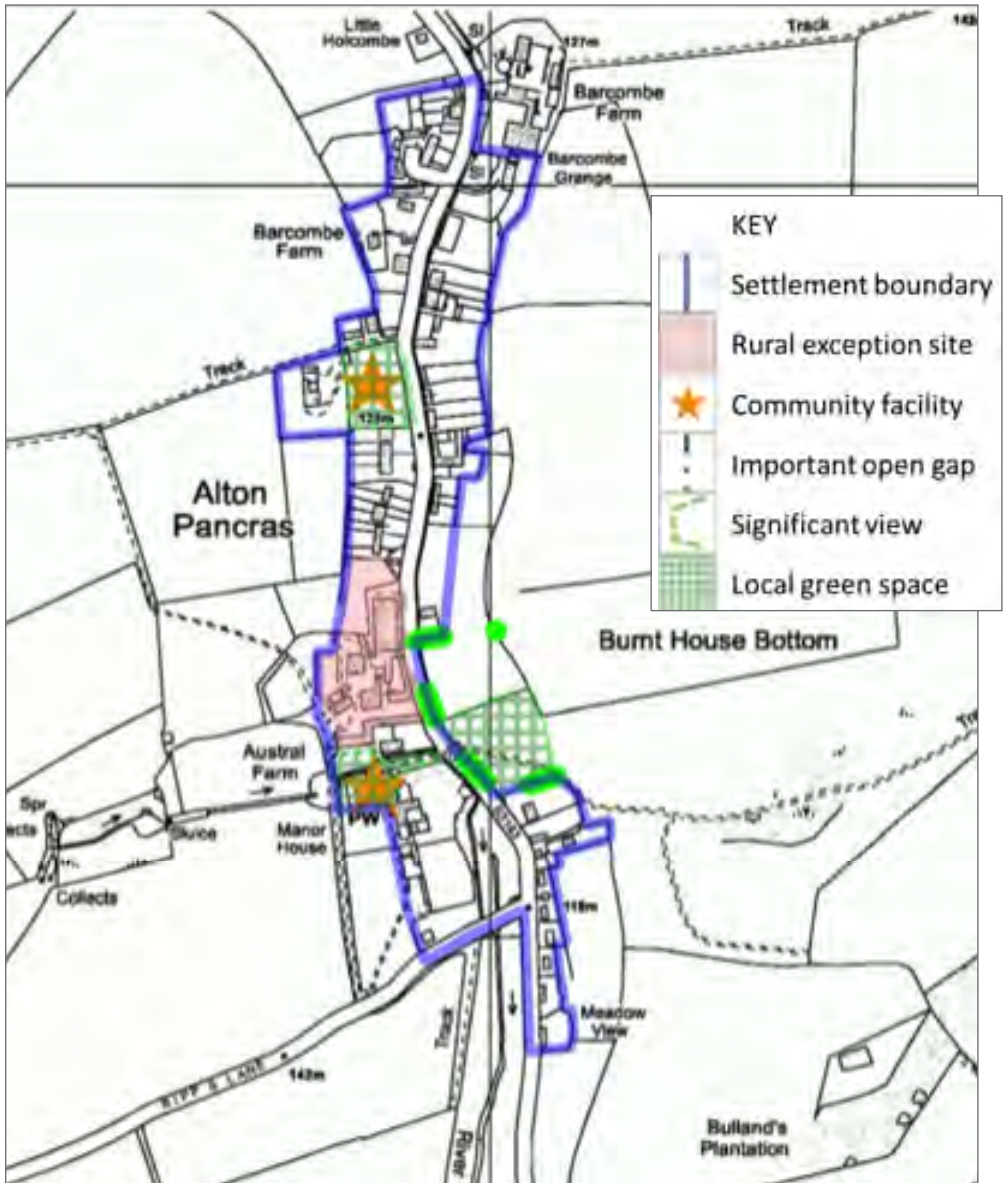
Policy 21 External lighting

Approval for external lighting schemes will only be supported where it is the minimum needed for security and operational purposes and does not give rise to unnecessary light pollution from glare and spillage. Where such schemes are likely to have a significant adverse impact on local landscape character, the benefits of the lighting scheme must be shown to outweigh any adverse effects. Where development may give rise to pressure for external lighting, a planning condition will be necessary to ensure that the impact of such a scheme in future is properly considered.

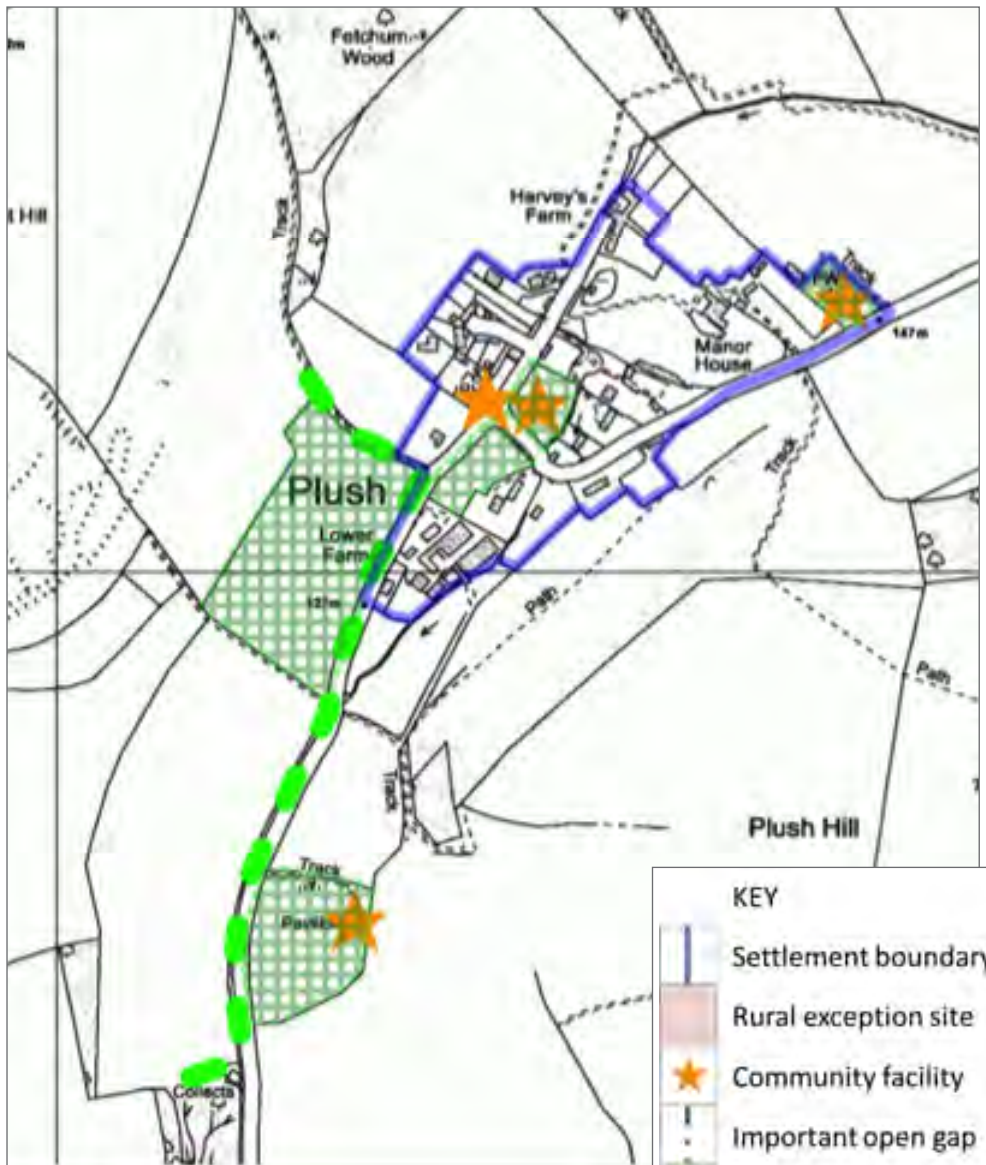
Maps (on following pages)

The goal is to preserve and protect the character and beauty of the Valley; these maps are key to how we are trying to achieve this.

- General aim is that no new housing should be built outside the blue lines designating the settlement boundaries.
- Spaces within villages that are important to be preserved are shown with green hatching.
- Spaces between villages that need to be kept to keep the open feel of the valley are shown as a chain dotted line along the road.
- Finally the magnificent views that we think should not be interrupted are surrounded by green dashes with the view being toward the open side.

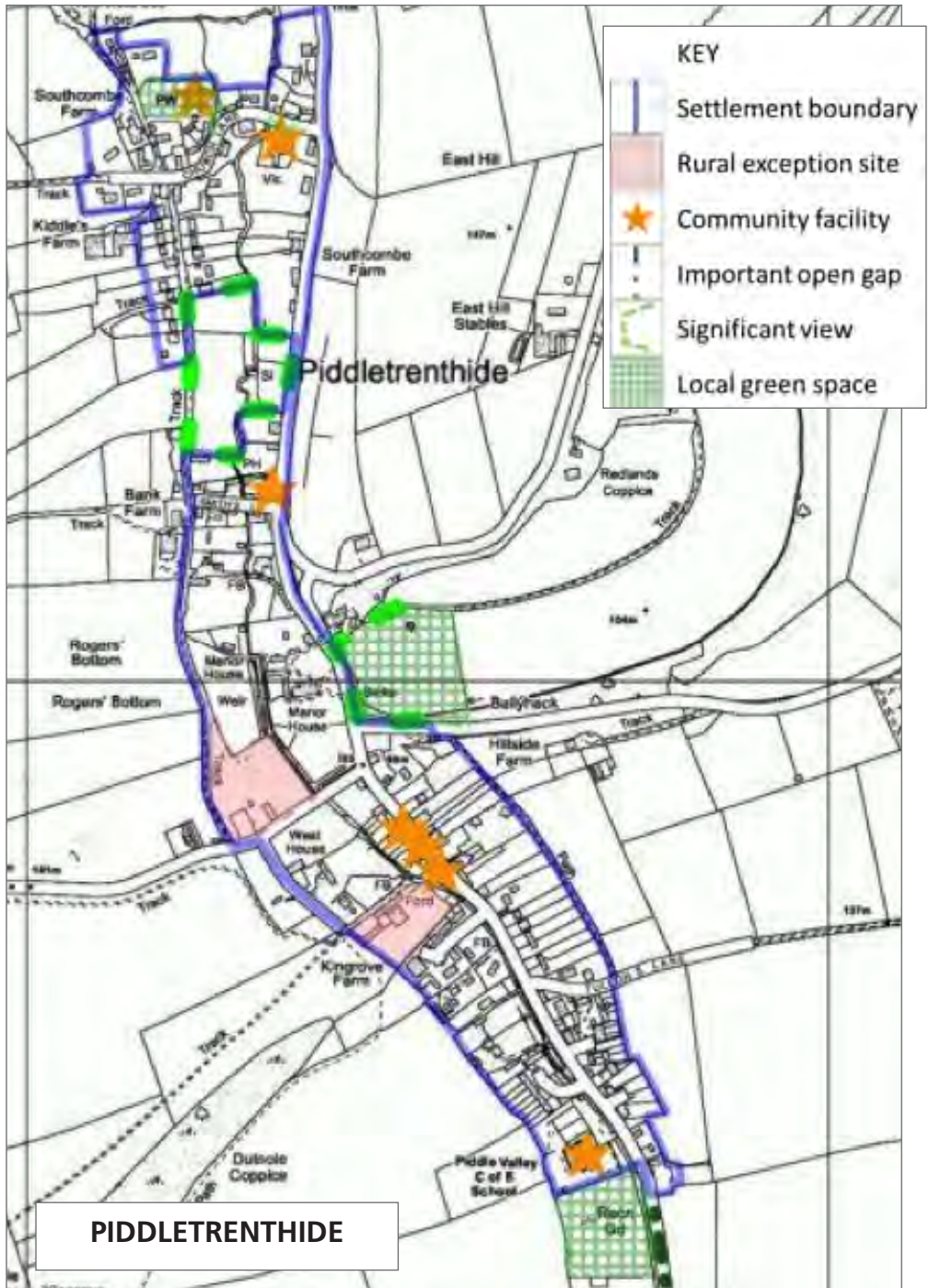


ALTON PANCRAS

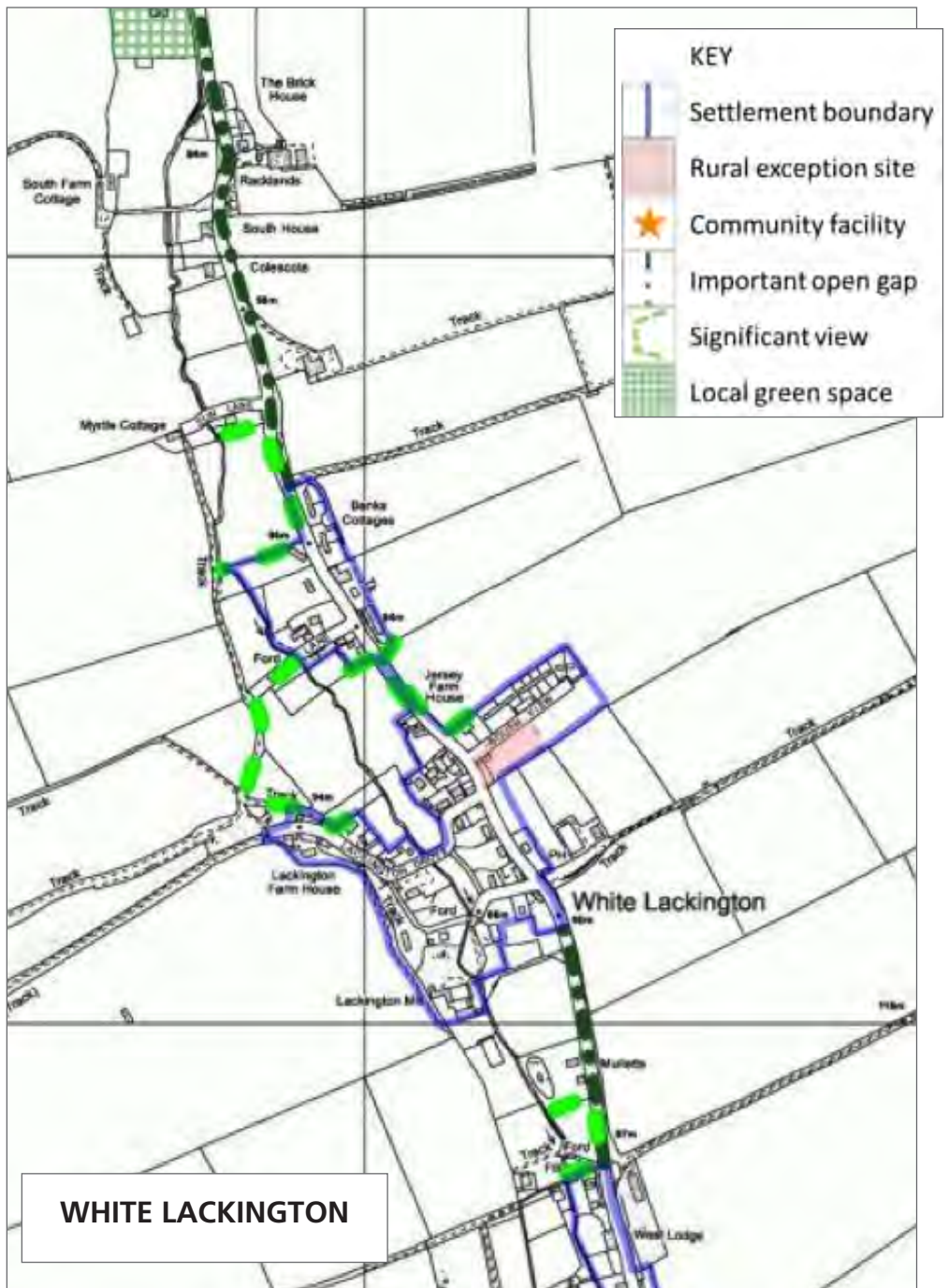


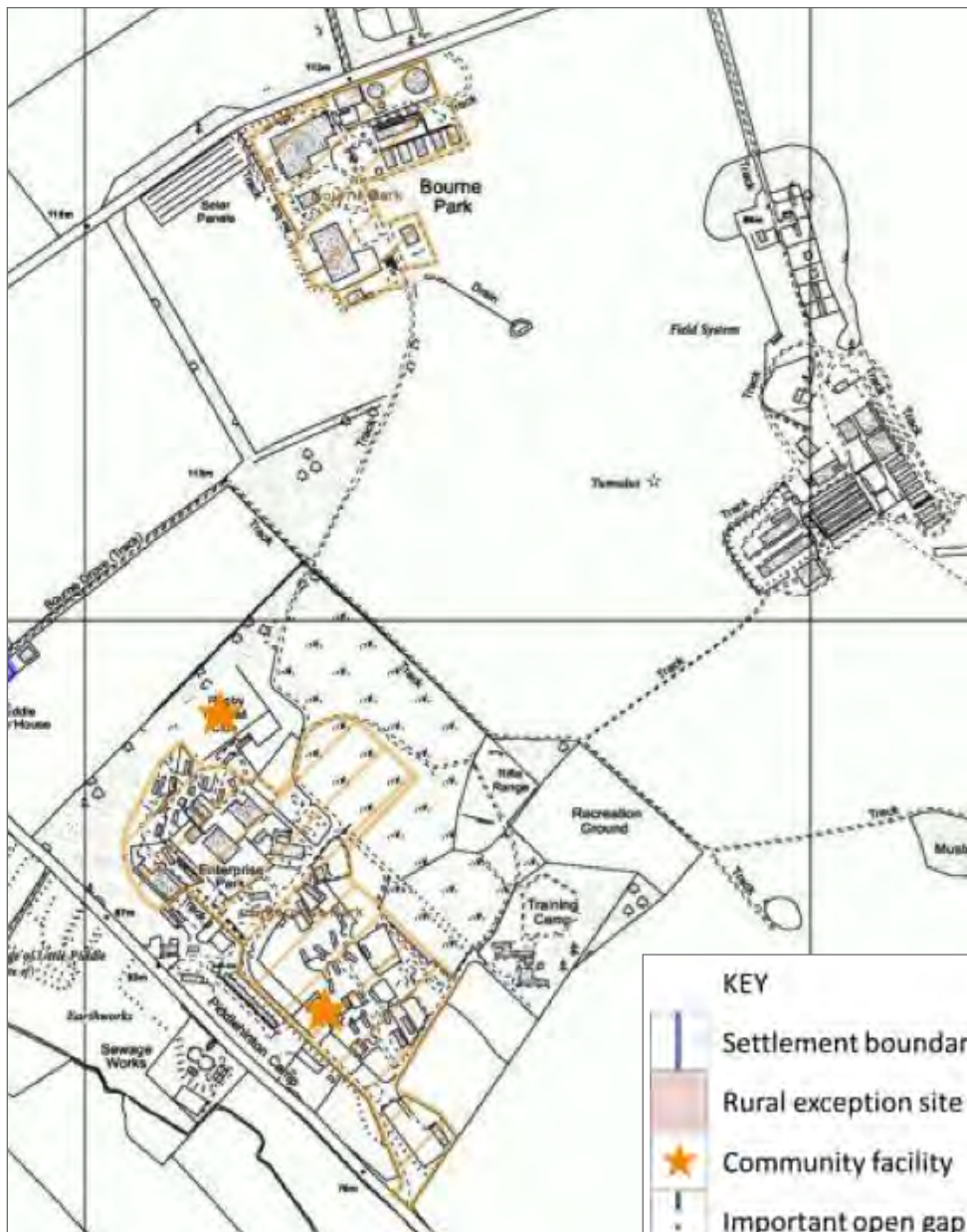
KEY	
	Settlement boundary
	Rural exception site
	Community facility
	Important open gap
	Significant view
	Local green space

PLUSH









PIDDLETRENTHIDE





BOURNE PARK + ENTERPRISE PARK

KEY

-  Settlement boundary
-  Rural exception site
-  Community facility
-  Important open gap
-  Significant view
-  Local green space

News Letter No 15 - 01/07/2015

Thank you to everyone who came to the presentation of the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan in the school at the end of April, we had a very large turnout.

Thanks also for returning your feedback forms and suggestions, the majority of which were very supportive. We are still going through these and will let you know our thoughts when we have finished. Where many people have made similar comments we will publish a reply in this magazine, those with more specific concerns will be addressed on an individual basis. A revised version of the Plan will be published taking into consideration those amendments which are supported by the majority of opinions.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Dot & John Browning who have now moved away from the valley. They have both worked tirelessly and been very keen, active and supportive members of the Neighbourhood Plan giving up considerable amounts of their time and energy from the start. They will be sorely missed and I would like to thank them for all their extremely hard work.

News Letter No 16 - 01/01/2016

The Neighbourhood Plan is still progressing, albeit slowly, as we are at a very time consuming stage.

Thank you to everyone who replied during the 6 week consultation on the Plan. This was a formal consultation so we also received comments from many public bodies, including West Dorset District Council, Wessex Water, the Environment Agency and Dorset AONB.

We are currently considering the responses, their effect and the changes that need to be made to the Plan.

There are still some outstanding issues, particularly with the exception site at South View and we intend to arrange a meeting in the near future at the school to clarify the position on this.

The next formal step in the process is to submit the amended plan and supporting documentation to the inspector for his consideration of our due diligence.

Paul Johns, Working Group Chairman

Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan – West Dorset District Council Comments

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Planning section of the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides advice on the key stages of neighbourhood planning and also provides, at paragraphs 065 to 068, some commentary on the ‘basic conditions’ that a draft neighbourhood plan must meet if it is to proceed to referendum.

Paragraph 067 states that a local planning authority should “provide constructive comments” on an emerging neighbourhood plan and advises that “if a local planning authority considers that a draft neighbourhood plan ... may fall short of meeting one or more of the basic conditions they should discuss their concerns with the qualifying body in order that these can be considered before the draft neighbourhood plan ... is formally submitted to the local planning authority”.

This document sets out West Dorset District Council’s comments on the Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Draft (v7, published in September 2015) and focuses on the key issue of meeting the basic conditions. It should be noted, however, (as stated in Paragraph 053 of the neighbourhood planning section of the PPG), that “it is only after the examiner’s report has been received that the local planning authority comes to its formal view on whether the draft neighbourhood plan ... meets the basic conditions”.

As outlined in Paragraph 65 of the neighbourhood planning section of the PPG, the basic conditions that a draft neighbourhood plan must meet are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

November 2015

The Council has provided commentary on the extent to which the draft neighbourhood plan has had regard to national policies (primarily in the National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF, but also in Ministerial Statements) and to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (primarily the PPG).

The Council has provided commentary on whether the draft neighbourhood plan would contribute to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions and on whether the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 are likely to apply.

Commentary is provided on the extent to which the draft neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area, the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan.

In relation to neighbourhood plans, EU obligations relate primarily to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC).

Neighbourhood Planning Regulations also prescribe that the making of a neighbourhood plan should not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012).

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>The Plan Period</i>	
Page 2 indicates that the neighbourhood plan is intended to last for 15 years from adoption to 2031. This is aligned with the joint Local Plan for West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland, which covers the period to 2031.	No change suggested.
<i>Vision and Aims</i>	
Throughout the Plan there are mentions of the significant heritage assets that are present within the Neighbourhood Plan Area however there is no mention of heritage assets within the Aims.	It is recommended that a new aim is added to highlight the importance of the history / heritage assets in the area.
Aim: “To protect dark skies and prohibit light pollution from new developments” – Prohibit is a little strong as there are circumstances where it may be appropriate to have external lighting. Would it be contrary to policy if a development had a light adjacent to the front door?	Suggest changing the word “prohibit” to “limit” or “minimise”.

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 1. Local green spaces</i>	
<p>The plan needs to be clear how each designated Local Green Space (LGS) meets the requirements for LGS as set out in the NPPF.</p> <p>For example: Is land opposite Lower Farm, Plush too extensive to meet the NPPF criteria? What distinguishes this particular field from other parcels that frame the village views on the approach road?</p>	<p>Ensure that the designated Local Green spaces meet the definition / criteria set out in para 77 of the NPPF. Set this out in detail for each designated space in Appendix C referring specifically to the reason it is demonstrably special and what local significance it holds. Also ensure that it is not an “extensive tract of land” and ensure that it is in reasonably close proximity depending upon its purpose. See</p> <p>http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space/local-green-space-designation/</p>
<i>Policy 2. Significant views from settlements</i>	
<p>The second part to the policy seems to be aspirational and isn't likely to achieve a great deal, and may also result in the removal of characteristic vegetation within the valley landscape.</p>	<p>Move this last sentence to the supporting text, and make more explicit in what activities would be encouraged to open up views to the river. For example removal or repositioning of boundaries.</p>
<i>Policy 3. The open and undeveloped chalk downlands</i>	
<p>Support the intention in this policy, and it links strongly with the objectives of the Local Plan policies, however at present there is concern that it is too vague to readily apply as a development management policy.</p>	<p>Better definition of the character of the area that is to be conserved establishing exactly what about it should be protected, or defining the area on the maps would be useful. In addition, broadening the definition to “<i>Development that would...</i>” may be the intention; as engineering operations (bundling, excavations etc) can also significantly impact upon the open and undeveloped nature of the downlands.</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 4. Important gaps between settlements</i>	
<p>Again, the intention of this policy is supported. However the final sentence “<i>Removal of redundant buildings...</i>” is unlikely to achieve very much; a more positive wording to support application which secure the removal of redundant buildings (that are not of historic or character value) and structures may be more effective.</p>	<p>Suggest amending the wording of the last sentence of Policy 4 to improve the chances of it delivering improvements. For example, “<i>Development which adds to the openness of these gaps for, example through the removal of redundant buildings and structures which do not contribute to local character or heritage, will be considered favourably</i>”.</p>
<p>The maps showing designations are not particularly clear.</p>	<p>Improving the clarity of the maps would aid in their interpretation and usefulness – we can assist in achieving this if necessary.</p>
<i>Policy 5. Improving wildlife areas</i>	
<p>The supporting text to policy 5 reads “<i>As a matter of course all planning applications for development on sites over 0.1ha in size, or involving the conversion or demolition of rural barns / farm buildings or similar structures, must be accompanied by a biodiversity appraisal</i>”.</p> <p>The threshold of over 0.1ha is inline with the requirements applied by the Dorset Local Planning Authorities. However, requiring a biodiversity appraisal for the conversion or demolition of rural barns will not be applicable outside of the AONB as permitted development rights enable the conversion of agricultural building to residential use without requiring planning permission.</p>	<p>No change recommended, for information only.</p>
<p>The policy requires development proposals to “<i>Development proposals should protect and enhance the biodiversity of the...</i>” Although this is supported, there may be instances where enhancement is not appropriate.</p>	<p>Consider amending to “<i>Development proposals should protect and where appropriate, enhance the biodiversity of the...</i>”</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
Policy 6. Features of historic interest	
<p>The protection of buildings and features of historic interest is supported however there needs to be a clear definition/statement setting out what constitutes “historic interest”. Are you referring to those formally listed heritage assets (listed buildings, conservation areas etc) or are you referring to a local designation/local listing? The generally accepted term for features that have a historic relevance and are worth preserving is “Heritage Asset” – see the glossary to the NPPF.</p>	<p>Consider exactly what is meant by “historic interest”. Define the term within the supporting text to the policy or maybe use the term “heritage assets”.</p>
Policy 7. Important community facilities	
<p>The second sentence of the policy states that <i>“Every effort should be made to work with the local community to investigate potential solutions before conceding the loss of one of these important community facilities”</i>. This approach is supported however as it relates to what is essentially procedure, it should be within the supporting text rather than policy.</p>	<p>Amend the text to indicate a requirement for applicants to meet and/or move the sentence to the supporting text. Suggested wording: <i>“Proposals which would result in the loss of an important community facility will have to demonstrate that every effort has been made to investigate potential solutions that would secure its retention.”</i></p>
Policy 8. Reducing Flood Risk and Sewage Inundation	
<p>This policy differs from the requirements of the Environment Agency (EA) adding further restrictions. For example the policy requires a flood risk assessment <i>“...for all proposals that are within 200m of either the flood risk zones 2 and 3 or indicative surface water flood risk areas...”</i></p> <p>The EA and the Local Plan require a flood risk assessment for development within flood risk zones 2 and 3. The policy could be considered too onerous placing burdens on developers where not backed up by appropriate evidence.</p>	<p>The requirement for flood risk assessments to support planning applications even outside of flood zones 2 and 3 goes above that required by the Environment Agency. Unless there is evidence to support this approach (viability, evidence of substantial flood risk...) it should be removed.</p>
<p>The last part of the policy requires developments to take opportunities to reduce the cause and impacts of flooding <i>“...where these are feasible and appropriate...”</i></p>	<p>It is appropriate to seek the implementation of flood mitigation opportunities however there will be instances where it is not viable to do so. Suggest adding mention of viability <i>“...where these are feasible, viable and appropriate...”</i></p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 9. Road Safety Concerns</i>	
<p>The inclusion of only two examples of road safety improvements are limiting. There may be other improvements that are more appropriate to certain circumstances.</p>	<p>Consider amending the wording of the last part of this policy to <i>“...the potential to improve highway safety should be considered as part of the application. Where improvements are viable and reasonable, they should be secured for example through...”</i></p>
<i>Policy 10. Car parking requirements</i>	
<p>The second sentence of the policy needs clarification. What does “a lot of on-street parking” mean? Does it mean more than one car parked on the street or does it mean a restriction on access due to parked vehicles? What are the “local problems”? Do they relate to appearance / inability for people to park outside / congestion?</p>	<p>Explain the meaning of this part of the policy in the supporting text to reduce ambiguity.</p>
<i>Policy 11. Development within the settlement boundaries</i>	
<p>The approach to development within settlement boundaries needs reviewing.</p>	<p>Residential infill sites within the settlement boundary would need to provide a contribution towards affordable housing. This should be equivalent to the 35% level set out within the Local Plan policy HOUS1.</p> <p>Larger site that are included within the settlement boundary (ie allocated for development) can be assigned a specific use (eg employment, residential, community use...). If a range of uses are offered, the most commercially viable will usually be built. The default position will therefore be residential.</p> <p>Where the requirement is for the site to be for 100% affordable housing or for a higher proportion of affordable housing than that required by HOUS1, the site should be outside the settlement boundary and therefore would be considered as an exception to the normal policy position. It would be very difficult to secure anything other than 35% affordable housing on any site within the settlement boundary.</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 12. Development outside the settlement boundaries</i>	
<p>Generally the aim of this policy is supported however it should be noted that the Local Plan policies enable some types of development outside of settlement boundaries. An approach that restricts development to levels below that established in the Local Plan is not permitted for inclusion in a neighbourhood plan. However I think your approach is generally OK in relation to employment sites particularly as you have a large employment site within your area at Piddlehinton Enterprise Park. In relation to other types of development that are potentially suitable outside of development boundaries, there is a need to have a more flexible approach. For example, under the current policy there would not be scope to identify additional housing sites other than through a review of the Neighbourhood Plan or enable the construction of a new village hall outside of the settlement boundary?</p>	<p>The recommended approach would be to amend the policy slightly to enable a specific range of development types outside of settlement boundaries, such as new community facilities, essential infrastructure, affordable housing...</p>
<i>Policy 13. Housing</i>	
<p>The Local Plan states that all residential development sites should provide affordable housing (or a contribution towards its provision). Policy 13 does not deviate from this approach however there is a need to ensure that the policy is deliverable and based on evidence (of viability in this instance).</p> <p>The requirement that <i>“open market housing should comprise no more than 40% of the total dwellings”</i> on a site may impact negatively on the viability and hence deliverability of sites.</p>	<p>The evidence produced to support the Local Plan suggests that the provision of up to 35% affordable housing was viable at the time of the viability assessment. Requiring a greater percentage of affordable (60%) is likely to impact on the delivery of the sites. It is suggested that the requirement is reduced in line with the Local Plan or a viability assessment is produced for each site/the plan area.</p>
<i>Rural exception sites box – affordable housing definition</i>	
<p>The description sets out what local affordable housing is in the context of the neighbourhood plan. Having this as the opening statement in the box is confusing as it could be taken as the definition of affordable housing. I think you are trying to define a new term: ‘Local Affordable Housing’.</p> <p>However, with the above, it would be undesirable for the housing delivered on the site to be left vacant because no-one meeting the eligibility criteria was available.</p>	<p>Start the box with a statement along the lines of <i>“Rural exception sites are sites that will deliver Local Affordable Housing. Local Affordable Housing is...”</i> or alternatively add some supporting text to highlight what would happen if no-one was eligible for a dwelling under this definition.</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<p>The overall definition of affordable housing does not fit with the definition in the NPPF. The NPPF specifically says that <i>“Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as ‘low cost market’ housing, may not be considered as affordable for planning purposes.”</i> The inclusion of ‘low cost market’ dwellings within the definition is therefore contrary to the NPPF. The intention to secure these dwellings as affordable in perpetuity is noted.</p> <p>The inclusion of ‘low cost market’ dwellings in the definition of affordable housing creates a number of questions where there is no detail in the Neighbourhood Plan. What proportion of market value constitutes affordable housing? Would the price be fixed to average wages in the area? Would these approaches actually be ‘affordable’ in perpetuity?</p> <p>In accordance with the strategic objectives of the Local Plan, all sites should contribute towards the provision of affordable housing at the 35% rate. If the ‘low cost market’ element was to be counted as part of the affordable housing mix (ie part of the 35%), this would be contrary to the approach in the Local Plan. The only way it can contribute is if the units could be secured in perpetuity and therefore counted as part of the intermediate element of affordable housing.</p> <p>There are a number of concerns raised about the management of any ‘low cost market’ housing schemes. The schemes would need to be secured in perpetuity through a S106 legal agreement. The Council is unlikely to take on the management of this approach and therefore alternative arrangements would need to be put in place. Alternatives include involving a registered provider who could take on the freehold of the scheme and manage the arrangements through a lease. A nomination board including local representatives could then be set up to allocate the housing to new tenants.</p>	<p>Consider reviewing the approach to affordable housing provision to bring it in line with the NPPF definition and Local Plan position.</p> <p>Alternatively, engage with a registered provider to secure the provision of ‘low cost market’ housing in perpetuity to enable it to remain ‘affordable’ to local people as intermediate affordable housing.</p>
<p>All of the sites identified as rural exception sites will need to be reviewed to take on board landscape and heritage impacts. If it is considered appropriate to continue with the sites (in whole or in part) the development boundary should be redrawn to place the site outside thus enabling a higher proportion of affordable housing to be delivered.</p>	

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 14. Land at Austral Farm, Alton Pancras</i>	
<p>This site is likely to be problematic in delivering what the community wish of it. The site is significant as a heritage asset by virtue of its relationship with the nearby listed buildings and its inclusion within the conservation area. It is also of historic value in its own right. Development of the site would therefore need to take these heritage constraints in to account raising the development costs.</p> <p>The most financially viable development is generally market residential. If small business units are to be provided alongside 60% affordable housing, the scheme is unlikely to be viable.</p>	<p>Revise the policy wording in the light of the potential impacts on the significance of nearby heritage assets.</p> <p>Consider identifying what type of development is most appropriate for the site, employment or residential. If employment, allocate the site (or part of the site) specifically for this use otherwise only residential development will take place.</p> <p>The settlement boundary should be redrawn to exclude the site so that greater than the 35% affordable housing can be delivered.</p> <p>Consider the response from Conservation in relation to the site to ensure that the heritage impacts are taken into account.</p>
<p>There are no principle landscape issues with this site; however this is a large site (1.3ha) with the potential to accommodate a large number of dwellings (up to 40) at a standard village density (30dph).</p>	<p>If it is not the intention for this level of development to come forward, and for areas of the site to remain undeveloped (e.g. the historic orchard to the north) this should be made clear in the policy with a ceiling figure of dwellings, to allow for such principles to be upheld during any future planning application.</p> <p>Other explicit design parameters could also be put forward, for example limiting the scale to two-storey rather than “modest”.</p>
<i>Policy 15. Land at West Cottage, Piddletrenthide</i>	
<p>The proposed site is located within the conservation area. In addition, a large proportion of the site is located within a Locally Registered Park and Garden. The impact on these heritage assets needs to be considered.</p>	<p>Review the allocation of the site to reflect the significance of the heritage assets. Consider the response from Conservation in relation to the site to ensure that the heritage impacts are taken into account.</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<p>There are some landscape issues with this site as currently proposed. The eastern portion of the site lies within a Locally Registered Park and Garden, and a significant reduction of trees would be required to accommodate the number of dwellings proposed in this area. In addition, the change in the character of the rural approach to the village would be significant with the introduction of ten dwellings on this rural village edge location.</p>	<p>A lower number of units (up to four) could potentially be accommodated in the western portion of the site (in the area currently housing the tennis courts) without significant landscape impacts, but this would be on the proviso that they were low density, small in scale (two-storey maximum) included robust tree planting, and that similar provisions in relation to the character of the access and street lighting are made in the policy.</p>
<p><i>Policy 16. Kingrove Farm, Piddletrethide</i></p>	
<p>The proposed site is located within the conservation area. The impact on this heritage asset therefore needs to be considered.</p>	<p>Review the allocation of the site to reflect the impact on the conservation area. Consider the response from Conservation in relation to the site to ensure that the heritage impacts are taken into account.</p>
<p>The supporting text to the policy makes statements about the access to the site being via land in separate ownership. The only alternative access is stated as being “<i>not suitable for additional vehicular traffic</i>”. This potentially creates a ransom situation.</p>	<p>Consider rewording the text to remove the potential ransom situation to enable the site to be delivered. Suggested text: “<i>A preferred approach would be via Whightman’s...</i>”.</p>
<p>There are no principle landscape issues with the site.</p>	<p>The south western boundary would need to be strengthened with robust planting (more than simply a hedgerow) in order to visually contain development at this site as at the surrounding settlement edge. The re-use of existing buildings and consideration of dwelling height are noted and supported.</p>
<p><i>Policy 17. Land at South View, White Lackington</i></p>	
<p>I have not been able to visit this site to consider it in detail, but note the comments of the Dorset AONB Team in relation to the potential for development rising onto the elevated valley sides. Such an effect would detract from the character of the valley landscape and the AONB, and I would support the AONB Team in this view.</p>	<p>Take on board the comments from the AONB Team in reviewing this site.</p>

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
Policy 18. Enterprise Park and Bourne Park	
The first bullet point of the policy states that the site “ <i>should remain a site for small-scale start up businesses</i> ”	Suggest removing the term ‘start up’ as it is restrictive and instead encourage small-scale businesses that suit the relatively remote rural location.
There are no principle issues with this policy, but it may be relevant to mention the site-wide management plan that was conditioned as part of the changing uses of the site in 2000. (see planning application 1/E/00/000004 via http://webapps.westdorset-weymouth.gov.uk/PlanningApps/Pages/Search.aspx)	The principles established in this plan still apply, and the policy could usefully reference continuing these principles with any new development that comes forwards. It may also be appropriate to reference the updating of this management plan in the supporting text to the policy as a means of securing the sensitive landscaping of the enterprise park going forwards.
The policy states that access to Bourne Park should not be via London Row. This is not mentioned in the supporting text to the policy.	There needs to be justification within the supporting text for this requirement.
It should be noted that the Enterprise Park site as shown in hatched on the proposals maps is slightly larger than the site designated as a key employment site in the Local Plan.	For information, no action required.
Policy 19. New farm buildings	
The first part of the policy reads “ <i>The provision of new agricultural buildings to improve the operational efficiency and long-term viability of farms and reduce the number of farm vehicle movements along the adopted roads in the Valley will be supported...</i> ”	The policy should make it clear whether a proposal should improve all three of these criteria (operational efficiency, long-term viability and farm vehicle movements) to be acceptable or whether it just has to meet one or two.
There are concerns around the blanket use of the term ‘redundant buildings’ in the second part of this policy. The redundant buildings considered for removal could be suitable for re-use or conversion both of which would be supported by the NPPF.	Further criteria should be introduced to suggest the re-use/conversion of buildings should be considered. In addition, outside of the AONB, permitted development rights allow for the reuse of agricultural buildings for a range of other uses without the need for planning permission.

November 2015

COMMENTS	SUGGESTED CHANGE/AMENDMENT
<i>Policy 20. Re-use of redundant farm buildings as dwellings</i>	
This policy will not apply outside of the AONB due to permitted development rights	
<i>Policy 21. The character and design of new development</i>	
There are no principle issues with this policy, however the final sentence of the first paragraph could be being somewhat stronger.	If the intention is to conserve character through consistency in plot size, density, scale and massing, tree cover and landscaping, the final sentence shouldn't be limited to character change through "over-intensive development". It could perhaps read " <i>It should not significantly change the character e.g. through over-intensive development</i> ".
Important to note that some extensions and porches can be carried out under permitted development and therefore this policy will not apply in all instances.	
<i>Policy 22. External lighting</i>	
<p>The final sentence of this policy seeks to use planning conditions to control external lighting that may be required in the future. External lighting does not normally require planning permission and therefore will be difficult to control. The NPPF places restrictions on the use of planning conditions and therefore it may be considered unreasonable to use them when fitting external lighting is not considered development.</p> <p>Should the policy apply to minor domestic light fittings? Should the policy apply to large scale industrial uses? How do you assess whether the "<i>development may give rise to pressure for external lighting...</i>"?</p>	Consider removing this requirement.

I'm commenting on the draft final Piddle Valley neighbourhood plan on the basis of heritage assets plus other considerations that have implications for heritage assets. Comments on specific rural exception sites are attached as separate documents.

- There is neither reference to nor clarity about the status of the adopted conservation area appraisals for Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton. In terms of their specific remit, these appraisals should inform the draft neighbourhood plan.
- The Neighbourhood Plan's description of Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide should be guided by the conservation area appraisals which are available at:

<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/387610/Piddletrenthide--Piddlehinton-conservation-areas>

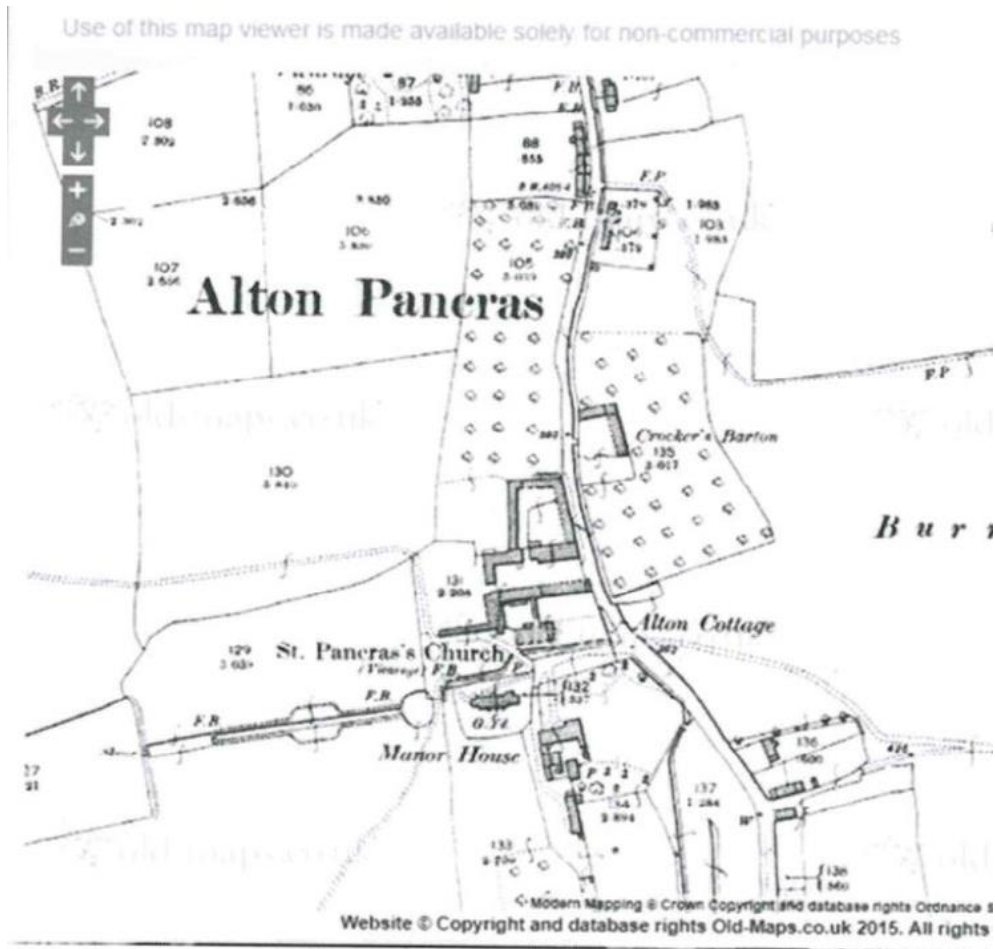
- On pages 33 and 34, at the end of the text on Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton, a reference to the relevant conservation area appraisals should be made. This will encourage people to refer to the appraisal document.
- Page 4 & 5 Environment – it is noted that there is no reference to conservation areas and these are not plotted on the major environmental constraints map (Appendix B). Throughout the draft neighbourhood plan, conservation area boundaries should be mapped as required.
- Page 8 Aims and Vision – there is no aim to preserve or enhance heritage assets.
- Page 9 Spaces and places protected from development – in the first paragraph, a recognition that views and spaces are considered in conservation area appraisals would be welcome. Such appraisals should also inform the Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton maps on pages 11 and 12 respectively.
- Pages 9 to 13 Spaces and places protected from development – there is no reference to TPOs and the role of trees and woodland in terms of conservation areas and their setting. It may be worth including TPO's on the various maps.
- The text refers to the Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide conservation area appraisals and therefore, their web link of:
<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/387610/Piddletrenthide--Piddlehinton-conservation-areas> should be given, as should The National Heritage List for England, web address of <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/> which is the official source of information on designated heritage assets in England. The Historic England (HE) website is the public site for the online list of national heritage assets. There is no alternative reference, as the online list covers innumerable assets throughout Dorset let alone England.
- The content and terminology of the neighbourhood plan's policy 6 would benefit from an amendment. To more inclusive in terms of the various heritage assets that benefit the Piddle Valley, the first paragraph might say instead, "Heritage assets, both designated, for example, listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments, and non-designated assets, which are of local architectural or historic interest and importance, must be protected for future generations, in line with national and adopted Local Plan policies".

- Pages 19 to 21 Locations for new development – as opposed to development boundaries in the Draft Local Plan, the differences in or even creation of new settlement boundaries for settlements in the Piddle Valley raise concern in regard to the impact on heritage assets.
- On page 20, the neighbourhood plan’s policy 11 does not refer to the heritage asset of conservation areas. There is also no mention of other types of heritage assets such as listed buildings or scheduled monuments but instead reference is made to “sites or features of historic importance, including their setting”. While this approach is acceptable, it would be more appropriate to use the term heritage asset as this is more widely recognised - “protection of *heritage assets*, including their setting”.
- Pages 21 & 22 Housing – it is observed that there is no reference to bringing vacant properties back into use. Such properties are referred to on page 6, under Housing and Business. Although there is limited scope within Planning Policy to achieve this, it could be mentioned in the supporting text on page 21.
- Pages 22 to 26, Rural exception sites, land at Austral Farm, Alton Pancras, West Cottage, Piddletrenthide and Kingrove Farm, Piddletrenthide – please see attachments sent previously.
- Page 30, Redundant farm buildings outside a settlement boundary – Reference to the reuse of heritage assets should be made either in the policy or in the supporting text.

Alton Pancras – example of the changes that are sought

Page 31, Understanding the character of the main settlements in the valley, Alton Pancras - Alton Pancras has no conservation area appraisal but consideration of the proposed rural exception site (see attachment) has highlighted concerns regarding the Alton Pancras map on page 10 and the text on page 31. For example, there is insufficient appreciation of the historic layout and separation between the north and south parts of the village by open space situated on both the west and east sides of the B3143. Austral Farm’s role in maintaining this separation on the west side is not acknowledged nor is it’s important association with the listed farmhouse and the important group of farmhouse, manor and parish church; all of which comprise much of the south part of the village.

The agricultural use of Austral Farm is at least as old as the original two separate parts of Alton Pancras. The agricultural use preserves the historic separation between the north and south parts of the village- please see extract from 1902 OS map below. Today, the distance (covering former orchard) between the north end of the large, modern cattle shed and the south boundary of 1 Boldacre is approximately 40 metres, and acts as a green buffer between the south and north parts. The rural exception site as currently proposed in the final draft of the neighbourhood plan proposes an area of development that removes this buffer and encourages coalescence that is contrary to the historic layout of Alton Pancras, which is a mainly designated (south part) and non-designated (north part) heritage asset and significant in its own right.



Extract from 1902 OS Map Copyright Old-maps.co.uk

There is no appreciation of the gateway/entrance into the conservation area from the north, together with the important views in which Austral Farm plays a significant part, and vice versa, when leaving the conservation area. The last paragraph is worded in a manner that suits the rural exception site and is not an assessment of the special interest of the conservation area and its setting, the latter of which also needs to be considered from the various rights of way that allow views/panoramas of the conservation area, it's setting and relationship to the open countryside. Matters such as historic village layout, conservation area, setting of the conservation area, gateway, open gaps (both side of the B3134), views/panoramas, setting of listed buildings, building groups require new or more consideration and incorporating into the text and maps.

In response to the proposed rural exception site an appreciation (as referred to above) of the conservation area and its setting would have helped to shape this rural exception site proposal and the accompanying text/policy/map.

With reference to Section 12 of the NPPF, it is concluded that the rural exception site as currently proposed will lead to substantial harm to designated and non-designated assets (for more detail on assets, see site specific comments dated 24 November 2015). In order to mitigate the harm, it is recommended that the site area be reduced to preserve and potentially enhance the historic green buffer between the north and south parts of Alton Pancras and to incorporate the C19 farm buildings and features, the C19 yards and the footprint of former C19 cattle sheds, all as indicated on the map below. Excluded are the stables/hay store and stores that are directly associated with the listed Austral Farmhouse. The “heritage led” objective to be an appropriate and viable use and the preservation, and where appropriate, the enhancement of the buildings, including the yards and boundaries.

In the draft neighbourhood plan, policy 14 might say:

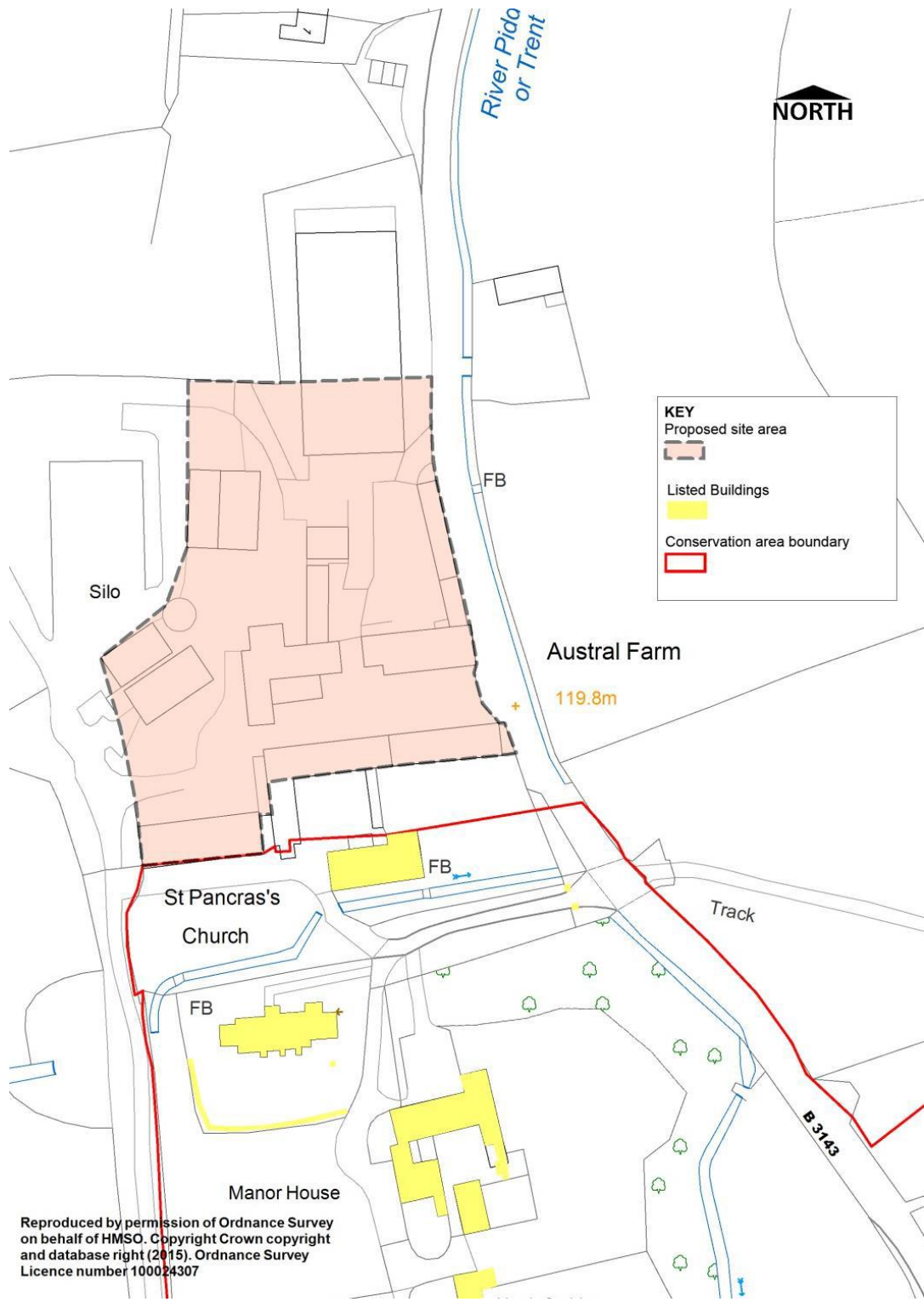
“The site, which incorporates C19 farm buildings, features and associated yards (as indicated on the proposal map) is identified as a rural exception site to provide a mix of appropriate and viable long-term uses.

“The proposal is to be heritage led with the objective of the preservation and enhancement of the historic green gap between the north and south parts of Alton Pancras on the west side of the B3143; and the preservation and enhancement of the C19 farm buildings and features, including yards and boundaries in a manner that safeguards the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area and its setting (including the northern approach into the conservation area and the public views from east and west), the setting of nearby listed buildings, and important building groups both designated (listed buildings) and non-designated (farm buildings and features). The removal of the large, modern cattle shed to the north will enhance the setting of the conservation area, as well as the historic green buffer. Such a removal will also allow appropriate replacement either on the footprint of lost C19 cattle sheds or something similar.

“The proposal will need to be informed by a full flood risk appraisal and incorporate suitable measures to risk the risk of flooding downstream.

“The layout of any vehicular access or parking areas within the site needs to be rural in character. Street or security lighting would not be appropriate in this location”.

The site area for the rural exception site’s proposal map is indicated on the map below.



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. Copyright Crown copyright and database right (2015). Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024307

- Page 32, Understanding the character of the main settlements in the valley, Plush – the statement “the attractive redundant farm buildings at Harveys Farm, directly related to the hamlet, calls for a new use to ensure they are kept in a good state of repair” together with the draft neighbourhood plan’s intent on placing a settlement boundary around Plush raises concern for this “rural hamlet of about 30 houses” and the future of its heritage assets, including historic character and appearance.
- Page 33, Understanding the character of the main settlements in the valley, Piddletrenthide – to assist in “understanding the character of the main settlements”, and in this case Piddletrenthide, the text should stress the importance of the Appraisal of the Piddletrenthide Conservation area. The draft neighbourhood plan’s intent on placing a settlement boundary around Piddletrenthide in excess of the Draft Local Plan’s development boundary raises concern for the future of its heritage assets, including the conservation area and its setting.
- Page 33, Understanding the character of the main settlements in the valley, White Lackington – the historic character and appearance of this dispersed rural hamlet is still strongly evident. The draft neighbourhood plan’s intent on placing a settlement boundary around White Lackington raises concern for the future of its heritage assets, including historic character and appearance.
- Page 34, Understanding the character of the main settlements in the valley, Piddlehinton - to assist in “understanding the character of the main settlements”, and in this case Piddlehinton, the text should stress the importance of the Appraisal of the Piddlehinton Conservation area. The draft neighbourhood plan’s intent on placing a settlement boundary around Piddlehinton raises concern for the future of its heritage assets, including the conservation area and its setting.
- The neighbourhood plan’s intent on placing new settlement boundaries around settlements raises concern for the future of its heritage assets, including historic character and appearance. It raised concern because of the possibility (or not) of negative effects on heritage assets, for example, historically uncharacteristic intensification of say Plush, because of these new settlement boundaries, which are over and above the Local Plan.. It may be appropriate to deal with this issue on a case by case basis dealing with the impacts on heritage assets at the application stage.
- Page 35, Detailed design and building materials through the valley – Although conservation area appraisals only relate to the conservation areas in Piddletrenthide and Piddlehinton, the text should stress the importance of the conservation area appraisals, which have sections that cover architectural details and materials. This can also apply to the setting of the conservation area appraisals.