



# 2013-2033

## Setting the Pattern for Future Development in Goudhurst Parish

# Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Reading this Document .....                        | 4  |
| Part One - Background                              |    |
| Section 1 Purpose .....                            | 5  |
| Section 2 How we developed our Plan .....          | 9  |
| Section 3 Goudhurst - A History .....              | 12 |
| Part Two - Our Objectives                          |    |
| Section 4 Our Vision, Goals and Objectives .....   | 13 |
| Section 5 Summary of our Policies .....            | 15 |
| Part Three - Our Policies                          |    |
| Section 6 Landscape and Environment Policies ..... | 19 |
| Section 7 Community & Wellbeing Policies .....     | 44 |
| Section 8 Housing Policies .....                   | 55 |
| Section 9 Business and Employment Policies.....    | 63 |
| Section 10 Design Policies .....                   | 67 |
| Section 11 Traffic and Transport Policies .....    | 75 |
| Part Four - Our Future                             |    |
| Section 12 Parish Action Plan .....                | 86 |
| Section 13 Table of Figures:.....                  | 89 |

This document has been produced with the considerable help and support of residents of Goudhurst Parish.

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Cover – Photographs submitted for the NDP photography competition,  
<https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/photographic-competition/>

## Foreword



**Colin Willis**  
Chairman  
Goudhurst  
Neighbourhood Plan

We are delighted to present to you the **Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan**. It is the result of over two and a half years' work, three public meetings with over 700 attending, five public workshops and monthly steering meetings, many working groups and public consultation under Regulation 14. This version of our plan reflects comments we received as a result of the Regulation 14 public consultation in early 2019. A further consultation on our plan, as a part of the Regulation 15 review, will be managed by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and from then the plan moves to formal inspection. If the plan passes examination, a parish referendum will be held to seek its ratification. If ratified, it will become binding on all new development proposals.

In April 2015 Goudhurst Parish Council launched a project to prepare a community-led neighbourhood plan (meaning we would largely do it ourselves), mobilising the enthusiasm of volunteers rather than contracting out the task. Work began in October 2016 to gather evidence and to devise a residents and business questionnaire to discover the views and opinions of the community. The results of the questionnaire, together with the underlying evidence and the findings of a series of public workshops, have been the main drivers in the formulation of a set of local planning and community policies and a number of specific projects and community actions.

The focus of all neighbourhood plans is land-use policies, which shape future development of housing and business. They reflect residents' majority views and wishes. Policies alone, however, will not effect all the changes and improvements we seek. Dedicated involvement and commitment are needed to push ahead with the projects identified in section 12 of this plan.

Throughout the development of the plan our residents have been most vocal about the impact of traffic on our community. A major 'A' road, with large heavy goods vehicles (HGV's) and a significant volume of traffic, does not work well with the 14<sup>th</sup> century Goudhurst village centre and conservation area. Although our plan can consider the implications of development on traffic within our Parish, decisions made by other communities, district and county councils could have a significant and detrimental impact on our community. Proposals for major development in Marden (in Maidstone Borough Council's area) and in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst will inevitably result in a considerable increase in traffic through Goudhurst Parish on roads which cannot safely cope with the current volume of traffic. If those developments were in our Parish the policies in this plan would mean that mitigation would be required. We therefore look to District and County Councils and to Ministry of Communities and Local Government to fulfil an oversight role in reducing the detriment to Goudhurst of those developments.

We have had the opportunity to engage with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and this plan gives Goudhurst Parish Council the ability to influence future development and coordinate the work of your Parish Council with others to better deliver what residents want.

Most importantly, the existence of our plan provides us with credible, legally based means to influence and shape new developments that may arise within our Parish.



**Antony Harris**  
Chairman,  
Goudhurst Parish Council

# Reading this Document

*There is a rolling summary in the left-hand margin*

*The plan is set out in four parts*

*Part 2 provides a policy summary*

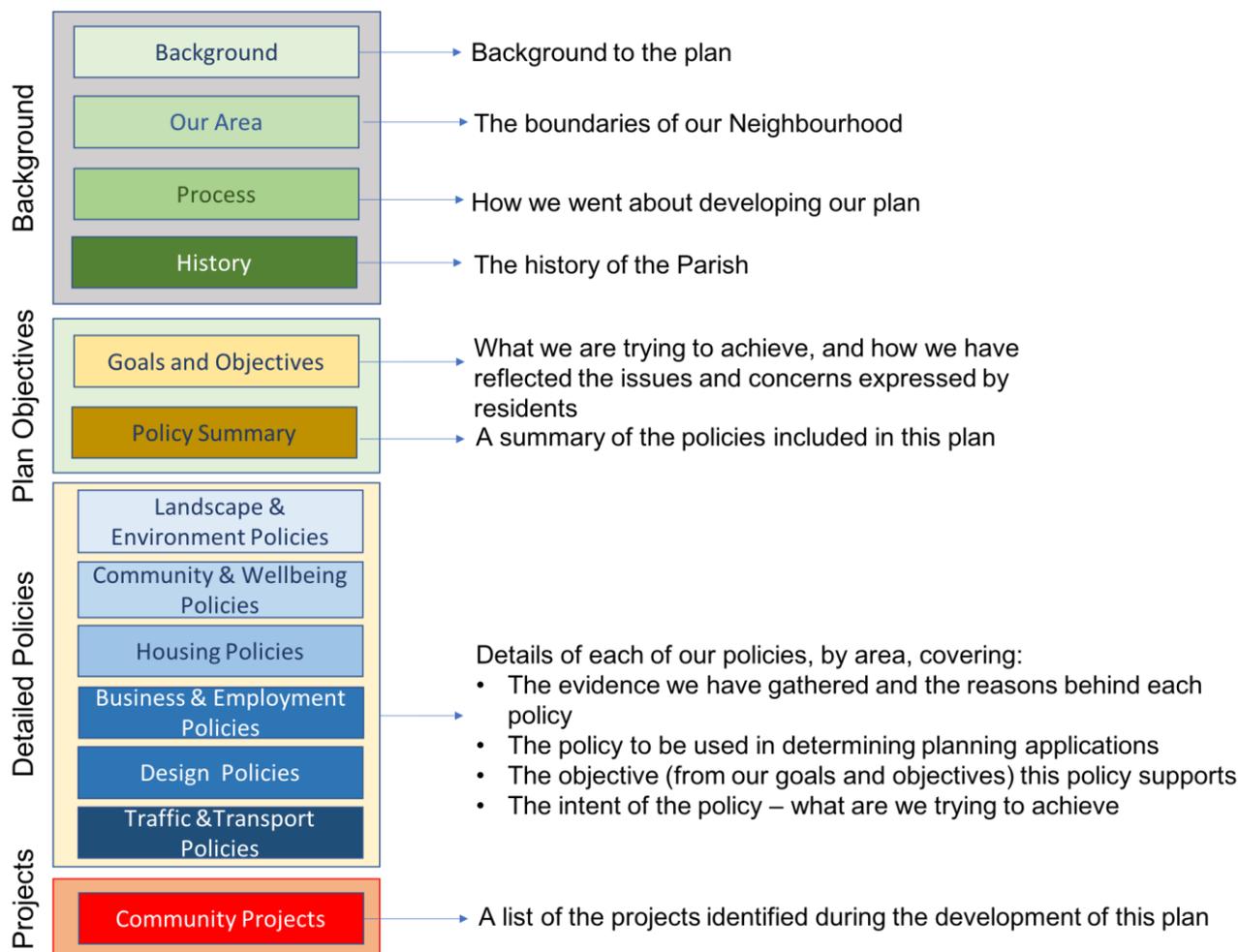
This document describes a set of often technical policies that, if our plan is approved, must be considered in the determination of all future planning applications proposed within the Parish.

The document contains much detail but, to make it more readily accessible, the main points on each page are summarized in a series of comments found in the left-hand margin in green.

We hope this helps you to understand the content of the plan without having to read every page in full! It also makes it easier to identify those areas of the plan that you may wish to read in more detail.

This plan is divided into four parts as detailed below. The first part describes our neighbourhood area and the background to the plan. The second part sets out our vision, goals and objectives. The third part details the land-use policies in our plan, and the fourth part lists the community projects identified during the development of this plan.

Each policy is described with the background and reasons for including it, the policy itself and a summary of its intent.



All documents referenced in this plan can be found at [ndp.goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/ourplan](http://ndp.goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/ourplan)

## Section 1 Purpose

*Our Parish occupies one of the most dramatic areas in the High Weald AONB and all three settlements are prominent on the skyline. Protecting this landscape is important to our communities and for future generations*

*Goudhurst is in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells, which lies in West Kent*

1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers allowing local communities to shape the pattern of development in their community. In Goudhurst the future of our community will be best served by having a Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) that establishes planning policies for the development and use of land in our Parish. Since 2011 various changes in Government policy have clarified and strengthened the importance of Neighbourhood Plans.

### Submitting Body

2. This Neighbourhood Plan is submitted by Goudhurst Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.

### Designating the Neighbourhood Area

3. The community fully supported the designation of the Parish of Goudhurst as the Neighbourhood Area (the area covered by this plan) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) approved our designation request on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

### The Context

4. The Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan may set out local policies governing development but must:
  - a. have appropriate regard to national planning policy;
  - b. contribute to sustainable development;
  - c. be in general conformity with strategic development policies of TWBC
5. The current Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Plan was adopted on 13th December 2006. TWBC is developing a new Local Plan and our Neighbourhood Plan has been drawn up in parallel with this activity. There has been regular dialogue with TWBC but our plan may need amendment once the new Local Plan has been approved.

### Our Parish

6. Goudhurst Parish comprises Goudhurst village, Kilndown and Curtisden Green. The Parish is in West Kent and forms a part of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. It lies to the east of Tunbridge Wells town and has boundaries with the Parishes of Horsmonden, Cranbrook & Sissinghurst, Hawkhurst, and Lamberhurst.



Figure 1 District and Borough Councils in Kent

*Once complete the plan will require regular monitoring*

*Goudhurst is one of many rural parishes in the Borough*

7. To the south there is a boundary with Ticehurst in East Sussex and with Marden and Staplehurst, both in Maidstone Borough, to the north.

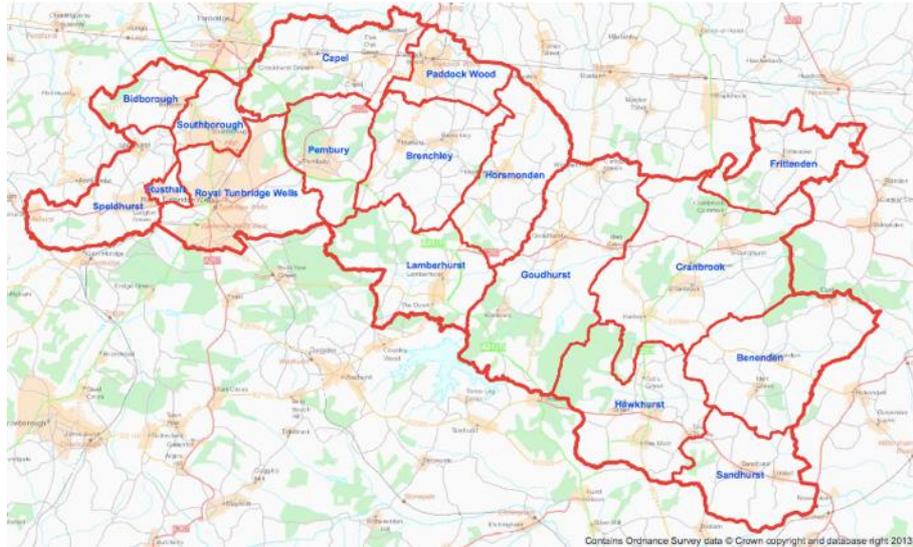


Figure 2 Parishes in Tunbridge Wells Borough

8. The Neighbourhood Area follows the boundary of the Parish of Goudhurst.

## Accompanying Documents

9. Supporting this plan there are eight additional documents:
  - A Consultation Summary detailing the feedback received from residents and public and statutory bodies.
  - A paper giving details of the methodology used to identify the Local Green Spaces designated in this plan.
  - A Facts and Figures paper setting out the key information about the Parish and evidence on which the NDP policies are based.
  - A Basic Conditions Statement appraising the extent to which the NDP policies conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); the strategic policies of the TWBC Local Plan and EU Guidance on Sustainability.
  - A Sustainability Appraisal assessing the sustainability of the proposals in the plan and whether a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is required.
  - A SEA and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report
  - A Landscape Character Assessment
  - A paper giving details of the methodology used to assess the views identified in this plan.
10. All documents can be found at <https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/gouhurst-neighbourhood-plan-full-history/>

## Monitoring and Review

11. The Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan will run concurrently with the emerging Tunbridge Wells Local Plan, being effective until 2033.

Goudhurst Parish Council (GPC), as the Neighbourhood Plan authority, will be responsible for keeping the plan up-to-date with an annual review to:

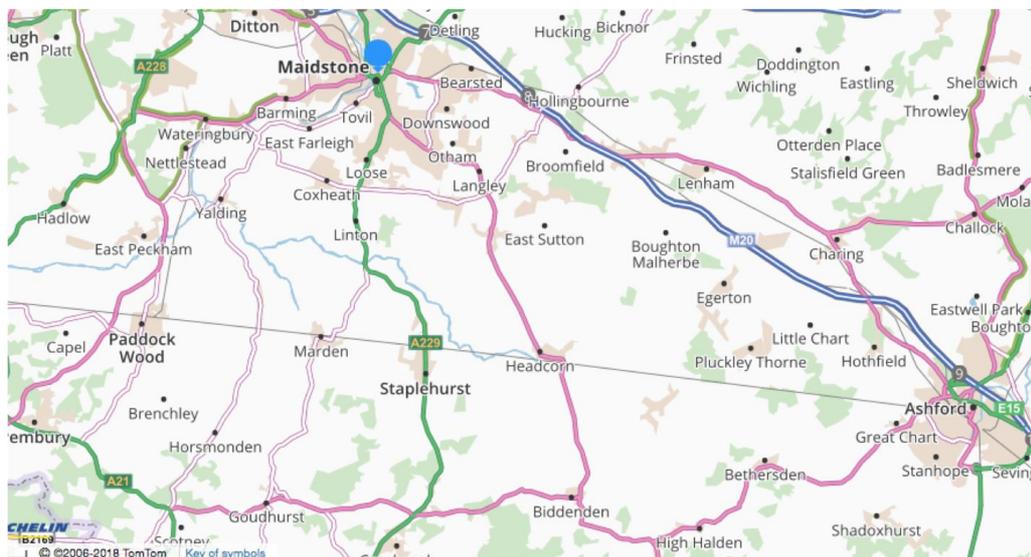
- assess changes in our community in order to ensure that the plan has continued relevance;

# Purpose

- monitor the delivery of the projects in the plan;
  - understand the impact of changes and national planning policy.
12. In addition, the plan will be reviewed following the publication of the new TWBC Local Plan (currently ‘adopted’ not ‘made’). All documents published and in preparation are included in the [TWBC Local Development Scheme \(LDS\)](#). The plan review will consider any new policies and their impact on the policies in this plan.

## The Parish of Goudhurst

13. Roads in the Parish follow the paths of ancient routeways. The village of Goudhurst is bisected by the A262, which runs from Biddenden to the A21 at Lamberhurst, and the B2079, which runs from Marden to the A21 at Flimwell. These routes move traffic between the towns of Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Hastings.
14. The map below shows the major routes across Kent. The A262 (Ashford to the A21) is an important cross-country route.



| Key                                 |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                                     | High Weald AONB Boundary          |
|                                     | Goudhurst Parish Boundary         |
|                                     | Historic Field Boundaries (FH2)   |
|                                     | Heathland (FH3)                   |
|                                     | Known Wildflower Meadows (FH3)    |
|                                     | Historic Routeways (roads) (R1)   |
|                                     | Historic Routeways (PRoW) (R1)    |
|                                     | Ancient Woodland (W1)             |
| Historic Landscape Characterisation |                                   |
|                                     | Early Medieval (AD 410 - AD 1065) |
|                                     | Medieval (AD 1066 - AD 1499)      |

n applies to the Parish of Goudhurst in Kent. The Parish covers 25 sq. km (9.7 miles). It has a rich heritage and the natural environment has changed over centuries. 80% of the Parish falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (HWAONB), 27% is ancient woodland and 19% of the Parish's ancient woodlands are listed.

The Parish has three hilltop settlements. Goudhurst village, the largest, has 65% of the population; Kilndown has 11%; and Curtisden Green has 9%. The remaining 27% of the population lives in the surrounding countryside. The map below follows the key (left)

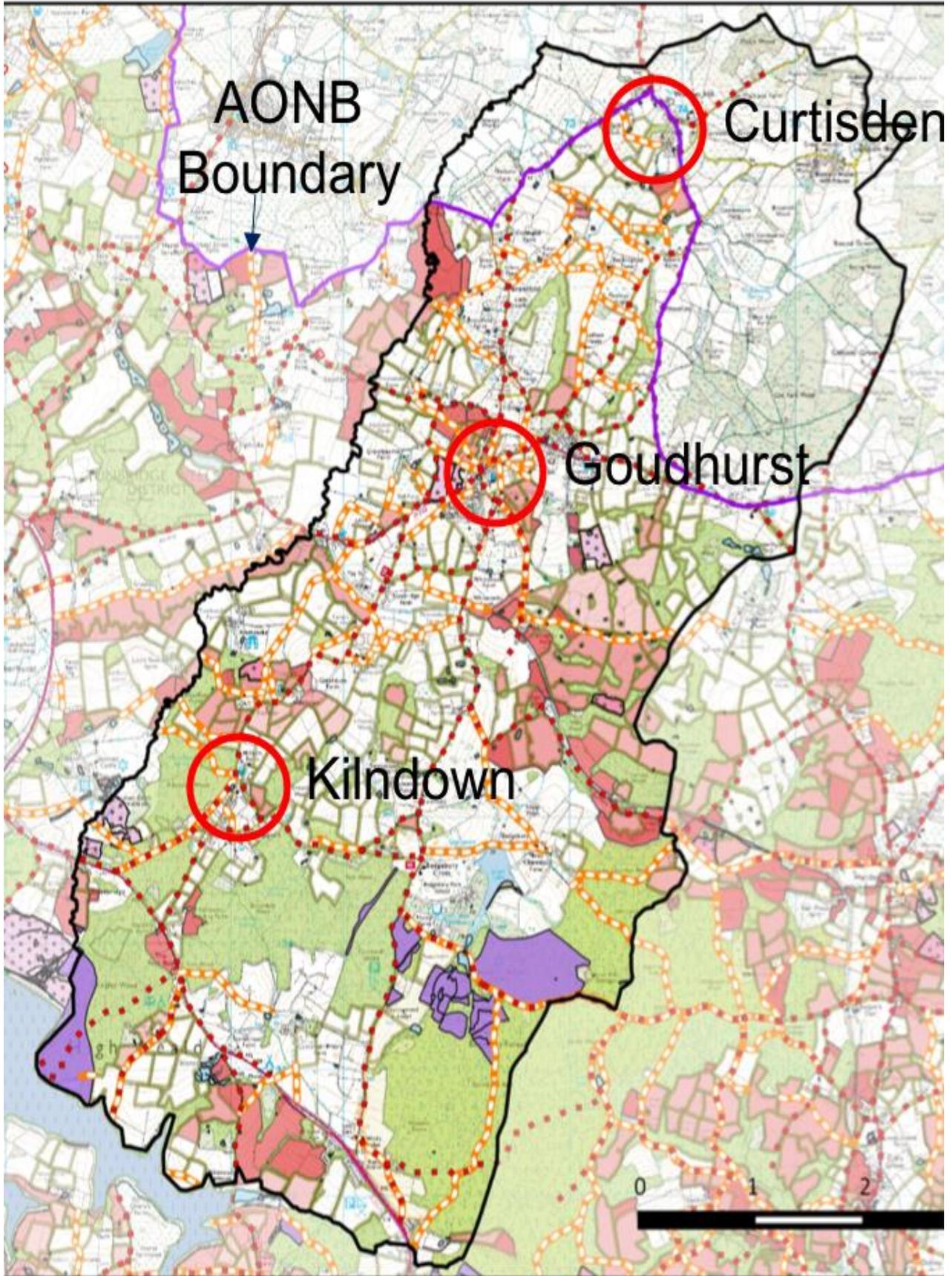


Figure 3 The Parish of Goudhurst

## Section 2 How we developed our Plan

*The proposal to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan was unanimously supported at a public meeting attended by 238 residents*

*This plan was to be a community-led project delivered by residents*

*An overall steering group and five working groups were established to develop our evidence base and plan*

### Plan Development Process

17. The proposal to create a Neighbourhood Plan for Goudhurst Parish was outlined at a public meeting in Goudhurst Parish Hall on the 22nd September 2016 attended by 238 residents. The meeting was unanimous that such a plan would benefit the Parish and, following the meeting, our intention was formally registered and subsequently accepted by TWBC on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

### How were we organised?

18. On the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016, at a second public meeting, a steering committee was created with Colin Willis elected by the group as chair and Craig Broom as secretary. The group was supported by Jim Boot and Michael Thornton as planning consultants.
19. The key objectives of the steering group were to understand:
  1. The housing need in Goudhurst;
  2. The criteria to be used when considering new sites for housing;
  3. Where new housing might be located;
  4. Design requirements for new developments and homes;
  5. The aspects of living in the Parish important to residents; and
  6. How to deliver sustainable development.
20. The decision was taken to produce a community-led plan. Five working groups were tasked with building our evidence base and identifying issues, objectives and policy areas. The five working groups created were:



Figure 4 Five Working Groups were established

Terms of reference were produced for each group<sup>1</sup>.

### Community Engagement

21. The key engagement steps were:
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 - 238 attended a meeting in the Parish Hall.
  - 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 - 85 people volunteered for working groups and steering
  - 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 - Update and questionnaire launch >270 people attended, including TWBC planning officers
  - End May 2017 - Questionnaire delivered to all households
  - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – Display at Village Fête
  - August 2017 Summary of questionnaire results delivered to all households
  - August 2017 - Exhibition of questionnaire results
  - September-November 2017 - Four public workshops
  - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 – Display at Christmas Fair
  - 17<sup>th</sup> March 2018 - Meet the Village – public meeting
  - 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 - Photographic competition exhibition and awards

<sup>1</sup> <https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan-process-and-governance/>

## How we developed our Plan

- 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – Workshop to establish options and alternatives
- 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 - Sustainability/Site Assessment and Policy Writing
- 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 - Public meeting to outline areas of policy development attended by the TWBC Head of Planning
- 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018 – Display at Village Fête

There were regular updates in the Parish Magazine.

### 2.1 Engagement with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

22. Throughout our process we have been working with the Borough to ensure that our plan conforms with local and national planning frameworks. TWBC have taken an active role in our major public meetings and we have had regular update meetings and discussion with them around the overall strategy and focus of our plan and how alignment with the emerging local plan can be achieved.

### 2.2 Evidence Gathering Activities

*The responses to our questionnaire, completed by 47% of residents, gave a clear view of what was important in our community*

*Questionnaire responses and other evidence were used in public workshops to develop our vision and set objectives*

*A housing needs survey measured the need for housing*

#### Questionnaire

23. A questionnaire was launched on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and ran until the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017. It was open to all residents age 14 and over. Two paper copies of the questionnaire were delivered to each household. It was also made available online. More than 1,200 responses were received, representing 47% of eligible respondents.

A questionnaire was delivered to local businesses and received 163 responses.

#### Workshops

24. We held four public workshops to create a set of objectives and explore options and proposals for the plan. The workshops were as follows:

- **Vision and Objectives:** Creating both short and long-term visions for the Parish and setting the objectives of our Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Housing and Design:** Developing design policies, understanding the types of housing we need and site selection criteria.
- **Traffic and Economy:** Addressing the traffic issues raised in the questionnaire responses and tackling growth in our economy.
- **Landscape and Community:** Identifying the things we value, the facilities we use and our concerns about our overall quality of life.

25. The analysis, objectives and proposals in this Neighbourhood Plan have drawn on a variety of sources. Data in respect of:

- population, employment, housing, deprivation and car ownership was obtained largely from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and from a Parish profile provided by Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE);
- housing need was obtained from an independent Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Parish Council and run by ACRE, the TWBC housing register, local estate agents, and public consultations;
- life in the village was obtained from the Goudhurst Village Appraisal (2015), the views of residents garnered from our questionnaire, public consultations and workshops and meetings with key service providers, including schools;

## How we developed our Plan

- our Landscape Character Assessment was developed by a volunteer team and with additional information from TWBC;
  - flood risk was obtained from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs;
  - geology, water and environmental assessment was produced by a local expert;
  - Goudhurst and Kilndown Conservation Area Appraisal 2006 was obtained from TWBC.
26. More detailed information on this extensive evidence base, including reports on the village consultations and workshops, can be found in the Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan supplementary documents on the website <https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/gouhurst-neighbourhood-plan-full-history/>.

### 2.3 Selecting Sites for Development

*This plan will defer site allocation to TWBC*

27. The Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan has been developed in parallel with the new Tunbridge Wells Local Plan. Tunbridge Wells B.C., in support of their Local Plan process, issued two Calls for Sites (in 2016 and 2017), which brought forward 26<sup>2</sup> sites across our Parish.
28. The Parish Council considered a process of site selection and ultimately decided to defer site allocation to the Borough Council.

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<sup>2</sup> As at October 2018

### Section 3 Goudhurst - A History

29. Goudhurst Parish is situated in the High Weald, a landscape of ridges and picturesque valleys dotted with lanes and tracks; farmsteads and fields; houses, cottages and gardens; orchards and ancient woodlands. But it has not always been that way. It was once a very small part of the great forest of Andresweald and, from relics found in the Parish, people are known to have been in this area as early as the Bronze Age. Clearings were made in the forest and, by the time of the Saxons, permanent settlements began to evolve.



Church of St Mary the Virgin

30. During the Middle Ages the Parish was divided between Manors, some under the control of Lords and others in the ownership of the Church. Of particular note are Bedgebury, Chingley, Combwell and Pattenden, the names of which are recognisable today. Goudhurst does not appear in the Domesday Book, but the Domesday Monachorum (1087) mentions the Church of St Mary the Virgin.



Goudhurst High Street

31. By the end of the 13th century Goudhurst was an established hilltop village at the centre of a farming community. During the 14th century it was prospering from the wool trade, which was later enhanced by the local weaving industry following the arrival of Flemish weavers into Kent. Goudhurst village was almost totally destroyed by fire in 1380, but the fine 14th and 15th century properties in the High Street bear testament to the wealth of that era.

32. The period of prosperity, for the Parish as a whole, continued into the 16th century when the iron smelting industry, which drew on the plentiful supply of local wood for charcoal, became established.

33. The 18th century saw the decline of the weaving and iron industries and the Parish reverted to relying on local fruit and hop growing. The success of hop farming in the Parish led to seasonal workers from London being brought in for the hop-picking season from the 19th century until that industry also declined in the middle of the 20th century.



Hop Picking in Goudhurst

34. The railway branch line arrived in 1892 from Paddock Wood to Hope Mill, Goudhurst bringing alternative opportunities for travel and the transportation of goods into and out of the Parish. However, with the popularity of motorised vehicles, railway use declined and the line was closed in 1961.

35. The late advent of the line, the fact that it was only a branch line, and the situation of the station some distance from both Kilndown and Goudhurst villages, probably acted as a brake to any major developments in the Parish.

36. At the time of the 1801 census the population of the Parish stood at 1,782. That figure rose steadily but did not exceed 3,000 until 1911 when it stood at 3,019. At the same time the number of inhabited dwellings more than doubled from 273 in 1811 to 581 in 1901. The 2011 census showed that the population of the Parish had not increased markedly over the previous 100 years standing at just under 3,500, while the number of dwellings had almost doubled.



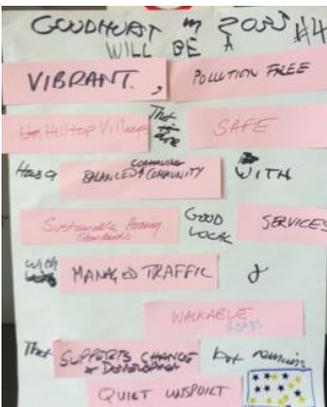
Goudhurst Station

37. Today the Parish still has many of the characteristics of its earlier times. Medieval properties, particularly in Goudhurst High Street, have changed little and the countryside is renowned for its medieval field patterns. The Church of St Mary the Virgin remains standing firm at the highest point of the Parish and from the top of its tower the Parish unfolds.

## Section 4 Our Vision, Goals and Objectives

### Our Vision:

*‘Our Parish in 2033 will be a vibrant neighbourhood, containing hilltop settlements that are safe, balanced communities, with sustainable housing standards, good local services, business opportunities, well managed traffic and walkable roads – a neighbourhood that supports change and development yet remains quiet and unspoilt’*



Our Vision

38. Since September 2016 we have worked to capture issues and concerns raised by residents and to identify the features and characteristics in the landscape we value and wish to preserve. This information, along with the results from the questionnaire, was used in a series of public workshops that set an overall vision and developed a broad set of goals and objectives. These goals and objectives have guided the development of our plan.

#### Our Vision

39. Our first workshop delivered a vision for our Parish to guide activities over the plan period ending in 2033. The vision (left) highlights the key qualities of our Parish as well as identifying the concerns and aspirations of our community:

- the landscape in which our settlements are located
- the need for balanced and safe communities
- the need for sustainable housing and local services
- the need to improve traffic flow and road safety
- the support for development
- the need to conserve the essence of the High Weald AONB

#### Areas of Focus

40. Our plan takes a positive approach to managing future development in our Parish. The five working groups identified six policy areas that best reflected the views, opinions, aspirations and concerns we have captured.



Figure 5 Six policy areas were identified

41. In the workshops we assessed the evidence base and identified a number of development options. The impact of each option was assessed, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats using small, medium and large development scenarios.

42. Objectives for each policy area were identified and these are addressed by the specific policies within the Plan.

#### Representing the Views of our Community

43. The community has supported the creation of this Neighbourhood Plan at all stages. Our public meetings attracted large audiences and the questionnaire was completed by nearly half of our eligible residents. This support, and the base of evidence, enabled us to establish a consensus against which we judged the policies and proposals included in our plan. Our vision, objectives and policies collectively support the provision of sustainable development that has due regard to national policy (see section 5).

# Our Vision, Goals and Objectives

44. The policies in our plan were developed against the following objectives:

| Goals of our Plan   | Objectives that deliver our Goals  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Landscape and Environment</b></p> <p><i>Our Parish occupies one of the most dramatic areas in the High Weald AONB with all three of our settlements prominent on the skyline. Protecting our landscape for future generations is important to our community</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retaining our distinct hilltop profiles</li> <li>- Protecting our heritage and its setting</li> <li>- Protecting our views in and out of our settlements</li> <li>- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and the natural environment</li> <li>- Conserving ancient woodland</li> <li>- Conserving water resources</li> <li>- Protecting our dark skies</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Community and Wellbeing</b></p> <p><i>Our residents have a strong sense of community and we are focused on meeting their needs and aspirations in both planning policy and community projects</i></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving and developing community facilities and services</li> <li>- Improving our communications infrastructure e.g. broadband</li> <li>- Preventing the loss of retail and commercial space to housing</li> <li>- Retaining community assets for future generations</li> <li>- Providing access for all sections of society to facilities and services</li> <li>- Improving dissemination of Parish news and information</li> <li>- Building pride in our community</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Housing</b></p> <p><i>Improve the sustainability of Goudhurst Parish as a demographically mixed and balanced community delivering new homes that meet the needs of our residents</i></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving the balance in our housing stock by encouraging smaller homes thereby allowing residents to remain in the community</li> <li>- Delivering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o more affordable housing for rent or shared ownership tied to local need</li> <li>o market housing suitable for downsizing and smaller households</li> <li>o housing to support an ageing population</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Allocating affordable housing to those with a strong local connection both now and in the future</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Business and Employment</b></p> <p><i>Support business development and the creation of new employment opportunities within the community</i></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving the strength of the local economy</li> <li>- Supporting local businesses and local employment</li> <li>- Supporting increased tourism</li> <li>- Protecting retail and commercial premises from change of use</li> <li>- Supporting live/work initiatives</li> <li>- Creating diverse employment opportunities for residents</li> <li>- Improving short-term parking</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Design</b></p> <p><i>Deliver homes that have safe access to amenities, are environmentally sympathetic, energy-efficient, flexibly designed and use materials that age well</i></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhancing our community by the quality of individual design and the overall spatial design and fit with existing development</li> <li>- Maintaining the character of our landscape</li> <li>- Improving access and inclusion</li> <li>- Ensuring efficient use of resources and available land</li> <li>- Developing housing of a scale and character appropriate to our Parish</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Traffic and Transport</b></p> <p><i>This is the most important issue in our community. We will initiate and support actions to manage traffic-flows, improve parking, implement traffic-calming and develop flexible community transport</i></p>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring traffic considerations are included in all development proposals</li> <li>- Initiating projects to address key issues not covered by land-use policies</li> <li>- Reducing the level of congestion in Goudhurst village</li> <li>- Improving road safety across the community</li> <li>- Facilitating safe walking, cycling and riding</li> <li>- Removing unnecessary Heavy Goods Vehicle journeys through our village</li> </ul>   |

## Section 5 Our Policies

45. This is a summary of the policies detailed in the remainder of this document. Each policy is summarised and the overall intent of the policy is also outlined. This summary is merely a guide and does not replace or change the meaning of the full policy.

| Policy Area               | Policy  | Policy Intent   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Landscape and Environment | L1 Development within the AONB                                  | To ensure that any development complements the AONB and improves the rural environment  |
|                           | L2 Development Outside the AONB                                 | To ensure that development in areas of the Parish that adjoin the AONB are of appropriate high quality  |
|                           | L3 Retain the Profile of our Hilltop Villages                   | To manage development on the slopes of our settlements and in prominent positions and to maintain a distinct green gap between our settlements                |
|                           | L4 Conserve Landscape and Heritage Assets                       | To protect, celebrate and pass on for future generations, the area of rich landscape and heritage in which we live  |
|                           | L5 Gap between Goudhurst LBDs                                   | To retain the gap between the two Goudhurst Limits-to-Built-Development (LBDs) from coalescence or erosion  |
|                           | L6 Biodiversity   | To ensure new development provides a net gain in biodiversity and does not adversely impact the natural environment   |
|                           | L7 Trees  | To protect the important trees and ancient woodland in the Parish   |
|                           | L8 Protect dark Skies 'Nightscape' and minimise Light Pollution | To protect the intrinsically dark rural landscape and dark skies ('nightscape') by considering the impact of new building and alterations on the 'nightscape' |
|                           | L9 Local Green Spaces   | To identify Local Green Spaces in our community that will be protected from future development  |
|                           | L10 Views   | To protect the important views that are the essence of what it means to live in the Parish and which are so valued by residents and visitors.                 |
| Community & Wellbeing     | C1 Community Facilities   | To support improvements in facilities and amenities   |
|                           | C2 Accessibility  | To ensure new development is accessible to all  |
|                           | C3 Developer Contribution                                       | To explore options for developer contributions to enhance community life  |
|                           | C4 Assets of Value within the Community                         | To protect significant assets in the Parish from change or loss   |
|                           | C5 Broadband and Mobile Infrastructure                          | To support the provision of improved service within the Parish  |
|                           | C6 Protecting & improving Public Rights of Way                  | To protect and, where possible, enhance the existing public rights of way network and its setting.  |
| Housing                   | H1 Housing Mix  | To require mixed development with an emphasis on smaller homes to meet local need   |
|                           | H2 Affordable Housing   | To ensure developments include a mix of tenures   |

## Our Policies

|                 |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
|                 | H3 Allocating Affordable Housing             | To ensure local people have priority when allocating affordable housing  |
|                 | H4 Rural Exception Sites                     | To actively seek rural exception sites   |
|                 | H5 Replacing or combining Existing Dwellings | To provide guidance and to control the size and scope of replacement dwellings   |
|                 | H6 Conversion of Existing Buildings          | To provide more commercial or residential properties using redundant buildings   |
| <b>Business</b> | B1 New Business Space                        | To encourage the development of businesses and employment, making Goudhurst a good place to invest   |
|                 | B2 Retention of Business Premises            | To support and retain shops and businesses in our community  |
|                 | B3 Adaptation for Live/Work                  | To provide guidance around developments intended for live/work use   |
| <b>Design</b>   | D1 Design Considerations                     | To provide guidance on our expectations of good design in our community  |
|                 | D2 Boundary Treatments                       | To set expectations on how boundaries in new development should be treated   |
|                 | D3 Climate Change                            | To require new homes to be more efficient and future-proofed with regard to drainage, the collection and re-use of water, and power generation and storage |
|                 | D4 Inside the Conservation Areas             | To provide guidance on development within the conservation areas   |
|                 | D5 Outside the Conservation Areas            | To provide guidance on development outside the conservation areas  |
|                 | D6 Extensions                                | To provide guidance around the size and scale of developments  |
| <b>Traffic</b>  | T1 Parking in New Development                | To ensure one parking space for every bedroom in new developments to reduce the impact of parking on the roads within the centre of Goudhurst              |
|                 | T2 Safe Access and Sustainable Transport     | To ensure that new developments do not inhibit free-flow of traffic or increase parking on local roads; and to seek mitigation where needed                |
|                 | T3 Traffic Mitigation                        | To ensure that where possible new developments provide safe pedestrian access to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.                          |
| <b>Projects</b> | P1 Access to Affordable Housing              | To meet the need for affordable housing in our community.  |
|                 | P2 Traffic, Parking and Road Safety          | To identify and address our traffic issues   |
|                 | P3 Improving Parish Facilities               | To identify areas for improvement of Parish facilities   |
|                 | P4 Improving Parish Communication            | To set out a plan to improve Parish communication  |
|                 | P5 Making Use of Developer Contribution      | To set out a plan for the use of developer contributions   |

Full details of these policies can be found in the following sections.

## Section 6 Delivering Sustainable Development

*Our Plan positively supports the needs of our Parish*

46. Our Neighbourhood Plan is designed to positively support the development needs of our Parish. The Plan sets out a vision, objectives and policies for the Parish that reflect the goals and ambitions of the local community in conserving our Parish and managing change and improvements over the coming years.

### 6.1 Supporting Sustainable Development

*'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'*

47. The central theme of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development means 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

48. The three 'dimensions' set out in the NPPF - economic, social and environment are used to measure sustainable development. Our plan therefore is required to:

**Economic:** Contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy,

**Social** Support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of quality housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations reflecting the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;

**Environment** Contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; helping to improve biodiversity, making better use of natural resources, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

49. The Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development by:

| Measure  | GNDP Policy Context                     | Summary  |
|----------|---|--|
| Economic | B1 New Business Space                   | To encourage the development of businesses and employment, making Goudhurst a good place to invest         |
|          | B2 Retention of Business premises       | To retain shops and businesses in our community  |
|          | B3 Adaption for Live/Work               | To provide guidance around developments intended for live/work use   |
|          | C1 Community Facilities & Amenities     | To support improvements in facilities and amenities  |
|          | C4 Assets of value within the community | To maintain a thriving community   |
|          | C5 Broadband and Mobile Infrastructure  | To support the provision of improved service within the Parish   |
|          | H6 Conversion of Existing Buildings     | To provide more commercial or residential properties using redundant buildings                             |
|          | T1 Parking in New Development           | To ensure one parking space for every bedroom in new developments to reduce impact of parking on the roads |
| Social   | C1 Community Facilities & Amenities     | To support improvements in facilities and amenities  |
|          | C2 Accessibility                        | To ensure new development is accessible to all   |

## Delivering Sustainable Development

|             |  |   |
|-------------|--|---|
|             | C3 Developer Contribution                        | To explore options for developer contributions to enhance community life  |
|             | C4 Assets of Value within the Community          | To protect significant assets in the Parish from change or loss   |
|             | C5 Broadband and Mobile Infrastructure           | To support the provision of improved service within the Parish  |
|             | H1 Housing Mix                                   | To deliver and better balance in our housing stock  |
|             | H2 Affordable Housing                            | To deliver affordable housing in our community  |
|             | H3 Allocating Affordable Housing                 | To ensure local people have priority when allocating affordable housing   |
|             | H4 Rural Exception Sites                         | To actively seek suitable rural exception sites   |
|             | T1 Parking in new Development                    | To ensure one parking space for every bedroom in new developments to reduce impact of parking on the roads                                    |
|             | T2 Safe and Sustainable Transport                | To ensure that new developments do not inhibit free flow of traffic or increase parking on local roads; and to seek mitigation where needed   |
|             | T3 Traffic Mitigation                            | To ensure that where possible new developments provide safe pedestrian access to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.             |
|             | L1 Development within the AONB                   | To ensure that any development complements the AONB and improves the rural environment  |
| Environment | L2 Development Outside the AONB                  | To place constraints on development in areas of the Parish that adjoin the AONB.  |
|             | L3 Retain the Profile of our Hilltop Settlements | To limit development on the slopes of our settlements and in prominent positions and to maintain a distinct green gap between our settlements |
|             | L4 Conserve Landscape and Heritage Assets        | To protect, for future generations, the area of rich landscape and heritage in which we live  |
|             | L5 Gap between Goudhurst LBDs'                   | To protect the gap between the two Goudhurst Limits-to-Built Development (LBD) from coalescence or erosion                                    |
|             | L6 Biodiversity                                  | To ensure new development does not adversely impact the natural environment   |
|             | L7 Trees   | To protect the important trees and ancient woodland in the Parish.  |
|             | L8 Light Pollution                               | To remain a dark skies community and continue to minimise the impact of light pollution whether from public or private sources                |
|             | L9 Green Spaces                                  | To identify Green Spaces in our community that will be protected from future development  |
|             | L10 Views  | To protect the important views that are the essence of what it means to live in the Parish and which are so valued by residents and visitors. |
|             | C6 Protecting & improving Public Rights of Way   | To protect and, where possible, enhance the existing PROW network and its setting.  |
|             | D1 Design Standards                              | To provide guidance on our expectations of good design in our community   |
|             | D2 Boundary Treatments                           | To set expectations of how boundaries in new development should be treated  |
|             | D3 Climate Change                                | To require new homes to be more efficient and future proofed including in drainage and the collection and re-use of water                     |
|             | T2 Safe and Sustainable Transport                | To ensure that new developments do not inhibit free flow of traffic or increase parking on local roads; and to seek mitigation where needed   |
|             | T3 Traffic Mitigation                            | To ensure that where possible new developments provide safe pedestrian access to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.             |

50. A more detailed analysis of how the Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable development can be found in the Basic Conditions Statement.

## Section 7 Landscape and Environment Policies

### 7.1 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

*Our landscape is internationally important*

*80% of the Parish is within the High Weald AONB*

51. The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe<sup>3</sup>. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (HWAONB) covers 78 per cent of the NCA.
52. The majority of Goudhurst Parish lies within the HWAONB with only a small area in the north, at Winchet Hill, Curtisden Green and Finchurst Farm, outside. Although outside, this area is important to the setting of the AONB.
53. Our settlements are sited on the sandstone ridges and the Parish is a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. Medieval patterns of small pasture fields enclosed by thick hedgerows and shaws (narrow woodlands) remain prominent in the character of the landscape. An appraisal of the local landscape can be found in the Goudhurst Landscape Character Assessment document<sup>4</sup>.
54. Our landscape is dramatic during daylight hours but at night the low level of light pollution means that there is only limited intrusion into the landscape.
55. Our area of the High Weald has a long and rich history and is extraordinarily well documented through old maps<sup>5</sup>.

### 7.2 Managing Development within the AONB

*Most of the Parish is within the AONB so there will inevitably be development in the AONB*

56. The AONB is very important to our residents with 98% of questionnaire respondents<sup>6</sup> favouring protection and only 2% favouring development.
57. However, given that most of the Parish lies within the AONB our plan must be able to provide clarity for managing proposals for development within it. There are already reduced Permitted Development Rights for residential and all other buildings within the AONB and the 2019 NPPF places further restrictions on such development.

**Policy Objective:**  
*To ensure any development in the AONB meets HWAONB objectives*

#### **Policy L1 Development within the AONB**

Proposals for development in the AONB should, where appropriate, make a positive contribution to the objectives of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and any subsequent updates thereto.

<sup>3</sup> [Natural England](#)

<sup>4</sup> [A Landscape Character Assessment](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Goudhurst & Kilndown Local History Society archive](#)

<sup>6</sup> [All references to residents is based on the 50% response rate to the questionnaire](#)

# Landscape and Environment Policies

*We will follow the objectives set by the HWAONB management plan*

- 58. The High Weald AONB Management Plan<sup>7</sup> sets out long-term objectives for conserving this nationally important landscape and the local authorities' ambitions for how the High Weald will be managed over the next five years.
- 59. This Neighbourhood Plan adopts the HWAONB management plan and supports the production and regular revision of the High Weald AONB Management Plan and its use in planning decisions.
- 60. In June 2019 the HWAONB issued for consultation design guidance<sup>8</sup>, which sets out an approach to making and assessing development proposals within the AONB. This Neighbourhood Plan endorses in full the design guidelines and expects their use in all proposals and decisions for development within the Parish.

## 7.3 Managing Development outside of the AONB

- 61. Although the majority of the Parish lies within the AONB the remainder of the Parish has landscape value and was previously designated a Special Landscape Area (SLA) and is included in the NCA mentioned earlier.

**Policy Objective:**

*To ensure any development conserves the setting of the AONB*

**Policy L2 Development Outside the AONB**

Where development is proposed outside of the AONB it must not harm or detract from the environment, character and landscape setting of the AONB.

- 62. Areas in the Parish outside the AONB are important to the setting and 'experience' of the AONB.
- 63. The term 'setting' is used to refer to areas outside the AONB where development and other activities may affect land within an AONB. Its extent will vary depending upon the issues considered but some can be mapped, for example, the impact of development on views into and out of the AONB. Section 85 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 requires public bodies to consider whether any activities outside the AONB may affect land in an AONB, and Planning Practice Guidance (Natural Environment: 003) emphasises that this duty is relevant in considering development proposals that are situated outside the AONB boundary. Development in areas of the Parish outside the AONB should, wherever possible, give protection and consideration to reinforcing and enhancing the landscape character of the Parish and should not harm the significance of the AONB. Given the relationship of areas outside the AONB with the areas within it, this Plan requires that the design guidance produced by the HWAONB to apply equally in these parts of the Parish.

## 7.4 Parish Setting and Landscape

- 64. The landscape of Goudhurst Parish has been shaped by the unusual underlying geology<sup>9</sup>, which produces many springs on the slopes of the ridge. These, and

<sup>7</sup> [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#)

<sup>8</sup> [High Weald Design Guide](#)

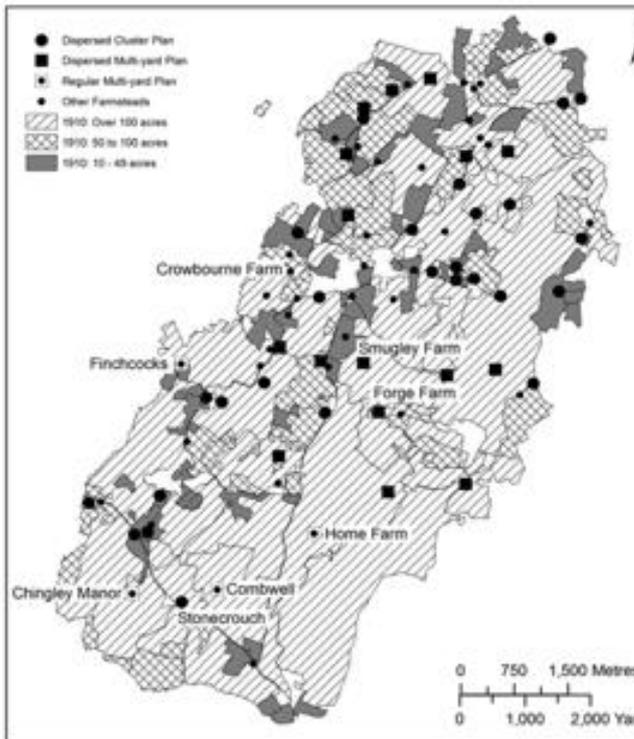
<sup>9</sup> [A detailed analysis of the geology of Goudhurst](#)

*Geology and the hilltop position of our settlements define our Parish making it unique in Europe – We wish to conserve this for future generations*

# Landscape and Environment Policies

the heavy clays of the High Weald, have generally restricted historic roads and paths and settlements to the drier higher ground or ridge tops.

- 65. Farmsteads have retained buildings from the 17th century or earlier along with the characteristic oast house. Historic England note that, by national standards, historic farm buildings in the High Weald have low rates of structural failure. This has resulted in high rates of conversion of listed buildings to non-agricultural uses, 46% against a national average of 34%.<sup>10</sup> Most of these are to domestic use, with only 5.7% of listed working buildings being converted to commercial use.<sup>11</sup>
- 66. The farms frequently contain large-scale buildings, often in association with barns and fruit packing sheds, although many are not visually prominent in the landscape as they tend to be hidden either by tree cover or the landform.



67. Goudhurst, the principal settlement, located at the highest point of the sandstone ridge (the ‘col-de-Goudhurst’ in past Tour-de-France events), is cut to the north and south by small tributaries of the Teise, while to the west the Teise valley is the physical boundary of the Parish.

68. Just over a hundred years ago a visitor described Goudhurst in words that are as true today as they were then:

69. "The whole neighbourhood is singularly beautiful with the sylvan pastoral beauty that is England's great characteristic. The village is straggling. Genius could scarcely have made it more irregular. It is built on the slope of an eccentric hill. Approaching it from the south you see a collection of red roofs one above another, picturesque and promising. At the summit of the hill you come to the church, ancient, large and interesting. The landscape is richly timbered. There are woods on all sides. The whole scene sparkles with a light and laughter that makes you joyous" –

70. Very little has changed although there has been some limited creep down the slopes. In general, development follows the geography and respects the complex geology of the Parish.

71. Goudhurst village, Kilndown, and Curtisden Green have dominant hilltop positions, which define their characters with views out from them and their appearance as landmarks from distant points in the local area (see Para 2.7 of the Views Assessment document). Protecting these distinct hilltop profiles is one of the most important objectives identified in our plan.

*Development has taken place but the character of the Parish remains largely unchanged*

**Policy Objective:**  
To conserve the hilltop profiles of our settlements

**Policy L3 Retain the Profile of our Hilltop Villages**

<sup>10</sup> [Historic England](#)

<sup>11</sup> [TWBC document on Farmsteads](#)

## Landscape and Environment Policies

Development should preserve and enhance the profiles of the three hilltop settlements (Goudhurst, Kilndown and Curtisden Green), as seen from the surrounding countryside.

*Four ways to conserve our hilltop settlements*

72. Our settlements have settings which are increasingly rare and of recognised international importance<sup>12</sup>. Our intent is that the valued features and qualities of the landscape should be conserved and enhanced through:
- 1) Retaining the rural, working agricultural character of the area. Development has the potential to erode this essential rural character.
  - 2) Protecting the traditional form of our communities as hilltop villages and restricting further spread, either down the slopes or along the ridge top.
  - 3) Ensuring new development and alterations, including boundary treatments, are in keeping with the local character.
  - 4) Protecting the landscape setting with its unimproved pastures and orchards. Preventing the incremental removal of hedgerows and wooded boundaries

### 7.5 Heritage

*19% of buildings are listed with 11 listed Grade I and Grade II\**

73. Goudhurst Parish contains three distinctive hilltop settlements. Goudhurst has a relatively intact historic settlement pattern and well preserved and interesting medieval buildings. It is important that development conserves and enhances the heritage assets of the Parish and their setting. The Parish has 224 listed buildings (19%), 11 of which are of Grade I or Grade II\* status<sup>13</sup>. More than 50% of our buildings were built before 1874 and remnants of past industries (oast houses, hop pickers' huts, hammer ponds, ancient routeways) can be seen across the Parish and constitute significant local features.

*Strong local character from brick, tile and weatherboarding*

74. There are conservation areas in both Goudhurst and Kilndown<sup>14</sup> centred around the stone, Grade I churches of St Mary the Virgin and Christ Church. More detail of these is provided in the Design Section of this plan (see Section 10).

*Highest density of historic timber buildings in Europe*

75. The high proportion of listed buildings contributes to the distinctive 'look and feel' of the Parish. The consistent use of similar materials across a broad range of buildings is the most notable feature of our local architecture. The buildings are generally brick with traditional Kent peg tiles hung vertically on first floor walls under tiled roofs. Tiles were historically made from local iron clay.

76. Our area of the High Weald has the highest density of historic, timber-framed buildings anywhere in Europe.<sup>15</sup>

**Policy Objective:**  
*To conserve the setting and character of our Parish*

**Policy L4    Conserve Landscape and Heritage Assets**

<sup>12</sup> Natural England considers the Weald to be the one of best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> [Historic England register of listed buildings](#)

<sup>14</sup> Conservation Area appraisals for both [Goudhurst and Kilndown](#)

<sup>15</sup> Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 122 'High Weald' was updated on the 18th December 2013.

## Landscape and Environment Policies

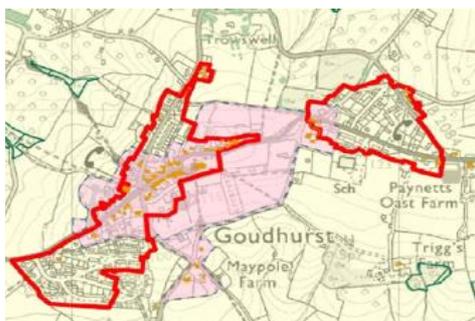
Development must conserve the historic landscape of the Parish and the settings of its heritage assets.

77. The character of our landscape needs to be conserved. Hedgerows, in particular, are an integral part of the Parish landscape and very often carry historic significance where they denote medieval field patterns. Historic Farmsteads are still visible in the landscape. National character profiling encourages new developments to follow the designs prevalent in the area, using locally sourced materials. We will adhere to the HWAONB design guidance.

### 7.6 Limits-to-Built Development (LBDs)

*LBDs have historically provided a boundary for new development*

78. The built-up edges of our settlements have historically set the limit, or boundary, for development. These are known as Limits-to-Built-Development (LBDs).
79. The LBD boundaries are agreed by TWBC and GPC and changes to them can only be made with their joint agreement. The LBD boundaries will be reviewed as a part of the Local Plan process.



80. LBDs are not fixed boundaries and have changed a number of times to incorporate new development. There have been developments adjacent to the existing LBDs that are not included within their boundaries. Rural exception sites in the Parish, for example Culpepers, have historically not been included within the LBDs. This situation will be addressed as part of the NDP and Borough Local Plan activities.

81. There are currently three LBDs in the Parish. Two of these are in Goudhurst and the third is in Kilndown. There are no LBDs in Curtisden Green. The LBDs are outlined in red on the adjacent maps.

82. The first Goudhurst LBD includes the historic heart of the village and follows the western ridge line encompassing the development of the 1970's-1990's to the south of the village and then follows the historical line of build towards Tattlebury. The second LBD in Goudhurst is to the east of the original settlement and encompasses the development that dates primarily from 1900 – described below as “the Chequers area.”

83. The conservation area overlaps the LBD covering the Glebe Field, Lower Glebe, Old Cricket Pitch, Five-Fields, the churchyard, and the surrounding fields.

84. Kilndown currently has its own LBD, which covers the majority of the developed area of Kilndown and incorporates the conservation area. TWBC's LBD Topic Paper *proposes 'The whole of this LBD boundary is to be removed as it is considered to be an unsustainable settlement for further development with a small number of facilities and services and limited bus services.'* This plan would support this proposal.



## 7.7 The Important Gap between the Goudhurst LBDs



85. The characters of Goudhurst village and the Chequers area are distinct. Goudhurst village is defined by its medieval High Street whereas the Chequers area consists of primarily Victorian and later houses. The gap separating them is made up of a large triangle of land to the south and an open field, crossed by two footpaths to the north, which afford views to the Greensand Ridge some 25 miles to the north. The gap, with its winding road, provides road users with a strong sense of transition as they pass through the area.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Preserve the gap between the two Goudhurst LBDs*

### **Policy L5 Retention of the Gap between Goudhurst LBDs**

**Development proposals must maintain the separate identity and character of the two Goudhurst settlements and avoid their coalescence or the erosion of the undeveloped gap.**

86. Development that would not meet this policy will be strongly resisted.
87. The sense of open space and the views from this area on the ridge are very important and should be preserved (see Policy L10 and Views Assessment document). The 2006 TWBC Local Plan<sup>16</sup> identifies this gap as important to the character of the Parish and this position is retained in the new Local Plan.

## 7.8 The Natural Environment

*Extraordinary biodiversity with ponds and river courses supports a range of protected species*

88. The presence of ponds, many resulting from historic industrial activities, and rivers is important to the extraordinary biodiversity of the High Weald. Over 100 species are supported including a number of uncommon ones that are recognised to be of national importance. Birds, mammals, amphibians, insects and other invertebrates all use ponds for food and shelter and to complete their lifecycles.
89. Areas of natural biodiversity and visual value, including the semi-improved pastures on the steep slopes surrounding Goudhurst, are important both visually and as a biodiversity resource.
90. The Parish has an abundance of species-rich 'woodland' hedgerows, primarily as field margins, which provide an important wildlife habitat. These hedgerows have been an integral part of the Parish landscape and very often carry historic significance where they denote medieval field patterns.
91. Ponds and the local river courses support a range of protected species including the great crested newt, water vole, shining ramshorn snail, and the medicine leech. Protected plant species include the bugle, marsh marigold, ragged robin, marsh woundwort, lady's smock, water nut, purple loosestrife, branched bur-reed, greater pond sedge, water violet, reed sweet grass, water forget-me-not,

<sup>16</sup> Section 3 Green Belt, Rural Fringe and Limits to Built Development para 3.5 Aims

## Landscape and Environment Policies

lesser spearwort, arrowhead, water starwort, rigid hornwort, water crowfoot, and water milfoil.

- 92. Deer are still present in local woodlands including roe, red and fallow deer.
- 93. The only Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS) in the Parish is the outcrop of Tunbridge Wells sandstone in Scotney Castle grounds containing a preserved dinosaur footprint. This is covered and protected by the National Trust.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Policy Objective:</b><br/><i>Development must enhance biodiversity in our Parish</i></p> | <p><b>Policy L6    Biodiversity</b></p> <p>All development must contribute to a net gain in biodiversity. Development that would result in a loss of biodiversity will only be considered where proposals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. mitigate that loss; or, where that is not possible,</li> <li>2. compensate for that loss</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

- 94. In simple terms we wish to **avoid** the loss of biodiversity. If such loss cannot be avoided, then the loss needs to be mitigated. If mitigation cannot be put in place, then we will seek **compensation** to ensure a net gain in biodiversity.
- 95. Enhancing the level of biodiversity in our Parish can vary from the provision of bird and bat boxes on a building to, on larger schemes, the creation of significant new areas of habitat or nature reserves.

### 7.9 Habitats and Species

*There are important habitats across the Parish*

- 96. A Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI) site of 2.7ha is located near Forge Farm and the lower meadows below Kilndown Wood. Around Smugley Farm and Furnace Farm there are Environmental Stewardship Agreements (ESAs) in place covering 666ha. West of Kilndown the ESA covers nearly 300ha for Organic Entry Level farming and there are further ESAs covering 95ha on Riseden Farm.

*Our Sites of Special Scientific Interest are “favourable” or “recovering”*

- 97. The following Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the Parish will need to be taken into account, as necessary, on decisions upon planning proposals:
  - Combwell Wood - Ref 1062208. Unfavourable, Recovering.
  - Combwell Wood - Ref 1062207. Favourable.
  - Scotney Castle - Ref 1062206. Favourable.
  - Scotney Castle - Ref 1062657. Unfavourable, Recovering

- 98. The entire Parish falls within the Higher-Level Stewardship Target Area for England, as part of the High Weald and Associated Valleys region.

### 7.10 Soils, Agriculture and Forestry

*Woodland is an important part of our Parish*

- 99. There are sixteen soil series ranging from the sandy soils of the old forest areas, the well-drained fine sands, and the clays with fair to poor drainage<sup>17</sup>. The cultivation of fruit (apples, pears and cherries) and hops has been important in the Parish and remains part of the ongoing heritage. Permanent grassland and arable land are also an important part of the landscape, with typically sheep rearing and reducing dairy farming.

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<sup>17</sup> [Goudhurst Geology study](#)

## Landscape and Environment Policies

100. Much of the higher, sandy ground is given over to forestry. An unusually high proportion of the Parish is designated as Ancient Woodland or Deciduous Woodland.<sup>18</sup> In addition, much of the old Bedgebury School estate is marked as Wood pasture and Parkland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat, while the 320 acre Bedgebury Pinetum is part of the Ancient Woodland and National Forest Inventory.

### **Policy Objective:**

*To retain our existing trees and woodland and ensure development does not damage our trees*

### **Policy L7 Trees**

Development that undermines the future health of, or results in the loss of, ancient woodland, protected trees and veteran trees will not be permitted. Proposals shall be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and expected longevity of any affected trees.

101. Proposals shall retain ancient woodland, protected trees and veteran trees of arboricultural and amenity value. If a loss of trees could be justified for arboricultural reasons, suitable replacements will be sought. Our Parish has 27% of its area as ancient woodland and this is important to its character. The HWAONB objective is to further prevent loss of ancient woodland from the 2004 baseline<sup>19</sup>.

## 7.11 Protection of the Rural Landscape at Night (nightscape)<sup>20</sup>

*GPC has always supported a dark skies policy*

102. Goudhurst Parish benefits from dark skies and the Parish Council has supported a dark skies policy to protect the natural beauty of the night sky. It has therefore resisted all but essential, well-designed and controlled street and external lighting. The Parish Council will promote the appreciation of the quality of the rural 'nightscape' and encourage the removal of unnecessary and/or inappropriate lighting or, where warranted, a suitable replacement. The intent is to ensure that the night-time character of the Parish is not diminished.
103. Goudhurst, as can be seen from the image below, has a relatively low level of artificial light pollution. Light pollution harms wildlife and undermines the character of the AONB at night. Unfortunately, light pollution has grown because of an increase in the use of external, security lighting and the introduction of large glazed areas in both new developments and altered/extended buildings. Viewed against a predominately dark background, the light emitted from such sources, particularly when in prominent positions, harms the nightscape character of the Parish.

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<sup>18</sup> Forestry Commission management of the Bedgebury Pinetum

<sup>19</sup> [High Weald Management Plan](#)

<sup>20</sup> Drawing on PPG Light Pollution

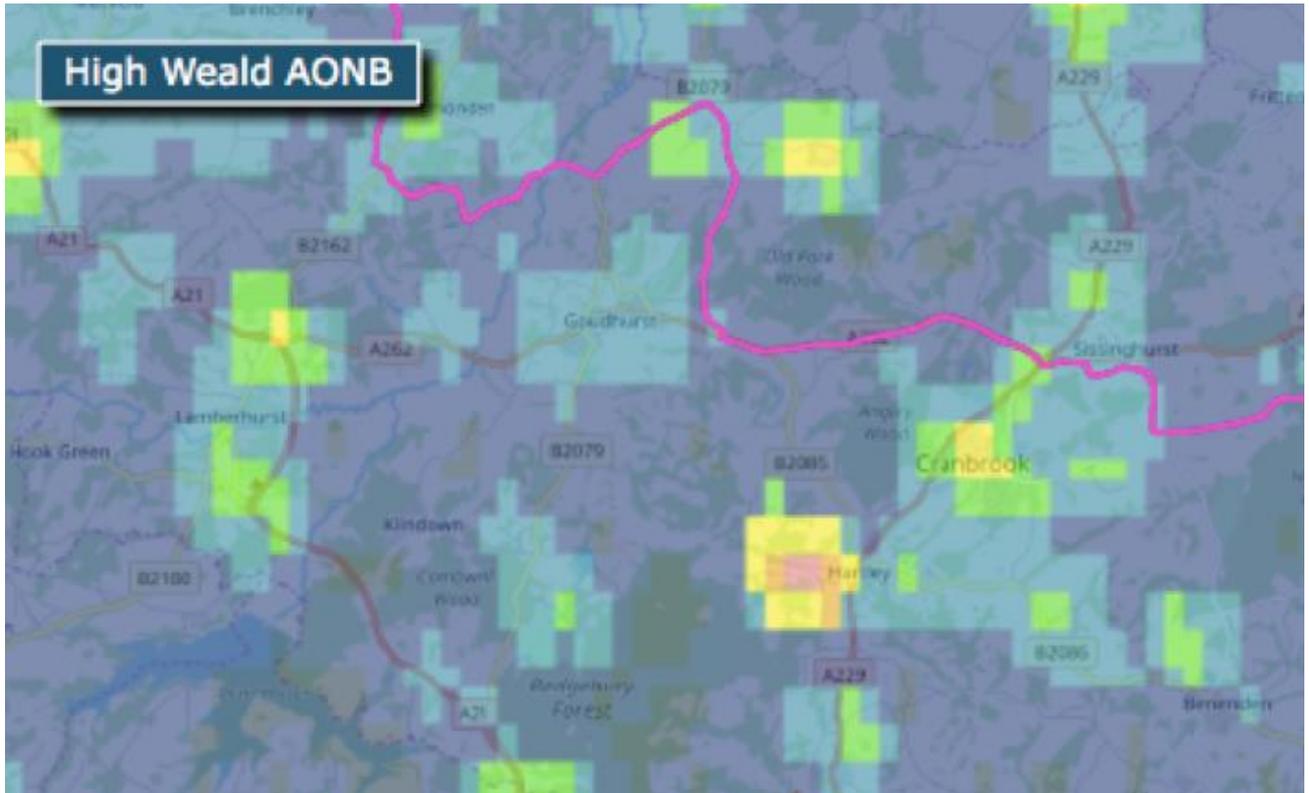


Figure 6 Light Pollution in Goudhurst

*We have low levels of light pollution and we want that to continue*

104. New building materials and reflective surfaces can also have an adverse impact when subjected to artificial illumination. But artificial lighting can be of benefit when designed to get the right light, in the right place, at the right time. White light, with more blue content, is generally more disruptive to wildlife, and human sleep, than yellow/orange light. Unnecessary lighting wastes energy.
105. We will require careful design assessments of the night-time appearance of new proposals and may stipulate planning conditions to ensure a design is right for the setting. While permitted development rights for dwellings allow the addition of external lighting, removal of such rights may be considered in new development proposals. ‘Part-night lighting’ of businesses and outdoor areas will be required when closed, and a switching-off of all external lighting between midnight and 5am specified wherever possible. Correct installation, shielding and maintenance of lighting is essential. Additional measures may be required to protect wildlife, including, if necessary, controls at migration routes and times.

**Policy Objective:**  
To protect the intrinsically dark rural landscape and dark skies (‘nightscape’)

**Policy L8 Protection of the Rural Landscape at Night (‘Nightscape’)**

All proposals for alterations, extensions and new development will be considered in terms of the appearance of lighting and reflectivity in the ‘nightscape’, with particular attention paid to the position and proportions of windows and other glazed areas. Inappropriate glazing leading to an incongruous

## Landscape and Environment Policies

appearance in the setting of the historic rural nightscape should be avoided.

New development schemes should be supported by a proportionate external lighting scheme (excluding those on an existing dwelling house) including temporary lighting and lighting of sports facilities. The impact of all external lighting should be minimised in terms of direction, power, colour and duration. A lighting plan submitted with the proposal should set out how this is to be achieved.

All lighting should be designed to minimise light spill.

All proposals for external lighting should demonstrate an essential purpose to the occupier or beneficial impact to the community and have regard to current policies and guidelines of the High Weald AONB and TWBC.

106. The landscape in Goudhurst means that houses are often built on exposed or elevated sites. In such development large windows can have significant impact on the level of light pollution when viewed from the surrounding area and beyond. This impact is highlighted in Design Policy D1.
107. Our intent is to ensure that we do not change the character of our Parish. What will be important is understanding the safety issues associated with lighting which, in the countryside, are quite different from the urban environment.

### 7.12 Local Green Space

*Green Spaces were first identified in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012*

*Our plan identifies and designates Local Green Spaces for protection*

108. The value of green space in shaping our community has historically been very much taken for granted by residents. The nature of our countryside, and the impact this has on the wellbeing of the community, was identified at a very early stage in the Plan scoping process. Our questionnaire identified that the environment and our green spaces are important to over 90% of residents. Local Green Space designation allows this plan to provide protection (similar to that afforded to Green Belt)<sup>21</sup> to areas that are, and historically have been, important to our residents.
109. Local Green Spaces are in addition to existing spaces such as the Glebe Field, the Plain and the Millennium Field that already have protection under other designation. We have identified Local Green Spaces across the Parish that have an enduring significance to residents because of their history, recreational value, landscape value, tranquillity, or richness of wildlife. All the sites are 'local' and within our communities.
110. We have developed, in conjunction with TWBC, a Local Green Space assessment methodology which looked at 33 sites in total. The methodology complies with

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<sup>21</sup> NPPF para 101 states 'Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts'

# Landscape and Environment Policies

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>22</sup>. The process was completed in two stages:

**Stage 1** - Each site was reviewed in the context of existing planning activities and other designations.

**Stage 2** - In stage 2 sites were assessed to understand their importance to our community.

*We want to keep our green spaces*

111. Details of the sites identified in this plan can be found in the Local Green Spaces – Assessment and Allocation<sup>23</sup> document which contains details of the overall process and the criteria for acceptance or rejection at both stages of the analysis.
112. The Local Green Spaces allocated as a part of this plan have been measured against the criteria set out in the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which includes guidance on LGS designation<sup>3</sup>. The following paragraphs in the NPPG are of particular relevance for the evaluation of sites for LGS designation. Key points are summarised below:
  - Paragraph 007 – Our LGS allocations are consistent with local planning for sustainable development.
  - Paragraph 008 – None of our sites is subject to planning
  - Paragraph 009 – Our LGS sites were identified by the Parish Council and in public consultation and have been reviewed with TWBC
  - Paragraph 011- Although the majority of the Parish is within the HWAONB we have nevertheless included Green Spaces that are within the AONB to ensure their protection.
  - Paragraph 014 – Sites are in close proximity to the community they serve
  - Paragraph 015 – All of the sites are < 1 hectare
  - Paragraph 017 – Some LGS areas have largely unrestricted public access.

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<sup>22</sup>[Planning advice – Local Green Spaces](#)

<sup>23</sup> <https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Green-Space-Designation-0.3.pdf>

## 7.13 Goudhurst Sites

- 97 St Mary's Churchyard
- 99 Old Cricket Pitch
- 102 Five Fields
- 103 'Triangle' by Maypole
- 101 Fields to west of Goudhurst
- 100 Cemeteries south of St Mary's church
- AS16 Land between Mary Days & High Ridge
- AS17 Land between Bankfield Way and High Ridge
- AS18 Land within Culpepers 'loop'
- AS19 Recreation Area within the Housing Association area
- AS20 Land on south side of Lurkins Rise
- AS22 Lower Glebe Field

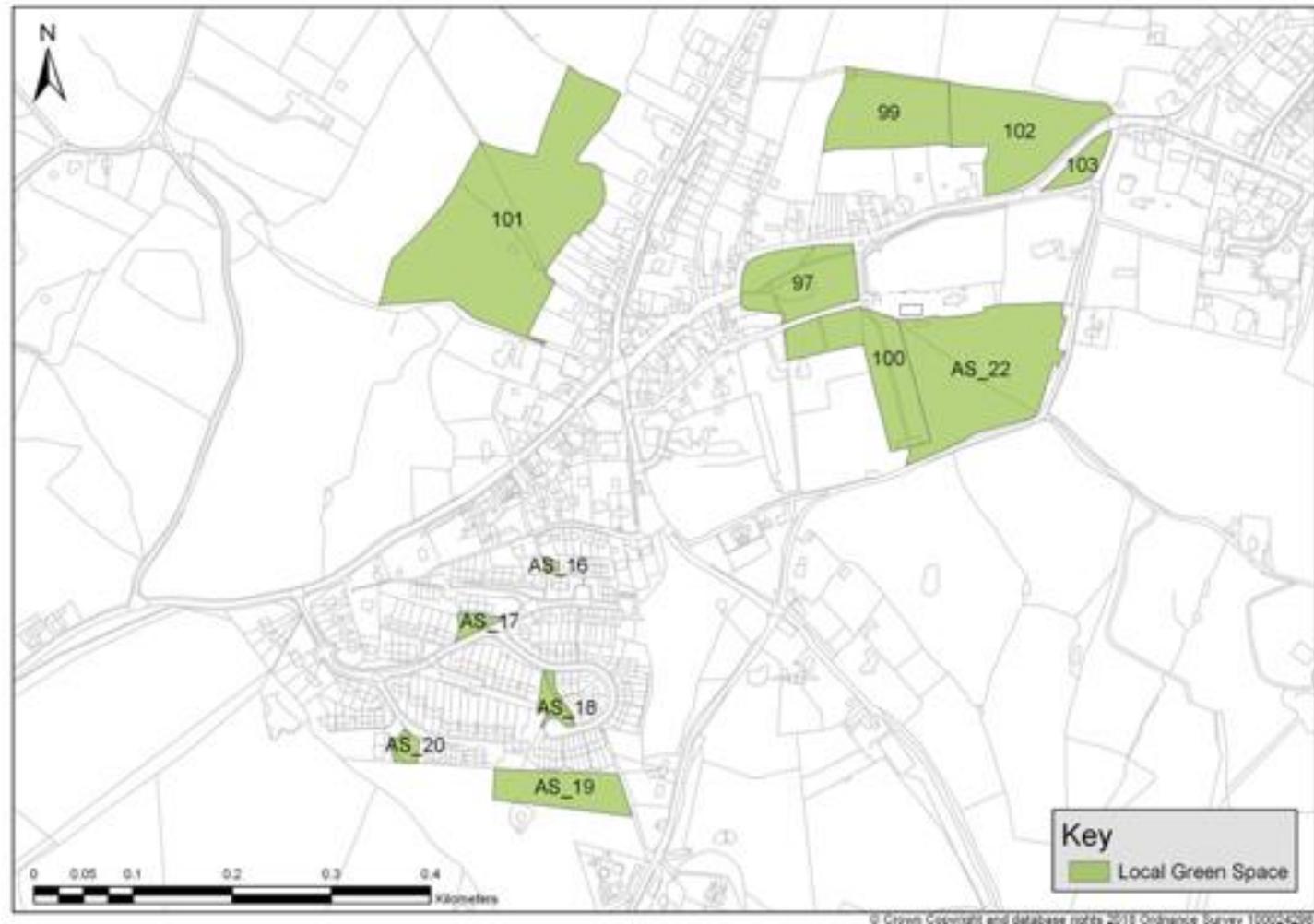


Figure 7 Goudhurst Local Green Spaces Map

## 7.14 Kilndown Sites

- 106 Millennium Green
- 105 Christ Church and Churchyard with War Memorial
- 104 Quarry Pond and Land
- 107 Cricket Ground



Figure 8 Kilndown Local Green Spaces Map

### 7.15 Curtisden Green Sites

- AS1 Firs Pitch
- AS2 Field SW of Firs Pitch
- AS3 Triangle in the highway



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Figure 9 Local Green Spaces in Curtisden Green

## Landscape and Environment Policies

113. It is important that development proposals recognise the role these spaces play in informing the rural character of the Parish and respect their context and setting.

**Policy Objective:**

*To ensure we retain existing Local Green Spaces*

**Policy L9 Local Green Spaces**

Development that results in the loss or degradation of Local Green Spaces will be rejected unless there are exceptional circumstances.

114. The Local Green Spaces identified in this plan are areas highlighted as deserving protection. Their designation is consistent with local planning for sustainable development. These spaces will continue to provide our community with its rural character and identity as well as providing recreational opportunities for residents and supporting biodiversity.

### 7.16 Views from, into, and across the Parish

*Views are an important part of living and visiting the Parish*

115. Our settlements are perched high on sandstone ridges (see figure 5 below). St Marys Goudhurst Church acts as a key landmark and its tower is a focal point for most views to, from, and within the village. The churchyard is 121m above sea level falling 91m to the surrounding Teise valley (30m above sea level) 1.km distant. From the tower (18m higher) there is a 360° view of the successive dark wooded ridgelines of Bedgebury Forest creating a sense of being on the ‘roof’ of the High Weald.
116. The difference in height means that many views look to the Parish boundary and beyond.

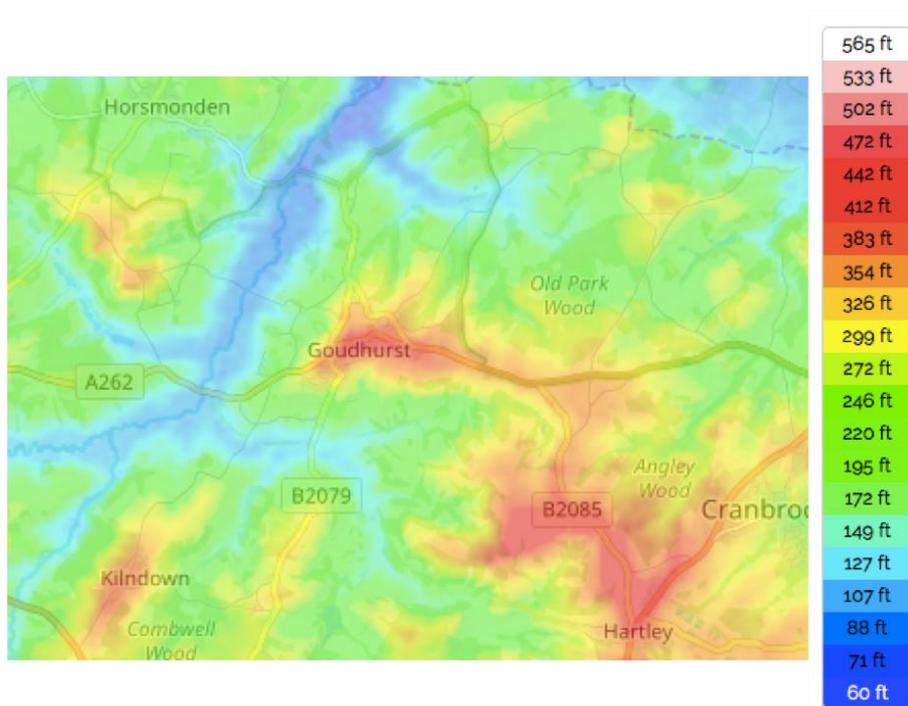


Figure 10 Topographic map showing the changes elevation

# Landscape and Environment Policies

117. There is a network of open spaces in Goudhurst following the medieval routeways that shaped the village, linking important historical sites, houses and estates. The countryside melts away from the hilltop settlements through these spaces and they afford views within and out of our settlements. Walking the centuries-old routeways is a key attraction for visitors and residents.



Figure 11 St Mary's Church tower offers a panorama across the Parish and Borough

118. In Goudhurst village the arrangement of buildings, roads and lanes creates a series of framed, long distance views from within Goudhurst village across the rural landscape of the Teise valley to St Margaret's Church, Horsmonden; Bewl Water; Finchcocks; Scotney Castle; Lamberhurst and Bedgebury Forest.
119. Although many people stop and walk through the Parish, most are driving through and experience fleeting glimpses of the landscape and extensive long views across the Parish from the ridgetop. In all cases, views within the Parish are rarely from a single viewing point, but rather from a wide selection of viewing points, which enhance the enjoyment of the landscape, particularly when travelling through the Parish.
120. Our landscape is extremely important to our residents with 97% wanting to protect and conserve it<sup>24</sup>.

*Many of our key views are to and from the Goudhurst ridge line*

## Policy L10 Views

**Policy Objective:**  
*To retain the key views within our Parish*

Development should conserve important views into, out of, and between the settlements from any area to which the public has access.

*Our intent is to limit the visual impact of new development in the landscape*

121. Our intent is to retain key views within the Parish in order to conserve the scenery, wildlife and the natural and historic landscape for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Our policy objective is to limit the visual impact of any development in the landscape and views are important considerations when making planning decisions. Our Views policy combined with our Design Considerations, set out in policy D2, and the HWAONB design criteria are intended to work together to minimise the visual impact of development in these corridors.

<sup>24</sup> [Goudhurst NDP questionnaire questions 45-49.](#)

## 7.17 Assessing views

*Views were assessed in three ways, the view, the viewpoint and*

122. The geography of our Parish provides a series of views and viewpoints which are considered significant.

We assessed our views in three ways:

1. An assessment of the view (see criteria below)
2. An assessment of the viewpoint
3. An overall assessment of the view based on view and viewpoint

123. In this document we have included only the relevant information covering our process. Further detailed information of each view can be found in a supporting document<sup>25</sup>, which should be used alongside our plan.

### Methodology for assessing Key Views

124. To understand the relative importance of views in our Parish we have developed a set of criteria which assesses each view from a number of perspectives:

| Assesment Criteria      | Description  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Viewpoint               | The location from which the view is seen is material to the importance of a view. The Viewpoint may be static, for example an established heritage asset or it may be a series or continuous viewpoint for example along a road where the viewpoint cannot reasonably be restricted to a single location.  |
| View and its components | A description of the view covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Type of view is panoramic, elevated, glimpsed, open or expansive;</li> <li>- Dominant elements in the foreground, middle distance or on the skyline;</li> <li>- Topography and where possible elevation and change in elevation</li> <li>- Features which contribute to the importance, distinctiveness and attractiveness of a view (e.g. the Greensand Ridge along the skyline);</li> <li>- Any iconic features (e.g. church towers);</li> <li>- The degree of containment;</li> <li>- Framed by built development, vegetation or landform;</li> <li>- Essentially rural or urban;</li> <li>- Impact of seasonal change (i.e. views opening up as a result of trees losing leaves in winter);</li> <li>- the built edges and interface with the landscape;</li> <li>- Features which detract from the view (e.g. roads, overhead powerlines, development).</li> </ul> |
| Access                  | How is the view accessed (e.g. vehicle, pedestrian, cyclist) is important in our assessment of views. Speed of transit would also have a bearing on the quality of experience. A view from a quickly moving vehicle might be considered qualitatively inferior than the same view experienced by a pedestrian. The A262 is a busy roads and the views along it are experienced each day by a large number of people. This potentially increases the importance of these views.   |
| Experience              | Potentially this is a subjective measure but the emotional response to a view is a measure of its importance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an attraction to a view;</li> <li>- a sense release deriving from open countryside;</li> </ul>  |

<sup>25</sup><https://goudhurst-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Draft-Views-Assessment.pdf>

# Landscape and Environment Policies

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a sense of tranquillity;</li> <li>- a desire to explore;</li> <li>- a sense of awe or 'wow' factor;</li> </ul> other associations (e.g. sense of arrival or departure). |
| Frequency of use       | How many people see a view over time. This provides measure of the impact of the view on residents and visitors.   |
| Relationship to policy | The relationship, if any, between the view and other policies in our plan  |

*Views were classified as exceptional, important or character*

125. Views (and viewpoints) have been characterised using the same three categories and are graded as either 'exceptional', 'important' or 'character.'

- **Exceptional** views include highly valued, panoramic views or long distance views. They might capture the quintessential character of an area; allow for an appreciation and understanding of the wider surroundings of the High Weald AONB; or contribute to the enjoyment of important heritage or cultural locations; or simply unique in their own way.
- **Important** views include panoramic or long distance views, dramatic scenery and skyline features; allow for an appreciation of more intimate setting of local villages within local landscapes; or reveal landscape character types.
- **Character** views include narrow or glimpsed views; they might be marred by the presence of negative features which detract from the quality of the experience; or they may be typical views which are replicated elsewhere.

## Viewpoints

126. Viewpoints were evaluated independently of the view. All of the viewpoints are publicly accessible (e.g. roads, footpaths, bridleways or public open spaces).

127. Viewpoints giving rise to essentially similar views have been grouped together, so that several closely related viewpoints may be used to observe the same view. This is particularly appropriate for views which are experienced along transport corridors, which cannot reasonably be restricted to a single viewpoint.

128. Viewpoints have been graded as either 'exceptional', 'important' or 'character'.

- **Exceptional viewpoints** include sites within the AONB; historic sites of particular importance (Grade I/II\* listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments); sites with strong associations to nationally famous cultural works; and sites where viewers have unique and prolonged/unfolding views from main transport corridors, footpaths or other recreational routes.
- **Important viewpoints** include historic sites (Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings); sites with strong associations to locally famous cultural works; and sites where viewers have opportunities to appreciate views – for example, approach roads leading to villages, long distance footpaths, well used bridleways and footpaths within markedly tranquil settings.
- **Character viewpoints** include typical local landscapes; sites where viewers are on movement corridors which are typical of the locality or which provide only fleeting views.

129. The overall classification follows the views description.

*Viewpoints were also classified as Exceptional, Important or Character*

## Landscape and Environment Policies

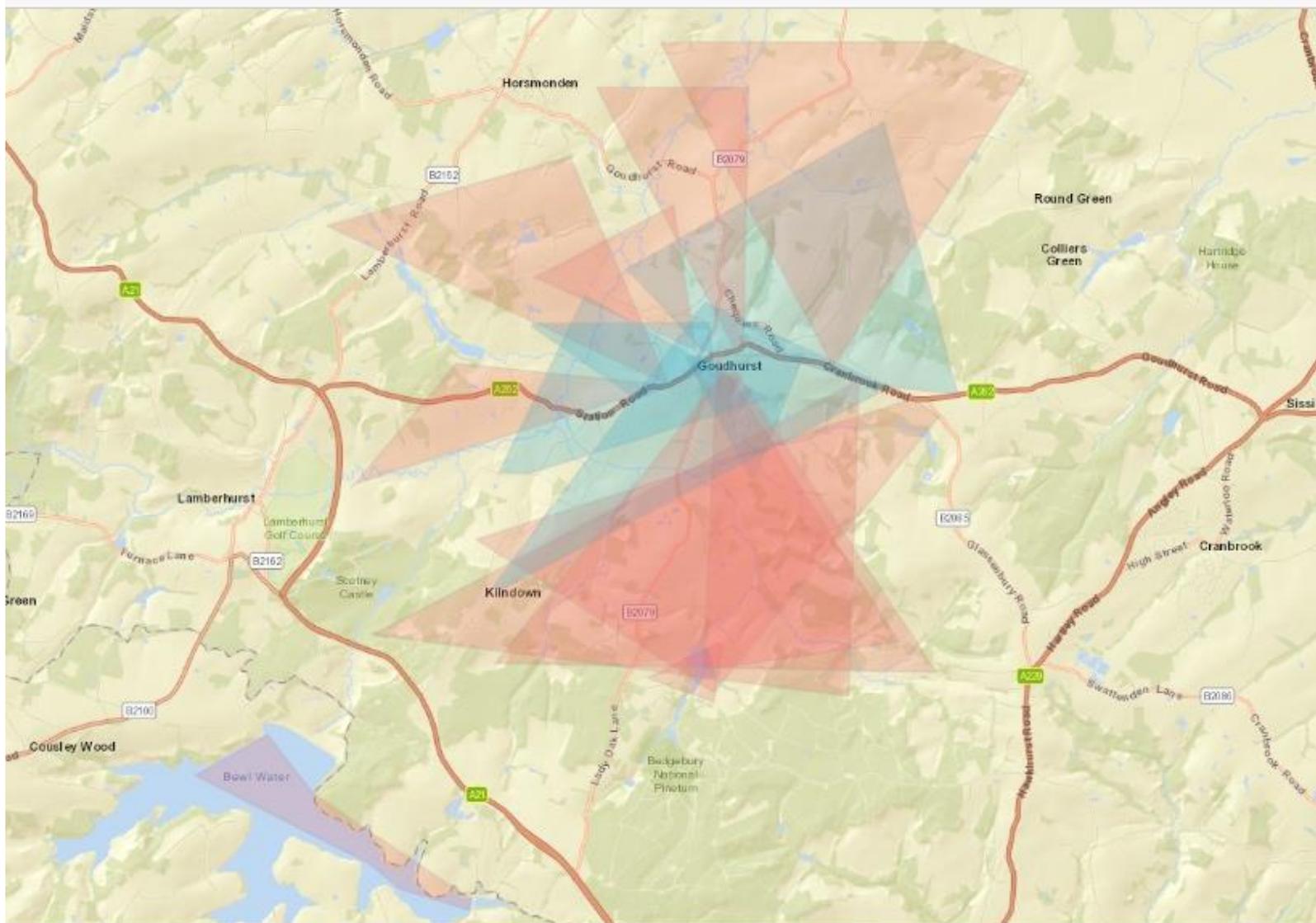


Figure 12 Map of Goudhurst Views (red out and blue into the Goudhurst ridge)

## Landscape and Environment Policies

| Ref | Viewpoint  | Access  | Frequency             | Direction | View Description & Components  | Experience   |
|-----|--|---|-----------------------|-----------|--|--|
| 1   | Church Road opposite Maypole Green, northwest towards Horsmonden.<br><br>This is a public viewpoint and sustained for 50m on the road and longer on the public footpath. | Pedestrians using the footway to Goudhurst and the footpath to North Road.<br><br>Road traffic on the A262.<br><br>51°06'55"N 0°27'52"E to 0°27'53"E  | >5000 per day         | W/NW      | This is a predominately rural view forms provides the key gap (NDP Policy L3) between the two Goudhurst limits to build (LBD)<br><br>The viewpoint and the immediate area acts as the setting and eastern gateway to and from the medieval heart of Goudhurst village; the approach to which has changed little since the 15 <sup>th</sup> century.<br><br>The view to the north is rural in nature across rolling farmland through trees to the Horsmonden ridge.<br><br>In summer the view is enveloping and 'cosy'. There is strong autumn colour which with gives way to a more expansive view of to Horsmonden and the Greensand ridge in the far distance. | Moving west along the A262 the road narrows as you leave the Little Goudhurst LBD. The road bears left presenting a the broad open space of Maypole (left) and Five Fields (right) which has distant views across fields to the Horsmonden ridge. The road leaves the apparent urban environment of Little Goudhurst for a broad green space which acts as a buffer and as the gateway to the historic village of Goudhurst.<br><br>The approach to Goudhurst has not changed materially since the 16h century. For walkers, the footpath provides tranquillity and an emerging and changing view as the footpath traverses the field the land falls away to the north around 50m from the road and the field margins. |
| 2   | North Road opposite layby at Brandfold Tennis Club entrance, northeast towards Curtisden Green and ridge.  | Pedestrians see this view from a gap in the roadside where a farm gate breaks the roadside hedge.<br><br>Vehicles driving northwards on the B2079 may glimpse this view in passing.                               | 2000 vehicles per day | NE        | This is a rural view within the AONB across cultivated farmland, with fields bounded by small trees and hedgerows, to the settlement at Curtisden Green in the distance (NCA High Weald)<br><br>. In the foreground the land falls gently into a valley, where a stream runs east/west, and then rises to the ridge on which Curtisden Green sits. Bethany School can be seen in the far centre of the view.   | Driving northwards along the B2079, a short distance beyond Lidwells Lane and past a pair of 19 <sup>th</sup> century cottages on the right, this view suddenly appears to the right-hand side where a farm gate creates a break in the roadside hedge. This is merely a glimpse and the view is better appreciated on foot from the grass verge in front of the farm gate. There is a small layby just beyond the farm gate on the nearside of the road, which is intended primarily as parking for Tennis Club members, allowing passers-by to park for a short while.   |
| 3   | A262 Cranbrook Road 200 metres west of Greentrees, north to Curtisden Green and ridge. This is a public viewpoint but most likely approached by car given the location.  | Pedestrians have a wide panoramic view of Curtisden Green. larger vehicles on the A262 have a clear view and other vehicles will glimpse this view in winter. View point 51°06'45"N 0°28'48"E                     | >5000 per day         | N         | On top of the Goudhurst ridge this viewpoint offers a wide panoramic rural view across open farmland, criss-crossed with hedgerows and shawss, north towards Curtisden Green. Which is underlined by the proposed green space AS2.<br><br>The raised viewpoint of the Goudhurst ridge provides long views beyond Curtisden Green to Coxheath and the Green Sand Ridge.   | There is tranquillity in the view which appears timeless. This is one of the rarer northerly views towards Curtisden Green. It is seen by passing traffic as they pass but is more accessible to cyclists and pedestrians.   |
| 4   | A262 Cranbrook Road junction with B2085 at The Peacock Inn, southwest to Kilndown. This is a public viewpoint.   | Pedestrians joining footpaths (WB15/21), and visitors to the Peacock Inn have a sustained view. Road traffic on the B2085 has a clear view for over 30m. Vehicles on the A262 has a view through trees for around | >2000 a day           | SW        | Wide expansive rural view west towards Finchcocks (grade 1 listed and clearly seen in winter and early simmer mornings) and Kilndown village. Gyhll Woodland provides the southern boundary following the line of a stream. A large arable field which twists away down to the valley floor. The fields are cut with tree boundaries and the tops of the trees, particularly in summer, show the rolling contours of the land as it falls away south and west to the valley of the Tiese. In the distance the Lamberhurst  | Drivers approaching the junction of the A262 and the B2085 get the view as they leave or approach the junction. Pedestrians joining the footpath network or visiting the Peacock Inn. have a clearer view and experience the 'wow' factor looking at the detail of this view with ridge after ridge rolling into the distance.   |

## Landscape and Environment Policies

|   |   |  |               |       |  |  |
|---|---|--|---------------|-------|--|--|
|   |   | 50m.View point 51°06'34"N 0°29'38"E  |               |       | and, further afield, Wadhurst ridges can be seen clearly. There is excellent Autumn colour.  |  |
| 5 | <p>Descending Clay Hill westwards from the village towards the junction of Lurkins Rise and the A262 looking west towards Spelmonden and Finchcocks.</p> <p>This is an extended public viewpoint for both pedestrians and vehicles sustained for over a distance of over 50m.</p> | <p>This is a sustained view for motorists and pedestrians alike with the road falling 20m in a very short distance.</p> <p>The view unfolds over a distance of around 70m.</p>   | >5000 a day   | W/NW  | <p>An elevated panoramic view west as pedestrians and vehicles descend Clay Hill dropping some 40 m from the village centre. This forms the first element of the view that most people will see when they are leaving Goudhurst Village on the A262 towards Lamberhurst and the A21.</p> <p>Heading west, the view is initially towards Finchcocks in the middle distance and Scotney and the Lamberhurst ridge beyond. The view unfolds to the right (west/northwest) with Horsmonden Church in the centre distance and, in the foreground, the flat arable land separating Goudhurst and Horsmonden Parishes. This is part of the Teise Valley along which lies the Parish boundary.</p> | <p>This is dramatic panoramic view at all times of the year particularly in the early morning when the sun lights-up the red brick façade of Finchcocks and the sandstone of Horsmonden church..</p> <p>The view is seen by all leaving the village evolving and continuing for some 50m and is one of the 'wow' factor views in the Parish that many people think of when thinking of Goudhurst.</p> <p>The view takes in the slope down to the Teise valley with meadow land beyond the housing estate and arable fields in the distance. To the left Finchcocks House can be seen and, in the centre, the cowl of Finchcocks Oast houses are visible.</p> |
| 6 | A262 Cranbrook Road 100 metres east of Lime Trees Farm, south to Bedgebury Forest and Kildown Public ridge  | <p>Pedestrians have a wide panoramic view of Bedgebury Forest in the far ridge. Larger vehicles on the A262 have a god view and other vehicles have a glimpsed view along a section of 100m. View point 51°06'45"N 0°28'48"E</p> | >2000 per day | S     | <p>An elevated panoramic view this is a component of the view from the ridge southwards towards Flimwell tower on the Wadhurst ridge and clear in the landscape and towards Bedgebury forest with Ghyll and ancient woodland. Coupled with views 4 and 10 this shows a depth of emerging undulating landscape. On clear days the radio mast at Hastings can be seen on the horizon.</p>  | <p>The viewpoint is on the A262 and although accessible to pedestrians the road is national speed limit at this point. Taller vehicles will have a more sustained view over the hedgerow.</p>  |
| 7 | <p>Curtisden Green south to the Goudhurst Ridge</p> <p>The viewpoint is from Jarvis Lane in Curtisden Green looking south and west.</p>   | <p>A sustained pedestrian and vehicular viewpoint between 51°07'07"N 0°29'10"E to 51°08'08"N 0°29'12"E.</p>  | >100 per day  | SW    | <p>Curtisden Green sits on a ridge to the north of Goudhurst. The viewpoint provides an uninterrupted view across the valley to Goudhurst village which highlights the broad range of farming activity in the area with grassland, orchard wood and arable fields all visible. In the middle distance is Ladham House and the Ladham House estate in wintertime. A view from the Curtisden green ridge (165m AOD) to Goudhurst (98m AOD) and St Marys Grade 1 listed church.</p>   | <p>This is a broad 120° panorama with a rural view of the river Beult running westwards through the arable, grassland and fruit orchards of the Combourne valley.</p>  |
| 8 | <p>The viewpoint is from the footpath behind Old Bank/ The Plain, northwest towards Horsmonden.</p> <p>The immediate area has a number of pubic footpaths which pass through a</p>  | <p>This is a pedestrian only view from the pubic footpath which is some 50m from the centre of Goudhurst. A panoramic view which even in summer encompasses Horsmonden Church in the West and Horsmonden in</p>                  | >50 per day   | W, NW | <p>An elevated and panoramic view over an open countryside of arable and pasture land which have clearly defined field boundaries. An expansive panoramic rural view from Horsmonden church in the west down into the valley which rises towards the Horsmonden ridge in the middle distance and long views to the North Downs.</p>  | <p>Dropping onto the footpath from the busy centre of Goudhurst village this view offers a real sense of tranquillity. There are three footpaths which encourages exploration of the area which contains a number of natural springs and boasts an large area of intact medieval field boundaries. The area provides a cosy enclosed feeling in summer followed by autumn colour and then a more open viewpoint in winter and spring. The hillside is dotted with natural springs which were mapped in the 1930's.</p>   |

## Landscape and Environment Policies

|    |  |  |  |           |   |   |
|----|--|--|--|-----------|---|---|
|    | series of medieval field patterns.   | the North. 51°06'48"N<br>0°27'27"E   |  |           |   |   |
| 9  | <p>Maypole Lane a panoramic view SE/S and SW towards Kilndown ridge and Bedgebury Forest.</p> <p>This is a public viewpoint for sustained over a distance of 100m.</p> <p>Maypole Lane is some 30m from the top of the ridge. There is a further perspective on this view from the top of the Glebe field, the New Burial Ground and Back Lane (some 200m) which offers the same view but from 20m higher.</p> | <p>A sustained view for both pedestrians and vehicles looking south along Maypole lane for a distance of 100m..</p> <p>51°06'44"N 0°27'52"E</p>  | >1000 per day  | SE, S, SW | <p>The panoramic view from the Goudhurst ridge of a rural landscape of undulating meadowland formed by the weathering of the sandstone and bordered by ghyll and ancient woodland. The land falls away into a deep valley where, on the opposite ridge, Flimwell radio mast is clearly visible above Bedgebury Forest.</p> <p>On clear days the radio mast at Hastings can be seen on the horizon. In the distance is Bedgebury Forest. To the southwest Kilndown sits on its own sandstone ridge with the pub and cricket pitch clearly visible. Above the canopy of trees is where the spire of Christ Church.</p> <p>The landscape offers a spectacular view in all seasons of the year.</p> | <p>This is the major component of the 150° panoramic view from the Goudhurst ridge southwards towards Flimwell tower on the Wadhurst ridge and clear in the landscape and towards Bedgebury forest with ghyll and ancient woodland. On clear days the radio mast at Hastings can be seen on the horizon.</p> <p>The land falls sharply from Maypole lane which makes this view dramatic with a true 'wow' factor. The view from Back Lane and the Burial Ground provides a different perspective on what is the best view in Goudhurst.</p> <p>Existing dwellings melt into the landscape without damaging the distant view to Kilndown where the spire of Christ Church is just visible in the centre.</p> |
| 10 | The roadway approx. 300 metres east of Finchcocks, east and northeast towards Goudhurst village and ridge.   | Viewpoint 51°06'10"N 0°26'05"E. The view is easily and safely accessible on foot. Dog walkers use the local footpaths and those approaching the Parish from the Scotney Castle and Finchcocks estates. | <50 per day  | NE        | From open meadow land the view clearly shows Goudhurst village standing atop the ridge with St Mary's Church at the highest point. In the centre ground the Teise valley is hidden by the trees.  | <p>The view shows the height of the Goudhurst ridge top accentuated by the lower flat farmland in the Teise valley.</p> <p>The view to Goudhurst village, elevated on the ridge changes throughout the seasons but the outline of the medieval village remains intact.</p>  |
| 11 | Footpath approx. 400 metres east of Smugley Farm, north towards Goudhurst village.   | Viewpoint 51°06'10"N 0°27'35"E. The view is easily accessible on foot for those using the footpaths which criss-cross this area.   | <50 per day  | N         | The view is from the valley floor at Smugley Farm with the steep southerly slope of the Goudhurst ridge rising to silhouette Goudhurst village on top of the ridge and the tower of St Mary's Church standing above all other buildings.  | This is an open view of Goudhurst village, church and burial ground which has remained largely unchanged over centuries.  |
| 12 | Kilndown cricket field northeast towards Goudhurst village.  | Viewpoint 51°05'30" 0°25'42"E to a wide panoramic view.  | Many visitors on match day and residents walking dogs etc. | NE        | The flat land of the Kilndown cricket field makes a perfect vantage point to appreciate the height of the ridge on which Goudhurst village sits.  | The view clearly shows the height of the ridge on which Goudhurst stands and how it rises from the north. This the key distant view that connects Kilndown with Goudhurst both with a steep drop to the undulating valley floor which connects the two settlements and highlights their height above the surrounding landscape.   |

## Landscape and Environment Policies

|    |  |   |              |      |  |   |
|----|--|---|--------------|------|--|---|
| 13 | Footpath just north of Bedgebury Great Lake, southwest across the lake and beyond. This is a public viewpoint from the footpath (WC66) that touches the lake in the north east corner. | Viewpoint 51°05'10"N<br>0°27'31"E   | Few          | SW   | A Lake view with glimpses of Bedgebury Manor in summer and a clearer view of the manor in winter and autumn. The house is behind a series of trees in summer but an open view in winter. The lake is somewhat neglected and surrounded by trees.   | An interesting glimpse of Bedgebury manor across the lake this area needs careful consideration in any future development proposals for the Bedgebury Manor site .  |
| 14 | Bewl Water from Rosemary Lane dam, westwards along Goudhurst Parish shoreline. (Remove?)   | Viewpoint 51°03'42"N<br>0°25'29"E   | >100 per day | E    | View along the bank of Bewl Water with scrub and self- sown treeline. Oast house on the further bank in Wadhurst parish..  | This is the 'shoreline' of Goudhurst Parish in the south which borders Bewl water itself one of the largest areas of open water in the South East. A footpath runs (some 13 miles) around the perimeter of the lake.  |
| 15 | Round Green west towards Combourne, Bakers Farm and Ladham House.  | Viewpoint 51°07'40"N<br>0°30'37"E . The view is accessible from footpaths and from the lanes which form the Parish boundary.                                    | >200 per day | W    | This is a wide undulating rural view across predominately arable farmland, ancient and ghyll woodland. The view is through the Combourne valley towards Bakers farm and Ladham house.  | This is a tranquil area crossed by footpaths which pass from farmland to ancient woodland and back again providing a real contrast, particularly in summer. The area, previously designated as a special landscape area, provides the setting for the AONB.   |
| 16 | Great Horden west towards Curtisden Green.   | Viewpoint 51°08'04"N<br>0°30'14"E. from Bounds Green lane.  | >200 per day | W    | A view across open countryside towards Curtisden Green and the AONB. This is a view due west which at sunset, silhouettes of Curtisden Green oast and Curtisden Green Farmhouse against the western sky  |   |
| 17 | Parish Boundary near Horsmonden Churchyard south east towards Goudhurst village and ridge<br>(51°07'09"N 0°26'45"E)  | A quintessential view of Goudhurst village sitting on top of the ridge across a patchwork of fields and orchards. Seen by walkers, cyclists and some motorists. | <200 per day | SE   | A panoramic view from the banks of the Tiese on looking south east back and upwards to Goudhurst village and ridge. To the west of the viewpoint is the Grade1 listed Horsmonden Church which itself forms part of many reverse views from the village.<br><br>The village is around 90m above the valley floor of arable and grassland Open farmland, farms cross by narrow lanes and public footpaths. | A broad sustained tranquil panorama viewable from many locations including Smallbridge road, the High Weald Landscape Trail, the Wealden cycle trail and footpath WT348/WC23.   |
| 18 | Top of the grade 1 listed St Marys Church tower, Goudhurst.<br><br>This is a public viewpoint open most weekends.  | An important viewpoint which defines the curtilage of the grade 1 listed St May's church.   | 200 per week | 360° | St Mary's church tower sitting 28m above the ridge provides for a breath-taking series of views in all directions. The views show all of the Parish and offer views to areas some 30 miles away. There is a sense of peace and tranquillity when viewing the extent and detail in the landscape.   | A breath-taking panorama that gives a view to all corners of the Parish and beyond.<br><br>The church tower is the highest point in the Weald and offers breath-taking 360° views over the surrounding countryside.. Views to Curtisden Green, Tattlebury, Bedgebury forest, Bedgebury manor, Flimwell, Twysenden Manor Kildown ScCotmey Castle, Bewl Water Lamberhurst Finchcocks, Horsmonden Church, Pembury, Greensand ridge, Brenchley, Horsmonden, Ladham House, Linton, North Downs/Greensand Ridge.. |

# Landscape and Environment Policies

## 7.18 Views Classification

### Exceptional Views

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 5  | Descending Clay Hill westwards from the village towards the junction of Lurkins Rise and the A262 looking west towards Spelmonden and Finchcocks. |
| 7  | Curtisden Green south to the Goudhurst Ridge  |
| 8  | Footpath behind Old Bank, The Plain, northwest towards Horsmonden.  |
| 9  | Maypole Lane a panoramic view SE/S towards Bedgebury Forest and SW towards the Kilndown ridge.  |
| 11 | Footpath approx. 400 metres east of Smugley Farm, north towards Goudhurst village.  |
| 18 | Top of the grade 1 listed St Marys Church tower, Goudhurst.   |

### Important Views

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Church Road opposite Maypole Green, northwest towards Horsmonden. This is a public viewpoint and sustained for 50m on the road and longer on the public footpath. |
| 4  | A262 Cranbrook Road junction with B2085 at The Peacock Inn, southwest to Kilndown. This is a public viewpoint.  |
| 10 | the roadway approx. 300 metres east of Finchcocks, east and northeast towards Goudhurst village and ridge.  |
| 15 | Round Green west towards Combourne Ladham House, Ladham Lane.   |
| 16 | Great Horden west towards Curtisden Green.  |
| 17 | Parish Boundary near Horsmonden Churchyard south east towards Goudhurst village and ridge.  |
| 12 | Kilndown cricket field northeast towards Goudhurst village.   |

### Character Views

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 2  | North Road opposite layby at Brandfold Tennis Club entrance, northeast towards Curtisden Green and ridge.  |
| 3  | A262 Cranbrook Road 200 metres west of Greentrees, north to Curtisden Green and ridge. This is a public viewpoint but most likely approached by car given the location.                  |
| 6  | A262 Cranbrook Road 100 metres east of Lime Trees Farm, south to Bedgebury Forest and Kilndown Public ridge  |
| 13 | Footpath just north of Bedgebury Great Lake, southwest across the lake and beyond. This is a public viewpoint from the footpath (number) that touches the lake in the north east corner. |
| 14 | Bewl Water from Rosemary Lane dam, westwards along Goudhurst Parish shoreline.   |

## 7.19 Rivers and Watercourses

*Goudhurst provides 10 million litres of drinking water a day to surrounding Parishes*

130. The Parish is bounded on the western margin by the river Teise (which takes most of the drainage) and the smaller River Bewl, which flow northwards to the Medway.
131. Springs and ponds are common. Some are man-made ponds, excavated for their stone or clay resource, but most are naturally formed. Some have distinct Chalybeate characteristics providing an important habitat for vertebrate and invertebrate species.
132. Goudhurst is the only village in the Weald to maintain its own groundwater abstraction pumping station serving Goudhurst and other villages, providing up to 10 million litres per day. It is important, therefore, given the lack of mains drainage in the Parish, that any development should manage wastewater and surface water run-off to ensure there is no risk to groundwater sources.

## 7.20 Areas of Flood Risk

*It is important that run-off from buildings does not contaminate our drinking water*

*Our plan will not include specific policies around water or flooding as national and TWBC policies are*

133. There are three types of flood risk in the Parish:
  - Flood risk from rivers. This includes much of the Teise and Bewl and stretches to Smugley Farm and Lamberhurst under high risk.
  - Flood risk from surface water (stormwater). This is mainly restricted to the Teise and Risebridge/Green Cross valley and is more limited in extent.
  - Flood risk from reservoirs is much more extensive. For example, the overtopping of Bewl Reservoir would be considered a major risk here.
134. There is a risk from predicted, long-term climate change (for example rises in sea level) but, given that the Parish is above 121m AOD (Above Ordinance Datum – sea level), major impact would not be seen for the next 300 years.
135. There is a spring line around Goudhurst marking the perimeter of the village. A survey marks the locations of ponds, seeps, springs, marshes and bogs, which are either on or just below the sandstone. Historically, this geology has constrained building on the western and southern slopes of the village: the underlying clay is highly mobile and plastic and difficult to drain.
136. Heavy rainfall can result in the reactivation of the older underground discharge routes with the potential appearance of sudden water flows. Any contamination from the top of the village, whether run-off from a road or site, or subsurface pollution, is highly likely to surface along this margin and run over ground down the clay slopes into the valley.
137. These features impact on the biodiversity of the Parish and the contribution to potable water resources. Given the detail in both the NPPF and the current TWBC Local Plan, we believe that a policy around flood risk is not required in our Neighbourhood Plan.

## Section 8 Community & Wellbeing Policies

### 8.1 Communities in our Parish

138. There are three main settlements in our Parish – Goudhurst, Kilndown and Curtisden Green, all of which sit on sandstone ridges.

*The principal settlement is the hilltop village of Goudhurst*



Figure 13 View of Goudhurst from Scotney

*Goudhurst village is home to 53% of all Parish residents*

139. Based on the responses to our questionnaire, approximately 53% of Parish residents live in Goudhurst village, 11% in Kilndown and 9% in Curtisden Green. The remaining 27% live in hamlets and in the countryside surrounding the three main settlements.

*Our population has remained stable recovering from a fall between 2003 and 2008*

140. We have a stable population of around 3,300; a small increase over the 2001 census figure. Growth in overall population, when compared with the rest of Kent and the UK, has been slow and during the period 2003 to 2008 we saw a fall in population of around 2%<sup>26</sup> but this has since recovered.

141. In general, residents remain in the Parish for extended periods, with 28% staying more than 25 years.

*The largest proportion of residents has lived in the Parish for more than 25 years*

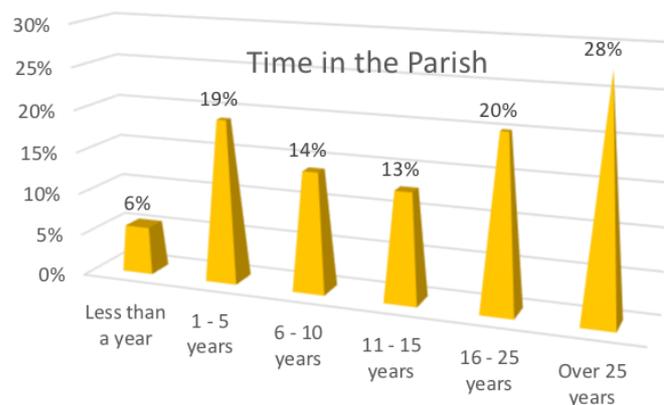


Figure 14 How long do residents remain in the Parish?

<sup>26</sup> [Goudhurst Parish Profile](#)

# Community & Wellbeing Policies

142. The average age in the village is relatively low. There are three similarly sized groups: 0-19 years; 30-50 years; and 50-70 years, each with approximately 30% of the population. The largest group is the 0-19 year range. Of the other groups, those in the group 70+ years represent approximately 6% of the population, and the 20-29 years group, the smallest group, represents approximately 4% of our population.<sup>27</sup>

*Largest population group is aged 0-19 and the smallest 20-30*

Population estimates by 5 year age band

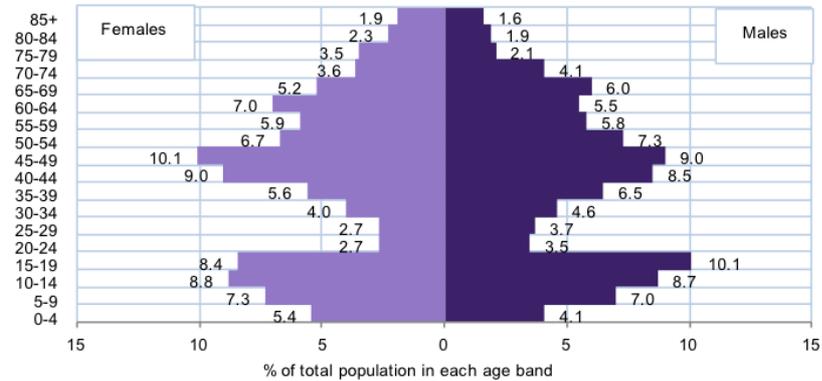


Figure 15 Population by age band

143. Because our total population remains stable, and because the largest proportion of residents has been here for more than 25 years, the overall demographic trend is towards an ageing population. The increase in population between the 2001 and 2011 censuses was 123. The number of residents over 65 also increased by 113, an increase of 27% over 2001. Those over 65 now represent 16% of the Parish population.

*Our total population remains stable*

*Like many communities our demographic is of an ageing population*

| Table of Parish residents aged 65 and over |               |            |            |            |                  |                            |                    |
|--|---------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Census Year                                | All Residents | Aged 65-74 | Aged 75-84 | Aged 85-89 | Aged 90 and over | Residents aged 65 and over | % of All Residents |
| 2001                                       | 3204          | 237        | 140        | 26         | 17               | 420                        | 13%                |
| 2011                                       | 3327          | 314        | 161        | 39         | 19               | 533                        | 16%                |
| % Increase 2001 to 2011                    | 4%            |            |            |            |                  | 27%                        |                    |

Figure 16 Parish residents over 65

<sup>27</sup> [Parish Profile](#)

# Community & Wellbeing Policies

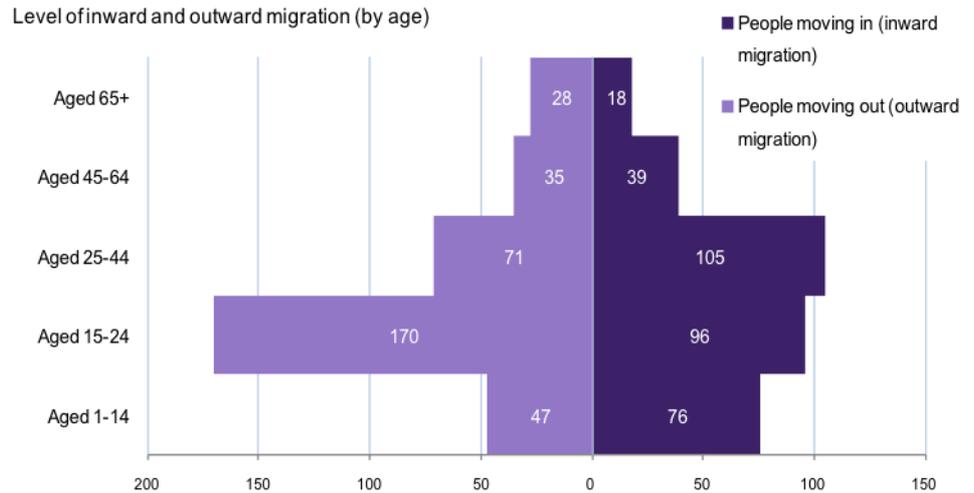


Figure 17 Inward Migration

- 144. We have inward migration of people in the 25-40 age range. Our estate agents survey showed that couples and families moving to the area come predominately from outside the Parish, generally from London<sup>28</sup>. This suggests that people come to Goudhurst, have families, and then stay for the long-term.
- 145. However, young adults leave the Parish at around the time they leave school or higher education and a rate much higher than national averages. An important factor in this migration is the lack of smaller and affordable homes.
- 146. Most of our residents are relatively prosperous, enjoy good health, good housing, and an exceptional environment. Education standards are high; unemployment and crime are low. Deprivation is, in general, low<sup>29</sup>, although we have 12.5% of our residents in fuel poverty, some 25% above the national level. This reflects the reliance on oil for hot water and heating. There is no mains gas in Goudhurst.

*Education standards are high*



Figure 18 Education Standards

- 147. In 2011 skill levels in the Parish were high and this contributed to high levels of employment. Overall the number of economically active residents was 3% lower than national averages, reflecting the increase in older residents. At the last census the number of self-employed was almost twice the national average and

*Goudhurst has a higher proportion of self-employed workers than nationally*

<sup>28</sup> estate agents survey 2016

<sup>29</sup> [Parish Profile](#)

the number of people working from home was three times the national average.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 19 Employment in the Parish

*Unemployment level is very low*

148. The percentage of residents receiving Jobseekers Allowance in Goudhurst (1%) is much lower than in Kent as a whole (3.4%) and nationally (3.9%).

## 8.2 Living in our Parish

149. The questionnaire results emphasised how much people like living in Goudhurst. Residents were asked about the things they most value. Top of the list is our landscape at 70%, views at 50% and the environment at 50%. Related facilities, footpath network (62%) and Bedgebury Pinetum (45%) are used by residents at least monthly.

## 8.3 Community Facilities

*There is a strong sense of community*

150. There is a strong sense of community reinforced by many clubs and societies, the social facilities offered by the Parish and village halls, three churches, two coffee shops, four pubs, Local History Society, U3A, Tennis Club, Scouts and numerous other clubs and societies that support major community events such as the annual village fête.

*The facilities we have are valued by residents*

151. Responses to our questionnaire showed that there was consistent support for improved facilities for the elderly, facilities for teenagers, play areas for younger children, dog waste bins and green energy.

152. We are a dispersed community and, although residents of Goudhurst village live within reasonable walking distance of pre-schools, the primary school, the doctors' surgery, churches, the post office and retail outlets, the remaining 47% of the residents in the Parish rely on private transport to access most of these services.

153. Our amenities and facilities are valued by residents, with shops (79%), post office (71%), pharmacy (60%), pubs (59%) and doctors' surgery (53%) used at least monthly<sup>31</sup>.



*Curtisden Green*

<sup>30</sup> [Parish profile](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Residents questionnaire](#)

# Community & Wellbeing Policies

- 154. Less than 50 years ago all three settlements in the Parish had at least one general shop. There are now no shops in either Curtisden Green or Kilndown, although the Quarry Centre provides Kilndown with a community-run, weekly, general shop.
- 155. Goudhurst still retains a range of facilities but there are no similar services in either Kilndown or Curtisden Green. These are important assets within the Parish and any diminution will see the decline of the sense of community.



*Our community values and uses these places*

Figure 20 Residents from all three settlements regularly use the facilities in Goudhurst village.

*Village shops top the list of those facilities used monthly*

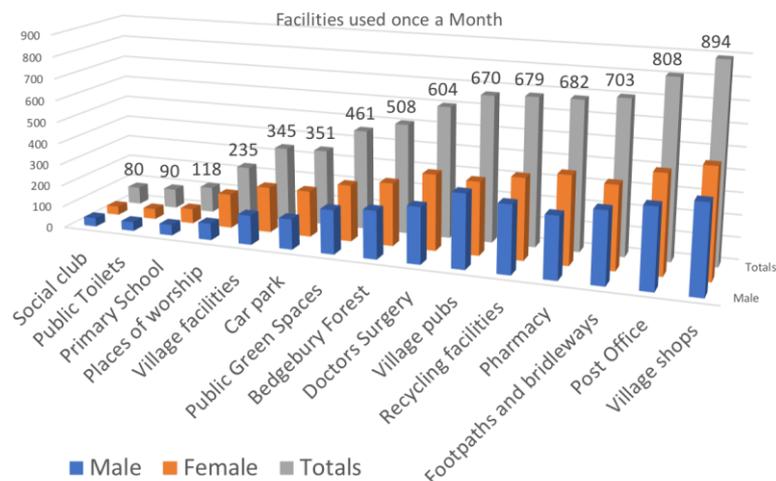


Figure 21 Facilities used at least once a month

**Policy Objective:**  
*Improving and developing community facilities*

**Policy C1 Community Facilities**

Developments that incorporate proposals for improved or additional facilities within the Parish will, in general, be supported.

- 156. The facilities we have in the Parish help us retain a stable and sustainable community. Expanding the range and number of facilities on offer is a key objective in our plan

## 8.4 Accessibility

*Residents highly value public green spaces, footpaths and views*

- 157. Our questionnaire responses showed that many residents value our public green spaces (294), footpaths (378) and views (556). Those attending our Autumn 2017 workshops also wanted to see social engagement with people of all ages and abilities in the community.
- 158. Both questionnaire responses and workshop feedback showed that most residents do not believe it is safe to either walk or cycle in the Parish and negotiating Goudhurst High Street is, at best, difficult.

*Safe access to facilities in the Parish is a concern*

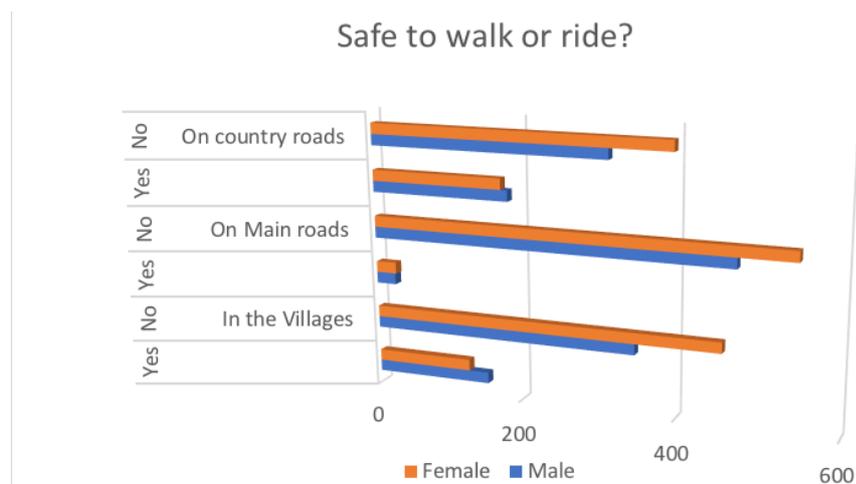


Figure 22 How safe are our roads

*Better and safer access to facilities is needed*

- 159. Residents wish to see better and safer access, for the community and visitors, to Parish facilities on foot, by bicycle and, where viable, on horseback. Visitors make an important contribution to the economy of the Parish when, for example, they spend money in our shops and pubs or they use our Parish venues for meetings or classes.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Providing access for all to facilities*

## Policy C2 Accessibility

Developments that incorporate proposals to create or improve accessibility to facilities within the Parish for everyone, regardless of their age, ability or disability, will be supported. Development that adversely affects the above will be rejected.

160. Access for those with restricted mobility is available at some facilities within the Parish. However, many buildings in Goudhurst village are listed properties and this may make it difficult to adapt them to support the access requirements associated with new development.
161. Residents had clear opinions on what would improve accessibility<sup>32</sup> and these will be reviewed for viability in our project activity.

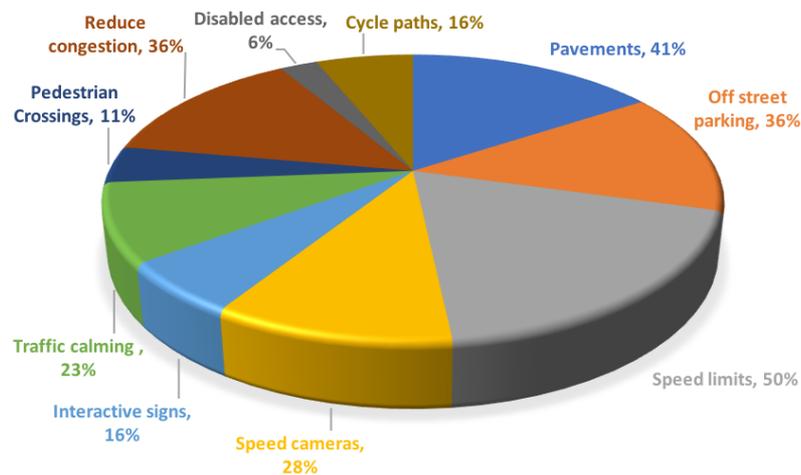


Figure 23 What will improve road safety – residents views

## 8.5 Delivering Improvements in our Community

162. 429 respondents to our questionnaire valued the sense of community and 462 valued the safe environment that exists in Goudhurst. We are keen, therefore, to promote amenities and facilities that reinforce these aspects of our community.

<sup>32</sup> [Residents Questionnaire Q26](#)

# Community & Wellbeing Policies

*We value our sense of community and safe environment*

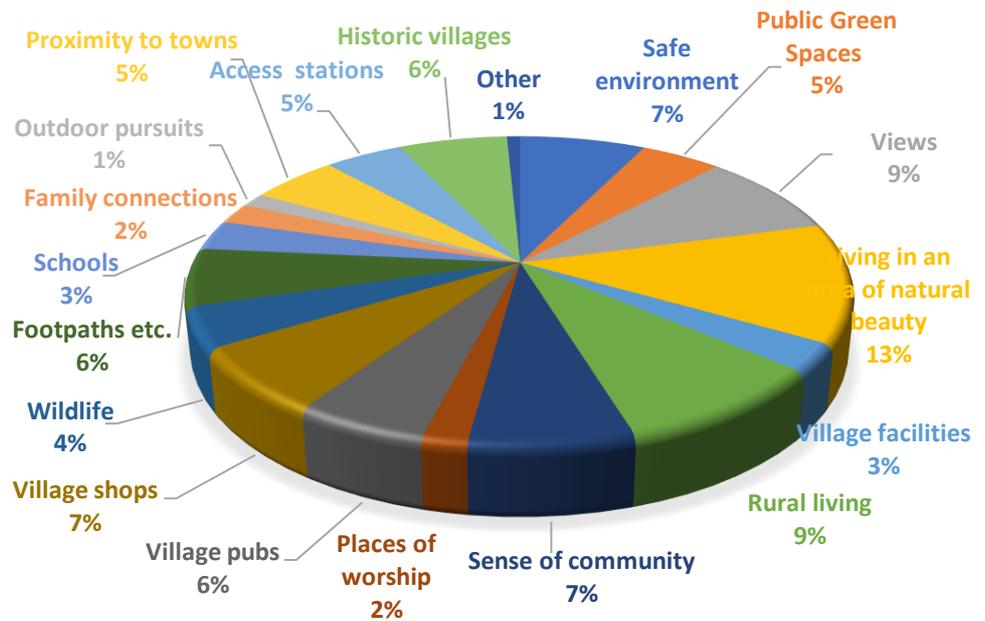


Figure 24 Good reasons to live in Goudhurst

163. Residents have identified, through the questionnaire and our Autumn 2017 workshops, several new or improved facilities they would like to see provided, for all age groups and abilities, including allotments, sports and medical facilities.

164. They also identified improvements that would enhance the safety of the environment, including road safety measures, additional pavements and community transport.

*Road safety topped the list of priorities for improvement*

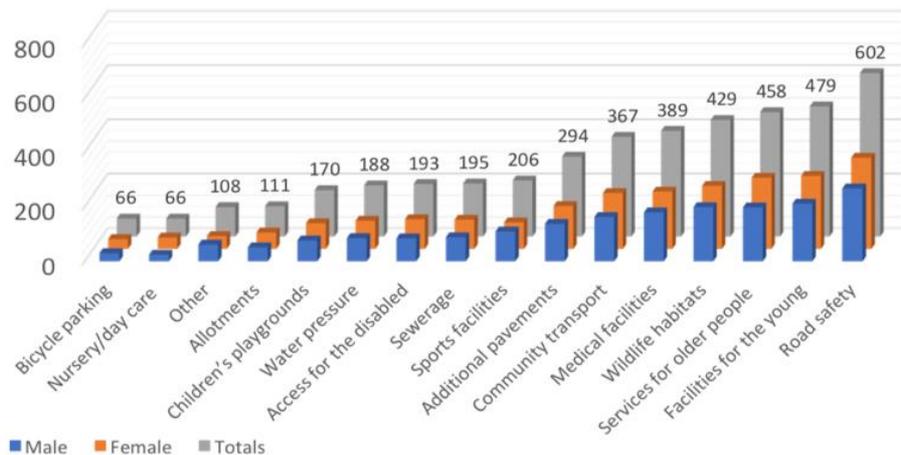


Figure 25 Residents' priorities for improvement

165. Some of the foregoing improvements might be achieved via Section 106 developer contribution. Section 106 planning obligations are development specific and are subject to statutory tests to ensure they are necessary, proportionate and directly related to the development. At the time this plan was completed we do not have options for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as TWBC have not yet adopted this approach to funding. More details on these and other projects can be found in section 13.

166. The Parish Council will maintain a list of costed projects that may be fully or partly funded by developer contributions.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Development should enhance our community*

## Policy C3 Developer Contribution

The Parish Council will maintain a list of costed and documented projects that may be fully or partly funded by developer contributions (Section 106 agreements), where justified, arising from development. Such contributions to be used to:

1. provide, or contribute to, the identified facilities on site; or
2. fund, or directly deliver, off-site facilities within the Parish.

167. The improvements that residents identified would help to further strengthen our sense of community, giving everyone better and safer access to existing facilities and any new ones that might be created. Road safety is a major concern for our community and any improvement measures that might become available through developer contributions would be welcomed.

## 8.6 Community Assets

168. Questionnaire responses showed that residents of Goudhurst Parish value the sense of community (429), which is strengthened by the services and facilities that are available and the existing range of clubs and societies. The clubs and societies hold regular meetings in, among others, the Parish Hall, the Church Rooms, the Social Club, the Quarry Centre and Kilndown Village Hall. Without these buildings, alternative, local, and suitable meeting places would be extremely difficult to find.



Figure 26 Social Club, Goudhurst Parish Hall, Church Room, Kilndown village hall

**Policy Objective:** *To retain community assets for future generations*

## Policy C4 Assets of Value Within the Community

Development proposals that will result in the total or partial loss of an actively (or recently) used asset or amenity that is of value to our community will not be supported.

# Community & Wellbeing Policies

169. Any loss of an asset or amenity of value within our Parish will diminish our community cohesion. The two smaller settlements, Kilndown and Curtisden Green, have already lost so much. We cannot allow this to happen also in Goudhurst village, as the whole Parish will suffer the consequences and a community will not exist in the same way for future generations. It is not planned to designate and register any Assets of Community Value (ACV)<sup>33</sup> at this time.

The following are considered important assets of the community:

1. Social Club
2. Parish Hall
3. Church Rooms
4. Car Park
5. Public Toilets
6. Scout HQ Hut – Tattlebury
7. Quarry Centre
8. Kilndown Village Hall
9. GP Surgery
10. Green Spaces

## 8.7 Communications

*Broadband and mobile communications are poor*

170. It is clear from our business and resident questionnaires that broadband and mobile communications are poor, limiting business growth and reducing the opportunity for people to work from home, or to start home-based businesses. Residents' short-term priorities are to improve communications, with 79% wishing to see improved broadband facilities and 55% seeking improved mobile phone coverage.

171. The large number of family households in the Parish is creating increased demand for mobile and broadband communications.

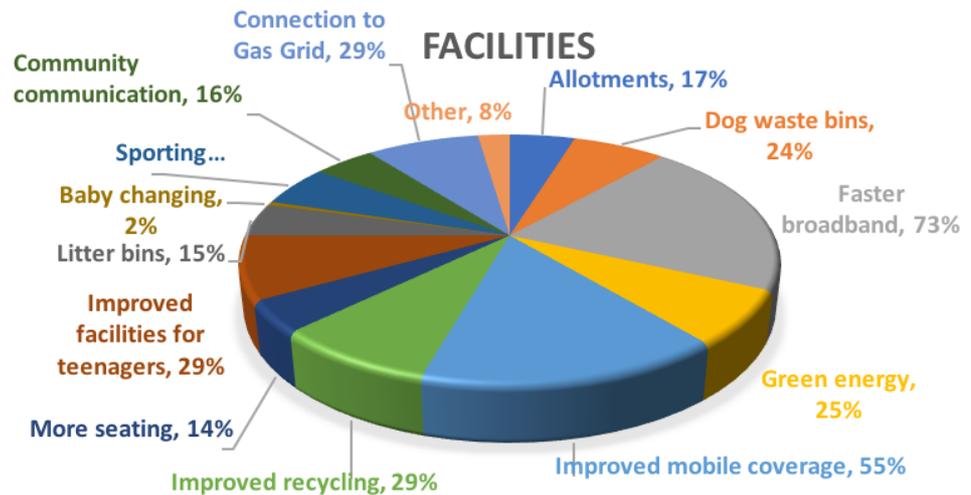


Figure 27 Important facilities for improvement (residents had multiple choices)

*Better communication supports business development*

172. Good internet and mobile phone connectivity is vital for businesses, existing or new, to enable them to conduct their work in a competitive manner. We

<sup>33</sup> ACV's identified in the Parish can be registered as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 101

support appropriate improvements to our communication infrastructure. Where a new development is being linked to high speed broadband, developer contributions might be used to extend that connection to neighbouring, existing properties.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Improve  
community  
communications  
infrastructure*

### **Policy C5 Broadband/Communications Infrastructure**

Development proposals that seek to expand the Electronic Communication Networks and high-speed broadband, along with improvements to connectivity, that benefit the Parish will be supported where:

1. the applicant has demonstrated that there are no opportunities to erect apparatus on existing buildings, masts or other structures; and
2. the numbers of radio and telecommunication masts are kept to a minimum, consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and
3. the development has been sited and designed to minimise the impact on the character and appearance of the AONB.

## 8.8 Public Rights of Way (PROW)

173. Plan policies support enhancements to local accessibility through improved linkages to cycle ways, footpaths etc., protect significant local views, promote high quality design, built and natural heritage assets and landscaping for biodiversity and which protect leisure and recreational facilities.
174. The Parish is criss-crossed by 39 miles of footpaths and bridleways and these are an important feature of our Parish linking outlying hamlets to Goudhurst village (see Map on page 6). They are a resource for informal recreational activities, they provide safe routes to school and shops, and create important natural habitats where they are an opportunity for the development of wildlife corridors.
175. Responsibility for monitoring and maintaining these footpaths and bridleways lies primarily with Kent County Council, but the Parish Council and relevant landowners also take a responsibility to preserve these valuable community assets.
176. Kent County Council consider PROW to be an important asset in communities and have published a Rights of Way Improvement Plan<sup>34</sup>. Our plan supports the objectives of this plan and GPC has developed their own plans for some extensions and improvements to the Parish PROW.

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<sup>34</sup><https://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/projects/the-kent-rights-of-way-improvement-plan> ).

Maps detailing all Public Rights of Way can be found on Kent County Council<sup>35</sup>.

***Policy Objective:***  
*Protect and enhance Public Rights of Way.*

## **Policy C6 Protecting and improving Public Rights of Way (PROW)**

New development should protect and, where possible, enhance the existing PROW network and its setting.

Where associated public footpaths or bridleways are proposed to be re-routed or realigned, they should be designed as part of the landscaped wildlife corridors, rather than being routed along estate roads as part of highway improvements.

177. PROW's are important in retaining the sense of peace and tranquillity and facilitate the enjoyment of the surrounding countryside by residents and visitors alike which should be protected for future generations.

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.kent.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-map>).

## Section 9 Housing Policies

### 9.1 The Need for Development in our Parish

*Our community recognises the need for positive development*

178. The questionnaire<sup>36</sup> and Housing Needs Survey (HNS)<sup>37</sup> identified that development continues to be required to support a growing and changing community and that the community is supportive of the right type of new development.

179. However, it is important that in any development:

- The homes delivered meet the needs of our community;
- The balance of the housing stock is improved by developing smaller properties to improve the age profile of those living in the Parish;
- There is a preference for smaller scale development (up to 5 dwellings per site) on brownfield or redundant agricultural sites or buildings;
- Affordable properties are delivered which can be allocated to people with a local connection now and in the future.

180. Historical development over the past 30 years has been an average of 2.5 homes per annum. In responses to our questionnaire (Question 13), our residents demonstrated support for increasing this average to a level that is achievable. Our goal is that:

*‘Our plan supports an average delivery of between 2 and 5 dwellings per annum across the Parish in the period to 2033 providing sustainable sites can be found and all other policies in our plan are complied with’*

*Our Goal: To deliver a level of development in the Parish that has the support of the community*

181. We established our housing need in four ways:

1. We completed an analysis of our current housing stock.
2. The opinions of the residents of our Parish were sought in a questionnaire, which asked what types of housing were needed in the Parish.
3. We commissioned a Housing Needs Survey to understand the need for both affordable and market housing.
4. We asked local estate agents.

### 9.2 Our Housing Stock

*There has been a small increase in our housing stock this century*

182. In the 2018 HNS census we had 1,236 dwellings in the Neighbourhood area, an increase of 89 dwellings (8%) over the 1,147 dwellings in 2001. The mix between owner occupation and renting is broadly in line with national averages.

183. Although owner occupation may be in line with national averages, the balance within our housing stock between large and small houses shows a large variance to national averages. Our Parish has more detached houses (39% against a

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<sup>36</sup> [Residents Questionnaire Q#s 11, 13 & 14](#)

<sup>37</sup> [A housing need survey was completed in 2018](#)

national average of 22%), we have fewer smaller houses (17% against a national average of 24%) and fewer flats (3% against a national average of 16%)<sup>38</sup>.

184. The housing stock in Goudhurst is weighted towards large detached homes with 36% of our housing stock in Council Tax bands F-H, four times the national average of 9%. Similarly, we have many fewer homes in bands A-D with 49% of houses in Goudhurst in these bands compared with 80% nationally.

*We have a higher proportion of larger houses and fewer smaller homes than average*

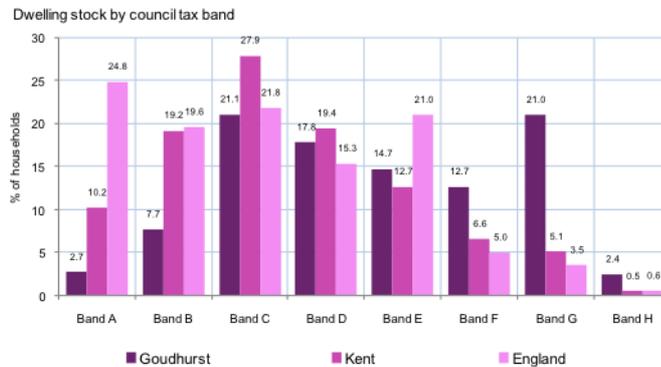


Figure 28 Housing stock by tax band

185. This imbalance has an impact on our community where we have very few residents between the ages of 20 and 35. The lack of affordable housing is one reason this group is underrepresented in our community. Smaller homes would support younger families or those wishing to downsize to remain in the Parish. Support for development reflects the age imbalance in our population with nearly half of respondents aged 18-30 and 60% of those aged over 55 being the largest groups supporting new development<sup>39</sup>.

**Policy Objective:** To improve the balance of our housing stock by delivering smaller properties needed by the community

## Policy H1 Housing Mix

To support sustainable communities, and to reflect current and future local housing needs, all housing developments of more than 1 unit will, subject to viability considerations, be expected to provide a mix of dwellings that falls within the following ranges:

- A minimum of 40% to be a mix of 1 and 2 bed dwellings\*
- A maximum of 15% to be 4+ bed dwellings\*

An alternative mix will only be permitted if a robust justification is provided to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that the scheme would reflect the most up-to-date housing needs evidence available.

\*Numbers should be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

186. This lack of smaller houses was recognised in our residents' questionnaire where half of residents favoured development of smaller homes and only 6% were in

<sup>38</sup> [Parish Profile](#)

<sup>39</sup> [Questionnaire Q11](#)

*Goudhurst is a popular location for families because of the quality of local schools*

favour of larger homes. TWBC have identified the Parish as a ‘high affordability pressure area’. The percentages identified are intended to improve the balance of our housing stock by delivering smaller properties needed by the community.

- 187. Homes in Goudhurst are in demand. There is inward migration of people in the 30-40 age range, generally from London (estate agents survey 2016). This, when combined with a higher than average number of children in the Parish, results in a lower than expected average age of 45.
- 188. Our intention is to improve the overall balance of housing across the Parish by delivering smaller and more affordable homes thereby improving the overall sustainability of our community. We will seek agreement from developers to market new homes to existing residents before they are marketed more widely.

## 9.3 House Prices and Affordability

*House prices in Goudhurst are high*

- 189. Housing in the Neighbourhood Area is expensive and less affordable than across England as a whole. In 2017, the Affordable Housing Ratio for Goudhurst was assessed to be 21.5. The figure in the 2011 census for England was 15.4.
- 190. In 2011 the average house price in Goudhurst was £536,000 and average income was £28,238.

## 9.4 Housing Need

*We established our housing needs for affordable and market housing*

- 191. A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) 2017 was completed for Goudhurst Parish Council by Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK).
- 192. The survey found that there is a need for up to 18 general needs affordable homes to accommodate 8 single people, 6 couples and 4 families, of which 15 currently live in Goudhurst Parish and 3 live outside but have local connections. The Housing Needs Survey 2017 showed that 1 family, 1 couple and 1 single person were seeking alternative housing in the Parish due to disability.
- 193. The survey also identified the need for 22 smaller market homes to support downsizing. These Goudhurst HNS results were also reflected in the Borough HNS completed in 2018<sup>40</sup>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Policy Objective:</b><br/><i>Deliver affordable properties in smaller developments</i></p> | <p><b>Policy H2    Affordable Housing</b></p> <p>Proposals for development shall reflect local housing need and 25% of all dwellings must be provided as affordable homes in all developments delivering 4 to 8 dwellings.</p> <p>Where affordable homes cannot be delivered on the development site, the alternative of a developer contribution to allow development on alternative sites within the Parish may be considered.</p> |
|--|--|

- 194. Developments in the Parish have been historically<sup>41</sup> on a small scale (<6 homes with an average of 2.5 p.a.).

<sup>40</sup> [TWBC Housing needs survey](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Development in Goudhurst since 1970](#)

195. Our residents recognise the need for affordable housing (Q15 – 84%) but we do not see developments proposals in our Parish of a scale (by national and borough standards) that will deliver affordable housing in the Parish.
196. This policy is intended to provide some affordable housing on smaller sites **but defers to Borough policy (H5) should larger developments come forward**. Our history shows that without a lower threshold we are *unlikely to deliver any affordable housing* in our community. In addition to the market need for smaller properties, our plan seeks to ensure that affordable homes are provided that improve the age balance of the community.

## 9.5 Affordable Housing for Local People

*We need to deliver affordable housing that enables local people to remain local*

197. Affordable Housing encompasses social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. A full definition can be found in the NPPF.
198. Responses to our survey (Question 15) supported the need for new affordable housing for those with a strong local connection.
199. In this context, a strong local connection means a single applicant who can satisfy at least **two** of the following criteria:
  1. Their parents were permanently resident in the Parish at the time of the applicant’s birth;
  2. They have a minimum period of five years permanent and continuous residence in the Parish at some point within the last eight years;
  3. They are currently lawfully resident in the Parish and have lived there for at least the previous three years;
  4. They are currently employed within the Parish;
  5. They have a confirmed, written offer of permanent work within the Parish;
  6. They can demonstrate active community involvement in the Parish sustained for at least the previous two years;
  7. Their parents currently live in the Parish, or another close family member, who provides or requires a substantial degree of support, currently lives in the Parish;
  8. If over 55, they have children currently living in the Parish.

*We must clearly define what a local connection means under this plan*

*Policy Objective: To ensure the needs of local people are prioritised when allocating affordable housing built under this plan*

### Policy H3 Allocating affordable Housing

Allocation of affordable housing in Goudhurst will be subject to a strong local connection requirement and subject to an agreement which will ensure that it remains as affordable housing for people with a strong local connection in perpetuity.

Where nobody demonstrating a strong local connection, as defined in 9.5 above, applies for residence in such a dwelling, it may be offered to someone whose housing needs are not met by the market and who meets **one** of the criteria; and failing that to someone who meets **two** of the criteria in relation to another Parish within the TWBC borough. If nobody in TWBC meets the criteria then borough rules will apply.

*Retain affordable homes for local people x*

200. This plan intends that affordable housing is provided to those with a strong local connection but recognises that this may not always be possible. The provision of affordable housing is intended to be in perpetuity so that when a dwelling is vacated the same local connection criteria are used to identify new tenants. Our projects include the potential creation of a Community Land Trust (CLT) to provide the legal framework within which to manage affordable housing.

## 9.6 Rural Exception Sites

201. It is possible that not all our affordable housing need will be delivered as a part of new development. To meet the need for ‘social rent’ affordable housing, the Parish, or landowners may need to identify ‘Rural Exception Sites’. A Rural Exception Site, under the NPPF, may be subject to fewer constraints than general development.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Support, where possible, the delivery of rural exception sites*

### **Policy H4 Rural Exception Sites**

**Proposals for the development of affordable housing schemes on appropriately located Rural Exception Sites will, in general, be supported.**

202. The intent is to ensure that everyone in our community has the opportunity of living in a decent home which they can afford. To be considered appropriately located a site would be relatively small (meeting local need) and generally located to the edge of an existing village. Policy H3, which covers the allocation of any affordable housing, will apply to homes delivered under this policy.

## 9.7 Housing for Rural Workers

*Goudhurst may always be too expensive for sections of our community*

203. Our policies for improved provision of affordable housing for those with a strong local connection reflects the priority we give to ensuring that people can afford to live and work in the Parish. However, there are rural workers, agriculture and land-based economy workers who require housing in our community, but they do not qualify for social housing and are not currently in a position to enter into home ownership in our community. There are provisions in the NPPF for housing rural workers and the Borough has retained policies in the Local Plan to manage this issue.
204. Where a business can demonstrate that rural workers, agriculture or land-based economy workers cannot be recruited without the provision of housing in the Parish, then our plan would be supportive of such development but will rely on the NPPF and the new TWBC Local Plan to provide the necessary policy controls.

## 9.8 Replacing or Combining Existing Dwellings

*Development should be in scale and relationship with the surrounding rural character*

205. The Parish has seen the demolition and replacement, or very significant extension and refurbishment, of a number of properties. In general, a smaller property, often a single storey dwelling, is demolished or extensively extended (using permitted development rights) resulting in a much larger property. This type of development can be out of scale or relationship with surrounding properties, spacing and the rural context. This also reduces the number of smaller and more affordable properties in the Parish adding to the overall imbalance in our housing stock. Planned replacement of an appropriate scale and design can result in a more suitable development.

206. Within the Limits of Built Development the replacement of an existing dwelling with another will be permitted by the application of design policies and guidelines to ensure the new development is compatible with; the surrounding street scene, pattern, massing, layout and amenity of neighbouring and future occupiers, including consideration of any impact on or the setting of heritage assets.

207. Outside the Limits of Built Development, the replacement of an existing dwelling by another dwelling within the same residential curtilage will be permitted where the policy criteria are met, the volume of extension will not normally exceed 130% of the original dwelling (or volume in 1948 if greater).

*Development that leads to a net loss of homes will be resisted*

208. The sub-division of an existing dwelling or combination of two or more existing dwellings into one larger unit can lead to a material change in impact that requires planning approval. Whereas the combination of very small units may be supported, proposals will be resisted where they lead to reduction in the number of existing dwellings of a reasonable standard of space and residential amenity.

***Policy Objective: To encourage net gain in our housing stock***

### **Policy H5 Replacing or combining Existing Dwellings**

Outside the Limits of Built Development, the replacement of an existing dwelling by another dwelling within the same residential curtilage will be permitted where the scale, form, height, massing, including relationship with the site boundaries, of the replacement dwelling is compatible with its rural location and the surrounding form of development.

209. This policy is not intended to prevent the replacement of a dwelling but seeks to ensure that any replacement does not change the character of the local area, particularly the relationship between the building and the plot and neighbouring dwellings as well as the height, mass and scale in relation to other buildings.

## 9.9 Conversion of Existing Buildings

210. There are buildings in the community that are suitable for conversion to either residential or commercial uses. Our residents showed a clear preference for using previously developed sites for future development.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Re-purpose existing buildings to provide new housing or business premises*

## **Policy H6 Conversion of Existing Buildings**

Development proposals for the conversion of existing buildings to alternative uses will generally be supported provided:

1. The proposed conversion will not materially or adversely affect the character and amenities of the surrounding area or the building itself; and
2. It does not result in the loss of a village amenity

Proposals for the conversion of buildings to residential use will need to be compatible with other relevant policies and the above criteria.

*Large previously developed sites have potential for conversion*

*The Bedgebury Manor site has >12,500 m2 of floor space*

*Blantyre Prison has a number of constraints with limited potential for re-development*

211. There are some large sites in the Parish where conversion to flats and apartments or new commercial uses would ensure improved land-use or enable the retention of character buildings. Two such brownfield sites may come forward during the life of this plan.
212. The larger of the sites is Bedgebury Manor. This consists of a Grade II\* manor house and a range of subsidiary buildings developed when the site was used as a school. The site has the potential for conversion and re-development. There is an existing Conservation Statement supporting current activities<sup>42</sup>. Bedgebury Manor is one of the key historic buildings in Goudhurst and is remote from existing communities. However, it is of a significant size and scale and may come forward for development during the life of this plan. Given the scale of this site we would like to see the creation of an overall Masterplan.
213. The second brownfield site is Blantyre Prison which has in recent years been used as a training centre by the Ministry of Justice. The prison is on the site of the original Fegan Society<sup>43</sup> home, which was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the original buildings remain along with some housing, originally for prison staff, and offender accommodation. The site is surrounded by a high metal fence and, within the site, the buildings are surrounded by grassland. This site is remote from all other development, with very limited road and other infrastructure. Development within the existing developed footprint would be supported but any proposal should be sensitive to the inherent constraints of this site

## **9.10 Self-Build**

*We will rely on TWBC to manage interest in self-build plots*

214. The questionnaire responses were supportive of the provision of self-build sites within the Parish. There is a demand for such sites and any interest in, or requirement for, self-build sites can be registered with TWBC. The number of registrations overall is relatively small and, since interest in such sites in Goudhurst is a fraction of the total, managing a separate register is unnecessary.

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<sup>42</sup> There is a current development activity which was approved by TWBC in 2013 under 13/01756/FUL

<sup>43</sup> The Fegan Society is still operating and details can be found at [fegans.org.uk](http://fegans.org.uk).

## Section 10 Business and Employment Policies

### 10.1 Business and Employment

*Businesses are generally small, employing fewer than 15 people*

*Most businesses own their premises*

215. We have a broad range of businesses<sup>44</sup> in the Parish with retail, consultancy and agriculture representing 35% of the total. Businesses are generally located in the Parish because, firstly, the owner lives here (32%) and, secondly, because of the availability of premises (29%). Businesses are generally small, employing fewer than 15 people.

216. Most businesses (50%) own their premises, with a further 33% renting and 12% leasing. Businesses felt it important to retain existing commercial space. They favoured conversion of farm buildings (39%) and development of brownfield sites (35%) to increase the amount of commercial property available. 64% of the businesses responding to our questionnaire do not foresee requiring additional space in the next 5 years.

### 10.2 Employment in the Parish

*Goudhurst incomes are relatively high & unemployment is low*

*Fewer than a third of businesses' employees live in the Parish*

*80% of residents work outside of the Parish with 30% commuting > 40km to work*

217. Employment opportunities in the Parish are limited as the historic investment in economic development has always been made in Tunbridge Wells. However, income levels are relatively high, exceeding those of South East England by 21%,<sup>45</sup> and deprivation is very low (ONS<sup>46</sup> index of multiple deprivation).

218. Although businesses offer employment to local people, only 30% of full-time and 23% of part-time staff are resident in the Parish. Most people employed here come from outside the Parish. Local unemployment is less than a third of the national figure, with most residents in employment (80%) working outside the Parish.

219. The largest employment group is professional occupations and the largest employment sector is retail.

220. Census data shows we have roughly twice the number of self-employed residents (16%) as the national average (9%) and nearly three times the national average working from home (14%).

221. Those working from home represent a growing percentage of the local workforce and this is likely to continue to grow in coming years. To meet the needs of these people, the Parish would benefit from improved mobile reception, broadband and a business hub. Options for this will be considered for a Parish project.

222. Goudhurst residents travel large distances to work, with 40% travelling more than 20km and 30% more than 40km to work - double the county and over three times the national average. Many fewer residents (11%) travel less than 2km to work - half the county and national averages. Ease of access to stations and Tunbridge Wells town scored highly with our residents. We have higher than average levels of car ownership in the Parish as most residents do not have access to bus or train services without the use of a private car.

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<sup>44</sup> Businesses were consulted in a [Business Questionnaire](#)

<sup>45</sup> [Parish Profile](#)

<sup>46</sup> Office of National Statistics

## 10.3 Retail, Hospitality and Tourism

*Shops are used by 70% of residents each month*

223. Retail and hospitality remain important features of our community. Much use is made of village shops (section 8.3). However, their success also relies on passing trade, particularly along the busy A262, and tourists.
224. Parking is an important element of the continuing viability of Goudhurst Village centre. Short-term parking is increasingly being used by residents and workers and a loss of short-term parking, preventing vehicles from stopping, could impact upon the viability of our businesses and community facilities.
225. Tourism is an important contributor to the local economy of Goudhurst which is at the centre of a number of tourist attractions (Bewl Water, National Pinetum, Sissinghurst Castle and Scotney Castle).

*Tourism is an important contributor to our local economy*



*Tourists camping at Pattenden Farm*

Figure 29 Camping in Goudhurst

## 10.4 Developing new Business Opportunities

226. Our landscape is important and our Parish is a base to explore nationally and internationally important sites. Tourism is invaluable to our community, allowing our retail businesses to thrive. Our population is growing, we have a high, and increasing, number of people working from home and new services will be needed to support this growth. The majority of our small business owners live and work in the Parish and we need to continue to be able to support local people in developing new business opportunities.

***Policy Objective:***  
*Support the development of new business space to improve the Parish*

### **Policy B1. New Business Space**

Planning permission for new business space and tourism facilities will be supported in the following circumstances:

1. Change of use of a rural building to business or tourist use,
2. A new building for business or tourist uses,
3. A proportionate extension to an existing building for business or tourist use that is on a scale appropriate to the settlement or the open countryside.

## Business and Employment Policies

227. We are a changing community and society and we need to ensure our community can accommodate changes in working practices and support new local services and enterprise. It is also important that we can support existing businesses so they stay viable and remain within our community.

### 10.5 Retaining our Community Facilities

228. Employment and services are important to our residents 79% of whom use our village shops at least monthly. The residents also value retail space, with 82% seeing it as key to the maintenance of a sustainable community.

*Policy Objective:  
Retaining business  
and commercial  
premises,  
particularly shops,  
are important to  
our community*

#### **Policy B2. Retention of Business Premises**

Support will be given to the retention of retail Shops (A1) against any proposals for redevelopment or change of use.

For all business premises, the change of use to other employment, commercial or business uses, or the extension of, buildings in employment, commercial or business uses will be supported.

Planning applications that result in the loss of retail (Use Class A1), services (Use Classes A2-A5), commercial (Use Classes B1 (excluding B1a Office) B2 and B8), or hotel/bed and breakfast (Class C1) uses (excluding premises that are also dwellings) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated by:

- I. At least two independent valuation reports provided by suitably qualified professionals; and
- II. a public active marketing campaign for a continuous period of at least eighteen months

that the premises cannot be sold or let on any basis for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses.

229. The policy objective is to retain retail premises within our communities and also retain other business premises which provide local employment and/or local services to all members of our community.

### 10.6 Farming and the Rural Land-Based Economy

*Changes in  
farming have  
been rapid in the  
last decade*

230. We are a rural community that historically grew around farmsteads and we still have 22 commercial farms in the Parish.
231. Change over the last 10 years has been rapid with pressure on farm income and profitability. Traditional mixed fruit/hop/livestock/arable farms, for which this area was renowned, are a thing of the past with now only two hop farms and no dairy farms left in the Parish.

### *Traditional mixed farms are a thing of the past*

232. Smaller farms have diversified away from traditional crops, e.g. top fruit, hops and livestock, and traditional ways to market. Farms have developed into sophisticated, high-tech operations, with a skilled labour force. Farmers are also reviewing the potential for housing development and the continuing conversion of farm buildings to commercial or residential uses.
233. Farmers are looking for other areas of diversification. There will be further change in the next five years, potentially driven by Brexit where the future is still unclear.

## 10.7 Design for Economic Growth

### *Development to support working from home or small-scale local business will be encouraged*

234. The price of housing in Goudhurst means that relatively few residents live and work in the Parish, unless they are able to establish a local business.
235. Many residents spend at least part of the week working from home (we have three times the national average of home workers) and this is likely to increase with improvements in the communications infrastructure sought elsewhere in this plan. In addition, we have almost twice the national average of self-employed workers. Our residents survey also identified nearly 200 people running businesses from home.
236. New development that includes provision for home working will be encouraged.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Small extensions, adaptations and new buildings for work will be permitted provided they do not disrupt neighbours*

### **Policy B3. Adapting Existing Buildings for Live/Work**

Conversion of properties for live/work should generally be supported but restrictions on future use may be placed on the property. Planning permission for office or light industrial uses will be considered for:

1. the use of part of a building
2. small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage
3. extensions to the building, or conversion of outbuildings

In all cases permission will be granted provided that:

- a) all work activities are carried out in the main by the occupants of the dwelling, and
- b) additional buildings, extensions or conversions should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction, and
- c) the employment element does not adversely impact upon road safety or substantially increase traffic volume, and
- d) adequate parking can be provided.

## Section 11 Design Policies

### 11.1 Introduction

*We have a broad range of homes of different periods and styles throughout the Parish*

237. The introductory sections of this plan and the section on Landscape and Environment reflect on the importance of Goudhurst village as a dramatic example of the characteristic development of settlements within the High Weald on hilltops and ridges. Kilndown and, to a lesser extent, Curtisden Green also demonstrate this characteristic.

238. Government planning guidance stresses that our built and natural heritage should be valued and protected for their own sake and that the responsibility for environmental stewardship is shared by everyone<sup>47</sup>.

239. In the Goudhurst and Kilndown Conservation Area Appraisal of 2006<sup>48</sup>, TWBC draws attention to some key elements of design, which therefore form the basis for our design guidelines to be applied to any development proposals. In particular, the appraisal states: *“The character of a settlement is determined by more than just the age and style of buildings. It is also influenced by the positioning of the buildings, their use, the shape, size and use of spaces between them, the materials, colours and textures employed. Topography and the relationship between the built form and the landscape elements are also key elements of settlement character.”*

240. This recognition of the variety of built environment components which together create character and a sense of space is central to our approach in framing design guidance. This plan fosters and promotes good design which is in keeping with the character of the Parish, whilst allowing for creative solutions which explicitly draw on and respect that character.

241. Good design relates not only to the built environment but to the natural environment and its relationship to the built form. That is particularly important for our Parish, much of which sits within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and should be a key consideration for any development proposals, even if they sit outside the AONB designation.

*19% of our buildings are listed*

242. In Goudhurst Parish, design character is described as a “picturesque jumble” with a variety of styles reflecting the development of each of the settlements over time. At the core of each settlement are some significant historic buildings, 19% of our buildings are listed<sup>49</sup> and English Heritage recognises that the area has one of the highest proportions of surviving medieval buildings in Western Europe. Our main settlements are also conservation areas and benefit from specific protections which we also wish to emphasise in this plan.

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<sup>47</sup> NPPF section 12 para 127 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/12-achieving-well-designed-places>

<sup>48</sup> [Goudhurst Kilndown Conservation areas](#)

## 11.2 Design Guidelines

*Development should be sympathetic to the landscape and environment*

243. We recognize that quality of design can be subjective. However, we wish to offer design guidance which helps developers and architects meet the aspirations of our communities and, in particular, respect the context of each of our settlements. We want to ensure development preserves and enhances the character, appearance and integrity of the Parish and providing guidelines around design to developers is an important part of our plan. We have a commitment to the goals and objectives of the HWAONB.

244. The HWAONB Partnership, which includes the Local Planning Authorities, have produced design guidance<sup>50</sup> for new homes. The guidance sets out very clearly how to ensure that new development conserves the strong sense of place that defines the High Weald. This plan endorses the High Weald Housing Design Guide and expects it to be followed for all proposals within Goudhurst parish.

245. Most of the Parish is in the AONB but buildings across the Parish demonstrate a common design code, the most notable feature of which is the consistent use of materials across a broad range of buildings. They are predominately brick with traditional tiles hung vertically on first floor walls under a tiled roof. Tiles were historically made from local iron clay. 98% of residents support the continued use of traditional materials. Our heritage has a strong local character influenced by a variety of locally available building materials. This has resulted in an abundance of brick, tile, weatherboard and stone or rendered buildings.

246. Consideration of materials is linked to the use and application of colour in new developments. The palette should consider both the built and natural environment to fully understand the way that they support each other. The HWAONB has also published a piece of work to analyse the colours that make up our landscape<sup>51</sup>. It has published a chart to guide developers and planning authorities on what colours can be used in new developments to help to integrate them into the landscape successfully. This plan strongly recommends the use of this colour palette for all new development or significant refurbishment projects.

*Modern design and technology can enhance the “picturesque jumble” and be more environmentally sympathetic*



<sup>50</sup> [High Weald Housing Design Guide](#)

<sup>51</sup> [High Weald Colour Palette](#)

Figure 30 High Weald AONB Colour chart

247. Their guidance also provides details of materials and suppliers to ensure new developments integrate and are ‘good neighbours’ with existing buildings and landscapes.

## 11.3 Design

248. As stated above, there is a clear vernacular design across the Parish. However, in recent decades there have been developments which have used national designs which are in most cases of generic and undistinguished design and not all have been in keeping with the High Weald character. However, some good quality designs have been delivered in the Parish in that period which serve as an example that modern development can be sympathetic to the prevailing character of the area, if properly considered and designed with that character and sense of place in mind.



Figure 31 There are many examples of good design in the Parish

249. Design in our communities was highlighted by our residents as important to their view of our Parish as a good place to live and as a key reason for continuing to live in the Parish. Our workshop ambition was:

*‘To build on the picturesque jumble of designs that are characteristic of our Parish through small scale developments incorporating affordable homes that are environmentally sympathetic (including Lifetime Homes), energy efficient, individual in character, constructed of materials that age well and with safe access to amenities’*

250. The Goudhurst Neighbourhood plan seeks to set policies and objectives that complement the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Living within the AONB and enjoying and sustaining its special character are important to residents of Goudhurst Parish and to visitors. Residents prefer housing to be developed in small clusters to reflect the evolution of the settlements and complement their character.

251. We had commissioned our own Design Guidelines<sup>52</sup> from AECOM which are useful in understanding the overall settlement patterns, architecture spaces within the Parish. The overall design guidance has now been superseded by the HWAONB design guidance.

252. Following the HWAONB design guidance will ensure that developments reflect and address this concern.

*Use of local materials that ‘age’ well will help to maintain character and support local business*

*The Goudhurst roofscape*



*It is important that new developments are ‘good neighbours’ with existing buildings*

<sup>52</sup> [Design Guidelines](#)

**Policy Objective:**  
*All development must achieve high quality of design and complement the character of existing local buildings*

### **Policy D1 Design Considerations**

All proposals for development must achieve a high quality of design and demonstrate how they complement local vernacular, distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Kent High Weald AONB, in particular by:

- a) respecting/complementing in scale, massing and form the character of existing buildings in the locality;
  - b) respecting established building lines, arrangements of rooflines (including chimneys), front gardens, and boundary treatments
  - c) using good quality materials that complement the existing materials and fall within the High Weald colour palette;
  - d) meeting the requirements of 'Secure by Design' to minimise the likelihood and fear of crime;
  - e) adopting innovation to achieve sustainable low carbon energy design, in particular the integration of renewable energy technologies;
  - f) address water stress and reduce water usage within new properties including through the re-use of rain and grey water;
  - g) providing sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape;
  - h) on plot parking should be screened from the road and/or sensitively located and care should be taken when designing hard standing areas;
  - i) driveways should be a fully permeable surface;
  - j) providing access for people with restricted mobility.
  - k) new development should enhance local ecology by creating new or expanding existing habitat and natural areas within or close to development sites and by incorporating bird and bat boxes/bricks into new buildings.
  - l) proposals should be accompanied by an integral landscaping scheme (for both soft and hard landscaping) to enhance the natural and local environment/AONB.
  - m) where development is in an exposed or elevated site then the design should minimise the impact on the nightscape of light pollution whether from internal or external light sources.
  - n) Support outstanding or innovative design
  - o) Provide a connectivity statement detailing connection to electronic communications network/high speed broadband.
- Applications proposing development contrary to the above will not be supported.

*Residents favour small developments of mostly smaller housing*

- 253. Our Design Considerations are intended to provide a level of guidance to ensure that planning applications consider their design in the context of the Parish. We have worked to include the elements raised as priorities by our residents.
- 254. Incremental change over many years has resulted in a wide variety of designs that characterise the settlements. There have been successful modern developments in the Parish that have been sensitive to the character of their surroundings and future development should follow this approach.
- 255. Our housing policies in Section 8 provide more detail on the size, scale and types of dwellings we believe we need in our Parish and the evidence to support our position. In summary:
  - Residents prefer small developments matching historical growth.
  - There is a need for smaller (2 bedroom) market housing to meet the needs of younger families and older residents downsizing to address imbalance in our housing stock.
  - There is a need for affordable housing in the Parish.
- 256. The density of housing in the Parish has evolved over many centuries. In general, density within villages is higher than in the open countryside. This is a pattern we would expect to retain.
- 257. The variety of housing layouts contributes to the sense of ‘jumble’ that is important to residents. The intricate pattern of roads, paths, alleyways, the built form and open space, together create the character which we wish to preserve. Maintaining the irregular relationship between properties and of developments to the surrounding landscape is important.

**11.4 Boundary Treatments**

- 258. Boundaries are as important as buildings. In Goudhurst native hedges and, low-key wooden fences and gates are typical.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Policy Objective:</b><br/> <i>Boundaries and planting should be in keeping with the surroundings.</i></p> | <p><b>Policy D2    Boundary Treatments</b><br/>                 New development should include the use of appropriate boundary treatments of hedges of native species</p> |
|---|---|

- 259. Hedgerows have been an important feature in defining our landscape and are important to maintaining our landscape for future generations. Hedges will be preferred over fencing or other boundary treatments. Outside the settlements hedges make the most appropriate boundary (screening, security etc.) and native species of planting, such as a traditional mixed hedge of hawthorn, field maple, beech, and hornbeam should be used and may include trees such as oak, cherry or ash. In urban areas other traditional urban hedging (privet, box etc.) may be used as boundary hedges
- 260. Intrusive fences and ornate gates with imposing pillars are to be avoided. If fencing is to be used then post and rail or low wooden fencing and green hedging should be used. High or close-board fencing in frontages will also be discouraged in favour of softer treatments.

## 11.5 The Impact of Climate Change

*All new development must be highly energy efficient and reduce reliance on fossil fuels*

261. Climate change is forecast to have a major impact on our Neighbourhood area. The whole Borough is an area of water stress and our community is dependent on fossil fuels, with oil being the major fuel for heating.
262. Our prevalence of listed buildings, with higher costs of heating, contributes to higher than average levels of fuel poverty across the Parish.
263. We wish to address the impact of climate change in both design and in the deployment of technology. Our goals are to reduce the demand that new development places on energy resources and reduce the cost of ownership for new homes. One option we would encourage is the use of the Passivhaus standard (which reduces space heating demand and primary energy consumption) to assess residential, commercial and public building development.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Development must promote the efficient use of all natural resources, including water*

### **Policy D3 Climate Change**

All new development should seek to achieve high standards of sustainability and, in particular, demonstrate in proposals how design, construction and operation will:

1. reduce the use of fossil fuels
2. providing energy efficient buildings
3. promote the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy
4. adopt and facilitate the flexible development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies
5. adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage

264. Homes that are resilient to climate change and are cheaper to run will be encouraged, but design must remain sensitive to the local character. 25% of residents would like to see green energy included in new development.

## 11.6 Conservation Areas

*Conservation areas deserve special protection*

265. Conservation areas in both Goudhurst and Kilndown surround a Grade I listed church. Whilst conservation areas benefit from specific protections afforded by national and local planning requirements, we wish to reinforce these requirements by establishing a set of local parameters to sustain and protect our conservation areas. There are already limited development rights within a conservation area.
266. Our priority is that development maintains the character of the conservation area with designs that are respectful of existing character and complement rather than contrast with it. Whilst we acknowledge that we cannot create policies that deal with style, our view is that conservation requires more sensitive treatment than we have experienced in recent years.

**Policy Objective:**  
*We will resist the demolition of buildings in the conservation areas*

**Policy D4 Inside Conservation Areas**

In addition to policy D1, proposals for development in a conservation area should conserve or enhance the special character of the area and be designed to respond to existing scale, height, form and massing, respecting the traditional pattern of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis of the immediate area.

Redevelopment which involves the demolition of an existing building (or part thereof) within a conservation area will be permitted only where the alternative development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area.

All applications for development within our conservation areas must be accompanied by a positive Heritage Assessment, and a detailed Design and Access statement (where required) showing how the proposal complies with the expectations in this policy.

267. Beyond the conservation areas, where more specific protections may not be available, it remains a key priority for residents of the Parish that development should be sympathetic with the historical and traditional landscape, should not change the profile of the hilltop settlements and should maintain views from those settlements (see Policy L10 and Views Assessment document). The policy below further enhances the general requirements set out in policies D1 to D3.

**Policy Objective:**  
*All development must respect the heritage and landscape setting*

**Policy D5 Outside of the Conservation Areas**

Development must be designed to:

- 1. avoid harm to the significance of any heritage asset
- 2. have regard to scale, height, massing, alignment and the use of appropriate materials
- 3. retain the spaces between and the grouping of all existing buildings and the elements of the landscape which form their setting.

### 11.7 Extending Existing Properties

268. We recognise that the opportunity to extend properties is attractive to homeowners and supports lifetime occupation. However, residents have set maintaining the character of the Parish and the provision of an increased number of smaller homes as high priorities.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Policy Objective:</b><br/><i>Extensions must complement the character of the main dwelling and of the surrounding area</i></p> | <p><b>Policy D6 Extensions</b></p> <p>Extensions to buildings – whether individually or cumulatively - must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. respect the overall design, size, appearance, scale, height and mass of the host dwelling and remain visually and functionally subservient to it;</li><li>2. use external facing materials which complement the materials of the host dwelling;</li><li>3. ensure no significant and adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents; and</li><li>4. ensure the effects of any significant increased run-off from rainwater arising from any additional hard surfaced area created by the extension can be adequately mitigated.</li></ol> |
|--|--|

269. It is important to us that smaller homes are not lost due to large or inappropriate extensions.

## Section 12 Traffic and Transport Policies

*Traffic is the single most important issue in our community*

*Large HGV having difficulty negotiating the double bend eastbound on the A262 in the centre of Goudhurst village*

*Long HGVs negotiating the bend by the church gate*

270. The overriding concern for the residents of our Parish is traffic and transport. Responses to our questionnaire showed that road safety was the primary issue residents want to see improved over the next 10 years. Responses also showed that 77% of residents believe our roads are inadequate<sup>53</sup> for the traffic using them.

271. The challenge for our Neighbourhood Plan is to deliver lasting change and improvement in our Parish. The land-use policies of our NDP will not, and cannot, deliver the level or type of change expected by our residents. Much of the future activity around transport can be delivered only by a series of Parish projects. These are described in section 12.



272. Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs): 90% of residents are concerned about the number of HGVs and 93% are concerned about their size. Our village still has the road layout set in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and modified at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and this is not suitable for, or easily adapted to, modern traffic flows.



Figure 32 Goudhurst High Street is the road that concerns the most residents (79%).

273. Our questionnaire revealed that;

- 90% of our residents do not feel safe when walking, cycling or riding on the main roads in the Parish:
- 63% of our residents do not feel safe when walking, cycling or riding on the country roads: and

<sup>53</sup> [Questionnaire Q23](#)

# Traffic and Transport Policies

- 71% of our residents do not feel safe when walking, cycling or riding in our villages.

*People do not feel safe walking, cycling or riding on our Parish roads*

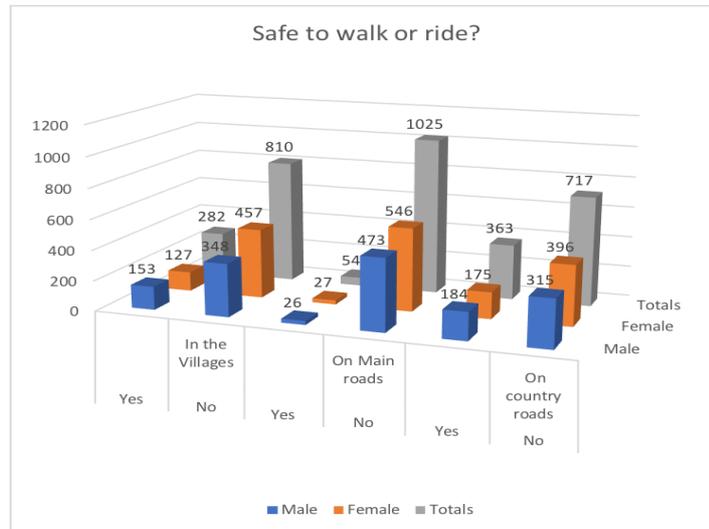
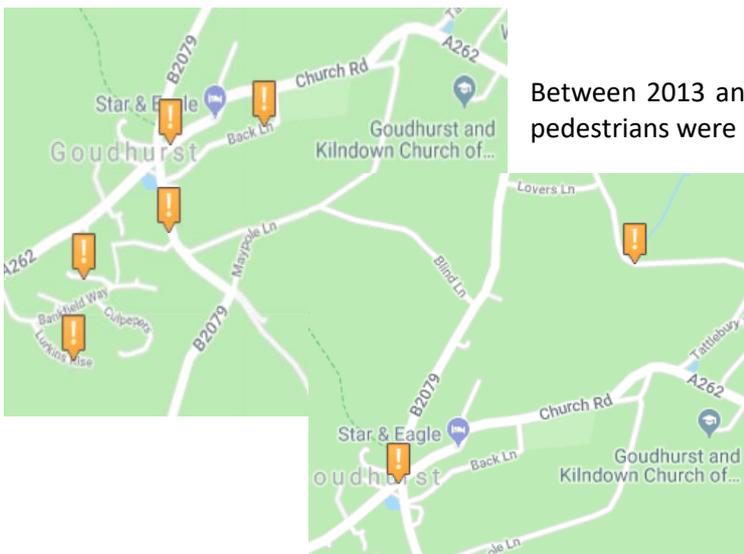


Figure 33 Is it safe to walk, cycle or ride in Goudhurst - residents think not



Between 2013 and 2017 five incidents that involved vehicles and pedestrians were reported in Goudhurst.

In the same period there were two reported incidents involving pedal cyclists.

## 12.1 Our Objectives

*We have clear objectives but planning policies cannot deliver all of them*

274. If we are to address our traffic issues, then we must:

- Ensure the impact of traffic is considered in all development proposals.
- Ensure that all proposals include adequate provision for on-site parking.
- Initiate projects to address key issues not covered by land-use policy, for example re-routing of HGVs to avoid the centre of Goudhurst village thereby reducing pollution and damage to historical buildings etc.
- Reduce the level of congestion in Goudhurst village.
- Improve road safety across the community.
- Facilitate safe walking, cycling and riding to improve community use of the highway.

## 12.2 Private Cars

*It is challenging to live in Goudhurst without a car*

- 275. The majority of working Goudhurst residents leave the Parish for work and this contributes to the above-average numbers of cars.
- 276. As a rural community with poor public transport, there is a high level of car ownership. Only 8.6% of households do not have a car (the UK average is 26%). 60% of households have access to two cars or more and 20% to three or more.

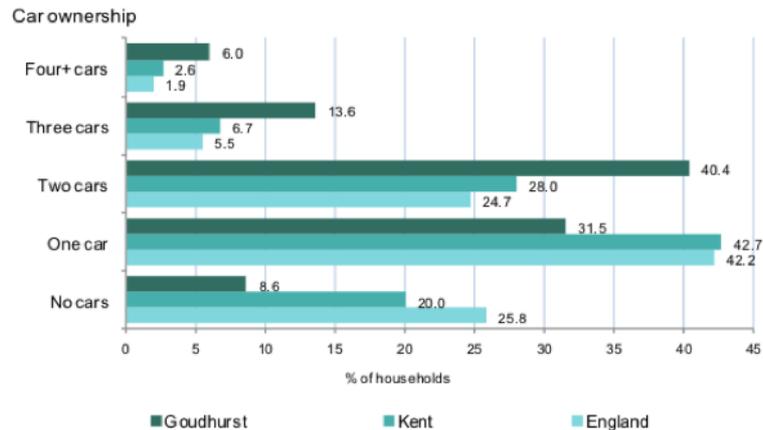


Figure 34 Car ownership is significantly above average (2011 Census)

- 277. Some 40% of Goudhurst households have two cars as compared to a national average of 24%. This places increased pressure on local roads, both in volume of traffic and, where there is insufficient parking space at a property, in the amount of on-road parking.
- 278. It is difficult to live a full life in parishes like Goudhurst without a car but many older houses, particularly in the centre of Goudhurst village, lack off-road parking provision. Goudhurst village retains some public transport with the bus services to Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone, but the services are irregular and not a viable option for commuters. Access within Goudhurst village on foot can be a struggle. Improvements could certainly be made, particularly in the High Street, at crossing points around the school, and along the Cranbrook Road footpath. Responses to our questionnaire showed that more than 70% of residents did not consider our roads safe for walking, riding or cycling.
- 279. New development should aim to increase walking and cycling and to encourage the use of public transport, thereby reducing the impact of vehicles. However, the extent to which this can be achieved is limited significantly by the above average, but necessary, levels of car ownership.

*Whilst we encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport, the car will remain the primary mode of transport.*

### Parking Need

- 280. As set out above, the overriding concern of residents is traffic and particularly traffic in Goudhurst Village<sup>54</sup> where congestion occurs many times each day. The high street is on the A262 and all schemes to improve traffic flow result in some

<sup>54</sup> [Goudhurst NDP Questionnaire](#)

*Parking is important to the survival of businesses in our communities*

*Parking is important to in retaining the success of our community*

degradation in the number of high street parking spaces<sup>55</sup> Finding additional space in a village within a medieval street pattern is a challenge.

- 281. Goudhurst is a successful village but, if we are to sustain our high street, then we need to continue to support short term parking in the centre of our village. The village supports a wide range of shops, pubs and cafes and although they are used by residents they are sustained by the busy A262 which delivers tourists and passing trade. Goudhurst is in contrast to other similar local villages (Brenchley, Matfield) where all shops have been lost.
- 282. Our assumption is that reliance on the private car will continue at the same rate for the next ten years, at which point technological innovations might begin to have a positive impact. The result is that parking within those developments must reflect the size of homes for the foreseeable future.

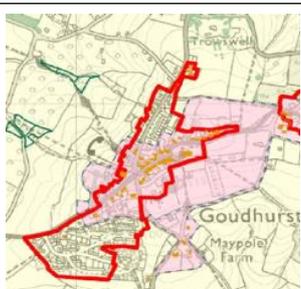
### Parking Challenges

- 283. Goudhurst is a successful village. The number of cars parking in the village has increased not least because of the success of venues such as the Parish Hall where there is limited parking available. Goudhurst has a car park on Balcombes Hill for 16 vehicles. This car park is regularly full during daytime and cars are, therefore, parked on-road in Balcombes Hill, West Road, Back Lane, North Road and the High Street which contributes to traffic congestion and safety issues.
- 284. The success of Goudhurst as a commercial centre is dependent upon visitors and residents being able to park and use these facilities. Any degradation in the amount of parking available in the village centre threatens the viability of our community.
- 285. Development in the centre of Goudhurst village should not create any additional pressure on parking by delivering sustainable levels of on-site parking so that our facilities and services continue to be accessible to residents and visitors.

**Policy Objective:**  
Development should not damage the economic or social sustainability of our community

### Policy T1 Parking in New Development

Proposals for **new homes** (additional dwellings provided through new build or the conversion of an existing building into multiple dwellings) in or adjoining the area common to the LBD and the Goudhurst conservation area and for 200m along B2079 from the village centre, must provide for one off-street parking space within the development site for each bedroom.



Goudhurst LBD (red) & conservation area (pink)

- 286. Our policy, set out above, sets a higher standard for parking for the centre of Goudhurst village than the local of county plans. We support development, but development should not damage the economic or social sustainability of our community. Our policy for the central Goudhurst sets a standard of one parking space per bedroom. In many circumstances an unused bedroom will be used as a study space. For this plan, a bedroom is considered to be a room reasonably capable of use as a bedroom.

<sup>55</sup> Project P2 in this plan is focussed on improving traffic flow and parking in Goudhurst Village

287. Any development within the area defined by the policy should be self-contained in parking numbers. No development within the settlements should result in the use of the existing carriageway or verge for residents' parking. Where appropriate, additional parking to ease wider village parking problems should be considered as part of any new development.

### 12.3 Ensuring the Safety of our Schoolchildren

*Travel to school must be safe*

288. The Goudhurst village pre-school provides facilities for those under five and Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England Primary School, just off the busy A262, has places for 210 children (2018). Bethany School in Curtisden Green provides secondary education and is fee-paying. Most children in the Parish travel to secondary schools in Cranbrook, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Wadhurst, Tonbridge and Paddock Wood. This is either by car, by school bus or by a mixture of car/bus/train.
289. To improve the health of our children we need to encourage safe walking and cycling to local schools and pre-schools. However, there are major concerns about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the Parish roads, particularly in, and surrounding, Goudhurst village.

*Crossing the road is not easy*



Figure 35 Crossing the High Street can be difficult

*We want to encourage walking & cycling*

290. Although the main road through Goudhurst village is classed as an 'A' road, there are many points along this route within the built-up area where HGVs cannot pass each other without mounting the footway. Similarly, there are two areas where cars cannot pass each other. Most roads within the built-up area, and particularly in the conservation area, do not have footways. The High Street was designed by Kent Highways as a hybrid area to be shared by pedestrians and traffic, including for parking. This might have benefits in terms of traffic calming, but the route is often impassable to wheelchairs, prams etc. without venturing from the combined footway/parking area into the road. Any increase in on-street parking would have the effect of exacerbating the existing danger to pedestrians negotiating parked vehicles while at the same time avoiding moving traffic.
291. As any sustainable development would most likely be in, or close to, Goudhurst village, any traffic generated by such development should not impact on road safety and should ideally be allied with measures to improve safety.
292. It is recognised that, because of the distance involved and the lack of safe walking or cycling routes, some children will need to travel by car to school and

pre-school sites in the Parish. However, creating safe walking and cycling routes will help to discourage non-essential car use.

293. Safe walking routes to school bus pick-up points are also desirable for children travelling to secondary schools outside of the Parish.

## 12.4 Sustainable Transport

*We want to reduce the level of car usage*

294. Goudhurst Parish is a dispersed rural community with a higher than average (60%) ownership of two or more cars per household, a percentage of residents commuting to London from stations outside the Parish and a lower than average use of buses (194 of 1,156 respondents). Access to bus stops often requires the use of a private car. Goudhurst residents travel long distances to work. 40% of residents travel more than 20km and 30% travelling more than 40km to work.

295. Access to facilities such as village shops and services is also important in our community, but 71% of residents do not feel safe walking in our villages.

*We want to feel safe walking in and around our villages*



Goudhurst Post Office



Goudhurst Pharmacy

296. This policy will enhance access to facilities and address the concerns of 71% of residents about safe walking.

**Policy Objective:**  
*Improving road safety and facilitating safe walking, cycling and riding*

### Policy T2 Safe Access and Sustainable Transport

Housing proposals should:

- I. incorporate measures to facilitate the safe access for children to Goudhurst and Kilndown CE Primary School, pre-school sites and secondary school pick-up points on foot, by bicycle, school bus or car;
- II. integrate with existing or proposed footpaths, footways and cycle routes, ensuring that residents can walk or cycle safely to schools, shops, green spaces and other Parish facilities;
- III. facilitate access to public transport, thereby minimising the need for car use; and
- IV. retain or improve existing footpaths and footways.

Development that would result in the loss of existing footpaths and footways will be supported only if a suitable replacement or alternative route can be provided.

297. Our intent is to improve the safety of vulnerable road users and minimize the need for car use within the Parish. This includes retaining existing footpaths, footways and cycle routes and extending them to link with any development, thus facilitating safer access of pedestrians and cyclist to Parish facilities.

## 12.5 Traffic Volumes

298. Residents’ responses to our questionnaire showed that they were very concerned about the volume and size of vehicles in the Parish, particularly in Goudhurst village centre.

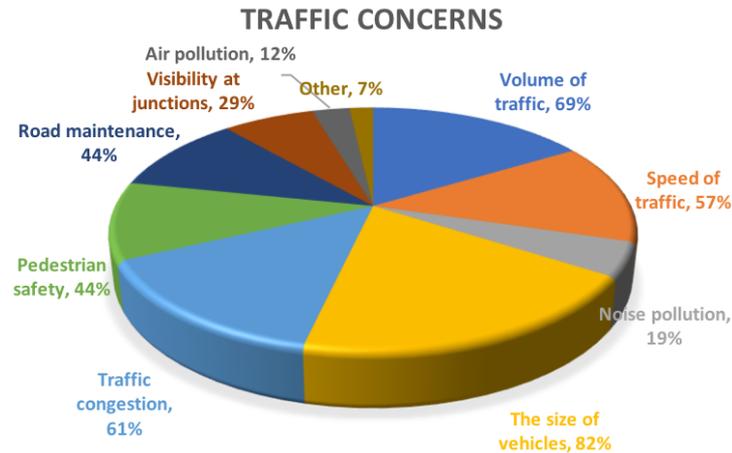


Figure 36 Residents’ traffic concerns

*The volume of traffic in the Parish is a concern to residents*

299. The Department for Transport measures traffic volumes at set count points on approximately a 5-year basis. The figures they supply for the years between counts are estimated. Vehicle counts between 2003 and 2016 show that the overall volume of traffic using the part of the A262 that is within Goudhurst Parish boundary increased by approximately 12% to nearly 12,767 per day in 2016. The most significant increase was a rise of 35% in the number of light goods vehicles.

*Almost 13,000 vehicles a day use the A262*

| A262 Measured Traffic per day |          |               |      |      |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------------|------|------|
|                               |          | TOTAL TRAFFIC | HGVs | LGVs |
| 2003                          | Counted  | 11282         | 368  | 1401 |
| 2007                          | Counted  | 11180         | 316  | 1652 |
| 2011                          | Counted  | 10445         | 294  | 1502 |
| 2016                          | Counted  | 12767         | 272  | 2186 |
| 2017                          | Estimate | 12886         | 280  | 2313 |

Figure 37 Number of goods vehicles using the A262 daily (2017 DFT estimate)

300. The DFT’s estimated figures given for 2017 show a further increase to a total of 12,886 vehicles per day, 12.5% higher than the 2003 figure.

*97% of residents are concerned about the number and size of HGVs*



Figure 38 Roads are not adequate for the traffic using them

301. Although the length of the A262 is marginally longer than the stretch of the A21 that is within our Parish boundary, the number of vehicle accidents on the A262 is approximately one third greater<sup>56</sup> over the period 2005-2016.

*Traffic accident numbers are higher than on A21*

|         | A21 | A262 |
|---------|-----|------|
| Fatal   | 2   | 2    |
| Serious | 8   | 12   |
| Slight  | 38  | 52   |
| Total   | 48  | 65   |

Figure 39 Accident comparisons - A21 and A262

*Too many accidents on our road*

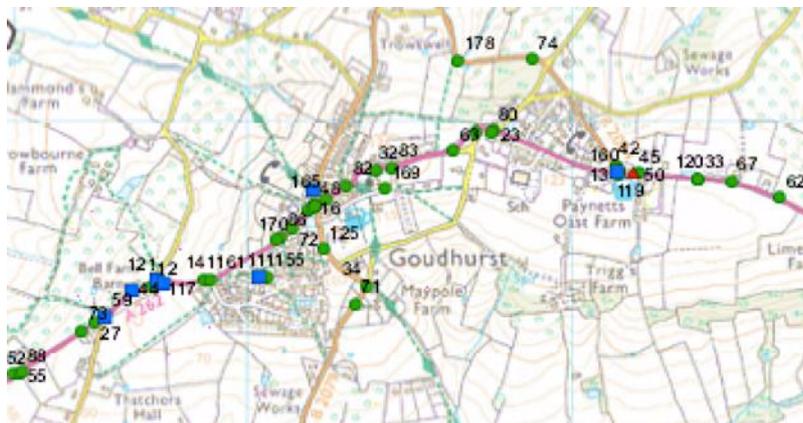


Figure 40 A262 has too many accidents

<sup>56</sup> [2005-2016 Parish Collisions](#)

# Traffic and Transport Policies



Figure 41 It is not only the A262 that has a poor safety record

302. Over the last seven years there has been a significant number of reported incidents along the A262, the B2079 and the B2085, some of them involving pedestrians and cyclists.



303. Traffic queues form regularly throughout the day in the High Street in Goudhurst, extending to Church Road, West Road and the B2079, when large vehicles (HGVs) have difficulty negotiating the tight bends in front of the Church and the parked cars on West Road.

*Queues  
cause  
congestion*



Figure 42 Congestion is a daily issue in Goudhurst village centre

- 304. The resulting congestion brings the traffic at the Plain to a standstill. The static traffic causes pollution from engine noise and exhaust fumes outside residential properties and commercial properties serving food.
- 305. Damage has regularly been caused to the Churchyard wall by long vehicles attempting to turn the tight bend at the top of the High Street.

*HGVs are damaging our heritage*



306. The damage to the Grade 1 listed wall of St Mary's Churchyard in the centre of the village demonstrates one of the impacts HGVs are having on our community. The vehicles frequently hit the wall while turning the bend by the church gate.

Figure 43 Damage to listed buildings

307. Church Cottage, a grade II listed property on the opposite side of the road, was hit by an HGV reversing in order to negotiate the righthand bend eastwards out of the village.



*Traffic queues make crossing the road difficult and dangerous*



Figure 44 Everyday queues

308. The queueing vehicles also make it difficult for pedestrians, especially the elderly, people with restricted mobility and those with young children in prams and pushchairs, to negotiate the High Street.



309. Goudhurst Hill (Station Road) can become impassable during periods of ice and snow. Traffic grinds to a halt and queues form westbound to the A21 at Lamberhurst and eastbound towards the village centre.



Figure 45 Traffic at a standstill in the snow

***Policy Objective:***  
*Development will bring more traffic but mitigation of the impact can be managed*

### **Policy T3 Traffic Mitigation**

Development that may adversely impact on road safety or traffic volume within the Parish will be supported only if that impact can be mitigated.

Mitigation can be secured by design, developer contributions or other measures agreed with the Parish Council, the Borough Council and the Highways Authority.

Traffic impact includes adverse road safety conditions, congestion and pollution on both the main roads and rural lanes.

310. Although we accept there will be development in the Parish, it is important that the impact of traffic does not exacerbate the problems we see within our community. Smaller development proposals should be supported by a Traffic Statement; larger developments (more than 5 dwellings) should be supported by a Transport Assessment. We are attempting, through Parish projects P2, to address traffic, parking and road safety.

## Section 13 Parish Action Plan

*Our plan is more than simply land-use policies*

- 311. In gathering our evidence, a series of issues, aspirations and needs was identified that cannot be delivered under land-use policies proposed elsewhere in this plan. This section of our plan expands further on those areas of need.
- 312. To deliver the needs and aspirations of our community, we will initiate a co-ordinated set of community projects that can address key concerns and deliver lasting beneficial change in our community.

### **Project P1. Access to Affordable Housing**

*Access to affordable housing can be controlled through a Community Land Trust (CLT)*

- 313. In Goudhurst, as in other communities, there is a demonstrated need for social and affordable housing in the Parish.
- 314. Our questionnaire highlighted the concern that local people should be given priority in the allocation of affordable housing within our Parish. However, the absence of a local connection requirement for existing affordable housing is both divisive and instrumental in reinforcing opposition to new affordable housing in the Parish.
- 315. One approach is to ensure that new affordable housing is, and continues to be, subject to a local connection requirement. One way of delivering this objective is for the homes to be controlled through a separate legal entity known as a Community Land Trust (CLT). A CLT is a non-profit entity that develops and manages affordable housing on behalf of the community. Partnerships between CLTs and housing associations can attract funding for land purchase and building costs to improve the viability of affordable housing projects. Goudhurst Parish Council will be consulting with interested affordable housing providers regarding the feasibility of establishing a Goudhurst Community Land Trust.
- 316. As a part of this process we will actively seek a site to deliver new affordable housing in our communities.

### **Project P2. Traffic, Parking and Road Safety**

*Traffic is the primary concern for residents*

- 317. Improving road safety in our Parish would significantly enhance the quality of life for residents. This project proposes a series of working groups tasked to:
  1. describe the traffic issues we face across the Parish, research solutions, engage with the Highways Authority to trial proposals and campaign to implement measures to relieve congestion and improve traffic flow;
  2. identify the threats to road safety, recommend means of reducing these and to campaign for their implementation.

*Goudhurst village was identified by most residents as the key issue*

- 318. There are two initiatives that have already been started as a result of the work done, and evidence gathered, as a part of this plan:
  1. GPC have employed consultants to review options to downgrade the A262 to 'B' road status. This aims to reduce traffic volumes and allows us to consider options to improve road safety measures that would not be possible on an A-road.
  2. KCC have been approached to change their website that routes HGV's along the A262 between Ashford and Tunbridge Wells.

## *Need to improve facilities in the Parish*



### **Project P3. Improving Parish Facilities**

319. We have a number of established and thriving facilities within the Parish and we need to ensure they continue to flourish in the future.
320. An overall working group will be established to:
  1. Work with the Trustees of Goudhurst Parish Hall to provide regeneration of the Hall and improve facilities. The Trustees have a considerable backlog of repairs which will require substantial investment to complete.
  2. Work with the Trustees of the Social Club to explore wider community use.
  3. Quantify the need for improved care for the young and elderly in our community. Work with existing groups (the Church and Readycall in particular) to understand the needs in this area.

### **Project P4. Improving Parish Communication**

321. Our questionnaire responses identified the need to improve community communications. We have a number of communication channels in the Parish with a variety of websites, social media, notice boards and the Parish magazine offering a broad range of options. We will establish a working group to explore, with all organisations in the Parish, the feasibility of providing a common communication tool.

### **Project P5. Making use of Developer Contributions**

322. Contributions from developers towards local infrastructure are collected primarily through two mechanisms, Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Section 106 planning obligations are development specific and are subject to statutory tests to ensure they are necessary, proportionate and directly related to the development. CIL is a more standardised approach intended to be faster, fairer, more certain and more transparent. CIL allows authorities to set a fixed-rate charge per square metre of new development used to address the cumulative impact of development in an area. TWBC is not likely to introduce the CIL in the lifetime of this plan.
323. A series of activities has been identified for support from future developer contributions. A working group will be set-up to review each of the proposals, develop costings, priorities and identify ways in which each of these can be delivered.
  - Cycle link/network to Bedgebury
  - Additional electric car charging points
  - Electric bike hire station
  - Parish Clerk's office, possibly combined with a tourist information outlet
  - Provision of facilities for a business/tech hub
  - Day care facility for the elderly
  - Community transport (bus and driver) for the elderly and disabled/ general use
  - Dedicated youth club/hub
  - Pre-schools funding for staff/premises/facilities
  - Refurbishment of the Chequers Field play area
  - Additional playground in Lurkins Rise
  - Outdoor gym equipment

324. This project list will be held by the Parish Council and will detail the costings and the priorities for the Parish. It will be available to developers.

### **Project P6. Documenting our Community**

325. Through the process of creating this plan, we have detailed and documented a large number of features and aspects of our community, many of which have driven specific policies in our plan.
326. As a record of change in our community, we propose to re-survey these features and aspects at intervals so that we can track changes over time and also provide evidence for future versions of this plan.
327. A working group will be created to record the details and schedule re-surveys of these features and aspect.

## Section 14 Table of Figures:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Figure 1 District and Borough Councils in Kent.....  | 5  |
| Figure 2 Parishes in Tunbridge Wells Borough .....   | 6  |
| Figure 3 The Parish of Goudhurst.....  | 8  |
| Figure 4 Five Working Groups were established .....  | 9  |
| Figure 5 Six policy areas were identified.....   | 13 |
| Figure 6 Light Pollution in Goudhurst .....  | 27 |
| Figure 7 Goudhurst Local Green Spaces Map .....  | 30 |
| Figure 8 Kilndown Local Green Spaces Map .....   | 31 |
| Figure 9 Local Green Spaces in Curtisden Green .....   | 32 |
| Figure 10 Topographic map showing the changes elevation.....   | 33 |
| Figure 11 St Mary’s Church tower offers a panorama across the Parish and Borough.....                  | 34 |
| Figure 12 Map of Goudhurst Views (red out and blue into the Goudhurst ridge).....                      | 37 |
| Figure 13 View of Goudhurst from Scotney.....  | 44 |
| Figure 14 How long do residents remain in the Parish? .....  | 44 |
| Figure 15 Population by age band.....  | 45 |
| Figure 16 Parish residents over 65 .....   | 45 |
| Figure 17 Inward Migration.....  | 46 |
| Figure 18 Education Standards.....   | 46 |
| Figure 19 Employment in the Parish .....   | 47 |
| Figure 20 Residents from all three settlements regularly use the facilities in Goudhurst village. .... | 48 |
| Figure 21 Facilities used at least once a month .....  | 48 |
| Figure 22 How safe are our roads .....   | 49 |
| Figure 23 What will improve road safety – residents views .....  | 50 |
| Figure 24 Good reasons to live in Goudhurst .....  | 51 |
| Figure 25 Residents’ priorities for improvement .....  | 51 |
| Figure 26 Social Club, Goudhurst Parish Hall, Church Room, Kilndown village hall .....                 | 52 |
| Figure 27 Important facilities for improvement (residents had multiple choices).....                   | 53 |
| Figure 28 Housing stock by tax band .....  | 57 |
| Figure 29 Camping in Goudhurst.....  | 64 |
| Figure 30 High Weald AONB Colour chart .....   | 69 |
| Figure 31 There are many examples of good design in the Parish .....                                   | 69 |
| Figure 32 Goudhurst High Street is the road that concerns the most residents (79%).....                | 75 |
| Figure 33 Is it safe to walk, cycle or ride in Goudhurst - residents think not .....                   | 76 |
| Figure 34 Car ownership is significantly above average (2011 Census) .....                             | 77 |
| Figure 35 Crossing the High Street can be difficult .....  | 79 |
| Figure 36 Residents’ traffic concerns .....  | 81 |
| Figure 37 Number of goods vehicles using the A262 daily (2017 DFT estimate) .....                      | 81 |
| Figure 38 Roads are not adequate for the traffic using them .....                                      | 82 |
| Figure 39 Accident comparisons - A21 and A262 .....  | 82 |
| Figure 40 A262 has too many accidents .....  | 82 |
| Figure 41 It is not only the A262 that has a poor safety record .....                                  | 83 |
| Figure 42 Congestion is a daily issue in Goudhurst village centre .....                                | 83 |
| Figure 43 Damage to listed buildings .....   | 84 |
| Figure 44 Everyday queues .....  | 84 |
| Figure 45 Traffic at a standstill in the snow .....  | 84 |