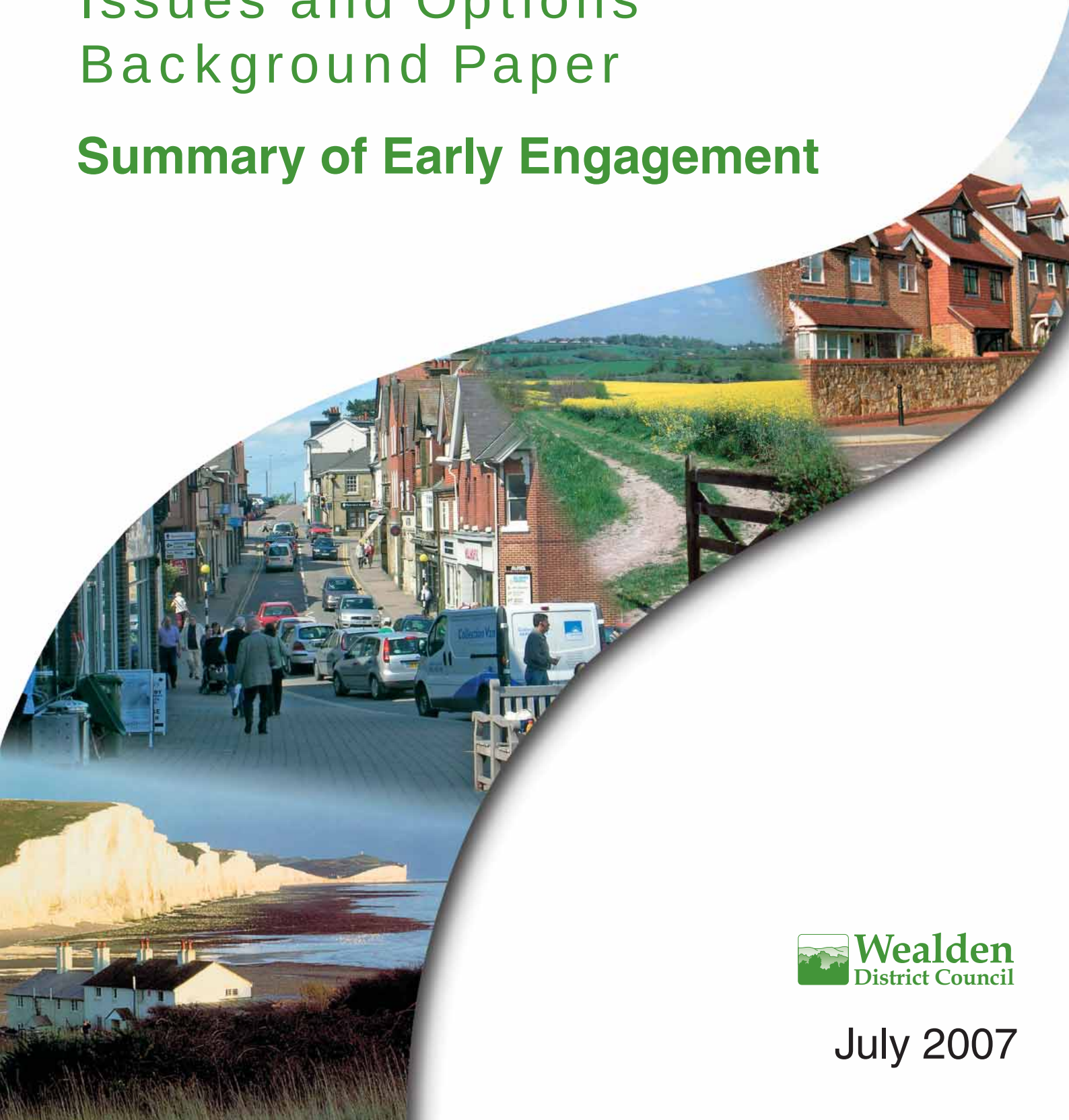


Wealden District Council  
Local Development Framework

# Core Strategy

## Issues and Options Background Paper

### Summary of Early Engagement



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Recycled Paper

**Local Development Framework  
Core Strategy  
Issues and Options  
Summary of Early Engagement January-June 2007**

**1.0 Introduction & Context**

- 1.1 Community and Stakeholder consultation and engagement is a key driver and component part of any Local Development Framework (LDF). Development Plan Documents (DPD) such as the Core Strategy form the major part of Wealden's Local Development Framework that the Council is required to produce under the new planning system, introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2 The Council has a duty to involve the community and stakeholders in the preparation and production of the portfolio of documents that make up the Local Development Framework for Wealden. All consultation must be in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI sets out the Council's consultation principles for the preparation of the Local Development Framework documents and for the planning application process. The SCI was formally adopted on 21st February 2007 and all consultation must now comply with the principles set out in that document.
- 1.3 In recognising and fulfilling the Council's commitment to the SCI, in October 2006, the Council appointed an officer into a new role with responsibility for Community Liaison and Engagement. The officer came into post in November 2007 and the post holder oversees and manages the consultation and engagement arrangements for the LDF programme.

**2.0 LDF programme 2006 – 2007**

- 2.1 The first major part of community and stakeholder involvement was during 2006 when the Council produced its SCI. This consultation was undertaken by sending out a questionnaire to all households within the District. Responses were recorded on a database, which is held on a consultation management system (Limehouse). The data base enables the Council to maintain a list of all those expressing an interest in the LDF process and wishing to be informed of progress on relevant documents. The Council received over 2000 responses to this initial consultation on the SCI.
- 2.2 The key stages of the community and stakeholder engagement on the development of Wealden's Core Strategy commenced in January 2007. The Council has made every effort to engage many stakeholders beyond the requirements of the Regulation 25 principles and as such, has utilised a range of methods to ensure that as many people as possible have had an opportunity to be involved.
- 2.3 Methods of engagement to date have included:
- Stakeholder meetings
  - Leaflet mail out to Parish and Town Councils, consultees on our database and distributed at various events.
  - Attendance at meetings held by other groups and organisations
  - Presentations
  - Use of the Wealden.gov.uk website
  - Workshops
  - Letters to stakeholders and consultees
  - Interactive exercises
  - W4Y young people website
- 2.4 We have consulted a wide range of people including:
- Elected members
  - Stakeholder organisations
  - Key Infrastructure and Service Providers
  - The Local Strategic Partnership
  - Parish and Town Councils

- Wealden Senior Citizens Partnership

- 2.5 We have organised a series of meetings, events, workshops and presentations and we have also included the LDF on the agendas of other events and meetings, including the Parish Planning Panel and the Agents Panel.
- 2.6 The notes / methodologies of the key events are appended to this covering paper.
- 2.7 Key engagement activities in 2007 during preparation of the Issues and Options Consultation Paper for the Core Strategy, which is being published for full public consultation on 2 July 2007, included:

January:

- Attendance at LSP Meeting
- Stakeholder Consultations with service providers
- Parish Clerk's Conference
- Parish Planning Panel
- Wealden Senior Citizens Partnership - attendance at meeting
- Wealden Youth Matters - attendance at meeting

February:

- Leaflet mail out to stakeholders, consultees etc
- Stakeholder engagement – Infrastructure/service providers
- Database interested parties mail out

March:

- Parish Planning Conference attended by around 80 people
- LSP – attendance at meeting
- DTZ stakeholder event (Housing Needs Assessment)
- Member workshops
- Meetings with key service providers, including East Sussex County Council, the Highways Agency, Primary Care Trust, Southern Water, Environment Agency
- Meeting with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Stakeholder Consultations – Environmental Bodies
- Housing Market Area stakeholder workshops

April:

- Stakeholder engagement – Environmental bodies
- Parish / LSP event attended by around 45 people
- Meetings with Key Service providers

May:

- Town/Parish Council Meetings on request – Arlington, Heathfield
- LSP meeting Presentation/Discussion Item
- Agents Forum
- Meetings with key service providers

June:

- Employment Land Review stakeholder workshops
- Attendance at PCT Event – Planning for the Future of Primary Care
- Members Issues and Options preview session
- Parish & Town Council Issues and Options Preview session

### **3.0 Issues and Options Consultation June 2007**

- 3.1 The Issues and Options paper, which forms the basis of the Core Strategy, will be available for public consultation for a period of six weeks commencing on July 2nd 2007.

- 3.2 The Issues and Options paper will be available on the [www.wealden.gov.uk](http://www.wealden.gov.uk) website for comment. Registration on the Councils consultation database will be required but this is a quick and easy process, which can be done by following a simple link on the home page. Consultees who are already listed on the consultation database will be contacted by letter or email (according to their preference) in order to provide them with information about the Issues and Options paper consultation.
- 3.3 To maximise coverage, a promotional leaflet is being distributed to every household in the District informing them about the Issues and Options Consultation. Adverts are also being placed in local newspapers to appear in the Courier and Sussex Express during week ending 29 June 2007. Copies of documents are being distributed to local libraries and Council offices. A free printed summary and a free CD of the full document are also being produced to allow a choice of formats. We are also writing to Councillors, Town and Parish Councils, the Local Strategic Partnership, Statutory and Non Statutory consultees who appear on our consultation database.
- 3.4 A series of 'drop in' sessions will be held on Saturdays in July at the five main towns; Crowborough (7<sup>th</sup>), Hailsham (7<sup>th</sup>), Heathfield (28<sup>th</sup>), Polegate (14<sup>th</sup>) and Uckfield (28<sup>th</sup>).
- 4.0 Next steps**
- 4.1 It is the Councils intention to engage the community and stakeholders in an iterative process throughout the production of the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents, which form the Local Development Framework. This is line with the Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.2 The next key stage of public consultation on the Core Strategy will be in April and May in 2008 when the Council will be consulting on the preferred options.

**ANNUAL PARISH PLANNING CONFERENCE**  
**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**EARLY ENGAGEMENT IN RELATION TO THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**  
**CORE STRATEGY**

**Summary of Workshop Notes**

4 workshops took place at the Conference (all delegates attended each of the workshops):

**1. Core Strategy Key Issues**

This workshop provided an opportunity to identify the key over-arching issues for Wealden, which delegates believe, should be addressed in the Core Strategy. This workshop focused on topics, themes and cross-cutting issues, which will apply to the District as a whole.

**2. Responding to the Spatial Development Challenges of the South East Plan**

This workshop explored options for how the overall development requirements of the South East Plan can be translated on to the ground. It debated what proportion of the total development requirement should be focused in and around the District's main towns/urban areas as opposed to within villages, the extent to which that growth should be evenly distributed between the different areas or more focused on specific towns having regard to key designations such as the areas of outstanding natural beauty. It also explored whether consideration should be given to the principle of a new settlement.

**3. The Role of Villages in accommodating sustainable development**

This workshop considered how development in the villages should be distributed. It debated what factors should be taken into account in assessing the suitability of villages for accommodating new development, focusing specifically on how we define "local service centres" in line with Government guidance. The use of a service 'matrix' to help agree a methodology for developing a settlement strategy was discussed.

**4. Parish Plans – Making the Links with the LDF**

This workshop enabled the Parishes and WDC to explore opportunities for joint working to develop a common evidence base for the future and to help deliver some of those Parish Plan priorities that have a spatial dimension via the LDF, for example, affordable housing and community facilities.

**WORKSHOP: CORE STRATEGY KEY ISSUES**

| <b>GROUP 1</b>                                                               |                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Issue</i>                                                                 | <i>Action</i>                                                                                                                 |
| Road Safety<br>Public Transport<br>An increased number of cars               | Car sharing and hence a reduced number of cars on the roads; Better Local Transport with better connections and accessibility |
| Few local employment opportunities;<br>Over industrialisation of rural areas | Some mixed development within rural areas i.e. villages is a possibility                                                      |
| An ageing population within villages, resulting in a reduced vitality.       | Revitalisation of villages by developing some affordable housing; and having a mix of tenure.                                 |
| Lack of infrastructure to support new development                            | Infrastructure should be taken into consideration before any development takes place.                                         |
| Environmental quality                                                        | Option: to consider some development in AONB; specifically in villages and not within open countryside                        |

|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>GROUP 2</b>                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Issue</i>                                                                                            | <i>Action</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Affordable Housing                                                                                      | <p>Any affordable housing is to be well defined as to the type; for whom it is targeted; how this is to be sustained; and how much of it should be made available</p> <p>Affordable Housing should be directly connected with the village locals</p> <p>Deliverability of affordable housing should be focused more on villages rather than in towns</p> <p>If combined with market housing, affordable housing should have a larger share (%).</p> <p>Intermediate products should be considered and included in the Core Strategy</p> |
| Market housing development is commonly done in a piecemeal fashion in order to avoid affordable housing | Wording of policies should ensure that piecemeal development requires an element of affordable housing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Transport (specifically A27);<br>Dispersal of heavy traffic through rural areas                         | <p>A community bus service system (dial a ride) would be more efficient in terms of serving the rural area;</p> <p>Public transport improvement is required;</p> <p>Better connection between towns in order to avoid heavy traffic passages through rural areas;</p> <p>Well designed town/ village centres e.g. with appropriate traffic calming measures</p>                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| No appropriate access to facilities/ services                                                           | <p>Reinstating of grants provided in the past;</p> <p>Mixed development</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>GROUP 3</b>                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Issue</i>                                                                                            | <i>Action</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Transport;<br>No direct links                                                                           | <p>To provide adequate linkages between the north and the south of the district;</p> <p>Increase number of dual carriageways;</p> <p>Improve public transport, yet caution needs to be taken not to increase the number of people out commuting to areas outside the District;</p> <p>Improve the A21 and A27;</p> <p>Increase the possibility/ options to have a more livework units (mostly beneficial to rural areas)</p>                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Centres outside the District attracting businesses (e.g. Gatwick)                                       | <p>Provide more job opportunities within the District (yet, one needs the appropriate infrastructure to support this);</p> <p>More job opportunities especially for smaller businesses;</p> <p>Retain the use of business centres outside the district as the main employment opportunity</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Lack of some services within villages (e.g. no broadband facility)                                      | Promotion of rural enterprise may foster better facilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ageing population and lack of facilities to cater for this sector of the community                                     | Improve public transport in terms of accessibility and connections                                                                                      |
| <b>GROUP 4</b>                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Issue</i>                                                                                                           | <i>Action</i>                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Natural environment; and built environment (Wealden's character is one which is made up of a number of small villages) | Any development should respect the character of the area; hence limited development within villages                                                     |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Transport                                                                                                              | Adequate road network within the rural area                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Climate change                                                                                                         | Water minimisation in homes;<br>Encourage the use of renewable energy                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Weak economic base;<br>Major businesses will not move into Wealden due to the existing poor infrastructure             | A question remains with regards to the preferred action (develop a rural economic base or one which is focused within towns?)<br>Improve infrastructure |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |
| Small businesses within the rural areas are creating pressures on roads                                                |                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                         |

### **Core Strategy Key Issues**

Delegates were asked to rank the top three issues that related to their Parish and Town. Housing appears to be the significant issue for Parish and Town councils with transport, and, roads and traffic as top priorities.

Other issues such as environment, design, employment and services were considered less of an issue for the parish/town councils.

The third priority for delegates revealed that housing was the largest issue for the District with the environment following.

### **Core Strategy Key Issues**

Record of the top three issues identified by delegates

| PARISH    | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                                            | ISSUE 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ISSUE 3                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alciston  | A27 Transport links. Growth of Wealden employment opportunities all restricted by road links                                                                                                                       | Housing, high quality required, spread through village                                                                                                                                                                                    | Re-cycling, very little available in village, environmental issues                                                                                                                       |
| Alciston  | A27 between Lewes & Polegate - no major east-west route despite numerous study groups and reports - this stretch is now extremely dangerous                                                                        | Environment, Alciston Parish, along with a lot of Wealden is a unique environment and there is a genuine desire to retain it.                                                                                                             | Affordable Housing - we need to maintain the life in our villages and encourage the regeneration of our rural commitments. Affordable housing is one way but site selection is paramount |
| Arlington | Speeding traffic, particularly through Upper Dicker. Reduce speed limits to 40mph within the Parish, 30 through Upper Dicker, 20 outside school area, Traffic calming. Common problem with other Wealden villages. | St.Bedes independent school of 800+ pupils, age range 13-18. Problems arising from continuous development, creeping expansion. Large employer - 110+ - cars commute to Upper Dicker daily during term time. Not typical of other villages | Roadside litter and fly tipping. Typical of other villages                                                                                                                               |

| PARISH                    | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ISSUE 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ISSUE 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Arlington                 | Maintain social balance & the balance of society                                                                                                                                                                                          | Discourage waste of resources via travel & renewable resources                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Buxted                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Buxted railway station and parking for commuters. There appears to be no response from the railways, Wealden or ESCC to address this growing problem                                                                                                                                         | Affordable housing. There seems to be no effective response from Wealden to maximise rented affordable housing gain out of private developments. There will be nowhere for my children to live. Please make somewhere available |
| Chalvington with Ripe     | Employment - encouraging local employment opportunities to prevent further commuting even within the District                                                                                                                             | Transport. Improving public transport from settlements to centres of employment, to reduce carbon emissions                                                                                                                                                                                  | Preserving district as a place worth living in. Preventing gross character change by allowing only evolutionary change                                                                                                          |
| Chiddingly                | Communications & Transport                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Countryside                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Built & Historic environment                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Crowborough               | Clean neighbourhoods - litter. Lovely countryside                                                                                                                                                                                         | Maintain free parking - encourage people to come to our market towns                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Balanced development - difference sized communities are important                                                                                                                                                               |
| Crowborough               | Centre of Crowborough is a mess. Has lost identity, character and is run down                                                                                                                                                             | Need for affordable transport for young people to access facilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Destruction of character buildings                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Danehill                  | AONB - Ashdown Forest                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Low cost housing - some areas are too expensive for local people to remain in or live and work in                                                                                                                                                                                            | Reduce speeding traffic through villages. Traffic too fast near schools and in village centres.                                                                                                                                 |
| East Hoathly with Halland | Location of housing - to protect an unique community                                                                                                                                                                                      | Poor quality of infrastructure in widest context. Ensure a good supply of water (clean & dirty), electricity etc. Telecommunication masts are necessary in correct location                                                                                                                  | Heavy traffic on country lanes. Closer involvement with ESCC on speed limits, weight and width of vehicles                                                                                                                      |
| East Hoathly with Halland | Conservation of village of unique character - ie buildings & services. Sensitive development needed. Integrates well in the Wealden area & character                                                                                      | Areas of recreation - its open spaces and lanes should be conserved                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | We have affordable housing developments in the pipeline - no demand for more as part of general 'progress'                                                                                                                      |
| Forest Row                | Any new building should only be considered if there is infrastructure. Policing to be enough to cover needs                                                                                                                               | any new building should be in keeping with the area and local materials used where possible                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Conservation areas to be maintained                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Forest Row                | Housing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Communications & Transport                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Economy - business development                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Forest Row Parish         | Roads. Lots of out commuting. Though commuting ambient road noise and pollution. Lack of Bypass. Lots of AONB used as excuse for not building relief roads. Villages are used as rat-runs. The Box A27 A23 does not help us in the north. | Transport. No interconnecting trains. Unreliable buses, especially to connect to Gatwick where lots of people work and travel to and from. Most of traffic passing NW to SE comes through our village. AONB is important but so is the quality of people's lives (there must be a solution). | Utilities - lack of water and electricity. Hose pipe ban for 8 months                                                                                                                                                           |

| PARISH              | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                        | ISSUE 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ISSUE 3                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Framfield           | Housing - maintain rural nature - infill/Brownfield preference - resist SE overdevelopment                                                                                                     | Infrastructure - Transport (public) provision - effective road network - provision of water/waste/etc - medical and social services - education services                                                                                                                                  | Environment - safe - clean, more effective waste disposal - attractive, maintain AONB                                                                                   |
| Framfield           | Post office - a must - and under threat of closure                                                                                                                                             | Affordable housing / clubs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Transport - varied                                                                                                                                                      |
| Frant               | Housing, small villages, rural communities. AONB                                                                                                                                               | Transport, country lanes, villages                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Infrastructure, rail, bus, water, sewage                                                                                                                                |
| Frant               | Traffic - rural - speeding through a teak times. Work / school areas                                                                                                                           | Recycling - rural                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Travellers - rural AONB. No planning, retrospective planning, Enforcement difficult                                                                                     |
| Frant               | Traffic - speeding through village. An issue throughout all Wealden villages                                                                                                                   | Maintaining character whilst addressing affordable housing needs and rural industry                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Maintaining a rural character (distinct from Tunbridge Wells)                                                                                                           |
| Hadlow Down         | Road Safety, busy district roads clogged. 'Minor' roads bearing the brunt, country roads used as rat run.                                                                                      | Keeping the village a village - reasonable commuting facilities attract people who do not want to become part of a small community.                                                                                                                                                       | AONB - a good part of Wealden is very much an AONB, extending housing in vast numbers will spoil the area.                                                              |
| Hailsham            | Social cohesion - if not maintained through out the District - splits. Community of Communities                                                                                                | Built Identity - don't want identikit development. Areas within District have different characteristics - should be maintained to support community identity.                                                                                                                             | Employment, local based, sustainable. Farm diversification, small hi-tic industry, estates/workshops, craft workshops - garage repair, carpenters etc. shops, pubs etc. |
| Hailsham            | Excess Building - retain green environment                                                                                                                                                     | Poor road system - alternative transport & more local employment                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Low paid work - need low environmental impact employment                                                                                                                |
| Hailsham            | Transport, infrastructure, sewage, water                                                                                                                                                       | Housing distribution. Would damage social cohesion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | health (mental) with the community                                                                                                                                      |
| Hartfield           | Lack of smaller houses in village as many extended and taken out of reach of lower income. Affordable houses needed.                                                                           | Land owned and controlled by few major landowners. Little scope for use for benefit of parishioners. Conservation village. Tourist village. HPC Parish bought land need help to allow affordable housing to go ahead, which they have applied for as exception site. RSL very interested. | Traffic speed management. Public Transport lacking, especially for youngsters.                                                                                          |
| Hartfield           | Affordable Housing - a village of AONB where people want to move to. Young of the village cannot afford to buy.                                                                                | Communication & Transport - poor bus service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Tourism - creates problems of parking and congestion                                                                                                                    |
| Heathfield/Waldrone | Transport, roads, junction improvements for safety                                                                                                                                             | AONB, countryside and landscape to be maintained                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Crime and disorder, more police on streets                                                                                                                              |
| Heathfield/Waldrone | Backhand development 'infilling' & demolition of single houses to make room for blocks of flats. Towns such as Heathfield & Crowborough surrounded by AONB where development severely limited. | Poor road structure & congestion. Lack of Government investment in roads/rail infrastructure. Few large businesses in Wealden                                                                                                                                                             | Water supply for existing / new housing                                                                                                                                 |

| PARISH                           | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                                  | ISSUE 2                                                                                                                                                                                                 | ISSUE 3                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Heathfield/<br>Waldron<br>Parish | Transport - rural                                                                                                                                                                                        | Affordable Housing, shortage of developers willing to provide.                                                                                                                                          | Waste management - distance to travel to waste sites                                                                                                |
| Hellingly                        | Countryside & Landscape Management. ANOB (particularly in relation to housing developments)                                                                                                              | Sustainable natural resource management. Villages of Wealden                                                                                                                                            | Social, cultural & health dimensions. Villages of Wealden                                                                                           |
| Hellingly                        | Inadequate infrastructure generally. Rural area widespread development                                                                                                                                   | Transport - inadequate. Public transport to service existing developments - insufficient users to justify new integrated transport                                                                      | No local shopping or employment opportunities - small towns unable to support larger comparative shopping centre                                    |
| Hellingly                        | Communications & Transport - no first class roads                                                                                                                                                        | Social cultural & health services. Poor health facilities. No cottage hospital - decline                                                                                                                | Economy - low wage base                                                                                                                             |
| Hellingly                        | Over development & too much housing. Wealden is focusing development of coastal strip and avoiding any development in AONB                                                                               | Lack of sustainable infrastructure. Poor roads and rail links. Lack of employment opportunities. Water, sewage problems. Flooding. Lack of schools, GP's medical facilities, dentists, post offices etc | Destruction of countryside gaps. Current strategy is for larger towns to absorb small local villages destroying the rural 'feel' which is so valued |
| Herstmonceux                     | Housing, rural area - so increase in housing in Wealden will add pressure to all services                                                                                                                | Transport - road structure poor and public services very poor                                                                                                                                           | Management of countryside – Wealden is a rural area                                                                                                 |
| Hooe                             | Communications & transport. Speeding. Bus services                                                                                                                                                       | Social / cultural / health                                                                                                                                                                              | Sustainability                                                                                                                                      |
| Horam                            | Lack of employment, areas with poor infrastructure                                                                                                                                                       | More programmes for youth, Lack of interest                                                                                                                                                             | More houses without infrastructure, AONB                                                                                                            |
| Horam                            | Youth crime - lack of police action. Lack of youth activities                                                                                                                                            | Merrydown development - lack of water, roads etc                                                                                                                                                        | Vines Cross - death of the Hamlet                                                                                                                   |
| Maresfield                       | Affordable Housing                                                                                                                                                                                       | Place of work or employment in villages                                                                                                                                                                 | Health coverage                                                                                                                                     |
| Maresfield                       | the need to control housing development and limit new housing to selected affordable housing. Essentially a rural community with many small villages and lots of green space - this should be preserved. | Heavy flows of traffic, much of which is too fast and too big. Need to funnel traffic to major roads. Small villages with narrow roads which cannot support this level of traffic                       | Sustainable village services must be retained. Community Hall, shops, pub, post office. Long distances people may need to travel for services       |
| Maresfield                       | We have already (Sept 06) submitted the issues for our three settlements                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                     |
| Mayfield &<br>Five Ashes         | Commuting - lack of facilities, road/rail                                                                                                                                                                | Speeding - caused by lack of infrastructure to cope with growing traffic movement                                                                                                                       | Preservation of environment                                                                                                                         |
| Ninfield                         | Road Safety, very poor road system, funnels traffic through villages                                                                                                                                     | Shortage of Water. Again infrastructure problem                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                     |
| Ninfield                         | Road Safety - lack of good roads                                                                                                                                                                         | Environment - balance between protecting environment and allowing development                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                     |
| Pevensey                         | Lack of Public Transport (services                                                                                                                                                                       | Lack of local facilities                                                                                                                                                                                | Disregard of Pevensey history in all things                                                                                                         |

| PARISH      | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                   | ISSUE 2                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ISSUE 3                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pevensey    | Flooding                                                                                                                                                                                  | Loss of medical facilities for an ageing population                                                                                                                                                                 | Loss of unique character of many houses due to planning decisions                                                                                                        |
| Polegate    | Transport - no major motorways within Wealden                                                                                                                                             | Employment - greater employment opportunities within our area                                                                                                                                                       | AONB - protecting environmentally sensitive areas. General protection of these areas                                                                                     |
| Polegate    | Road infrastructure - needs to be improved but should be sympathetic to the countryside given the lovely rural character of Wealden. Public transport needs much improvement              | Development in AONB - given the character of Wealden, no development should be permitted in the AONB or there would be no point in their designation                                                                | Affordable housing - given the rural character, some of the villages could take some affordable housing to bring some young families into these communities              |
| Polegate    | Economy and regeneration of Town Centre                                                                                                                                                   | Infrastructure: lack of essential services, schools, transport etc.                                                                                                                                                 | Lack of affordable housing                                                                                                                                               |
| Rotherfield | Social Housing, rental, first time buyer                                                                                                                                                  | Traffic. HGV.                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Rural Transport                                                                                                                                                          |
| Rotherfield | Traffic - 1.volume - 2. Weight/length                                                                                                                                                     | Local employment - lack in area                                                                                                                                                                                     | Affordable housing                                                                                                                                                       |
| Selmeston   | A27 problems of junction and traffic density, which will be significantly worse with completion of bridge at Beddingham - support in convincing Government that funding is required soon. | Ageing population - better support for transport. Better support for services 'at home'                                                                                                                             | Cleaning road through village - it is never done by anyone except villagers                                                                                              |
| U/K         | Traffic through Village - speeding                                                                                                                                                        | Lack of facilities - doctors, school, hospital access                                                                                                                                                               | Crime                                                                                                                                                                    |
| U/K         | Infrastructure, jobs, medical, shops, petrol stations in rural areas                                                                                                                      | Village Margins - Open market and affordable housing. Character of hill top settlements such as Rotherfield and Mayfield need to be protected therefore very careful selection of village development sites needed. | Affordable housing. If secured by meeting 30% units on sites of 5 + houses, could dry up open market housing by escalating open market pricing beyond sustainable levels |
| U/K         | Countryside remaining of a rural nature                                                                                                                                                   | Infrastructure                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Increasing size of towns and town centres                                                                                                                                |
| U/K         | Planning new house developments - Do this and keep rural, calm, beautiful quiet nature of the villages and large open spaces to walk and explore                                          | Transport - rural nature of Wealden means that public transport has disappeared. It needs to be brought back                                                                                                        | Conserving open spaces - one of the best aspects of living in Wealden is the AONB and the availability of walks etc                                                      |
| Uckfield    | Transport. Especially joining up transport e.g. rail, bus                                                                                                                                 | Social Housing, to sustain communities                                                                                                                                                                              | Town Centre improvements, to meet demands of new homes                                                                                                                   |
| Uckfield    | Central car parking under pressure                                                                                                                                                        | Water supply - more reservoirs                                                                                                                                                                                      | Lewes to Uckfield rail link                                                                                                                                              |
| Wadhurst    | Countryside & Landscape Management - Essential to prevent gradual urbanisation of District                                                                                                | Affordable Housing - impossible for younger people to afford housing in parish                                                                                                                                      | Transport - at least 50% of population work outside the Parish                                                                                                           |
| Wadhurst    | Sustainable Communities - Village character                                                                                                                                               | Affordable Housing - local vitality                                                                                                                                                                                 | Traffic & Parking - village character                                                                                                                                    |
| Warbleton   | Water storage for new developments and sewage disposal                                                                                                                                    | Houses for our kids at affordable prices                                                                                                                                                                            | Wind generation for affordable energy                                                                                                                                    |

| PARISH                 | ISSUE 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | ISSUE 2                                                                                                       | ISSUE 3                                                                                                 |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wartling               | Planning, many listed buildings                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Environment, Scenic countryside                                                                               | Roads, speed to be controlled                                                                           |
| Wartling               | Roads in the village need speed restriction                                                                                                                                                                                          | Waste collection - need to introduce green policies and recycling, and make easier for older people           | Protection of countryside. Countryside management/tourism                                               |
| WDC                    | Right of individual to dispose of property as he/she wishes (without undue detriment to the community). Must not prevent provision of affordable housing to help our children remain in the area and provide for essential services. | Preservation of our living environment                                                                        | Regeneration: shops, jobs, facilities, amenities. To ensure continued economic viability                |
| Willingdon & Jevington | Inadequate infrastructure - health, water etc                                                                                                                                                                                        | Inadequate roads, public transport                                                                            | Satisfactory provision of green open space & recreational facilities. Maintaining character of Parish   |
| Willingdon & Jevington | Roads & Transport. A22/A27 link etc to Maresfield. Transport & infrastructure. Difficulty in accessing other areas of the country                                                                                                    |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |
| Withyham               | Transport. Rural links to National Network                                                                                                                                                                                           | Boring Housing Design                                                                                         | Don't smother existing character                                                                        |
| Withyham               | Affordable housing - lack of sites. Large areas of AONB & SS1- Greenfield and Brownfield sites - flood plains - poor infrastructure                                                                                                  | Volume of traffic - poor commuting transport necessitating at least one car per household to access amenities | Recycling - limited opportunities - lack of facilities officering recycling opportunities to households |

## **WORKSHOP: RESPONDING TO THE SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES OF THE SOUTH EAST PLAN**

### **Workshop summary**

There were four short interactive exercises to complete in this workshop. After completing the exercises, delegates were asked to consider responses and also to consider the issue of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) when considering development options.

### **Exercise 1**

**What proportion of the total housing requirement should be focused around urban areas as opposed to being distributed to the villages?**

Overall, most people thought that either 75% or 90% of development should be focused around urban areas. A number of people stated a specific split between 75% and 95% of development in urban areas.

### **Exercise 2**

**Should we spread the development as evenly as possible between the different towns / urban areas or should the focus of development be determined having regard to the character of specific towns?**

Overall, more people were in favour of 'even spread' than 'specific towns'. One workshop group achieved a consensus of 'even spread'.

### **Exercise 3**

**If the focus of development should be determined having regards to the character of specific towns, which towns should be the focus of development?**

Generally, most people seemed to favour Polegate as a development area over the other towns. However, one group had most people opting for a split between Polegate and Hailsham. There were several comments that AONB areas should be protected from development.

### **Exercise 4**

**If consideration should be given to a new settlement option, what locations are most appropriate?**

Clearly, some people did not agree with the concept of a new settlement while many respondents said a new settlement should depend on the level of infrastructure available to support this or where there is the potential for new and improved infrastructure. There appears to be a wide view that the road system would be key to new settlements, with a focus on the A22 / A27 main roads. Some people expressed a view that AONB areas should be protected from new settlements. Some people felt that Berwick could accommodate a new settlement whilst others felt that Berwick is too close to the Downs and other villages/

### **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

There was general agreement that the protection of AONB's should be high priority. A number suggested that AONB's shouldn't be sacrosanct and that sensitive development could be accommodated.

## **Workshop number 2 – Exercises feedback in detail**

### **Exercise 1**

**What proportion of the total housing requirement should be focused around urban areas as opposed to being distributed to the villages?**

Most people favoured the 75% urban split although there was a range of suggestions.

### **Exercise 2**

**Should we spread the development as evenly as possible between the different towns / urban areas or should the focus of development be determined having regard to the character of specific towns?**

Most people favoured an 'even spread'.

### **Exercise 3**

**If the focus of development should be determined having regards to the character of specific towns, which towns should be the focus of development?**

Overall, Polegate was considered to be the focus of development though there were a range of suggestions, with some people considering that an even split between the 5 towns is the preferred option.

### **Exercise 4**

**If consideration should be given to a new settlement option, what locations are most appropriate?**

There were many suggestions ranging from no new settlement to new settlements in Berwick, near Uckfield and anywhere not in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The concept of a single new settlement to take the majority of the development should not be excluded. Consideration should be given to centring a new settlement in an established settlement area and where services already exist. Development should be proportional to existing population.

Not everyone supported the idea of a new settlement but a key message was that if a new settlement is the way forward; this should be only where the infrastructure supports this.

## **WORKSHOP: VILLAGE SUSTAINABILITY**

### **First Workshop Group**

SUMMARY: favoured a dispersed pattern of development with controlled incremental growth to numerous villages.

In response to the question "do you believe you have a particular village that may qualify as a local service centre?" the following villages were recorded:

- Forest Row (transport was identified as a key issue)
- Buxted (rapidly and reluctantly becoming a service hub)
- Rotherfield (space is a constraint to expansion)
- Willingdon
- Village's services must be maintained, especially the shop and Post Office.

Example of Northiam was given, where the school and village was revitalised by an influx of new residents after a fairly large development went ahead.

AONB: development should be allowed to take place in the AONB if there is a need for it, and it will help to revitalise villages and sustain services. Development in the AONB should not be ruled out simply on grounds of the environmental designation for its own sake.

It was agreed that a large number of limited development in villages is preferable to a small number of very large developments-a dispersed pattern of development distributed amongst villages would be more acceptable than a large site which would place heavy demand on existing services.

Generally agreed that small incremental organic growth to each village (10% over 10 years was given as a possible threshold) would be absorbable.

With regard to the Matrices, the following were identified as being the most critical services:

- Post Office
- Shop
- Pub (prioritised above transport)

It was suggested that the planning system is too stifled in its current format, and a lack of joined up thinking between infrastructure, planning, and other agencies is an issue.

It was suggested that there is a problem with the way in which affordable housing is perceived, and a mixture of both affordable and market housing would be more acceptable in terms of perception than a development of solely affordable housing.

The criteria of Social Cohesion were added to the Village Assessment Framework chart.

### **Second Workshop Group**

SUMMARY: Favoured a more concentrated pattern of development focused on larger villages due to service and transport issues.

Existing Local Service Centres were identified as:

- Polegate
- Forest Row
- Heathfield

Services were ranked as follows:

- Post Office
- Pub
- Shop
- Transport

It was suggested that developer contributions from one area could be used to fund social housing elsewhere (no one agreed).

Withyham PC suggested that the concept of *local* housing has lost all credibility due to people from outside of the village wanting to move there.

It was suggested that the Parish Council could have a part to play in identifying who should be allocated affordable housing-it should be solely for local people.

With reference to the Assessment Framework chart, the following were identified as being particularly important:

- Transport and Infrastructure
- Settlement size

The category of Joined up Transport was added to the chart. It was suggested that there was a current lack of joined up thinking between different agencies, such as transport and housing.

It was considered important to retain strategic gaps to prevent the coalescence of villages (i.e., Hellingly may coalesce with Hailsham). This was added to the Assessment Framework chart.

### **Third Workshop Group**

SUMMARY: Expressed preference for a criteria approach to development based on settlement size (hierarchy approach)

In answer to the question “does your Parish contain a village that is currently functioning as a local service centre?” there was no response.

It was suggested that the village shop is at the heart of the community as it used as a deposit point for information and promotes a sense of community as well as providing an essential service.

It was also suggested that the closure of so many village post offices has speeded up the disintegration of communities.

Accessibility to services by public transport was cited as a key issue. The example of getting to both hospital and doctor's appointments was given.

It was agreed that the social aspects of villages (such as a sense of community) are as important as the availability of services in terms of identifying what makes a village successful/thriving.

It was suggested that the unique character of individual villages could act as a draw for attracting new interest/investment if promoted.

The representative from Maresfield said that development could be used as an advantage to a village as it would then allow other issues (such as traffic problems) to be tackled. Also suggested that six affordable housing units in each village in Wealden would be an acceptable distribution.

It was suggested that there is a case to be made for limiting market housing as market housing equals growth.

The capacity of Infrastructure was raised as the key issue when looking at any type of housing.

It was proposed that creeping development which adds incrementally to villages without addressing infrastructure/service base issues should be avoided.

### **Fourth Workshop Group**

SUMMARY: A critical mass of settlement size is needed to ensure adequate service provision (hierarchy approach)

The following were identified as currently acting as Local Service Centres:

- Forest Row
- Frant
- Wadhurst

The following were identified as being critical Assessment Parameters:

- Business and Employment
- Shop
- Surgery
- School
- Transport (fundamental issue)

Car parking was identified as a key issue for villages, but it was also emphasised that enforcement of parking is a problem in some villages. It was suggested that a general policy for car parking in all villages is needed to ensure the issue is tackled in an equitable manner.

**New Plan for Wealden (Local Development Framework)**  
**Development of our Core Strategy**  
**Workshop for Members**  
**28<sup>th</sup> March 2007 Committee Rooms, Pine Grove Offices**

## **1. Exercises**

Two exercises were used for this workshop. The first was a short 'ice breaker' which asked Members to 'guess the density' of various areas highlighted on a series of map excerpts. The second exercise was a more focused way of considering areas for development throughout the Wealden District with an emphasis on the two areas outlined in the South East Plan; namely, Sussex Coast Policy Area and Rest of Wealden.

## **2. Key issues identified and points raised**

### **2.1 New Settlements**

Whilst there was some support for the concept of new settlements, the key to this issue is 'phasing', 'infrastructure' and 'sustainability'. There was some support for a new settlement option rather than a conglomerate of towns and villages.

2.1.2 Key to new settlements is provision of infrastructure, in particular good transport. It was considered that where possible, any new settlement would be ideally placed around a railway station or other integrated transport system. An issue to be considered is the conundrum of 'housing then infrastructure' or 'infrastructure then housing'.

2.1.3 Phasing of new development, whether in a new settlement or expansion of towns and/or villages is thought to be a main issue to consider. By phasing development, the benefits would include making the development more 'palatable' to the community and would allow for infrastructure, in particular roads and services to be developed and improved in parallel and to complement housing.

2.1.4 Affordable housing is crucial with the concept of key workers possibly being extended to a wider range of occupations.

### **2.2 Infrastructure and transport**

The road system, in particular the A27 and A22 was a key point of discussion and was considered to be a key issue for development options both in terms of new settlements and expansion. It was noted that currently the A22 acts as a separation between residential and business and employment. Any road improvements in terms of relief roads would require an optimum number of dwellings before they could be considered.

2.2.1 One issue raised in discussion was car ownership and the perceived reluctance of people to use public transport. However, it was acknowledged that in order for people to make better use of public transport, the system would have to be efficient and convenient. This is why areas of new housing needs to be based on what infrastructure is available or can be developed. Rurality is also an issue in the Wealden area.

2.2.2 Infrastructure is not just about transport. It is also about facilities and access to services. In this respect, it was noted that there are some water constraints particularly in terms of development of Hailsham and Polegate and water drainage consideration would be an issue for any development. The way to address some of these issues is to have to secure 'buy in' from infrastructure providers.

2.2.3 The key to any development is not to see housing in isolation of everything else. Social cohesion, environmental considerations and social issues need to be integrated into any development options.

### **2.3 Village expansion**

There was some agreement that development should be distributed between towns and villages. It was felt that any growth of villages should be phased and managed. Some villages are more appropriate for expansion than others and it was felt that any development should be hinged on sustainability.

2.3.1 It was also felt that it was important to maintain countryside buffers between settlements. If these buffers are not maintained, it was acknowledged that some places might be seen to be swamped and merged.

2.3.2 It was felt important that village development should be based around lifestyle development not employment development.

2.3.3 It is important to note that some people felt that there should be a greater concentration of housing in urban areas than villages.

## **2.4 Design**

The design of buildings in any development is key. Creating new towns would create a need for metropolitan architecture. It was noted that the Design Guide (Supplementary Planning Document in the suite of LDF documents) would assist with explaining the principles of good design for the Wealden area.

## **2.5 Identified areas**

Several areas were identified for potential development and from the discussions these included:

- Polegate
- Berwick
- Hailsham
- Lower Dicker
- Upper Dicker
- Laughton

2.5.1 Polegate was at the centre of much discussion as it was considered a good place for transport infrastructure (as it has a railway station centrally). It was felt that consideration should be given to parking facilities in order to cope with commuter traffic parking particularly with increased demand created by new housing development. Existing parking needs to be expanded and improved (which could include multi storey and underground parking) to avoid blocking local roads and taking away 'local' parking.

2.5.2 It was noted that Polegate has a number of low level lock up shops centrally located.

2.5.3 It was noted that development would probably be influenced by the Hailsham / Eastbourne triangle.

2.5.4 Suggestion was made that there would need to be a buffer zone between Hailsham and Polegate and that a consideration should be that housing development would take up land use employment options for business. It was felt important not to overlook employment opportunity.

2.5.5 Berwick was suggested as a good location for development mainly because of its rail link.

2.5.6 Rotherfield was noted as a village capable and willing to expand but not without improved roads / transport.

2.5.7 It was considered that constraints in the South of Wealden are more harsh than the North e.g. Eastbourne, Pevensey Levels etc. North of the Wealden area is not without problems as it has fragmented land and agricultural considerations.

2.5.8 Mixed development should be given consideration alongside housing development. Affordable housing is also key.

**Parish Forum: Engaging with the LDF  
Parish & Town Councils and Local Strategic Partnership  
25 April 2007, Pilgrim Hall, Easons Green, Uckfield**

**Summary of Notes from Workshops**

**AREA 1: Crowborough**

**HOUSING**

**Development**

Crowborough feels 'put upon' because of the intensity of building. The current perception is that there is no improvement to infrastructure. The Housing Needs Survey supports the need for housing, especially affordable housing. The South East plan requirement and the HMA studies suggest there will be an expectation that much of our housing need is found from urban extensions and Crowborough will have its part to play. Phasing of development is absolutely necessary in order to be effective. Need to consider the villages; more housing may deliver infrastructure.

**Affordability**

There is a problem of affordability as houses in Crowborough are very expensive. There is a definite need for affordable housing and also smaller houses. In villages around 10 units need to be affordable. Also, a nomination policy could be used. There is support initially for affordable housing (in principle) until specific sites are identified.

**Density**

Density issues are also important and must be decent accommodation.

**TRANSPORT**

There is a lack of public transport in Crowborough and there has been a loss of Jarvis Brook to Town Centre service. There is a need to identify realistic options for delivery in an area. The main concern is traffic congestion and car dominated settlements.

Wadhurst has an issue of station car parking. The village car parks are full (in Wadhurst more parking is needed). There is congestion in Crowborough, which focused on particular pinch points. This is a major issue and shows the need for public transport. The big worry is the ESCC method of assessing the percentage in traffic increase / impact and there is a need for base information against which to let people know the traffic impact.

**HEALTH**

There are major health issues, mainly community services, dentists and mental health. There are some pockets of deprivation. The provision is problematic in large rural areas and access to services is poor in many places. There is sufficient capacity in Crowborough to meet any LDF proposals but there are wider access issues to secondary care. There is a need to replace Mayfield / Frant but good facilities exist at Saxonbury & Beacon. Can development help play a role to meet health requirements? Most of the secondary care is outside area. Most of GP facilities can/could cope.

Rural transport is an issue where access to health services is concerned e.g. Nutley identified.

**EDUCATION**

**Secondary provision**

In terms of Secondary schools, provision is by Crowborough and Wadhurst community college (Wadhurst is well served). There is a need for public transport to bring people in. In terms of secondary provision – existing facilities are probably capable of absorbing extra demand. All towns in Wealden are 'secondary school single'. Min size (secondary around 900) – maximum around optimum 1200

**Primary provision**

In terms of primary provision, there is capacity in Crowborough. Outside Crowborough, there are a lot of small schools in villages and there is potential to lose these. Crowborough (people) are feeling that Beacon is too large and lacking some social cohesion. Beacon has the capacity to grow (physically).

Primary schools problems include administration policy / transport issues.

There is a need to ensure realism re the possible village growth (e.g. not just a pair of affordable semis) but likely to require significantly more, especially in some of the larger villages). There is too much emphasis on choice and not on accessibility / sustainability

## **OPEN SPACE, LEISURE & RECREATION**

There are deficiencies in provision but generally; the area is pretty well served. There is a significant leisure centre at Crowborough and also at the Community College at Wadhurst where there is some provision. A swimming pool is an aspiration of the Wadhurst parish plan.

There are lots of facilities just North outside of the District. Wadhurst looks to Tunbridge Wells, especially for indoor facilities.

The question is; will development mean more need?

Young people (in Crowborough) want a bowling alley. There could be possible developer contributions and the use of Town Council land at the Leisure Centre. Also, more football pitches are needed in Crowborough. The land allocation at Luxford and Steel Cross will cost £200k to drain the existing land.

In Wadhurst, there are also not enough pitches though expectations are raised. There is a need for transparency of delivery from Section 106 contributions; i.e., how much is spent and where.

## **ECONOMY**

It would appear that no employment land is allocated in the Non-Statutory Plan at Crowborough. One suggestion for employment land is for the land adjacent to the Army Camp on the A26 Crowborough Warren which has no visibility problem but not Jarvis Brook where congestion is immense. There is a need to think of business wishes and trends. Business will outsource, e.g. new ideas 'bio fuels production'. There is a need to test viability of sites and where allocated for specific uses.

Village uses – small scale / some scope for agricultural diversification.

## **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT**

There is grave concern that any development should protect the character and history of settlements that show periods of growth (against wholesale demolition etc). Development should add something to an area, not subtract.

There is a need to appreciate why people move to the area and new development must respect / integrate with existing community. There is a probability of 'noisy few' stopping the development needed and supported by silent majority.

There is a need to plan for development of the area – spectrum between 'aspic' and 'total redevelopment'. Phasing of development, i.e. gradual assimilation of impact helps. There is a need to account for the dimension re pace of change and step change that may bring with it some infrastructure e.g. doctors surgery, schools etc

In terms of size of houses, there are concerns about higher density requirements and the quality of life that would be available with these units (an issue to be aired in the Community Strategy).

Organic growth needs to be phased across plan period and balanced with the need for infrastructure, which may only be triggered by a step change in proposed development and assurances on delivery of infrastructure, by partners.

Section 106 developer contributions which are in the hands of the LPA mean that there is some way to go on this to ensure joined up thinking / delivery (getting large managed organisations to work together is difficult). Section 106 negotiation creates a need 'to get a quart from a pint pot'. A question is are budgets in place amongst partners to provide this part of infrastructure requirements?

## **AREA 2: Heathfield**

### **EDUCATION**

There is a need for a standard level of education amongst the various different levels. e.g. Primary school. This avoids parents assigning their children to the best school, which might be the furthest away, hence eliminating long commuting distances. At the moment this issue is not being controlled through catchments areas. Projections need to be made in order to identify the exact amount of schools/ classes required. This is especially important if new housing development is to occur. These facilities should be developed in conjunction with housing. The key issue is access.

### **OPEN SPACE**

There is an increased need for facilities at the leisure centre in Heathfield, including a swimming pool. It is thought that the locals mostly use the existing facilities. Two alternatives were suggested:

- Have development contributions made available to upgrade existing facilities; or

- Improve existing public transport and hence make other facilities outside the area available for locals

## **TRANSPORT**

The bus service in Heathfield is County supported but this is deemed to be a poor service. The key for improving the bus service is actually the lack of rail service. Connection of the rail line between Uckfield and Lewes is essential and significant scale new development may help unlock this potential. Lack of demand for public use limits the potential of upgrading the service. At the moment the council is trying to provide for an internal community bus service. Yet, attention needs to be paid to avoid potential conflicts with commercial operators. The existing road network is not suitable within the rural areas. Development contributions directed towards the operation of the service may not be so feasible since the funds will run out as these are not being replenished by the community (in terms of lack of service usage). The main issue is thought to be the reluctance of people to give up use of private cars.

## **HEALTH**

One doctors centre exists in Herstmonceux, which is likely to be extended following discussions with the Primary Care Trust.

Health facilities need to be provided when planning future housing developments.

A need for a Doctor's surgery within Mayfield exists.

It is problematic when GPs own their own surgery and they eventually retire. However, most GP premises are leased.

A key point is that a critical mass is essential to make a GP practice viable.

## **ECONOMY**

The shortfall of business is focussed on the Blueprint triangle. The change of use (conversion) of farm buildings to business use frequently makes the rural road network inadequate to use. A mixed development concept is ideal. Small business areas within villages to cater for the local community are needed.

## **HOUSING**

There is a need to provide more smaller units and there is the possibility of a new settlement option.

## **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT THEME**

There is a need to avoid ribbon development and vital infrastructure is required to proceed or should be undertaken concurrently with development. Without very localised employment, traffic on the roads will increase. Housing development needs a balance of local employment and infrastructure. The preference is for a new settlement based on an established location with existing road/ rail/ links rather than being devised/ planned in a piecemeal fashion.

## **AREA 3: Polegate / Hailsham**

## **HEALTH**

A New medical centre is now open at Westham with good bus access. It has been well received. There are no medical facilities at Arlington and people have to go to Hailsham, (some use a community bus). Dental facilities are based in Hailsham, Eastbourne and Seaford.

A new medical centre is now open as a branch of Polegate, however dental facilities poor. There is concern about potential cuts in services at Eastbourne District General Hospital.

## **EDUCATION**

Major growth in this area will necessitate significant additional school places – how best should these be provided?

There is concern about the traffic impact of the school run and the safety of the school bus system. The quality of education is considered to be ok. There is concern about behavioural issues, so standards need to be raised across the board in that regard. There is a suggestion that Willingdon Secondary School has a poor reputation.

The issue at Hailsham is volume of people in the street, whilst the issue at Heathfield is safe transport of children home. Extended school hours also present issues in terms of the availability of public transport for children heading home.

Upper Dicker is dealing with the school run issue by operating two 'walking buses' from the village hall at one end of the village and from the pub at the other. There are concerns about the number of exits provided from new development on to the main road, which raises safety issues.

Willingdon's 'walking bus' has failed due to a lack of volunteer/parental support. There is a suggestion for a need for a park and ride type arrangement for schools.

An enquiry has been made by a councillor about the methodology for calculating how the number of school places required is reached. It was explained (by a delegate) about PPRs (1,000 homes = new primary school, who stated 8,000 for a new secondary school, whilst some suggested it would be lower 4-5,000).

Emphasis on the importance of school bus services for promoting sustainable communities.

## **OPEN SPACE, LEISURE AND RECREATION**

In Stone Cross, it is suggested that there are anti-social behaviour issues. The Parish Council issued a questionnaire to seek views on this and how to address it. The results demonstrated a strong demand for football pitches/goals for boys and girls. It was emphasised that it is a role for parishes to look at such provision. Shelters for teenagers are needed.

There is only one leisure pool in the area, although some other indoor facilities have an element of public use, e.g. St. Bedes is available to community groups. Arlington is well provided for and makes use of St. Bedes facilities.

There is a suggestion that demand is insufficient for expensive all weather pitches, (cited example of Shinewater which is little used).

There was a suggestion whether the clustering of provision for shared use or dispersed localised provision was favoured. Concerns were raised about transport and access and there was some support for more localised provision. Overall the group concluded that there was a need for both elements.

Some concerns about localised provision; sometimes poor management can result in social problems and it can be better to invest in existing volunteer networks as supervised/managed rather than just hand over a new facility.

Some are very keen to find a mechanism to secure Hindslands playing fields for public open space, but may not support the potential for development in this process – primarily due to traffic capacity or lack of.

## **ECONOMY**

Good communications and good surroundings for attracting economic growth are important. Polegate could be the best location for new business development. The rural areas however offer good opportunities for small businesses. There is a suggestion that the best opportunities lie with warehousing, particularly due to growth in Internet shopping etc.

The A27 is the problem for business development. There is a need to understand our strengths and weaknesses before deciding on a strategy. Better management of road system is also critical for economy and a focus on small businesses and maximising use of rail stations, for example, build around them and get more freight on to rail.

## **HOUSING**

There are concerns about terminology – the word "affordable" attracts objections. Land occupied by a nursery at Rattle Road was cited as being a good candidate development site. Some felt that we must build on what we've got and to focus development where there are facilities available. Developer contributions have an important role to play in securing affordable housing.

There is a need to make better use of the railway, which will help solve traffic problems. There was support within the group for more stations and more railways. The group generally supported new development being used as a mechanism for securing a new parkway station in the Polegate area. The group also suggested the re-opening of Friday Street station. Concerns were raised about the highway through Upper Dicker being used as a rat run.

There was general support in the group about finding ways for reducing total travel and promoting viable public transport systems and community bus networks.

## **SPATIAL PLANNING**

New settlements do not meet the criteria on sustainability – e.g. Hellingly, but it is accepted that larger developments may do so. New towns undermine existing towns and there is a need to regenerate the areas and have regard to aging populations. Large properties are under occupied and there is a lack of supply. There is a need to expand villages too, to meet the long term needs of the elderly wanting to downsize. There is a need to plan for business development within the housing areas themselves. There is concern about smaller house sizes, but the rationale of higher densities is recognised.

### **AREA 4: Uckfield**

## **HEALTH**

There is a failure of engagement – PCT can't plan Doctors surgeries without customers, WDC can't plan houses without doctors. New GP contract 2004 changed planning and GPs have to now justify to the PCT. What is the threshold to decide? The PCT has to catch up to provide GPs.

Village specific:

- Maresfield – Health need to work with planners re new development.
- New practice to be built at Uckfield in next six months. 1200m<sup>2</sup> - 1200 patients.
- East Hoathly – new G.P. surgery – should start in a year.
- Nutley – area to north west of Uckfield – no G.P's as not viable.
- Buxted – behind pub allocation for G.P's surgery – replacement but bigger.
- Hartfield – will keep surgery.

## **TRANSPORT**

Buses are used and needed by the elderly and children. Safety on the roads is important i.e. crossing of roads to catch buses etc. Housing estates should not be built unless there is safe access.

Village specific:

- Buses must be able to get into new developments – e.g. Grampian (children need to cross A26 – 60mph limit).
- Housing – at Piltdown – problem of crossing road.
- A27 – safety issues – many accidents as well as on A22 near East Hoathly
- Buxted – school – no good pedestrian access
- Five Ash Down development – children would need to be driven to school as public transport is not an option

## **HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Should we have large scale development? What about suffering the 'drip drip approach'? There is a need for larger contributions towards local requirements.

Will housing destroy quality of life and beauty of the area? Villages full of commuters and will decrease integration.

Is the opening of the Lewes / Uckfield line a good idea or will it bring in more commuters?

Village specific:

- Maresfield – good site at Park Wood – brownfield – old army camp on south east of village.
- Buxted – more houses will destroy landscape. Housing growth brings in migrants who commute long distances.
- East Hoathly - Villages will become unsustainable if too much new development.
- Maresfield – new houses will put pressure on roads. Spotting around will not help – but need major infrastructure if concentrated.
- Buxted – should be small developments across variety of Parishes – but with developer contributions

## **ECONOMY**

Uckfield: flooding limitations and the perception of flooding puts people off.

Maresfield: the impact of the waste site. Perception of who would want to set a business park next to it? Is it a 'tidy site'?

Donaldson report: small business need but WDC new review for LDF may inform otherwise.

Outsourcing and homeworking is a consideration.

Impact of business in redundant rural buildings – impact on traffic.  
Ashdown Business Park has been a failure.

Village specific:

- Maresfield – Ashdown Park will have waste site – will discourage business. Transport links an issue.
- Buxted – Grampian site will provide some small units.
- East Hoathly – have had success in using redundant farm buildings but this has created a problem of heavy traffic.
- Maresfield – need more localised businesses – national companies will not come because of poor transport.

## **EDUCATION**

Capacity of primary schools / location / catchment areas / transport is an issue. In Secondary schools, there is pressure on places / catchment / transport (train). There is an issue of capacity V demand and a lack of information on capacity projections.

How should additional capacity for school places best be achieved, either within or outside this sector?

- WDC & ESCC – deficiency in information sharing on education issues. Nutley - at capacity (primary)
- East Hoathly – primary has some capacity – church school (previously full). Wide catchment area – some Polish children
- Buxted – school access issues. Highway 60mph speed limited
- High Hurstwood – catchment area Crowborough & beyond (only 9 from village attend).
- 100 houses to be built at Five Ash Down (children's ages not known yet)
- Bonners (Maresfield)
- Buxted, High Hurstwood, Bonners – only safe way to these schools is by car – not at capacity yet.
- Uckfield – very popular Community School
- Buxted – only safe way to get there is by bus. Education Authority does not pay train fares.
- East Hoathly – secondary school is Ringmer –no transport there
- Maresfield – no spare capacity in Uckfield schools – District not aware of this.

## **OPEN SPACE, LEISURE & RECREATION**

Uckfield: Luxford field – there was a suggestion at Uckfield Design Day that a riverside meadow be developed. But what about public liability insurance issues where water is a feature? The parish representatives present found it difficult to comment on these issues as it relates specifically to Uckfield and was not considered directly relevant.

General issues: 1) Children – accessibility to recreational facilities / activities i.e. transport issues  
2) Expansion / decline cycle of facilities due to interest and enthusiasm. 3) Need for improvement of facilities, which would require huge investment.

Village specific:

- Buxted – concern about insurance of creating a water feature in Uckfield – really for Uckfield to determine what they want.
- Maresfield – young people – only have access to kickabout space – no formal provision.
- Fairwarp – no facilities – residents use the following:  
Uckfield & Jarvis Brook - football  
Crawley – swimming
- East Hoathly – good cricket, tennis and junior football club – all growing – New Pavilion needed (with combined Community Centre) – existing Pavilion has asbestos problem.
- Buxted – cricket, football etc., good. Drainage of grounds is an issue
- High Hurstwood – recreation ground
- Maresfield – Temple Grove – will share cricket but not other facilities with community.
- Buxted – developers of Grampian need to make facilities available for public – need to discuss with Parish.

## **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Transport is an ongoing issue. Substantial growth for Uckfield was suggested. Also, there was a suggestion that a new village could be developed between Uckfield and Maresfield, maintaining a low environmental impact. The 80/20 town / village development split is not supported as it allocates more to the villages. This

is not sustainable and would destroy villages. Development should be concentrated on towns. It was considered that there are no cyclical housing opportunities (lack of smaller housing).

There is a question over organic growth versus forced growth. Less focus on developer profit and growth should be where it is needed rather than for profit.

Changes in lifestyle should be acknowledged – i.e. groceries delivered, homeworking growth and trends.

There is a concern that Parish Plans are being ignored and that consultation is 'lip service' especially the 6 weeks period taking place during the summer when Parishes don't have meetings. New thinking is required.

Village's specific suggestions in consulting and engaging community:

East Hoathly – a blog has been developed for young people to encourage involvement.

Buxted – Parish plan rests on a few people.

Marsfield – used market research company for help in parish plan consultation. Also, suggested focus groups, pin boards, post it notes at events etc

Village specific:

- Maresfield – as it is now but with public transport.
- East Hoathly – should grow organically – need some development because of
  1. Children
  2. To pay for facilities.
- East Hoathly – perception that the Parish Plan is being ignored.
- Buxted – too much lip service. Consultations shouldn't be during summer.
- East Hoathly – fast moving times – sustainability now being defined – no longer buses (must be kept up to date).
- Buxted – school outside village – shop is in balance. (Plan is based on facilities at 'point in time' but things are dynamic.)
- East Hoathly – concentrate development in urban areas.
- Maresfield – Uckfield – needs regeneration – significant level of development needed to solve transport problems – concentrate development here.
- Maresfield – on Park Wood – can provide new facilities of its own. By spreading development – makes it difficult to plan – too many small developments – difficult to discuss infrastructure needs with Parishes.
- Buxted – possible scope for some development behind pub.

## **AREA 5: Forest Row**

### **RECREATION AND LEISURE**

The main priority is play space for children/teenagers aged 10 – 17 although young children are already well catered for. A suitable site has been identified which is a field near shops, footpath, allotments and storage sheds. The area is also part of floodplain and relatively close to the centre of the community. Informal use is envisaged e.g. goal posts. It is not overlooked at present but planning application for two bungalows is under consideration and these dwellings would have a view of the site (deters anti-social behaviour). A local farmer owns the field. This is in the early stages and no further negotiations or estimates of cost have taken place. Funding is not yet identified. There is a suggestion for a similar project in Mayfield (details to be provided).

The Open Space Study identified a shortfall in football and cricket pitches. These already exist in Forest Row but are outside of the village and of a more formal nature. A suggestion was made that new development could achieve the desired outcome through developer contributions and as part of the LDF proposals

The Area is well supplied by other facilities such as community halls and there are indoor leisure facilities in adjacent towns e.g. Haywards Heath, Crowborough and East Grinstead. It is hard to justify the provision of significant indoor leisure facilities in Forest Row.

### **ECONOMY**

Local businesses are not well represented and the Parish Council have little knowledge of their needs. There used to be a local business organisation but this has now folded though efforts are being made to re-establish this. Two business centres exist in Forest Row for light industry.

Further development is taking place in Station Street e.g. warehouse for Bathroom Outlet together with associated workshops for letting. Organic farming is high profile in Forest Row and there are a number of

outlets. With demand growing. There are few farm buildings in and around the Parish but it is hard to know where these rural businesses are located

There is an increase in numbers of people working from home; in the region of 10 – 13%. Retail is becoming more specialist e.g. hairdressers, restaurants, antique shops and fewer basic provisions. Forest Row does have organic grocer, butcher and direct farm sales

## **HOUSING**

Large areas of low density housing could offer redevelopment potential at higher density and these may need to be allocated in conjunction with specific policies but may be a difficult concept to achieve 'community buy in'.

There is little scope for the village to expand beyond present boundaries due to current designations such as AONB, floodplain etc. Potential exists to the East and West. The East is preferable but if development in the West could result in a 'by pass', this would be the favoured option.

The Housing Needs Survey shows high demand but this faces opposition when potential sites are identified. There is a need to lobby Government to insist on key housing for key workers, as land prices are too high for open market provision

There is concern that a relief road would introduce the potential for more housing and it is important to ensure that Forest Row maintains character of a village. There is further pressure from commuters to Gatwick and no clear idea as to where residents of Parish work. It is suspected that local businesses do not always find the right staff so this could lead to commuting in and out of Parish.

## **TRANSPORT**

This is a key issue for Forest Row. Already the village is reaching capacity in relation to large volumes of through traffic. A proposed relief road for East Grinstead could increase traffic flows in the Parish to an unacceptable level.

Local preference is for a road to the South. The option to the North would be strongly opposed. East Grinstead Town Council is also opposed to a relief road but the decision lies with Mid Sussex - they could either decide to build a new road or try to improve existing route by traffic calming schemes.

East Sussex County Council are also opposed to a new road as they don't want to see a material increase in traffic through Forest Row and the Government do not support a relief road.

The Parish Council has obtained advice from a traffic consultant who has identified a route to the South of the village but this has not been taken further. There is likely to be strong objections to this proposal from local residents and this also involves complicated engineering solutions e.g. high embankments.

There is no funding for rail improvements such as an extension of the rail line and bus services are very limited (critical mass is hard to achieve otherwise not viable). Parking at stations is inadequate and expensive so doesn't offer a practical alternative.

If Mid-Sussex propose a relief road in their LDF, the issue will need to be discussed at a public inquiry

## **HEALTH**

There is only one Surgery in the village, which provides a good service, but the access is poor (via the village green) and it does not meet the Disability Discrimination Act standards and the parking is limited. The Primary Care Trust is negotiating proposals to widen this. This has approval from Wealden District Council but there is a need to persuade Doctors to invest in the preferred option. The present site is limited and may pose problems if the population increases. Doctors have closed their list to residents from East Grinstead so that they have more scope to expand in Wealden.

There is a need to consider options with adjacent surgeries in Buxted and possible branch surgeries in Nutley and Maresfield This depends on where new development might take place. Surgery in Hartfield (branch surgery for Buxted practice) is in temporary premises but is due to move into larger accommodation soon

It must be remembered that GP's now operate as businesses. Branch surgeries tend not to be viable unless there is sufficient catchment. A good solution could be achieved by building a new surgery on a site near Station Road and the Parish Council is keen to see this happen. The Parish Council will liaise with the PCT to discuss the options further.

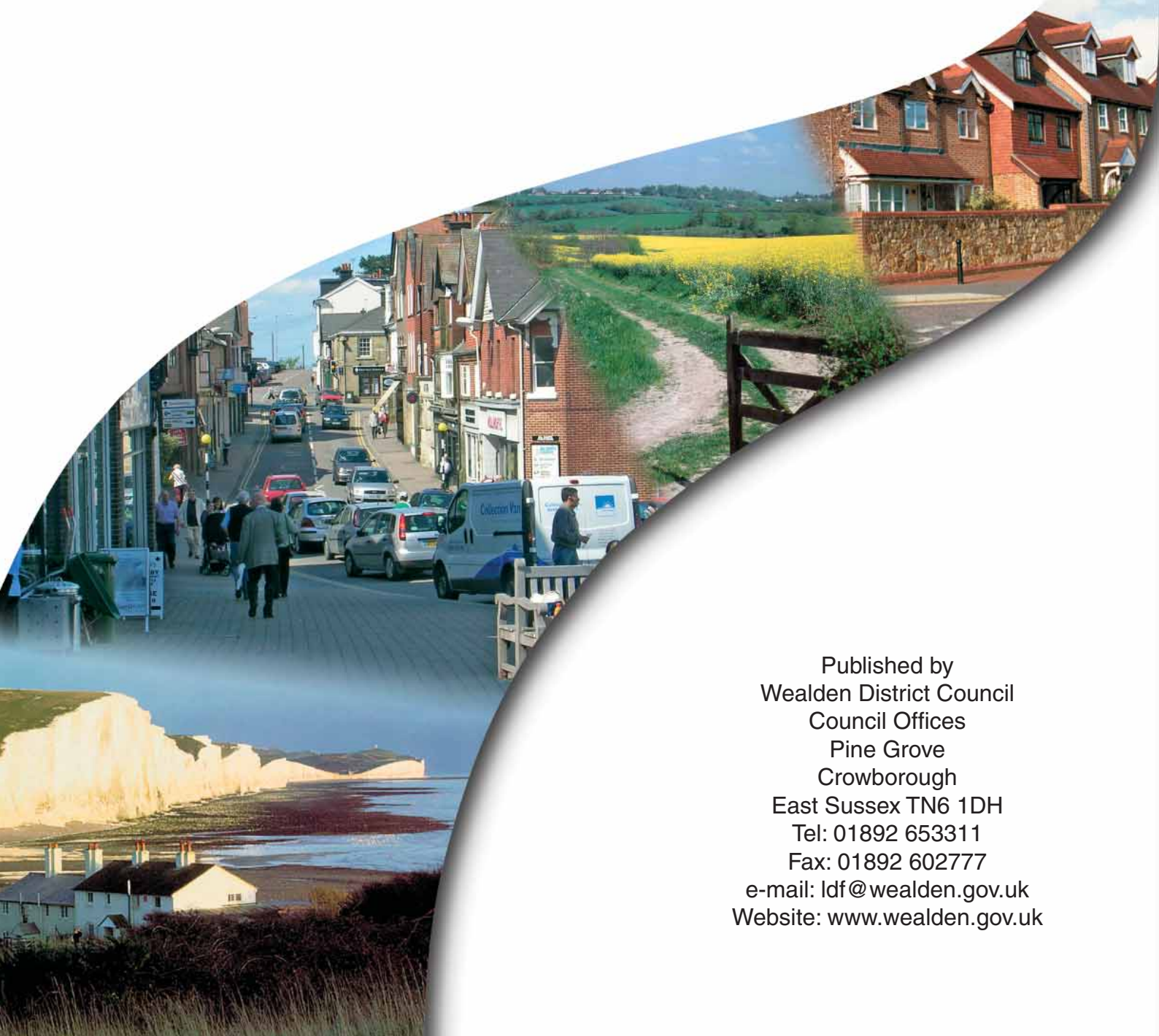
## **EDUCATION**

There are no problems with the capacity in the Primary school sector and the Secondary schools are outside the Parish boundary e.g. East Grinstead, Chailey. Also, there are many private schools e.g. Brambletye, Steiner School. People come to Forest Row to ensure their children have a good education and may then leave. Local issues include problems of parking in association with Primary school.

## **SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Parish Councillors' view is that Forest Row is a cohesive village and they do not wish to see it expand to become a town. Consideration is being given to the concept of developing a Design Statement to supplement the Parish Plan. The rationale behind the designation of the Conservation Area is not well understood. There is a need to improve standards and address existing problems. The Heritage White Paper is proposing reforms to address this.

It is preferable to have development on the East side unless it contributes to the relief road; this could be accepted with trade offs to achieve this. There may be a need to co-ordinate developer contributions with development associated with East Grinstead. It may be easier to accept new development if it has a specific character e.g. ecological. Local architects may be keen to develop sites with a particular slant.



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