



ENGLISH HERITAGE



# Knowing Your Place

Heritage and Community-Led Planning in the Countryside





# INTRODUCTION

As English Heritage cannot always provide detailed commentary on individual Community-Led Plans, we offer this general advice note to help rural communities that are producing, reviewing or updating their plan. In doing so, we deal with current approaches to community planning, although we may offer additional advice on proposed Neighbourhood Plans in the future.

Our guidance is designed to complement and add more detail on heritage to the community planning toolkit provided by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and other, more local, advice. ACRE's toolkit should always provide the starting point for your plan and is available online at:

[www.acre.org.uk](http://www.acre.org.uk) Should you require further detailed advice on heritage issues, directions to English Heritage guidance on a wide range of topics and good practice case studies in Community-Led Planning are provided throughout this document.

England's villages and hamlets have a long history, with beginnings in the distant past that we are still discovering. Many originate in the Middle Ages, but some have a longer story, starting with the Vikings, Saxons, Romans or Britons. Others were later, with many established to serve local industry. Most developed in a piecemeal way, some were planned, some shrank or were re-sited and others were abandoned. Some are compact and have grown up around a green or a square. Others have a sprawling plan or are strung out along roads. Some parishes are dominated by one large village: others have straggling clusters of hamlets and farmsteads.

Whatever their origin and development, every village and parish today includes its own distinctive historic buildings, fascinating archaeological remains, and streetscapes and landscapes full of historic information and character. This history helps to make each place unique and cherished in some way.

When a community is planning its future, through a Community-Led Plan, it is important to consider its past. By including their heritage in the plan, communities can really get to know the place in which they live. They can ensure it keeps its vitality, sense of identity and individuality. They can choose the best ways for it to develop and grow. They can hand it on – as a place to be proud of – to future generations.

This advice note deals with the incorporation of local heritage within plans that rural communities are producing, reviewing or updating and focuses particularly on parish plans and village design statements.

English Heritage hopes this advice will ensure that Community-Led Plans harness the full power of the community's heritage. With only limited resources available for protecting and revitalising this heritage, local action is now required more than ever.



# WHY INCLUDE HERITAGE?

When a community starts work on a Community-Led Plan – such as a Parish Plan, Village Design Statement, or similar neighbourhood initiative – it is usually thinking about its future. So why should it worry about its past?

Including heritage in a plan allows you to effectively combine care for the natural and the built environment with community hopes and intentions for the future. A good understanding of your local heritage can reveal forgotten links to the past. It can inspire and guide development and innovation as well as encouraging conservation.

Without an understanding of your heritage, well-intended recommendations and actions could cause damage that might be difficult or impossible to put right. So it is important to have sufficient understanding before you make these decisions.

Including heritage in your plan will:

- **Inform** The character of the place in which we live is rooted in its heritage; it helps us understand what makes a place distinctive, attractive and interesting to live in. The 'shape' and 'look' of today's settlement and its surroundings – its pattern of roads, lanes, fields, woods, hedgerows and buildings – has built up over centuries. Including heritage in your plan ensures all these continue to tell the story of the parish and its people through time.
- **Integrate** Although the important need to protect nature, including species and habitats, is well understood, little of England's landscape is truly 'wild'. Our landscapes were made by people working with nature. Important habitats – hedgerows, woodlands, orchards, commons and ponds – are also our heritage, created by generations of farmers and villagers. Community-Led Plans can bring together nature, landscape, heritage and community aspirations far more effectively than larger scale plans, such as Local Development Frameworks.
- **Innovate** Including heritage in your plan is not about fossilising the village or preserving the parish 'in aspic'. Knowledge of its history helps a community understand how it has changed – sometimes dramatically – over time. This can stimulate ideas for future actions and help to guide them.
- **Invigorate** By encouraging sensitive and thoughtful change, by inspiring design that responds to its surroundings and by promoting the conversion to new uses of redundant historic buildings, heritage can contribute to the vitality of the village and rural communities. It can encourage investment, entrepreneurship, tourism and employment.
- **Involve** Heritage belongs to all of us and is at the core of our sense of personal and community identity. With its potential to accommodate new housing, reduce carbon consumption, build skills and support jobs, it can provide an excellent stimulus to community action and bring people together.

---

## PART 1 ►

of this advice note offers

advice on *gathering information*

---

## PART 2 ►

discusses *recognising opportunities*

---

## PART 3 ►

discusses *developing objectives*

and *making recommendations*

---

## PART 4 ►

provides advice *on presentation*

*of your plan*

---

## APPENDICES ►

provide advice on *community*

*questionnaires* and *useful links*

to further information

---



## HERITAGE AT THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE AND PARISH ►

As well as providing spaces for homes, businesses and community use, your local heritage is fundamental to a sense of place, identity and shared history

**Figure 1:** St Mary Magdalene, Caldecote Hertfordshire © Brijesh Patel

**Figure 2:** Village store, Chiddingly, East Sussex © Ivor Berresford. Source: English Heritage. NMR

**Figure 3:** Village hall, Blisland, Cornwall © Gill Cardy. Source: English Heritage. NMR

**Figure 4:** Village school in historic building, Burnsall, Yorkshire Dales National Park © Yorkshire Dales National Park

**Figure 5:** War memorial, Fen Drayton, Cambridgeshire © Jane Greatorex. Source: English Heritage. NMR

**Figure 6:** Post Office, Lechlade, Gloucestershire © Michael Clarke. Source: English Heritage. NMR

**Figure 7:** Square and Compass pub, Worth Matravers, Dorset © Tony Jerome, CAMRA





## PART I GATHERING INFORMATION

### HOW MUCH INFORMATION DO YOU NEED?

When you are deciding how to use your heritage to develop a Community-Led Plan, it is important to be clear about how much detail you need. You could spend many years researching the heritage of one parish. So, to avoid getting side tracked or bogged down with unnecessary work, concentrate on the purpose of your plan and be clear about 'what' to include and 'why'.

English Heritage recommends that **all** Community-Led Plans address local heritage, but the amount of detail you include will depend on your resources and the type of plan you want to produce. Parish Plans, for example, have a wide scope and focus on services so they usually include less detail on heritage than a Village Design Statement. A design statement considers the look, layout and future development of the village (or all settlements in the parish), so it will have a reasonable level of detail on your local heritage. More information and greater detail may be required if your community's ambition is to have its statement adopted as formal planning guidance, such as supplementary planning documents.

It is important for those drafting the Community-Led Plan to discuss carefully at the outset how much detail is needed. In the rest of Part I we offer broad advice on what could be included in a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement as a series of bulleted actions.

- ❖ Those with diamond-shaped bullets are worth considering for all Community-Led Plans including Parish Plans.
- Those with arrowed bullets are more appropriate for plans focusing on the built environment of your community, such as Village Design Statements.

When considering how to tackle heritage in your plan, a good starting point is to look at plans completed by other communities. Throughout this document we offer examples of plans that we believe are good models in their treatment of different aspects of heritage, whether it is in terms of landscape, archaeology or village design. Some of these plans are exemplary in several different ways, but in our case studies we choose to highlight just one of these.

Further information on these plans is available on the Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) website at: [www.helm.org.uk/communityplanning](http://www.helm.org.uk/communityplanning) and all are available in full on-line (see Appendix 3).



## WHERE TO GET HERITAGE INFORMATION

### IDENTIFYING LOCAL HERITAGE

Information on your local heritage can be found in both national and local records. A useful starting point is the online *Heritage Gateway* at [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk). This provides an initial and easily-accessible set of local and national sources of information about England's heritage. You can easily search these using your village or parish name. They include:

- **Listed Buildings Online:** the online register of listed buildings
- **Images of England:** contemporary colour photographs of listed buildings
- **PastScape:** the national record of the historic environment with information about archaeological and architectural heritage
- **ViewFinder:** historic photographs
- **Parks & Gardens UK:** information on historic parks, gardens and ornamental landscapes.

The Heritage Gateway can also direct you to your local *Historic Environment Record* (or HER). This is an important source, maintained by your district, borough, or county council or National Park Authority. It will generally have more comprehensive information than the national records, extending from individual finds and sites to entire landscapes. Some HERs are accessible on-line: for others you need to contact the relevant council. Links and addresses for every HER in England can be found on the Heritage Gateway.

A variety of other basic sources may also be helpful. Nicholas Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series of books (arranged by counties) is an important and easily accessible guide to the most notable historic buildings in your area (see [www.pevsner.co.uk](http://www.pevsner.co.uk)). Many counties will also have volumes in the *Victoria County History* series, an invaluable source for local history (see [www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk)).

### ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

As well as information about the historic buildings and places in your parish, a lot of advice on how to look after local heritage is available on-line, or as free pamphlets. A good starting point is the English Heritage web site at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications). These publications are also available on the Historic Environment Local Management (HELM) web site at [www.helm.org.uk](http://www.helm.org.uk), where they are supplemented by numerous good practice case studies. Your local authority web site may also have more local specific guidance on heritage.

Throughout this document, we provide links to the most relevant on-line English Heritage advice notes, should you want more detail on any topic. We also signpost other useful sources of information and advice.



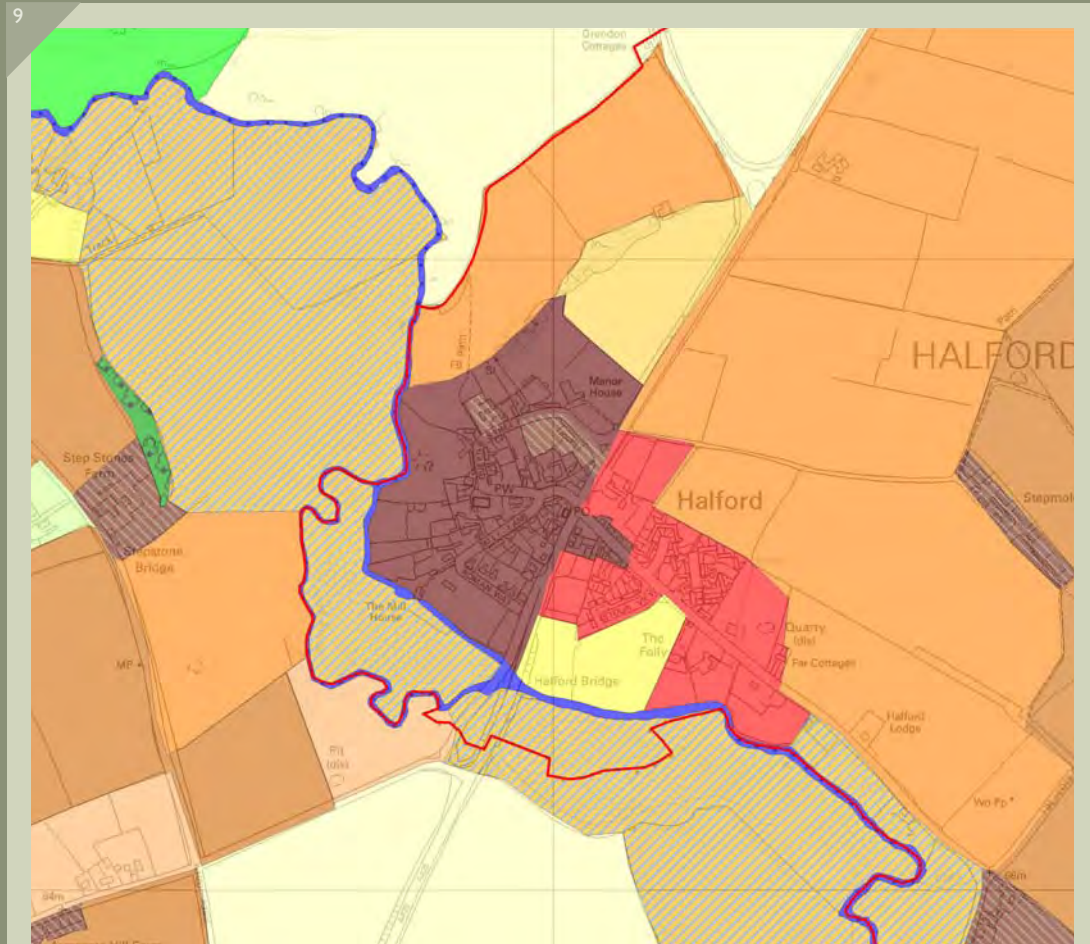
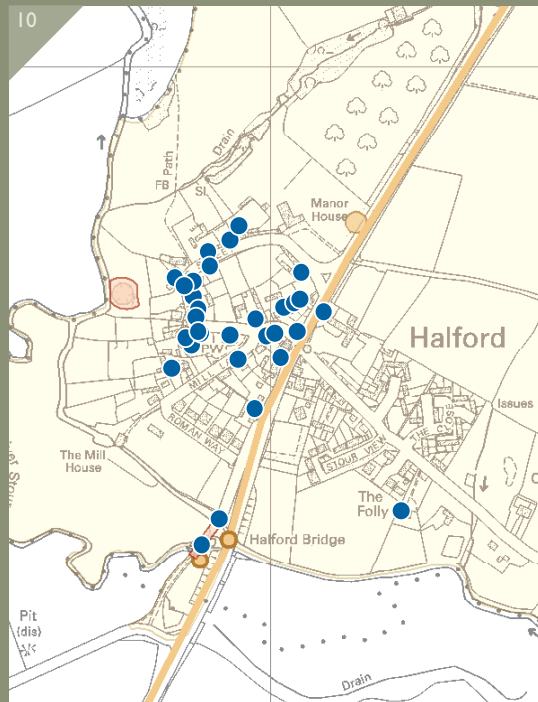
## HERITAGE IN THE LANDSCAPE ►

Your Community-Led Plan should not neglect the landscape which surrounds the place where you live

**Figure 8:** The wider landscape is a vital part of your community's heritage and new tools are available to help you understand it. These are illustrated by reference to the village of Halford in Warwickshire, seen here from the air. NMR 15218/25 © Crown copyright. NMR

**Figure 9:** Most of England is covered by Historic Landscape Characterisation studies, which interpret today's landscape in terms of its past and present uses and its 'ancientness'. Information and maps are available from local Historic Environment Records

**Figure 10:** On-line access to mapped information on listed buildings (blue circles) and other heritage designations is available from English Heritage and many Historic Environment Records © Crown Copyright and database right 2011. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019088.



This plan has been produced specifically to supply an individual with value added Local Authority information. Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (R) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019088.

## WARWICKSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD ▲ HALFORD HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

### HLC Types

- |                                  |                                |                                 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nursery/Garden Centre            | Planned Enclosure              | Paddocks and Closes             |
| Floodplain                       | Other Small Rectilinear Fields | Designed Landscape              |
| Historic Barns                   | Other Large Rectilinear Fields | Historic Settlement Core        |
| Large Irregular Fields           | Very Large Post War Fields     | Post 1955 Semi-detached Housing |
| Re-organised Piecemeal Enclosure | Broad Leaved Plantation        | Historic Farmstead              |
|                                  | Natural Open Water             |                                 |



## WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER INCLUDING IN YOUR PLAN?

All Community-Led Plans need to have good information to guide decisions. The effectiveness of any plan will depend on the quality of the information on which it is founded. Heritage is only one of a number of topics that the plan will need to include in its evidence-base.

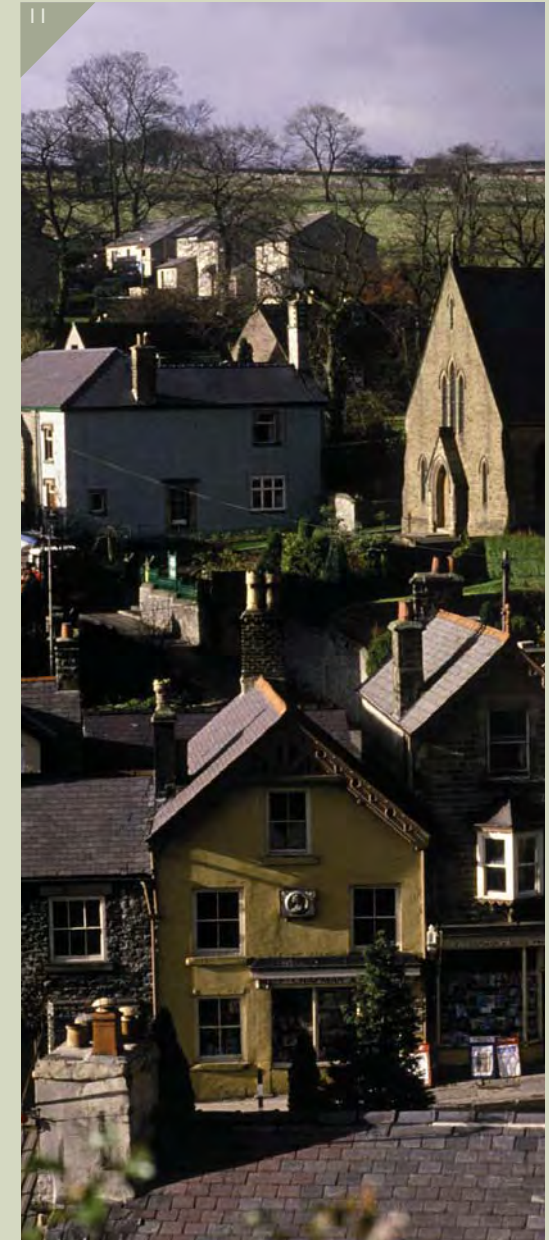
'Heritage' (often also referred to as 'the historic environment') is an umbrella term that includes a variety of features, evidence and traditions surviving from the past. The most obvious heritage features are historic buildings and structures but buried archaeology, townscapes and landscapes, gardens, ancient woodlands, green spaces and landscape features can be just as important, as can local place-names, customs, traditions, memories and oral histories.

Some heritage features and historic places are protected by law (designated) because they are considered to be of particular importance. Most commonly these are listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas. More rarely they can be World Heritage Sites, protected historic shipwreck sites, and registered battlefields.

Sites protected by law clearly need to be identified in Community-Led Plans, but they are only a small part of the community's overall heritage. To provide a full picture we recommend your plan considers:

- the surrounding landscape
- village layout
- historic buildings
- places of worship
- village character and 'townscape'
- green spaces
- views and sight lines
- conservation areas
- archaeological sites.

Each of these is considered in more detail in the following pages.







### GOOD PRACTICE: HISTORIC MAPS AND UNDERSTANDING LANDSCAPE

The Village Design Statement for **Murton**, on the eastern side of York, makes good use of the analysis of historic maps from different periods to understand the historic growth of the village and its present day form.


At **Kinnerley**, in Shropshire, the Parish Landscape Group produced a very detailed Landscape Character Assessment as part of their Parish Design Statement, which is an extension of their Parish Plan.

### THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

Remember to consider the landscape surrounding the place where you live – it is just as historic as any listed buildings. The pattern of fields, hedges, settlements and woodland across your parish is like a patchwork quilt, with the character of some patches little changed since medieval times or the agricultural revolution, while others have been much altered in modern times.

Factors to consider include:

- How people in the past have used and divided up the landscape. What variety of shapes is apparent in the surrounding fieldscape?
- How settlements relate to the land. Do you live in a landscape dominated by big villages or many smaller hamlets and farmsteads?
- How people have moved through the landscape. What can you learn from the pattern of pathways, lanes, roads, canals and railways?
- Whether you live in a nationally designated landscape such as a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast and what special qualities this confers.

A good initial understanding of the characteristics of the landscape which surrounds your village can be obtained from the set of 159 **National Character Area descriptions** available at: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)  These describe the underlying geology, land cover, land use and historic development of each area.

More detailed information on your local landscape heritage is available from the **Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)** that covers most of England. Where these studies have been completed, the reports and maps will be available through your local HER. They usually cover whole counties and interpret today's landscape through past and present uses and the 'ancientness' of each part of the patchwork. A local **Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)** may also be available from your local authority. This will cover a wide range of attributes of the landscape, including some aspects of its heritage, although it will tend to focus more on the **aesthetic appeal** of the landscape than on the details of its history and development.

If you think a more thorough landscape study is needed to support a community plan, a good way of understanding the development of a village or parish over the

last few hundred years is by examination of **historic maps**. This allows historic road patterns, plot boundaries, field boundaries, and the historic shape and relationship of settlements as they have changed through time to be easily understood. Information on access to maps is provided in Part 4 of this guidance.

### Checklist:

- ❖ If Historic Landscape Character mapping is available for your area consider what it tells you about the development of the place and include a map in your plan
- ❖ Consider including selected and easily available historic maps of the parish in the plan
- ❖ If a Landscape Character Assessment is available for your area summarise it in your plan and cross reference it
- Consider undertaking a more detailed landscape study, with greater emphasis on analysis of historic mapping.



### GOOD PRACTICE: UNDERSTANDING DEVELOPMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT

The Village Design Statement for **Castle Hedingham**, in North Essex, describes the village in terms of its setting, the development of the overall settlement, and then goes on to describe the characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village.

The Town Design Statement for **Sturminster Newton**, in North Dorset, incorporates detailed analysis of townscape and includes a series of analytical maps to define different aspects of townscape. It defines distinctive character areas and systematically describes and analyses each area.

## VILLAGE LAYOUT

While the buildings, structures and monuments in a village or hamlet are of importance, other less obvious aspects make an important contribution to its character and individuality. These include its plan or layout.

A good starting point is to think about how the layout of the settlement has developed through time.

- Does the parish have one large village or several hamlets?
- Is the village arranged around a green or square, or along a street? Is it compact or 'stragglings'?
- Has it lost population and shrunk, leaving the 'humps and bumps' of ruined houses in adjacent fields? Or have people decided to move it to a completely new location?
- Is the parish church in the centre of the settlement, on its edge or distant from it?
- Does map evidence suggest the village has been added to gradually or in bigger planned blocks?

Historic maps, together with visual inspection of buildings and immediately surrounding fields are the key to understanding these changes over time.

This information can set the scene for your community plan and an understanding of how settlements sit in the landscape and have grown in the past may help guide decisions on future growth.

### Checklist:

- ❖ Consider including selected and easily available larger-scale historic maps of the village in your plan
- Consider undertaking a more detailed map analysis of historic village maps
- Consider including an annotated map that shows how the village has developed over time, including any clearly defined areas that have a different character or development history.

## HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Identifying *historic buildings and structures* is a key consideration in any community plan. Many homes, business premises and community spaces in the village will be in older buildings. Identifying any *listed buildings* – the legally protected historic buildings considered to be of national importance – is the obvious starting point.

But also think about other buildings. For example, some local authorities maintain a list of historic buildings of *local importance*. You can also identify

buildings and structures that your community thinks are an important part of your heritage through discussions or questionnaires (see Appendix 1). Beside more recent housing developments, these might include landmarks, memorials, or other buildings of particular relevance to your community such as a church, chapel, hall, school or pub. Don't stop at the edge of the village: consider local farm buildings in the surrounding landscape, as these also contribute to local character and can find important new uses.

National and local *Buildings at Risk Registers* can also be consulted to identify which buildings are threatened and in need of action to save them. The National Heritage List for England is available at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/list](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/list) and some local planning authorities maintain a local 'at risk' list.

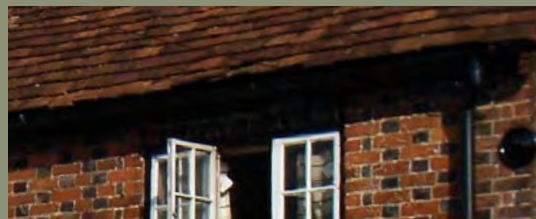
### Checklist:

- ❖ Include a table and a map showing listed and locally listed buildings in your plan
- ❖ Identify any buildings on the national or any local Building at Risk Register
- Consider consulting the community to identify any other buildings of particular local importance and include them in the plan as a table and map.



## LOCAL CHARACTER ►

Your community's sense-of place depends as much on everyday details as on the rare and extraordinary. Local materials, building traditions, and minor features all contribute to character of the area





## PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship – the church, meeting house or chapel – have been at the heart of the village for centuries. The church will often be the oldest local building standing and its fabric, extensions and alterations will tell the story of the community's changing lifestyle, prosperity and experiences. The churchyard or burial ground may provide tranquil communal open space and a haven for wildlife as well as a permanent record of those who lived locally. Memorials, monuments and headstones can reveal a great deal about the social mix, health and occupations of previous inhabitants whose experiences may still have an influence on the modern community. Together, the church and churchyard may offer clues about the community's story that are otherwise undocumented. As places of worship sometimes move from one denomination or faith group to another, records may be held in different places.

Help in researching and caring for places of worship is available from denominational websites including [www.churchcare.co.uk](http://www.churchcare.co.uk) and [www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/places-of-worship](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/protecting/places-of-worship)

### Checklist:

- ❖ Do not forget to include places of worship, the churchyard and facilities such as church and community halls in the scope of the plan)
- ❖ From the outset, involve the Parochial Church Council or minister (or their equivalents in other faiths) in the preparation of your plan.

## VILLAGE CHARACTER AND 'TOWNSCAPE'

The materials, styles, scales, detailing and groupings of buildings within the village, together with their relationship with streets, plots, boundaries, open spaces and views all provide the overall character (or 'townscape') of the settlement. Other aspects, such as traditional street surfaces, street furniture or signage (such as cobbling, fencing, and fingerposts) are also important.

These details may vary significantly from one part of the village to another, between settlements in the same parish, or between neighbouring parishes. All are at the heart of our 'sense of place' and their identification and description will be important in a community-led plan, particularly a Village Design Statement.

The 'townscape' can be systematically described and illustrated using a straightforward procedure known as **Historic Area Assessment**. Historic Area Assessments help people to understand what makes a place distinctive by describing the buildings, patterns and features that are **special**. Equally importantly they establish what makes a place characteristic of its locality by establishing what is **typical** and what are **recurring local themes**.

All communities can undertake a basic historic area assessment. Don't just confine this to conservation areas, but take account of the entire community, by covering the whole village or all the settlements in the parish. Look at what has been achieved in other community plans to see different ways of describing and illustrating village character and design and think about what will work best for your community.



**GOOD PRACTICE:  
UNDERSTANDING  
LOCAL CHARACTER**

The Village Design Statement for **Wymeswold**, Leicestershire, contains excellent hand drawn sketches, photographs and descriptions of building features, identifies predominant styles in different streets and pays attention to local boundary styles.

The Village Design Statement for **Winterborne Stickland**, in North Dorset, is strong in its analysis of distinctive local themes, especially recurring local building materials and detailing.

The Village Design Statement for **Prestbury**, in Cheshire, provides systematic descriptions of listed buildings, as well as other buildings of architectural merit. Local character is described street-by-street both within and outside the conservation area and there is a section on the landscape setting of the village.

**Checklist:**

- Consider and describe what makes one part of the village or parish different in character from another. Think about the community history that might explain these differences
- Identify the way building materials (stone, slates, bricks, cobbles, timber) contribute to the place and whether there are problems of supply or skills for maintaining them?
- Think about the way styles, scales, detailing and groupings of buildings are used in different parts of the village or parish. Are there predominant styles or recurring themes?
- Look at the way buildings relate to each other, to streets, to building plots and to open spaces. Are there areas of greater housing density and some parts of the village that are more sparsely settled?
- Consider how aspects of approaches to the village and its streetscape, street furniture and surfacing contribute or detract from the character of the settlement
- Consider the role of paths, lanes, roads, canals and railways and the way these connect your village and parish to the surrounding landscape.

Although written initially for local authorities Section 5 of English Heritage guidance *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments in a Planning and Development Context* provides a useful and longer checklist of issues to think about when analysing and describing the character and 'townscape' of your village or parish. This is available at: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-place-planning-develop](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-place-planning-develop)

**GREEN SPACES**

Historic green spaces commonly encountered in the parish include village greens and ponds, commons, veteran trees, woods, orchards, historic parks or gardens and churchyards. Recreation grounds, play grounds, burial grounds, verges and historic transport routes, such as canals, also have historic interest. Occasionally parishes may also include the sites of historic battles. Some of these green spaces are public and others will be privately owned, but may be accessible by rights of way. Together they provide an important aspect of the historic character of the village and parish.

These historic open spaces are often important for their *nature conservation value* as well as their heritage. It is important to consider both aspects and attempt to balance them if proposals in the plan might lead to conflict.

Nationally important parks, gardens ornamental landscapes and battlefields are listed on English Heritage registers. These can be accessed via the Heritage Gateway. Others important landscapes may be on local registers or can be identified through advice from County Garden Trusts (see [www.gardenstrusts.org.uk](http://www.gardenstrusts.org.uk))

**Checklist:**

- ❖ Include a list and map of any registered parks, gardens or battlefields
- Include any other parks gardens or battlefields considered important by the community
- Include a list and map of other types of historic open spaces that are important to the whole community, such as parks, commons, village greens and churchyards and burial grounds.



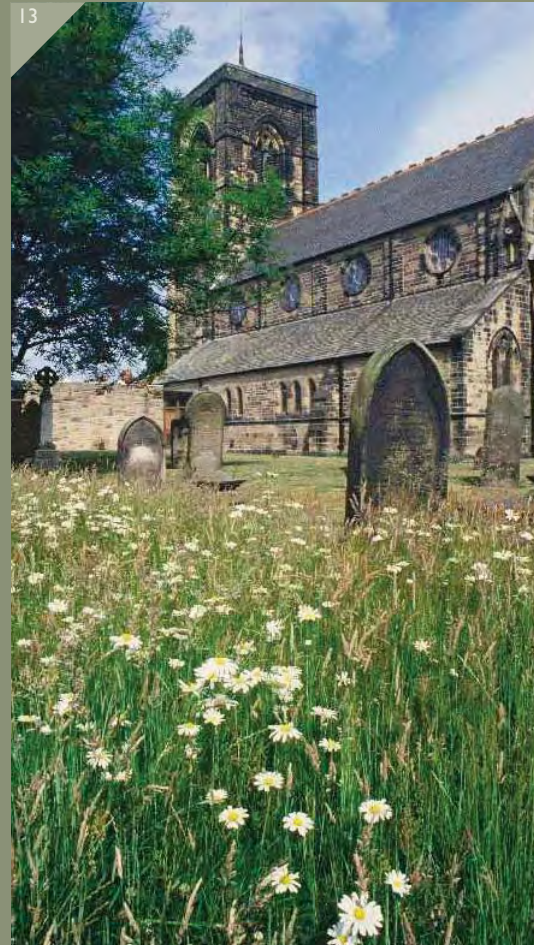
## GREEN SPACES ►

Green spaces in and around your settlement – whether large or small – are important for its heritage, wildlife and character

**Figure 12:** Village pond, Ashmore, Dorset © Brian Kingsland. Source: English Heritage, NMR



**Figure 13:** Churchyard at St Nicholas, Cramlington, Northumberland © Peter Wakely, Natural England



**Figure 14:** Earthworks of medieval fields, Bradbourne, Peak District National Park © Peak District National Park

**Figure 15:** Gardens, stream and grass verges, Rockbourne, Hampshire © English Heritage

**Figure 16:** Castle mound, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire © English Heritage

**Figure 17:** Village Green, Minstead, New Forest National Park © English Heritage

**Figure 18:** The Common, Hungerford, Berkshire © English Heritage





### GOOD PRACTICE: UNDERSTANDING VIEWS

The Town Design Statement for **Sturminster Newton**, in North Dorset, identifies selected principal views both within and towards the town and looking outward into the surrounding countryside. These are depicted on a Town Analysis map.

## VIEWS

Views and lines-of-sight within the settlement and the settings of its historic buildings are important, but so are views to the landscape beyond or views into it from the surrounding countryside. Views from high ground looking down on the village may be particularly important to the community, as may deliberately designed views (such as along an avenue of trees). Features within your village, such as a church spire, may also be important eye-catchers when viewed from a distant viewpoint.

Planning policy requires the settings of designated historic buildings and sites to be taken into account when there are development proposals, but community plans can go further and identify other key views. These should generally be views that are important to the community as a whole, rather than just to individuals.

### Checklist:

- Identify which views are most sensitive and important to the community as a whole and consider how these might be affected by development
- Depict key views on a map in your plan.

## CONSERVATION AREAS

Some villages and hamlets lie partly or wholly within a conservation area – a designation that provides protection for parts of the settlement that are identified as having a special character and appearance. These are usually the oldest or best preserved parts. This designation recognises and protects historic townscape, historic spaces, trees and landscapes, the relationship of groups of buildings, and important views in addition to individual buildings.

Assessments of character and appearance have been produced for about half of England's conservation areas. Known as **Conservation Area Appraisals**, these identify the characteristics and appearance that give the area its special qualities, such as recurring local themes. Such documents vary in scope and coverage but, where they exist, they can be usefully summarised and cross-referenced in your community plan. Some conservation areas also have a **management plan**, which you will need to take into account. Your local authority planning department can tell you whether an Appraisal or Management Plan exists for conservation areas in your village or parish or you may be able to find the information on the Council web site or in the local HER.

These are very valuable sources of information – but also remember to consider the character and heritage of your parish or village **outside** the conservation areas.

### Checklist:

- ❖ Identify the existence and boundaries of any conservation areas and include a map showing them in your plan
- If there is one, obtain the conservation area character appraisal or management plan, summarise the key issues they set out and cross-reference them in your plan.



### VIEWS AND SIGHT LINES ►

Views and lines of sight can be an important aspect of your local heritage, particularly when they are valued by the community as a whole

**Figure 19:** 'Glimpses' of local landmarks within the settlement can be important. Church of St Peter and St Paul, Weobley, Herefordshire © Skyscan Balloon Photography. Source: English Heritage Photo Library



**Figure 20 and 21:** Long-distance views into and out of settlements can be important to the community, whatever the topography. Lyddington, Rutland (20) © Skyscan Balloon Photography. Source: English Heritage Photo Library and Boscastle, Cornwall (21) © English Heritage



**Figure 22:** Designed views are particularly sensitive. This tree-lined avenue provides the approach to New Arlesford, Hampshire © English Heritage



**Figure 23:** Views from high ground can be sensitive in terms of the village roof-scape and back-land development. Longnor, Peak District National Park © Peak District National Park Authority 2011





### GOOD PRACTICE: UNDERSTANDING LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The Village Design Statement for **Horton**, a small hamlet in Wiltshire, includes an account of its local archaeology, including a map and schedule identifying the location of archaeological sites and finds. It also refers to the settlement's industrial archaeological heritage in the form of the Kennet and Avon Canal.

Figure 24: © Peak District National Park Authority 2011

## ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological remains are an important, but often overlooked, part of the heritage of the parish and village. They include the evidence of thousands of years from the earliest traces of human activity to remains from industry, the World Wars and even later. They represent far more of your community's history than its historic buildings. A large number of archaeological sites occur within the landscape of each parish and some lie underneath its villages, hamlets and farmsteads.

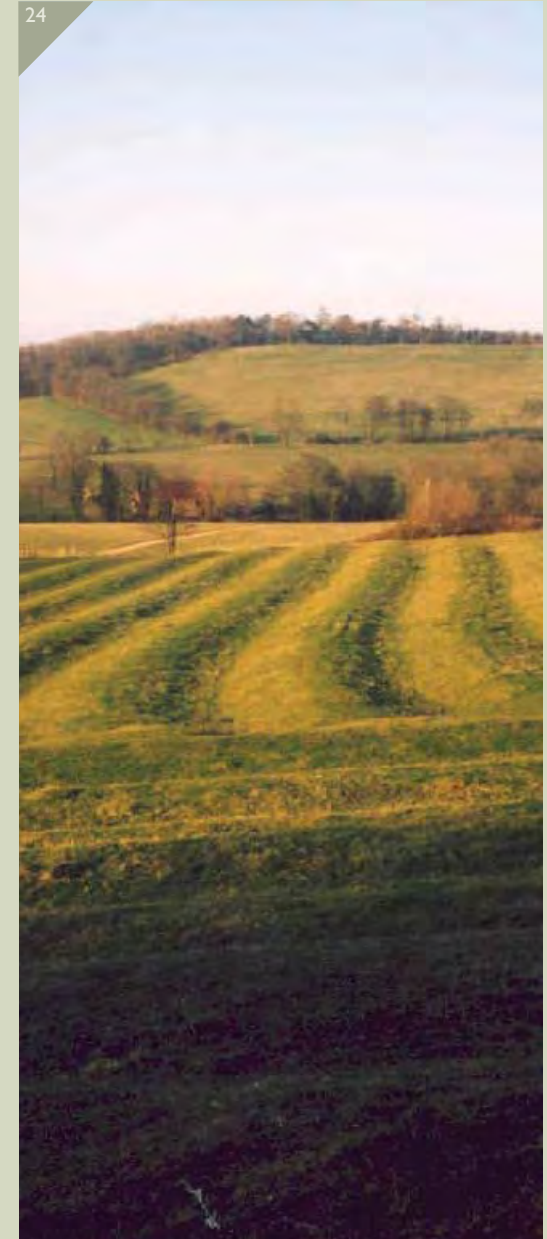
Some archaeological sites survive as impressive monuments, such as a standing stone or a castle mound. Elsewhere, they may be deeply buried or may occur as 'humps and bumps' in surrounding fields. These 'earthworks' on the edge of villages may show the site of abandoned houses because the village has shrunk over time. Don't forget your industrial archaeology, features such as canals, lime kilns, quarries and mills.

Some archaeological sites (*scheduled monuments*) are protected by law, but many other archaeological sites are also important. They can all illuminate your community's most distant history and provide the excitement of actively discovering it.

Information on local archaeology is available from the *PastScape* website (via the Heritage Gateway) and a more comprehensive record is available from the local authority *Historic Environment Record*. Remember that this information will not be complete and many more features remain to be discovered.

### Checklist:

- ❖ Include in your plan a table and map showing any scheduled monuments in the parish and consider extending this approach to include other important sites
- Include in your plan a table and map showing all known archaeological sites and finds adjacent to or in the village.





## DOING YOUR OWN COMMUNITY SURVEY WORK

The sources signposted in this document will help your community to identify its local heritage without having to employ professional help. If their workloads permit, local authority staff such as planning officers, historic building conservation officers and archaeological advisers may be able to offer additional advice; help you identify buildings, sites and places that are protected by law or recorded in the HER; or direct you to Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.

For Village Design Statements, it is particularly important for your community to identify aspects of your heritage that you think important, alongside the places protected by law. This may involve carrying out survey work to identify buildings that contribute to the quality of the village townscape or which are 'at risk'. Or it could involve undertaking historical research on the settlement, documenting community memories, or collecting old photographs.

If your community intends to develop a questionnaire, open days or workshops to inform your plan, as recommended by ACRE, consider including questions on local heritage to identify what features local people value. Some suggested questions to ask are included in Appendix I.



Figure 25: © English Heritage



## PART 2

# RECOGNISING OPPORTUNITIES

Understanding the history of your parish or village will show how much and how often it has changed over time. So caring for your local heritage does not have to be about stopping all further change. Instead it can be used to guide and inspire future development, ensuring it is of high quality and contributes to sense-of-place.

Preparing a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement provides an excellent way of identifying opportunities to enhance the value of local heritage to the community. These opportunities can be addressed in various ways.

- Some can be undertaken as preparatory projects needed to inform the drafting of the plan.
- Some can be dealt with as recommendations and guidelines within the plan (see Part 3).
- Others can be identified as desirable actions for the future.

The range of projects you undertake and recommendations or actions you set out will vary from community to community and depend on your timetable for action and your available resources.

Amongst actions you may wish to consider, as preparatory projects, as plan recommendations and guidelines or in an action plan are:

### RISK AND CONDITION SURVEYS

English Heritage maintains a national Heritage at Risk register [www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk) and some local authorities maintain

their own more local registers (see above). Risk registers provide opportunities to identify priorities for action and grant-aid, but local authority lists can be out-of-date and rarely include non-listed buildings or other types of historic site such as archaeological monuments or parks and gardens.

Preparing a Village Design Statement offers your community the opportunity to establish the condition of key historic buildings and sites, to update the local authority register or to extend it to unlisted buildings and other features of importance to the community.

### LOCAL LISTING AND CONSERVATION AREAS

A number of local authorities have policies which encourage 'local listing'. Local listing does not bring any additional consent requirements over and above the requirement for planning permission but it is a status recognised in national planning policy so locally listed heritage is a material consideration when making planning decisions.

The writing of a Community-Led Plan can provide a useful opportunity to determine whether there is community and local authority support for local listing and what aspects of local heritage might be designated. It can also help to make the case for putting an area forward for designation as a conservation area or reconsidering the boundaries of existing conservation areas.

The English Heritage Good Practice Guide for Local Listing is available at: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/local/local-designations](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/local/local-designations)



## FINDING ADDITIONAL AND NEW USES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS ►

Finding additional uses for historic buildings can help to ensure their continuing value to the community. Where original uses are no longer possible, new functions can be found that retain their historic character

**Figure 26:** Farmers market in St Giles' Church, Shipbourne, Kent © English Heritage

**Figure 27:** A village shop has recently been opening in outbuildings of the community-owned Derby Arms, Witherslack, Lake District National Park © English Heritage

**Figure 28:** Well-designed village shop, cafe and meeting place within St Leonard's Church in Yarpole, Herefordshire © English Heritage

**Figure 29:** Chapel converted to residential use, St Dennis, Cornwall © English Heritage

**Figure 30:** Village school converted to study centre, Minstead, New Forest National Park © English Heritage

**Figure 31:** Methodist chapel converted to affordable rural housing, Ambleside, Lake District National Park © English Heritage

**Figure 32:** Traditional farm building converted to workshop, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset © English Heritage

**Figure 33:** Traditional farm building converted to community centre, Little Basing, Hampshire © Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council





### GOOD PRACTICE: COMMUNITY-LED CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS

With the encouragement of their local authority, the people of **Cranbrook**, a small town in Kent have taken the lead in producing an appraisal of their Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Advisory Committee, comprising representatives of local interest groups, the business community, relevant professionals including architects and parish and borough councillors drew up the appraisal informed by the relevant English Heritage guidance. The Appraisal has subsequently been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

### ADDITIONAL AND NEW USES FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Ideally, if they are to be kept in good heart, all historic buildings need to be in active use. If their original use is no longer viable, consideration can be given to finding additional uses or to adapting them to wholly new purposes, while trying to maintain their character and evidence of past use. These buildings could include redundant places of worship or industrial or agricultural buildings.

If the community needs a new service or space, consider whether this can be provided in a currently under-used historic building, such as a church hall, village shop or pub, to ensure it is kept in regular use.

In rural areas, historic farm buildings present a particular opportunity for re-use, as so many are becoming redundant with the potential to become derelict eyesores. Some agricultural buildings are situated in villages and hamlets and may be particularly suitable for conversion to community use, business or live-work units or housing. Buildings lying outside the village have similar potential, although local plan policies will need to be taken into account.

More detailed English Heritage guidance on the adaptive re-use of historic buildings includes:

- *New Uses for Former Places of Worship* available at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/new-uses-former-places-of-worship/](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/new-uses-former-places-of-worship/)
- *Living Buildings in a Living Landscape: Finding a Future for Traditional Farm Buildings and The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice* available at [www.helm.org.uk/farmbuildings](http://www.helm.org.uk/farmbuildings)

Giving redundant historic buildings new life through sensitive refurbishment to improve services, facilities or energy efficiency needs to be considered before options involving demolition and new building. This is because it will retain the historic character of the community and is generally more cost-effective than new-build projects. It also makes more environmentally sustainable use of the energy and materials already used in creating the original building.

More detailed guidance on the sensitive refurbishment of historic buildings includes:

- *Refurbishing Historic School Buildings* available at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/refurbishing-historic-school-buildings](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/refurbishing-historic-school-buildings)
- advice from the Campaign for Real Ale on the sensitive refurbishment of historic pubs is available at [www.heritagepubs.org.uk/home/adviceforplanners.asp](http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk/home/adviceforplanners.asp)

### ACTION ON CONSERVATION AREAS

One in 7 conservation areas is 'at risk', meaning it has deteriorated over the last three years, or is expected to do so over the next three. Your community can play an important part in reversing this deterioration. Three key actions that can address this loss of character are:

- making sure each conservation area has a Conservation Area Appraisal
- providing each conservation area with a Management Plan
- removing permitted development rights (development rights that do not require planning permission) where there is good evidence that this is damaging local character. This can be achieved through a formal process known as an Article 4 direction, on which your Local Planning Authority can provide advice.

The local authority is ultimately responsible for taking these actions, but concerns and widespread backing for action set out within a community-led plan will help make the case. With limited public resources for heritage there may also be potential for more direct community leadership in producing appraisals (see Cranbrook, to left), although this is still rare and does require good local expertise and a lot of effort.



For more detailed advice on dealing with conservation areas at risk, see:

**[www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation\\_areas\\_at\\_risk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/conservation_areas_at_risk)**

#### TAKING OWNERSHIP

An increasing number of community-based organisations are taking on responsibility for managing assets that were formerly owned by local authorities. This can focus the energies of local people to prevent these assets, which are often local landmarks, from falling into decay or inappropriate use or to help secure the future of a local amenity, such as a community hall or public open space. English Heritage, along with partner organisations, including the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Asset Transfer Unit, has published guidance to support the process of successful asset transfer. Its purpose is to ensure that all parties involved in the process have access to all the information they require to make it a success. That guidance, along with a number of case studies can be found at **[www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/get-involved/take-ownership](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/get-involved/take-ownership)**

#### IMPROVING CARE FOR YOUR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Caring for places of worship can benefit the whole community. This is because they can accommodate a wide range of uses, ranging from post offices to crèches; lunch clubs to adult education classes, concerts, exhibitions and markets. However the cost and responsibility of maintaining them generally falls on a few volunteers who are part of the congregation. If historic places of worship are to be well-maintained and made available for everyone in the parish, the wider community, not just those who want to worship in the buildings, needs to help out. Inventive community plans will recognise the potential of places of worship as a possible venue for community space and facilities, particularly where there are no other public spaces.

More detailed advice on caring for places of worship and finding new uses is available at **[www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/caring-for-places-of-worship](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/caring-for-places-of-worship)**

Additional information on the wider use of places of worship is available on **[www.churchcare.co.uk/develop.php](http://www.churchcare.co.uk/develop.php)**



Figure 34: © English Heritage



## NEW BUILDING AND GOOD DESIGN IN THE COUNTRYSIDE ►

If well designed, new or converted buildings can enhance the character and vitality of your community. Traditional or novel design and the use of local materials all have a part to play

**Figure 35 and 36:** Affordable rural housing using traditional materials at Corfe Castle, Dorset (35) © English Heritage and Bakewell Derbyshire (36) © Ovi Rominger

**Figure 37:** Earthen-walled toilet block, Swanage Steam Railway, Norden, Dorset © English Heritage

**Figure 38:** Contemporary conversion of a farm building in Northamptonshire © English Heritage

**Figure 39:** The RIBA award-winning Jerwood Centre, Grasmere, Lake District National Park uses traditional materials and respects existing buildings © English Heritage

**Figure 40:** The David Mellor cutlery factory, Hathersage, Peak District National Park, built in local gritstone and with a spectacular lead roof © English Heritage

**Figure 41:** Modernist conversion of ruinous manor house at Blencowe Hall, near Penrith in Cumbria, for use as a private residence and holiday accommodation © English Heritage





## ENCOURAGING GOOD DESIGN

Your Community-Led Plan provides an opportunity to encourage good design in new development. Your appraisal will have explained the village layout and defined its character so new development can be designed to reflect and complement that character. A rural location does not prevent high-quality innovative design and this can be particularly effective when re-using and extending a traditional building or when executed in local building materials.

## SKILLS AND MATERIALS

It is not possible to maintain the distinctive historic character of the place you live without access to craft skills or the right traditional materials. There is a national shortage of skilled craftsmen and some local materials, such as building stone, can also be very hard to obtain.

Your plan could consider the opportunities for bridging the gap in both skills and materials. This might be through proposals that encourage the creation of new businesses, such as local building firms, local timber production, or small-scale 'delves' for building stone. You may also address skills and materials shortages as part of heritage projects following up on your plan.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A population that is diverse in background, age and income benefits the vitality of the community, but retaining this diversity often requires new affordable housing. The historic character of the village need not be a block on affordable housing if it is well planned. You might consider, for example, the potential of redundant buildings to provide affordable housing.

Where new housing is proposed in sensitive historic locations it needs to be carefully designed and use appropriate materials. Good design will pay attention to – and take inspiration from – the scale, density, character and setting of surrounding historic buildings.

Detailed English Heritage guidance on the affordable housing is available at [www.helm.org.uk/affordablehousing](http://www.helm.org.uk/affordablehousing)

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Community-Led Plans may also consider whether re-using historic buildings can contribute to the community's energy efficiency, while retaining local character. Many rural historic building types are already energy-efficient and the performance of others can be easily and cost-effectively enhanced. The re-use of buildings as local work spaces can reduce the need to

travel to more distant work locations. Old buildings can house community energy schemes and some, such as old water mills, can easily be converted to produce power.

Detailed English Heritage good-practice guidance on energy efficiency is available at [www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk](http://www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk) and your home.

## ACTION TO ENHANCE THE STREETSCAPE

The condition of the streets and lanes around your village can have a huge impact on its appearance, and they can easily become cluttered with unnecessary signage and road markings. Rural streetscapes tend to be characterised by their simplicity and lack of intervention, so it is important to avoid inappropriately urban characteristics when introducing traffic calming or parking control measures in your village. Retaining or reintroducing traditional signage helps to reinforce local distinctiveness.

A *street audit* can identify problems and issues and contribute to your community plan. More detailed English Heritage guidance is available as *Streets for All: Practical Case Studies*. This consists of a summary and ten leaflets on different aspects of making better streets, each featuring a community





42

### MAKING A DIFFERENCE ►

By acting as an inspiration for community action, your heritage can support the future of the place you live

**Figure 42:** Traditional building skills are essential to the maintenance of local heritage © Natural England

**Figure 43:** Gibson Mill, a former cotton mill at Hardcastle Crags, West Yorkshire, is now used to generate energy © National Trust

**Figure 44:** Affordable rural housing combining converted farm buildings with new build at Blanchland in the North Pennines AONB © Bob Edwards

**Figure 45:** Repairing a cobbled road, Hawes, Yorkshire Dales National Park © English Heritage

**Figure 46:** Skills training session at Holy Trinity Church, Ratcliffe-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire © SPAB

**Figure 47:** Repairs to a traditional road sign in Somerset © Quantock Hills AONB Service



43



44



45



46



47



where this has been put into practice.  
The guidance is available at:

 [www.helm.org.uk/server/show/nav.19645](http://www.helm.org.uk/server/show/nav.19645)

A good example of local design advice for the rural streetscape is provided by 'Rural Streets and Lanes: A Design Handbook' published by The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, available at: [www.kentdowns.org.uk/pdf/masterfinal.pdf](http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/pdf/masterfinal.pdf) 

In addition, advice on traditional rural road signage is available at: [www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/planning-and-transport/streets-for-all/future-for-fingerposts](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/planning-and-transport/streets-for-all/future-for-fingerposts) 

#### ENHANCING OTHER HISTORIC GREEN SPACES

Give consideration to conservation and enhancement projects for other aspects of historic public open space as well as the 'streetscape'. These include churchyards, village greens, parks and gardens; bodies of water such as mill or village ponds; and even individual veteran and other historic trees. They can also include historic transport routes such as canals or disused railway lines and the footpath network surrounding the village.

Consider, for example, whether there is widespread community support for protecting open space through registration as a Town or Village Green or for negotiating improvements to your surrounding rights-of-way network, to offer new ways to access your local heritage.

Advice on the conservation of churchyards is available at: [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk) 

Advice on common land, village greens, open spaces and public rights of way is available from the Open Spaces Society at [www.oss.org.uk](http://www.oss.org.uk) 

Advice on caring for historic trees is available at: [www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk) 

#### MAINTAIN HERITAGE IN THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

Many local historic features and buildings will lie in the farmland around your village and many will be visible from footpaths or on common land. If these are in poor condition, the landowner or the commoners may be able to get assistance to help improve things through Natural England's *Environmental Stewardship Scheme*.

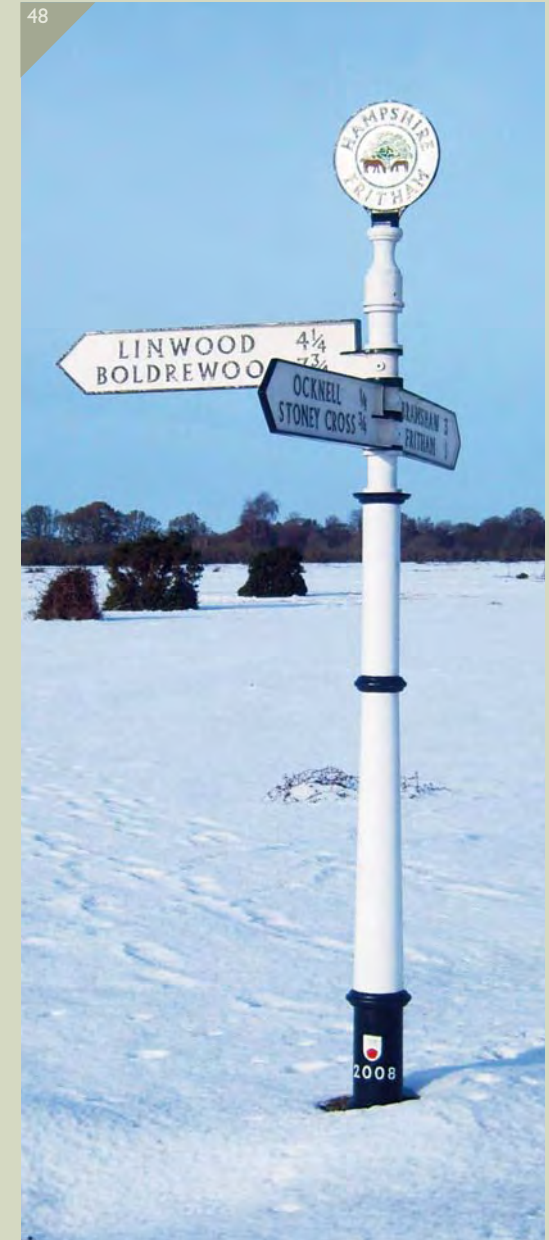


Figure 48: © English Heritage



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE ▶

Local action is the key to ensuring your community heritage is cared for and appreciated

**Figure 49:** Members of the parish planting trees on the historic common at Chesham Bois to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 © Cllr David Hamer, Chesham Bois Parish Council

**Figure 50:** Volunteers surveying risk at the ruined 18th-century Banqueting House at Hornby Castle, Bedale, North Yorkshire © Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland

**Figure 51:** Churchyards can be cared for in ways that benefit both people and wildlife. St Weonard's churchyard, Herefordshire © Caring for God's Acre

**Figure 52:** Community workshop, Cranborne Chase AONB © CCWWD AONB





English Heritage advice on managing the heritage and archaeology of farmland is available on

 [www.helm.org.uk/farmadvice](http://www.helm.org.uk/farmadvice)

#### IMPROVE INTERPRETATION AND UNDERSTANDING

Any survey you undertake of local heritage may identify aspects that are not recognised or are under-appreciated by the community. Consider whether these can be better explained, perhaps by providing an information board for a poorly understood ancient monument or by opening a building or historic site on Heritage Open Days, during the Festival of British Archaeology or Civic Day (see [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk), [www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk) and [www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/civic-day](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/civic-day)) 

You may also want to go beyond your local buildings, townscape and archaeology to consider place names, customs and traditions. The names of fields, woods, lanes and local pubs are also important aspects of the history of a parish and can deepen understanding of local heritage (see, for example, [www.commonground.org.uk](http://www.commonground.org.uk)) 

Once information is gathered for a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement, it can also be used in a variety of ways to stop it being forgotten again, for example by providing a parish history board in a public place, an attractive parish map in the parish or church hall or extra pages on the parish web site.


You can also establish a longer-term project to dig deeper into your history than is immediately needed for your community plan. For a more in-depth study, the key local organisations and places to search are *local studies libraries*, *local museums*, and *local civic societies*. You could study the parliamentary enclosure maps and tithe maps often available through local studies libraries, county record offices and land-owning estates. Where they exist, *local history societies* and *local historians* can be invaluable. Above all, *local people* can be a valuable source of information about the history of your village or parish. Ask local residents for old photographs, newspaper cuttings, family history, and old records that might give an insight into earlier use of land and buildings.

You may also want to go beyond your local buildings, townscape and archaeology to consider place names, customs and traditions. The names of fields, woods, lanes and local pubs are also important aspects of the history of a parish and can deepen understanding of local heritage (see, for example, [www.commonground.org.uk](http://www.commonground.org.uk)) 

#### FUNDING

Funding for community heritage projects is inevitably limited, but a community-led plan provides a good basis for making a grant application and can improve the likelihood of success.

Advice on securing funding for a wide range of heritage projects is available at [www.ffhb.org.uk](http://www.ffhb.org.uk) and through the Heritage Lottery Fund website at [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) 

Some assistance is also available through funding streams such as the LEADER or Environmental Stewardship schemes of the *Rural Development Programme for England*. For examples of LEADER schemes which have benefitted local heritage see *Leader and the Historic Environment* at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/leader](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/leader) 



## DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES ►

Action to explore, interpret and understand your local heritage will make sure it stays at the heart of the village and parish

**Figure 53:** Community archaeological excavation of the old parish church at Perranzabuloe, Cornwall © Dick Cole, Historic Environment (Projects), Cornwall Council

**Figure 54:** Interpretation board at Cawood Castle and Garth, North Yorkshire produced by the Cawood Castle Garth Group, on behalf of the parish council © English Heritage

**Figure 55:** Opening heritage properties to the public on Heritage Open Day, St Nicholas' Church, Charlwood, Surrey © Rod Shaw

**Figure 56:** An interpretation board produced by the Friends of Pulverbatch Castle highlights the heritage and wildlife value of this Shropshire site © Friends of Castle Pulverbatch

**Figure 57:** Simple information board provided by the Moat Society, St Briavel's Castle, Gloucestershire © English Heritage





## PART 3

# DEVELOPING AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The key section in your Community-Led Plan is an **action plan** that sets out **recommendations for actions** to be taken, identifies who will take them and gives dates for completion. A Village Design Statement or equivalent will also have descriptions of local character from which **guidelines** for future changes are developed.

Your plan will be more effective if it includes recommendations and guidelines for your local heritage alongside those for other topics, such as the natural environment or village services. These recommendations will be the guiding principles to help you achieve the community's aims in terms of its heritage and to set out clearly how you want your village or parish to be in the future. Even if you do not expect a great deal of change locally, your plan will need recommendations repair your local heritage and to respond adequately to future problems and opportunities.

Although your plan may have particular sections dedicated to local heritage, it is very important to consider the implications of **all** aspects of the plan for your heritage. For example, your plan might be concerned with education provision and your local school may be a historic building. If so, proposals for the school should take account of its historic character.

If you wish your plan to be adopted by the Council you need to demonstrate that all sections of the community, including local businesses, residents and voluntary groups, have been involved in the planning process and that your proposed actions recommendations and guidelines have been discussed with the council officers, land owners and organisations which might implement them. You may also wish to undertake some additional **preparatory projects** before you begin the process of drafting recommendations. Or you may want to identify some **future projects** in the Action Plan. Possible options are suggested in Section 2.

Before you begin to frame any detailed recommendations or guidelines on heritage it will be helpful to:

- check the existing policies for heritage or for your village or parish in the adopted local development plan or its proposed replacement
- assess the information you have gathered from records, maps and guidance on heritage
- weigh up opinions you have been offered in community meetings and surveys and consider how these relate to local heritage
- list the strengths and weaknesses of your local heritage, together with any threats to it, or any opportunities it provides.

Guidelines in your plan are likely to develop naturally from this process. For example by identifying:

- which buildings and areas are protected;
- which other parts of the village contribute to its character and which views the community thinks are important to retain or enhance
- which parts of the village need renovating
- what you think is harmful to the historic interest and character of your village and is capable of improvement
- where the heritage interest of the buildings and landscape lies
- what size and scale of buildings or materials contributes to the character; and what you are looking to emulate in any new buildings
- where archaeology may be important in terms of the location of any proposals, as it may need to be preserved or excavated before development.



### GOOD PRACTICE: GUIDANCE ON LANDSCAPE

The Landscape and Design Statement for **Kelsall**, in Cheshire, draws attention to the relationship between the landscape setting of the village, with its sandstone geology, and the distinctive character of traditional buildings and boundaries within the settlement. It seeks to protect this landscape and distinctiveness by augmenting development plan policies.

Figure 58: © English Heritage

Keep in mind your social and economic proposals when you are considering what buildings the community wants to keep or enhance. Try to match proposals for village services with space in under-used buildings. For example:

- Are there enough homes in the village to sustain your local school or village shop? If not, can conversion of redundant historic farm buildings or other disused structures contribute to meeting the need for new housing and helping to retain the population and services?
- What sort of new businesses might be needed in the future and what sort of guidelines are needed to encourage them to invest? Are under-utilised buildings available and are they best suited for use as housing, workshops or live-work units?
- Does all new development need to be in the village or main hamlets, or are new recommendations to encourage housing or businesses in outlying farmsteads desirable as well?

Consider adding recommendations your plan for all aspects of the historic environment, including the streetscape, green space and other aspects of public space. Remember to check your recommendations for green spaces to ensure they respect both their historic and natural importance.

Finally, consider what trends are affecting the place you live in, such as changes in employment patterns, population or the nature of local businesses. Are they harmful or beneficial? Do they need to be modified and what is most effective way of achieving this? Will there be unintended effects? Think through the consequences of any proposed action.

If you want your plan adopted formally by the council you will need to have discussions with officers and members of the council at an early stage to check how you plan relates to the heritage policies in your local development plan or any supplementary planning documents. Do your proposals fit with these? Could the local plan policies be added to and improved upon?





## PART 4 PRESENTATION OF YOUR PLAN

### GOOD PRACTICE: ATTRACTIVE PRESENTATION

The Parish Plan for **Brereton** and **Ravenhill**, is available both in hard copy and as a web version. The version on the website contains an interactive map of the village, locating the listed buildings and buildings of interest as well as providing a photograph and description of each feature.

The Village Design Statement for **Good Easter**, in Essex is available as a web version which can be downloaded. The document contains good illustrative maps of the village detailing character areas, settlement pattern supported with good photographic evidence.

Advice on drafting and presenting your plan is provided by the ACRE toolkit, which also sets out a suggested structure for a community-led plan. Information, recommendations and guidelines on the community's heritage will be only one part of the plan and needs to be fitted into its overall structure.

- Information on heritage from records, maps and surveys would form part of Section 3: Snapshot Profile of the Community.
- Results of questionnaire surveys would be included in Section 4: Consultation.
- Specific actions relating to protection, regeneration, or enhancement of the historic environment would be included in the Action Plan.

Presenting information about your local heritage will usually require a mixture of written description, illustrations and maps. You may even opt for a more interactive web-based approach. Remember that, alongside a specific heritage section, heritage issues need to be fully integrated with other sections of your plan.

Don't overload the plan with too much detail on heritage. Too much text can be off-putting and obscure the really important issues. If you have a lot of information, you can include the key points and make use of tables or appendices. If your parish heritage

is well-documented elsewhere (in a Conservation Area Character Appraisal or Landscape Character Assessment or in Supplementary Planning Documents), it may be sensible to cross-reference to these other documents, and summarise their content in your plan.

Some of the best plans adopt a more visual approach, with descriptions and photographs related to key maps. Illustrations make a document easier to digest and are particularly appropriate when considering your settlement's 'townscape'. Well-taken photographs of key heritage assets and views are always desirable and should be clearly dated and located. Historical photographs are helpful in interpreting previous uses of buildings, understanding the evolution of a place, and appreciation of historic views.

Maps are particularly important for understanding heritage. They can be used to show the locations of individual buildings and sites and are the only practical way to mark key boundaries such as the extent of a conservation area. As well as using maps to identify the location of historic buildings and sites, they are also useful for presenting analysis, proposals and recommendations. For example, key views can be marked with arrows on a suitable base map and areas that need enhancement can be

shaded. A map is the best way to explain site-based or area-based plan recommendations. Access to Ordnance Survey maps is discussed below but a map drawn by a local artist or community group can also be visually engaging. The process of producing such maps can also lead to a greater understanding of the place and are invaluable when monitoring changes over the long term.

Remember to date your plan (when prepared and when adopted) and the maps and photographs it contains as the statutory designations and other heritage information will change over time. Ensure a copy is deposited in an accessible place – it will become an important historical document in its own right – and consider whether it will be easily understood when it is consulted in the future.





## ACCESS TO MAPS

Large-scale Ordnance Survey maps, which were first produced in the later 19th-century, can be particularly informative and are easily accessible in digital format from commercial retailers such as *emapsite* and *Landmark*.

The Ordnance Survey 'OS OpenData' initiative provides free access to a range of modern OS maps and data that can be downloaded and used. These are restricted to mid-scale map products, which may be of greatest use in presenting whole-parish scale information.

Ordnance Survey also maintains 'OS OpenSpace' a simple online Geographic Information System (GIS) developer portal which provides access to a range of OS mapping products and allows the creation of simple on-line GIS for inclusion in local community-based websites. Some software development skills are required but the system uses simple industry-standard coding and programming. OS OpenSpace data is free to use and is covered by a simple Creative Commons user licence. Both OS OpenData and OS OpenSpace may be accessed through the Ordnance Survey website [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk)

Ordnance Survey base maps at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500 are often the most suitable for Village Design Statements, as they show individual buildings and plots. If they are kept uncluttered they will be easier to read, so you may need more than one map for different categories of local heritage. Remember that listed buildings do not have designated boundaries. The extent of land covered by the listing (the 'curtilage') is a matter for legal interpretation, so is better identified with a dot or other symbol.

Large-scale mapping data, for illustrating your plan, is available from a number of sources – depending on the status of your group or society. To investigate the best option, contact the Ordnance Survey directly at: [customerservices@ordnancesurvey.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@ordnancesurvey.co.uk)



Figure 59: Historic OS Mapping: © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024.



## APPENDIX 2: USEFUL LINKS

Action with Communities  
in Rural England (ACRE)  
[www.acre.org.uk](http://www.acre.org.uk)

Ancient Tree Forum and Woodland Trust  
[www.frontpage.woodlandtrust.org.uk/ancient-treeforum/atfaboutus/aboutus.htm](http://www.frontpage.woodlandtrust.org.uk/ancient-treeforum/atfaboutus/aboutus.htm)

The Ancient Tree Hunt  
[www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk)

Association of Gardens Trusts  
[www.gardenstrusts.org.uk](http://www.gardenstrusts.org.uk)

The Association of Small Historic Towns  
and Villages of the United Kingdom  
[www.ashtav.org.uk](http://www.ashtav.org.uk)

Campaign to Protect Rural England  
[www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)

Civic Voice  
[www.civicvoice.org.uk](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk)

The Domesday Book online  
[www.domesdaybook.co.uk](http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk)

Common Ground  
[www.commonground.org.uk](http://www.commonground.org.uk)

The Council for British Archaeology  
[www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk)

The Domesday Book online  
[www.domesdaybook.co.uk](http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk)

English Heritage  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Directory of all County Gardens Trusts  
[www.gardenstrusts.org.uk](http://www.gardenstrusts.org.uk)

HELM (Historic Environment  
Local Management)  
[www.helm.org.uk](http://www.helm.org.uk)

Heritage Funding Directory  
[www.heritagelink.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php](http://www.heritagelink.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php)

The Heritage Gateway  
[www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

Heritage Lottery Fund  
[www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire  
Downs AONB historic landscape  
characterisation  
[www.historiclandscape.co.uk](http://www.historiclandscape.co.uk)

Images of England  
[www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk)

Listed Buildings Online  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk/lbonline](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/lbonline)

Looking at Buildings  
[www.lookingatbuildings.org.uk/index.html](http://www.lookingatbuildings.org.uk/index.html)

MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic  
Information for the Countryside)  
[www.magic.defra.gov.uk](http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk)

Natural England  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

The Open Spaces Society  
[www.oss.org.uk](http://www.oss.org.uk)

Ordnance Survey Mapping  
and Data Centres  
[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/partnerships/mdc/index.html](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/partnerships/mdc/index.html)

OS OpenData service  
[www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/opendata](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/opendata)

Parks & Gardens UK  
[www.parksandgardens.ac.uk](http://www.parksandgardens.ac.uk)

Pevsner Architectural Guides  
[www.pevsner.co.uk](http://www.pevsner.co.uk)

Victoria County History  
[www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk)

A Vision of Britain through Time  
[www.visionofbritain.org.uk](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk)



## APPENDIX 3: LINKS TO SOME EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY-LED PLANS

Acton, Edleston & Hunhull

[www.cheshireaction.org.uk/forms/parishplans/completed/Acton%20Edleston%20Henhull%20Parish%20Plan.pdf](http://www.cheshireaction.org.uk/forms/parishplans/completed/Acton%20Edleston%20Henhull%20Parish%20Plan.pdf)

Brereton & Ravenhill

[www.davecottongraphicdesign.com/Parish\\_Plan\\_Intro.htm](http://www.davecottongraphicdesign.com/Parish_Plan_Intro.htm)

Castle Hedingham

[www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/9FEE2331-8003-489A-B2A5-6DDA9C127B1A/0/CastleHedinghamVillageDesignStatement.pdf](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/9FEE2331-8003-489A-B2A5-6DDA9C127B1A/0/CastleHedinghamVillageDesignStatement.pdf)

Good Easter

[www.goodeaster.org.uk/vds\\_document.htm](http://www.goodeaster.org.uk/vds_document.htm)

Horton

[www.wiltshire.gov.uk/horton\\_village\\_design\\_statement.pdf](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/horton_village_design_statement.pdf)

Kelsall

[www.kelsall.org.uk/VDS.html](http://www.kelsall.org.uk/VDS.html)

Murton

[www.york.gov.uk/content/45053/64848/64860/Planning\\_advice\\_and\\_guidance/Murton\\_vds](http://www.york.gov.uk/content/45053/64848/64860/Planning_advice_and_guidance/Murton_vds)

Prestbury

[www.macclesfield.gov.uk/publication.asp?pageid=12766](http://www.macclesfield.gov.uk/publication.asp?pageid=12766)

Sturminster Newton

[www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148859&filetype=pdf](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148859&filetype=pdf)

Winterborne Stickland

[www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148010&filetype=pdf](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148010&filetype=pdf)

Wymeswold

[www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148010&filetype=pdf](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=148010&filetype=pdf)



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

English Heritage intends to keep this advice under review and to amend it in response to feedback from community groups and others. We will also review and update it in response to developments in neighbourhood planning. If you have comments or suggestions about it please contact Sarah Tunnicliffe, National Rural & Environmental Adviser at [sarah.tunnicliffe@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:sarah.tunnicliffe@english-heritage.org.uk).

This document was prepared by Stephen Trow and Sarah Tunnicliffe with assistance from Pat Aird, Tim Brennan, Tim Brooks, Nick Chapple, Katy Coate, Katja Condy, Andrew Davison, Keith Emerick, Diana Evans, Phil Garner, June Gosling, Sarah Green, Grover Lewis Associates, Martin Hawkins, Pete Herring, Sarah Holloway, Jon Humble, Lindsay Jones, Jeremy Lake, Owain Lloyd-James, Erick Matthews, Kate Minnis, Louisa Moore, Ian Morrison, John McCann, Judith Nelson, Ann Preston-Jones, Ferol Richards, Alyson Rogers, John Sewell, Amanda Smith, Rohan Torkildsen, Phil Turner, Charles Walker, Ben Wallace, Ruth Watkinson, Rowan Whimster, Jenifer White, Andrew Wood, Helen Woodhouse and Phillip Vincent.

## Cover images:

**Top left:** Tree planting by parish members at Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire © Cllr David Hamer, Chesham Bois Parish Council

**Top middle:** Square and Compass pub, Worth Matravers, Dorset © Tony Jerome, CAMRA

**Top right:** Heritage Open Day, St Nicholas' Church, Charlwood, Surrey © Rod Shaw

**Bottom left:** Community archaeological excavation at Perranzabuloe, Cornwall © Dick Cole, Historic Environment (Projects), Cornwall Council

**Bottom middle:** St Mary Magdalene, Caldecote, Hertfordshire © Brijesh Patel

**Bottom right:** Peak District village from a distance © Peak District National Park Authority 2011



ENGLISH HERITAGE

If you require an accessible version of this document (for instance in audio, Braille or large print) please contact our Customer Services Department on 0870 333 1181 or email [customers@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:customers@english-heritage.org.uk)

This advice is supported by

