

# Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2028

## Pre-Submission Consultation



Published by Burwash Parish Council for Pre-Submission Consultation with the local community under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42

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## Foreword

The Localism Act 2011 gives communities the ability to exercise more control over future developments by creating their own Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

In January 2016, Burwash Parish Council (BPC) agreed to proceed with the NDP for the entire Parish – Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common. After 3 years of investigation and consultation we are pleased to present to you the consultation “draft” of the Burwash NDP.

**Burwash Parish Council now seeks your views on this draft during a six-week consultation period which ends on 11 July 2019**

**This is your chance to influence the Neighbourhood Development Plan for our three Burwash villages**

There are a number of ways to make your views known :

- We will be holding two-drop in sessions on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, one at Burwash Common Playing Fields Pavilion between 10am- 12 noon and the other at the Internet Café, Bear Car Park between 1pm – 3pm.
- Online through our dedicated e-mail [info@burwashneighbourhoodplan.org](mailto:info@burwashneighbourhoodplan.org)
- Comment collection boxes in Burwash Common Playing Fields Pavilion, Jarvis the Butchers or the Parish Council post box outside the Internet Cafe

Additional copies of the entire Plan and Appendices are available via the Parish Clerk e-mail [burwashparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:burwashparishclerk@gmail.com) . A separate shorter version containing the Executive Summary, Vision, Objectives and proposed policies is also available.

**It is very important that we hear from as many residents as possible to ensure we have reflected your views correctly and to demonstrate the communities engagement and hopefully your support. This will be a key factor in obtaining approval for this Plan.**

Following this consultation, BPC will consider and respond to the comments received from the community before submitting a revised Plan to Rother District Council (RDC) after which it will be subject to consideration by an independent Examiner. If this is approved by the Examiner we aim to hold the required local community referendum on the NDP in the autumn. A majority vote in favour of the NDP will allow the Plan to be formally adopted. Thereafter it must be taken into account by developers, planners and local authorities when making or considering new developments in our Parish.

Finally, we would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who have freely given so much of their time. BPC and the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDPSG) wish to thank the community for their continued involvement in this important work. Without your contributions, this Plan would not have been possible.

Ian Rees and Nick Moore  
Joint Chairmen of the Burwash NDP Steering Group

## Executive Summary

1. The Localism Act 2011 gives communities the ability to exercise more control over future developments in their area by creating their own Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).
2. In January 2016, Burwash Parish Council (BPC) agreed to proceed with the NDP for the entire Parish. After three years of investigation and consultation this final “draft” document has been produced.
3. The process for the ‘making’ (adoption) of the NDP requires community consultation on the Plan. We are, therefore, seeking your views over a six-week consultation period ending on 11th July 2019.
4. Following consideration of the community’s views we will submit the final document to Rother District Council (RDC) for a further six-week consultation and then to an Examiner for independent examination. If the Plan passes examination, a Parish Referendum will be held. If the majority vote in favour of the NDP it will then be ‘made’ (adopted) and its policies will be a material consideration in all future planning applications in Burwash
5. Initial consultation brought together a number of local residents who volunteered to work on specific aspects of this Plan. The NDP Steering Group was formed along with four Sub-Groups covering the following aspects of this NDP:
  - Environment
  - Infrastructure including Leisure, Economy and Tourism
  - Housing
  - Consultation and Communications
6. Detailed investigation and consultation have been carried out over the past three years to inform the production of this document. A range of policies has been developed which reflect the views of the community on where new developments will be built, what they look like; what supporting infrastructure should be provided; and provide a framework for planning applications for the new buildings the community wants to see built in the future.
7. Options for sites for the development of new homes were looked at in order to meet the Burwash housing target set by RDC of 52 new homes by 2028. This target only relates to Burwash village as Burwash Weald and Burwash Common were not given a housing target by RDC in view of their status as hamlets and relative lack of accessibility to key facilities and services.
8. Only developments of six or more new homes count towards the Housing target set by RDC. An analysis of all planning applications across the Parish since 2002 shows that only four schemes would have met this requirement. One is the Old Rectory Court scheme which saw 18 existing units replaced by 19 new units.

9. A thorough review of all development opportunities was undertaken. This looked at the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) carried out by RDC which informed our housing target. In addition, we asked RDC to consider two additional sites for development which they subsequently rejected.
10. We also carried out a Call for Sites which brought forward four potential development sites (three were new and one had already been considered within the SHLAA). Following presentations, detailed evaluation and consultation sessions with residents it was decided, by public opinion, that none of these sites were suitable for development.
11. The recent decisions taken by RDC on the “Denton Homes” and Strand Meadow planning applications were also considered along with residents’ views about the need to protect the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
12. Further details of the review and assessments are included in Section 4 of this document under ‘Housing’ and supported by further information within the appendices.
- 13. We have concluded that there are no suitable development sites, which meet RDCs requirement of six or more homes, which will be supported by RDC and the community and for this reason we are not allocating any sites for development within this Plan.**
14. If this Plan is adopted the current housing target of 52 new homes by 2028 will still apply but all new planning applications will be assessed in the light of the policies set out in the agreed NDP. Applications which meet these requirements will generally be welcomed and supported.
15. The Parish Council is, however, committed to exploring other small schemes as exception sites like the highly successful Morris Close development in order to provide affordable housing for the community. It will also be looking into the merits of setting up a Community Land Trust to assist in the delivery of new homes.

## SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

### History of Burwash Parish

1. Burwash Parish has been inhabited since prehistoric times, with archaeological findings in Burwash Weald at Willingford Bridge dating from the Stone Age and evidence of Iron Age inhabitants from the Roman Forge nearby. At the time of the Norman Conquest, Burwash was a hilltop settlement with a wooden church which was replaced in 1090 by the stone church of St Bartholomew's.
2. By the 13th century, Burwash had emerged as an important trading centre, which prompted King Henry III, to grant a weekly market from 1252, an annual three-day fair in May and an additional annual fair on August 24th.
3. During the Elizabethan and Stuart periods, many of the older buildings were rebuilt or replaced, and during the 18th century many timber-framed houses were tile-hung. Burwash still has an exceptionally high proportion of medieval buildings in its High Street. The Parish has 137 listed buildings, with most of those in the High Street Conservation area.
4. In the 18th and 19th centuries Burwash gained a reputation for smuggling; several smugglers' graves can still be seen in the churchyard of St Bartholomew's. The main route connecting Heathfield and Hawkhurst, then a toll-road and now in part the A265, was a notorious spot for highwaymen.

**“The pretty High Street ought to be walked to be fully appreciated. It is not wide and it undulates gently. The colours are red and white.”**

The Buildings of England Sussex: East with Brighton and Hove, Nicholas Antram & Nikolaus Pevsner (2012, first published 1965)

5. Today, the Parish retains very many of the characteristics of its rich history. The communities in the three ridge-top villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common, continue to enjoy the beauty of the protected High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which surrounds them.
6. Burwash is closely linked with the author Rudyard Kipling. Kipling lived at Bateman's, now owned and managed by the National Trust, from 1902 until his death in 1936. Many of his best-known works were produced here including “Puck of Pook's Hill” and the poem “The Land” which is about Batemans. Bateman's is visited by around 129,000 people each year.



## Purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

### Our Parish

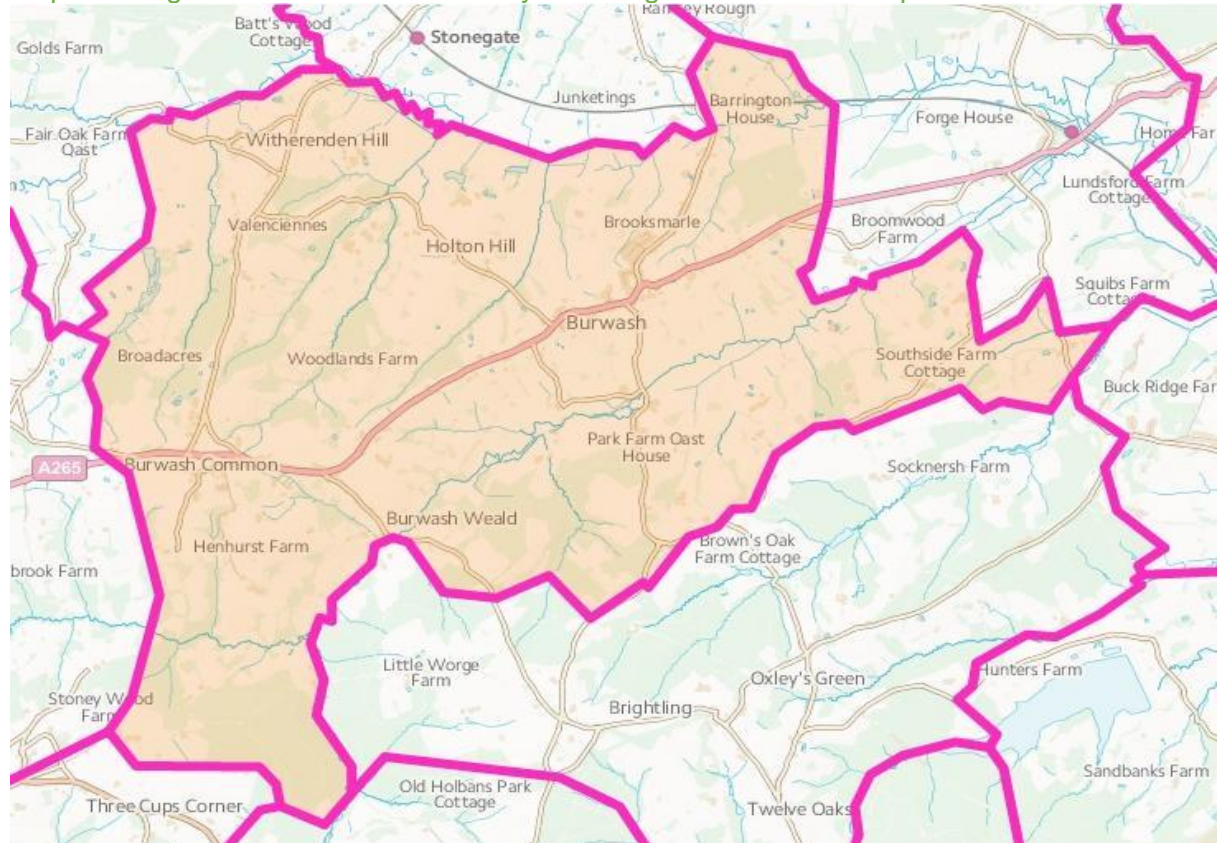
7. The Parish of Burwash is in East Sussex. For the purposes of government administration it has a Parish Council and forms part of Rother District. The Parish comprises three villages, Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common. It's local councils are East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council (RDC).
8. The three villages are ridge top settlements with steep river valley sides affording spectacular views across the Weald and towards the coast. The entire Parish is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The 2011 Census showed the Parish comprised of 2,713 inhabitants in 1,178 households.

**Burwash Parish is made up of three settlements all of which sit within the protected High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Neighbourhood Development Plan covers the whole Parish area**

### What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

9. The Localism Act 2011 gives communities additional powers to establish planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. This enables local people to guide and shape development in their neighbourhood area. NDPs can shape and influence where development should go, what it should look like, and what supporting infrastructure should be provided.
10. An NDP should support the strategic development needs set out in Rother District Council's Local Plan and Core Strategy and plan positively to support local development (as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework).
11. An NDP should address the development and use of land and include land use policies. This is because, if successful at examination and referendum, the NDP will become part of the statutory Development Plan once it has been made (brought into legal force) by the planning authority. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the NDP, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (see section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
12. This NDP has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, The Localism Act 2011 and Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Map showing the entire Parish boundary and Neighbourhood Development Plan area



## Context

13. The Burwash NDP sets out a series of local policies approved by the community which will govern decisions made by planners on new development. These policies will need to comply with legislative requirements as follows:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan).
  - the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).

## Summary of the statutory Plan process

14. The NDP process is as follows:

- Step 1: Designating the NDP area
- Step 2: Preparing a draft NDP
- Step 3: Pre-submission publicity and consultation
- Step 4: Submission of the draft NDP to the local planning authority (RDC)
- Step 5: Independent examination by an Examiner
- Step 6: Parish referendum
- Step 7: The NDP comes into force if approved by a majority in the Parish referendum



15. This consultation document forms part of Step 3. If the Plan meets the basic conditions and passes the independent examination, it is subsequently put to a Parish referendum. A majority vote will lead to the Plan becoming part of the Development Plan for the Parish and it will be used when determining future development decisions alongside the current Local Planning Authority Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## How the plan was developed

### Decision to proceed

16. The decision to go ahead with developing an NDP for Burwash was taken by the BPC in January 2016. This decision was formally registered and accepted by RDC in June 2016.

**The Parish Council decided to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan. This work has been a community led project with support from many local residents**

### Setting up the Steering Group

17. A number of local residents volunteered to assist with the development of the plan and together they made up the NDP Steering Group.

### Creation of Sub-Groups

18. Four Sub-Groups were set up to work on specific aspects of the plan and to report to the Steering Group. These were:
- Infrastructure, including Leisure Economy and Tourism
  - Environment
  - Housing
  - Consultation and Communication.
19. The Steering Group and Sub-Groups carried out widespread consultation and research; identifying issues and objectives and developing required policies.

### Developing the Plan

20. Through a combination of questionnaire surveys, public consultations, workshops, village events, e-mail correspondence and meetings with local businesses, the Steering Group was able to collect the views of the residents on what they wished to see for the future of their village. For residents, the most important aspects they wished the Neighbourhood Plan to address included Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism).

21. The vision and objectives in this document were presented to both the community and the BPC as a sound basis for proceeding with the NDP. There were various consultation events which informed the vision and objectives.
22. Further details on the consultation events and questionnaire results can be found in Appendices A, H, K and L.
23. This is a summary of the steps taken to produce the NDP:
  - a. A consultation questionnaire sent out to all households asking for their input into the key components of the Neighbourhood Plan (October/November 2016)
  - b. Publicity stands at the Summer and Christmas Fairs (2017 and 2018)
  - c. Stalls at the Annual Assembly (2017 and 2018)
  - d. Transport and Traffic survey (Dec 2017 and summer 2018)
  - e. Call for Sites (February 2018)
  - f. Vision and Objectives consultations (February/March 2018)
  - g. A Housing Needs Questionnaire (April 2018)
  - h. Air Pollution surveys (from June 2018 and ongoing)
  - i. Dark Skies Monitoring (early spring 2018)
  - j. A Biodiversity survey of the Parish by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (November 2018)
  - k. Site promoters/landowner presentations (April 2018)
  - l. A survey of local businesses (April/June 2018)
  - m. Community Consultation on the call for sites (July 2018)

## Community Engagement

24. Obtaining the views of the community has been an essential part of the development of this draft plan.

**Responses to the various consultations had a significant impact on formulating this Plan**

25. The various consultation events gave residents and other stakeholders (e.g. local businesses) the opportunity to contribute to its shape, key messages and policies. A full description of the community engagement process is included in the Communication Strategy. (See Appendix B)

## Evidence Gathering

26. The Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDPSG) began with a review of RDC's Core Strategy and Local Plan to ensure that our Plan addressed their objectives. Members of the NDPSG met with the High Weald AONB unit and reviewed their Management Plan and the ESCC Landscape Character Assessment. The NDPSG reviewed Parish records and relevant published statistical information including the Office of National Statistics, Census and East Sussex in Figures (ESiF). The Sub-Groups researched extensively, undertook surveys and engaged in community discussions to produce the documents in the Appendices

## Character Appraisal

### What is a Character Appraisal?

27. Planning future growth and development for the Parish requires a broad understanding of its characteristics and appearance. The Character Appraisal is a factual and objective report and includes analysis of the elements which make an area distinctive, such as historic properties, open spaces, building materials, property types, state of maintenance and landscape setting.

### Key characteristics

28. The Character Appraisal covers the entire Parish, but focuses on the three villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common.

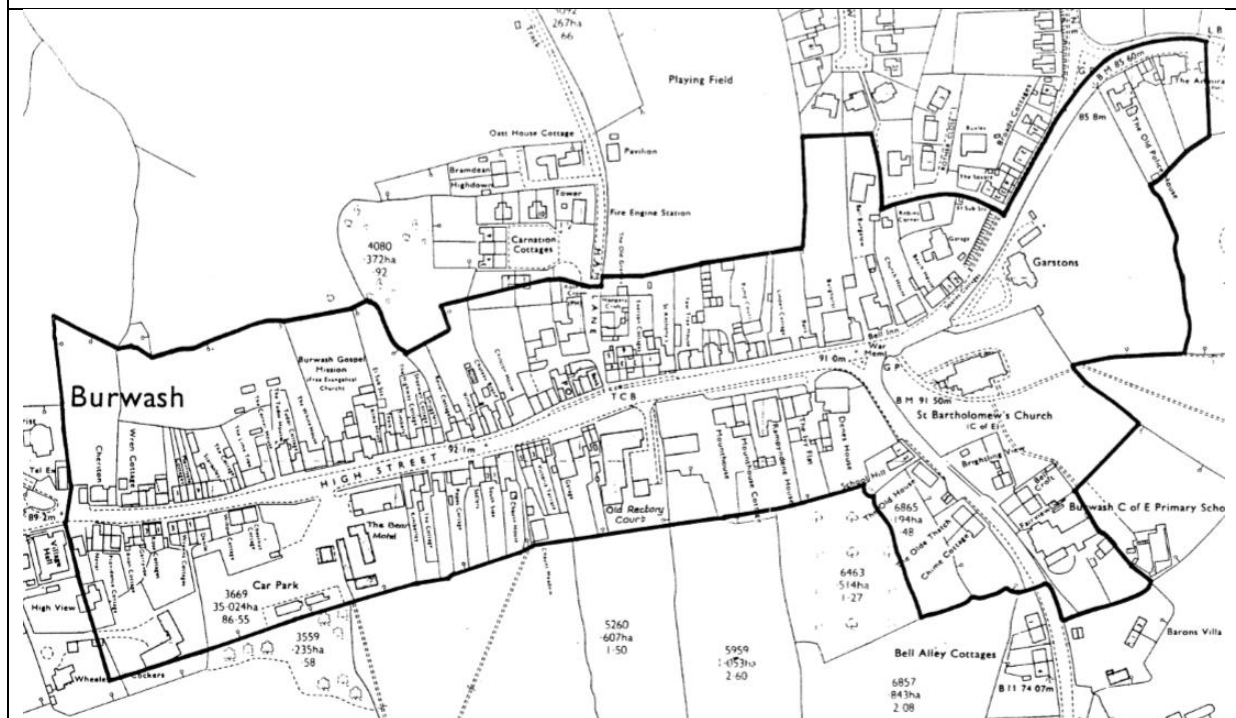
**Burwash is known as one of the most picturesque parishes in East Sussex with 137 listed buildings, 74 of which are on the High Street. Burwash village High Street makes up most of the Parish Conservation Area**

29. Most of the housing in the Parish is set either on the prominent ridgetop or along the several historic routeways which radiate steeply downwards into the Rother and Dudwell river valleys on either side of the ridge and continue as narrow, winding rural lanes many of which link to neighbouring settlements. The Parish was selected by English Heritage in its 2005 Historic Landscape Characterisation Project as a classic example of the landscape features of the Upper Rother and Dudwell High Weald AONB. It comprises spectacular valley landscapes with far-reaching views to the north and south across a series of ridges, floodplains and ancient woodland and, as noted by The Royal Geographical Society, as some of the best-preserved medieval field systems to survive unscathed in northern Europe. When considering future developments, it is vital that these important historical features are protected and retained.
30. Burwash Village High Street makes up most of the Parish Conservation Area. The Medieval and Georgian homes and frontages – mixing hung tile finishes, white weatherboarding, wooden sash windows and tall chimneys – have earned Burwash its reputation as one of the most picturesque and historically significant villages in East Sussex and gives it its distinctive character.

**“It would be difficult to find a more satisfying village, even in Sussex, than Burwash, for not only is it composed of unspoilt medieval buildings, rich in the mellow colouring of time, but from its ridge it commands extensive views of rare beauty, both by day and by night....”**

Taken from 'Rudyard Kipling's Village' by William A Ramsay (1934)

## Map of Burwash Conservation area



31. Burwash Common and Burwash Weald are predominantly linear settlements along the A265 road. Many houses sit on individual plots with generous gardens and behind mature hedges and fences. There is an attractive mixture of traditional Georgian and Victorian cottages and farmhouses. Houses have mostly been added singly or in small clusters reflecting the historical settlement pattern.
32. In Burwash Village, there have been a limited number of small post-war 'estate' developments, Highfields, Rother View, Rosemary Gardens, Strand Meadow, Hornbeam and Beechwood Close, The Old Orchard and most recently, Morris Close which was completed in 2018. In addition, four units on the Old Laundry site were completed in 2016, and the rebuild of Old Rectory Court which is currently underway in the High Street adds a net gain of one additional unit to the original number. Some designs have complemented the traditional style of the locality better than others, and some designs have been unsuitable for their AONB setting.
33. The full Character Appraisal is appended to this plan. (See Appendix C).

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

34. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process to identify likely significant effects of NDPs on the environment.
35. An SEA provides technical details of likely effects of the proposed NDP and sets out a management and monitoring framework to help mitigate and track any impacts.

**A Strategic Environmental Assessment is required by Rother District Council because of the likely impact of new housing development on our environment**

36. In order to have the NDP tested, a screening opinion request was drawn up and submitted to RDC by our consultant. The screening opinion describes the impact of building on the environment in landscapes sensitive to development (see Appendix D).
37. Following consultation with other bodies, RDC has determined that new developments would be likely to have significant environmental effects. On this basis, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for the proposed Burwash NDP. (See Appendix D).
38. RDC also concluded that the proposed NDP is not likely to have a significant effect on European designated protected habitats (Habitats Regulations) which is another environmental consideration.



## SECTION 2 OUR VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### Our Vision

1. The Steering Group, with guidance from Moles Consultancy, held a workshop on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017 to discuss and formulate the draft vision and objectives for the Burwash NDP.

2. The Vision:

**Our vision is for Burwash Parish to be a friendly, welcoming community of three villages.**

**We will enhance and protect our rich area of outstanding natural beauty and heritage whilst being sympathetic to appropriate development which meets the needs of our community.**

**To promote and support our existing and new businesses and encourage tourism, we will seek the appropriate infrastructure to ensure a sustainable future for Burwash.**

3. Through a combination of questionnaires and surveys, public consultations, workshops, village events and meetings, the Steering Group collected the views of parishioners on how they wished to see their village develop in the future. For the community, the three most important aspects they wished the NDP to address were Environment, Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism), and Housing. Three Sub-Groups covered each of these aspects while a fourth Sub-Group was set up to facilitate consultations.

4. In the Autumn of 2017 Burwash residents were given an opportunity to comment and add to their vision for Burwash. The two important questions asked were: -

*What are your three wishes for our three connected villages of Burwash?*

*What will it look like in 2028 if the best of our wishes came true?*

5. The responses, along with ideas that emerged from the community engagement events, shaped the vision and objectives for the Plan. These are included in Appendix L.

6. Capturing everyone's aims and aspirations also provided us with a sound basis on which to formulate the policies proposed in this draft Plan.

## Our Objectives

7. The objectives provide a framework to deliver development and other changes that conserve and enhance the sustainability of Burwash in a balanced approach to social, economic and environmental factors. They reflect the nature of the Parish and the direction the local community wants to take, especially in securing the long-term future of those community and environmental assets most precious to local people. They also accept and welcome change that will enable the community to grow in a sustainable way.

**The objectives identified by the community were taken forward by four Sub-Groups**

8. The objectives which seek to address the issues identified have been grouped into themes and have been used to develop the policies that are set out later in the Plan. The objectives initially put forward at the outset of this process have been developed to reflect the views of residents gathered through subsequent consultation.

## Environment

9. The Parish landscape has remained largely unchanged for many hundreds of years. This is reflected in its current natural and built environment and historic settlements. The Environment Sub-Group looked at the Parish's general history, archaeology and landmarks. They also studied the natural landscape, environment and biodiversity.

**Protecting, conserving and enhancing our environment were priorities agreed by everyone**

10. The following objectives reflect the importance of protecting, preserving and where possible enhancing the special features of the natural and historic environment of the Parish.
  - a. To conserve and protect our distinctive landscape with natural features such as hedges, ditches, verges, trees, wildflower meadows and ancient ghyll woodlands, including the two nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Willingford Wildflower Meadow and Dallington Forest.
  - b. To conserve and protect the Parish setting including views into and out of the historic built and landscape setting of the AONB.
  - c. To conserve and enhance the ecosystem and biodiversity of the Parish.
  - d. To improve the safety and quality of footpaths and bridleways and increase access around the Parish through this 'green' network.
  - e. To protect and enhance the open and community green spaces such as Swan Meadow, Burwash Common Playing Fields, Down Meadow and Hornbeam.
  - f. To support and encourage land stewardship schemes which protect nature, landscapes and the environment.

- g. To protect the dark skies by minimising light pollution.
- h. To protect and conserve the environment and minimise air pollution.
- i. To ensure that designated heritage assets in the parish and their settings are preserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.
- j. To ensure that landscaping associated with any new development fits within the local natural setting.

### **Infrastructure, including Leisure, Economy and Tourism**

- 11. The Infrastructure Sub-Group researched all the aspects of infrastructure within Burwash Parish and produced an Infrastructure Assessment report. The Infrastructure Assessment highlights potential areas of infrastructure improvement, strengthening and future proofing which are recorded in the list of potential projects.
- 12. The Infrastructure Assessment is complemented by a Traffic Survey and a survey of the views and needs of local businesses. These documents can also be found in the Appendix K.
- 13. The following objectives set out the important priorities.
  - a. To promote appropriate speed limits to ensure that local roads are safe for pedestrians and residents who live close to the road, and to facilitate free-flowing vehicle movement.

**Resident and pedestrian safety on our roads is of utmost importance**

- b. To maintain and seek to improve the bus services through the villages.
- c. To preserve the footways and pavements, and ensure they are suitable and safe for pedestrians, including those with mobility issues.
- d. To encourage more sustainable means of travel, including cycling and walking.
- e. To provide appropriate car parking space to meet the needs of residents, support the viability of local shops and businesses, and to promote tourism.

**Car parking that meets residents needs and enables local businesses to survive is key**

- f. To ensure that all financial contributions received by the Parish Council from new developments are used on projects and initiatives that meet the identified needs of the community.
- g. To promote and encourage small scale and appropriate tourism through active marketing initiatives.

- h. To help sustain the local economy and to help local business networking, including the development of a local business directory, in order to sustain the local economy.
- i. To identify opportunities for new business development and premises to provide further employment within the Parish whilst safeguarding existing employment for the community.

**Enabling efficient Wi-Fi communication is essential, whilst maintaining as far as possible 'invisibility' of the supporting infrastructure**

- j. To seek improvements in the communications infrastructure, including the provision of superfast broadband, whilst ensuring that the siting and appearance of any required equipment has minimal impact on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the local area.
- k. To encourage the provision of a range of appropriate activities which promote the Parish as a destination for visitors. These activities include events, specific walking trails, footpaths and bridleways. To produce promotional material to advertise tourist attractions in local, regional and national forums.

## Housing

14. The Housing Sub-Group carried out research into housing need and supply including a housing needs survey, a character appraisal and re-evaluation of land assessments. The Sub-Group led the Call for Sites process. These documents are included within the Appendices C, F and H.

- a. To plan for and support the delivery of suitable new housing which meets the current and future needs of the local community.
- b. To ensure that new housing development is designed and built to a high quality, respecting the existing character of the three villages in the Parish.

**Meeting local need and sympathetic design are an absolute must for any new housing**

- c. To provide an appropriate mix of housing to meet local needs for sale and rent including level access accommodation for the elderly or disabled and housing which is affordable to local households.
- d. To maintain and enhance the wooded and rural character of the villages by encouraging the integration of soft landscaping in new developments and, where appropriate, screening from the AONB.
- e. To protect and enhance listed buildings and other heritage assets.
- f. To conserve and enhance the historic environment in relation to buildings, landscapes, and places that enhance our heritage settings.

## **Consultation and Communication**

15. To prioritise and support open communication and consultation between residents, local businesses and organisations, the Parish, District and County Councils.
16. To build on the consultation and community communication processes adopted for the NDP and to ensure these are enshrined in future plans of the Parish Council.



## SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

1. Rother District Council (RDC) carried out a review of its 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in 2013. SHLAAs are land surveys which are carried out to identify areas of land suitable for potential development. This review informed RDC's Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2014 and provided the information to support the specific housing targets for each area.
2. The RDC assessment for Burwash Parish concluded that in the view of the relative inaccessibility to key services, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common were not suitable for additional housing and they were therefore not included within the housing target for Burwash Parish as a whole.

**Burwash village has been allocated a housing target of 52 new homes by Rother District Council. Burwash Weald and Burwash Common have not been allocated any housing targets**

3. Burwash village was identified as having access to key services. The initial housing target for Burwash village was set at 35 homes. However, in September 2014, the adoption of the Core Strategy brought with it an increase in this target to 52 homes.
4. Nine sites were identified by RDC in the Burwash village area as part of the SHLAA. Six were evaluated as 'red' (not suitable for development) and rejected by RDC for a variety of reasons including impact on the AONB, rural character and setting, and impact on biodiversity.
5. One site, (Shamrock Field land NW of 40-49 Shrub Lane - SHLAA ref. BU12a) was evaluated as 'amber' and a possible development site although it was acknowledged that there were significant AONB, community, landscape and biodiversity impacts to overcome in order for this site to be considered suitable for development.
6. Two sites were graded as 'green' and therefore suitable for development. These were the former Burwash laundry site (SHLAA ref. BU6) and the Strand Meadow site (SHLAA ref. BU2).
7. Full details of the SHLAA evaluations can be viewed on-line via the RDC website (See link on page 43 or the Burwash extract at Appendix N).

#### Land evaluation

8. At the outset the NDP Steering Group carried out its own evaluation of possible development sites within Burwash Parish. The options were very limited given the constraints of the AONB and the heritage setting, the problem of the steep slopes on either side of the High Street, and the need for proximity to the village hub. The Steering Group met with RDC to discuss the options identified:

### Two sites in fields to the south of Greenfield Lane

9. These two possible sites both relate to the frontages of the large field to the south of Greenfield Lane in Shrub Lane (SHLAA ref BU10). Following consideration RDC confirmed that neither site was suitable because: 'The rural setting and character of the village, landscape setting and lack of footpaths all weigh against development in the gaps. This view was supported at the last Local Plan Inquiry when this site came forward with the Inspector's conclusion stating that the green field location in the AONB, landscape intrusion and lack of adequate local employment made these sites unsuitable for development.'

### Other options

10. During the consultation process residents have raised questions about the potential for development of the Bell Inn and Oakley's Garage sites. These have both been considered.
11. The Bell Inn stopped operating as a public house in 2010. It would require a change of use from commercial to residential to permit it to be developed for housing. It is highly unlikely to provide six or more new homes which is the minimum number required by RDC to count towards the housing target so has not been included in this NDP.
12. Oakley's Garage has stood empty for over two years and is increasingly derelict. It is being marketed for sale but at present no application has been made for change of use to residential. In view of this it has not been considered within this NDP.

## **Analysis of planning permissions in Burwash**

13. RDC set the requirement that to count towards the housing target, developments must contain six or more homes. In the context of housing development in the Parish, this is a significant constraint.

**Since 2002 only four planning permissions would have been large enough to count towards the housing target**

14. An analysis of all planning permissions for additional homes granted since 2002 has been undertaken. This shows that 92% of permissions were below the housing target of six homes (46 of 50 permissions). Of the 4 schemes of six units or more, The Old Orchard (12 units) and Morris Close (10 units) have been completed. Strand Meadow (30 units) only has outline planning permission, with its subsequent application for full approval having been refused by RDC. This has now gone to appeal. Rectory Court (19 units) is under construction and replaces 18 units which were demolished. This would not count under RDC's criteria as this is only a net gain of one unit.
15. The full table of permissions since 2002 is shown in Appendix E.

## What has happened since the SHLAA?

16. One of the two sites evaluated as 'green' (suitable for development), the former Burwash Laundry site was developed in 2016 but only four houses were provided. This development therefore fails to meet the RDC minimum requirement of six homes for inclusion in the housing target.
17. Two further applications have come forward. One (known locally as 'Denton Homes site' after the name of the developer) comprises two areas considered in the SHLAA, one graded 'amber' and the other graded 'red' (SHLAA ref. BU12a and BU12r respectively). The other application concerns the site known as 'Strand Meadow' which also comprises two areas in the SHLAA graded 'green' and 'red' (SHLAA ref. BU2 and BU11 respectively).
18. The 'Denton Homes' scheme was refused by RDC because of its impact upon the AONB. This scheme had over 300 objections. Initially the developer appealed this decision. The appeal was also opposed by the local community. RDC, Burwash Parish Council, Etchingham Parish Council and a local community group were all given approval by the Planning Inspectorate to be participants in the Inquiry. The developers subsequently withdrew prior to the Inquiry citing their view that they felt they were unlikely to be successful.
19. The full planning application on the Strand Meadow scheme was considered by RDC and refused for several reasons including:
  - a. The design of the proposed development being out of character with the historic settlement of Burwash and the High Weald,
  - b. Poor pedestrian access,
  - c. Urban character and appearance of the buildings,
  - d. Does not represent a high-quality response to the local context and landscape, and
  - e. The failure to enter into a section 106 agreement.
20. This application had over 400 objections. The Strand Meadow decision has been appealed by the developer. The local community and the Parish Council has requested that this appeal should be heard at a Hearing or a Public Inquiry but the developer has asked for the appeal to be dealt with by correspondence. As at May 2019 the Planning Inspectorate has been asked to consider these requests.

## Call for sites

21. In January 2018, the Burwash NDPSG carried out a local 'Call for Sites' to identify land potentially suitable for new housing development within the Parish boundary of Burwash. Agents, developers, landowners, businesses, relevant local interest groups and others were invited to identify any sites, land or buildings across the Parish that could have potential for additional housing. Owners of land identified in the SHLAA were also contacted inviting them to submit proposals. It was made clear that putting forward a site for consideration did not mean it would necessarily be accepted for inclusion in the final plan. The Call for Sites consultation was open for six weeks.
22. The following four sites were submitted by landowners. A consultation event was held in April 2018 to enable proposers to make a presentation and give us a better understanding of their proposals.

**Four sites were submitted for consideration.  
All four submitted sites were outside the  
development boundary**

#### **Fairview Farm**

23. This is a greenfield site on the A265 in Burwash Common. The site is in an area not included in the SHLAA and is outside the development boundary for Burwash. The landowner was keen to bring this site forward for affordable housing. The site can accommodate approximately six housing units.

#### **Little Dawes**

24. This is a greenfield site on the A265 just to the west of Spring Lane. The site is outside the development boundary and is on a steep slope visible across the Rother valley. The site can accommodate approximately six units.

#### **Glebe House**

25. This is a greenfield site which is currently agricultural land to the east of the village of Burwash fronting the A265. The site is outside the development boundary and can accommodate approximately 15-20 units.

#### **Fields to the rear of 102-109 Shrub Lane**

26. This is a greenfield site which is currently agricultural land with fields that have a frontage onto Shrub Lane. The site can accommodate approximately 60 units.

### **Evaluation of sites**

27. Only the landowners for Fairview Farm and Little Dawes took up the invitation to attend the presentation event.

28. Following these presentations, the NDPSG carried out an evaluation of the specific schemes. This process was independently facilitated by Moles Consultancy (the consultant advising on the NDP). The report and evaluations are included in Appendices F and G respectively.

29. Residents were consulted about the Call for Sites outcome at two events in July 2018; one held in Burwash Common and the other in Burwash village. Over 50 households attended these events.

30. Residents were asked to consider the merits of the specific proposals and, as all four sites were outside the development boundaries, whether they felt the boundaries should be expanded to facilitate these potential schemes.

31. There was a small majority (52%) in favour of the Fairview Farm scheme but a clear majority (79-95%) against the other three. Of those consulted, 91% were opposed to extending the existing development boundaries.

32. Many comments - by far the single largest subject in the responses - related to the need for any development to provide housing to meet the needs of local people.

33. The NDPSPG consulted with BPC and, taking all feedback into consideration including the detailed evaluation, it was agreed that none of the sites was suitable for inclusion in the final Burwash NDP.

## Housing Needs Survey

34. The 2011 Census shows that the tenure mix for the Parish is as follows:

- 78.6% Owner occupiers
- 0.3% Shared Owners
- 9.8% Private rented
- 9.5% Social rented
- 1.8% Rent free

35. 'Affordable housing' is housing which is deemed to be affordable to those with a median household income or below. This is generally expressed as rents set no higher than 80% of the open market rent. There are several different types of affordable housing:

### Social Rented

36. Properties let as Social Rented units are usually let on Assured Tenancies which give the tenants security of tenure at rent levels broadly in line with those of Council tenancies.

### Affordable Rented

37. These are usually let on Assured Shorthold Tenancies which have a defined end date (maximum of three years). They are let at up to 80% of the local open market rent level.

### Shared Ownership

38. This enables lower income households to move into home ownership by being able to buy a portion of the property, usually a minimum of 25%. The household pays a reduced rent on the unowned balance. Shared owners can stay at that initial level of ownership or, if their circumstances allow, they can buy further shares and reduce their rent accordingly.

39. A Housing Needs Survey was carried out in June 2018 to determine local needs.

**Of the households who indicated that they will, or may, move within the next five years within the Parish, 79% say they will require either one or two bedroom homes**

40. Residents across the Parish were asked about the make-up and age profile of their household, the number of years they have lived in the Parish, whether they intended to move within the next five years and, if so, if they intended to remain in the Parish.

41. There were returns from 126 households which is 11.3% of the total households shown in the 2011 Census. Of these, 46 were from households with children. The average time lived in the Parish was 23 years and 8 months.



**There is high demand for bungalows or accessible housing for downsizing**

42. There were 18 households who indicated that they intend to move within the next five years with 38 who may move and 70 not intending to move.
43. Further analysis was carried out to establish the tenure of potential movers and the types and sizes of properties required.
44. This showed 79% of potential movers required one or two bedroom accommodation and the main requirement was for level access homes principally for the elderly to buy or rent in order to downsize. The second largest requirement was from young families requiring Social Rented houses. There was only very limited demand for Affordable Rent or Shared Ownership. The planning application on the 'Denton Homes' site in Shrub Lane was predominantly for three and four bedroom houses for sale with no provision of social rented units. The Strand Meadow development which was recently refused and is now being appealed proposed 30 homes which are mainly three bedroom houses with no provision of any affordable housing.

**Social rented homes for young local families are a key requirement**

45. The full analysis of this survey is in Appendix H.
46. The community has demonstrated its understanding of the competing pressures of protecting the AONB and heritage settings for future generations and the need for additional housing. The community has been supportive of new development proposals where they make a positive impact on their setting and the provision of housing meets local needs. This is evidenced by the following schemes:

**Morris Close (Exception site)**

47. Exception sites are typically built on land such as agricultural where normally development would not be permitted.
48. In 2013 BPC became aware of the availability of funding which could be used to develop an exception site to provide affordable housing for local residents. This funding arose because a developer who could not provide affordable homes on their own site had paid an agreed sum to RDC to allow the development for affordable housing elsewhere. BPC moved quickly to identify a possible site and arranged introductions between the landowner and Hastoe (the Housing Association who developed the scheme). BPC worked closely with Hastoe and RDC to ensure the homes were affordable and prioritised for local residents.

**Exception sites offer the opportunity for creating additional affordable homes for local people**

49. This ten-unit scheme comprises eight social rented units and two shared ownership units. The scheme was widely supported by the community and when it was completed in 2017, all of the units were taken up by local residents or households with strong local connections.

### **Old Rectory Court**

50. Optivo, who own Old Rectory Court, rehoused the tenants of this 1960's built sheltered housing scheme in 2013. The building was left empty for two years during which the community pressed for it to be redeveloped. Finally, in 2015 Optivo submitted a planning application for a replacement older persons' scheme and four houses for shared ownership. However, the main building was further into the site than the existing one which encroached into the AONB, the designs were suburban in style and the materials were not in keeping with the heritage setting. This resulted in a significant level of local objections. Following the refusal of the planning application there was a long period during which Optivo considered its options including sale of the site. The community, through the Parish Council, made contact with Optivo to re-establish their relationship and provide positive suggestions for bringing forward a supportable scheme.

**Through partnership working between Optivo and the Parish Council, Old Rectory Court will provide much needed older persons' homes**

51. This approach culminated in a new application which resolved the previous issues and was widely supported by the community. This scheme is currently being built to provide fifteen units of housing for older people and four houses for shared ownership. It is scheduled for completion in December 2019.

## **Housing Conclusion**

52. For many residents the attraction of Burwash Parish and the reason why so many remain for so long is the setting of their homes. The steepness of the land which slopes away from the ridgetop villages into the Rother and Dudwell valleys provides long distance views of unparalleled beauty. It is, therefore, not surprising that there is tension between the requirement for additional housing and the community's overwhelming desire to protect the AONB from development.

53. The Burwash NDPSG has reviewed all the various sites set out in the SHLAA and those that came forward through the Call for Sites.

54. The Call for Sites identified four sites. Two of these submissions did not provide any real detail about their proposals and neither of the owners attended the event organised to allow them to outline their schemes in more detail. All four sites were evaluated and not one of them was supported as they all sat outside the development boundaries and each would impact on the AONB. One of these sites had already been considered by RDC within the SHLAA and was graded 'red', not suitable for development.

55. Although a small majority (52%) of those consulted were in favour of Fairview Farm (a scheme of circa six homes) there was a clear majority (91%) against expanding the current development boundaries to facilitate this development. It is located outside of Burwash village so would not count towards our housing target.

56. The SHLAA review concluded that the reasons given by RDC not to support six of the nine SHLAA sites were well founded and there were no grounds to seek to challenge their views.
57. One of the two 'green' sites within the SHLAA, the former Burwash Laundry site (SHLAA ref BU6) was developed but with only four houses, so does not meet RDC's requirement of a minimum of six properties to count towards our housing target.
58. The other 'green' site, (SHLAA ref: BU2) Strand Meadow has recently had full planning permission for 30 properties refused by RDC and is now going to appeal. Over 400 people objected to this development.
59. The 'amber' site (SHLAA ref BU12a) was the subject of a planning application in 2017. This scheme included the adjoining 'red' - not suitable for development - site (SHLAA ref BU12r) and was originally for 45 homes (later amended to 42 homes at the request of RDC). This application was refused by RDC. Over 300 people objected to this development. Within the SHLAA, the assessment of the 'amber' site suggested a possible scheme of up to 30 homes. Given that the more recent application was moderated by RDC to 42 homes and this was across this site and an adjoining larger site, it is difficult to see how the 'amber' site alone could accommodate anywhere near 30 homes.
60. In addition to the need to protect the AONB, land available for development is severely restricted within Burwash village area not least because 330 acres are held for the nation by the National Trust.
- 61. The Burwash NDPSG has worked tirelessly to identify options but it is our view that there are no development sites, which meet RDCs requirement of six or more homes, within the existing development boundary which will be supported by RDC and the community. For this reason, we will not be allocating any sites for development within this Plan**
62. BPC is, however, committed to exploring other small schemes as exception sites similar to the highly successful Morris Close development in order to provide affordable housing for the community. It will also be looking into the merits of setting up a Community Land Trust to assist in the delivery of new homes.

## SECTION 4 - OUR POLICIES

### Policy list

This section sets out the policies that will support and deliver the vision and objectives for Burwash. The detailed evidence behind each one can be found in the appendices to this draft Plan.

**These are the policies that are crucial to support and deliver our vision and objectives**

The policies being proposed in the Plan are:

#### General Policies

- GP01** Development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- GP02** Views to and from the AONB
- GP03** Heritage
- GP04** Development boundaries
- GP05** Design standards
- GP06** Existing open spaces
- GP07** New open spaces
- GP08** Sustainable development
- GP09** Resident consultation

#### Housing

- HO01** Housing tenure and mix
- HO02** Rural Exception sites
- HO03** Local connections

#### Environment

- EN01** Land management
- EN02** Landscape protection
- EN03** Natural environment protection
- EN04** Green infrastructure: footpaths and bridleways
- EN05** Dark skies
- EN06** Air pollution
- EN07** Historic landscape environment
- EN08** Integration of landscaping

#### Infrastructure: including Leisure, Economy and Tourism

- IN01** Pedestrian safety
- IN02** Parking
- IN03** Integrated transport
- IN04** Supporting businesses
- IN05** Retention of existing business premises
- IN06** Provision of Telecommunications

Full details of these policies can be found in the following pages. The policies are shown in bold print.

## General Policies

### Development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The whole of the Parish is situated within the High Weald AONB. The community has overwhelmingly demonstrated their opposition to developments which impact on this area. The importance of protecting AONBs is a national priority which is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.

#### Policy GP01 Development within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

**Developments will need to be appropriate to the AONB in terms of scale, size, design, type and sensitivity of setting.**

### Views to and from the AONB

The Parish is set within the High Weald AONB and has many big beautiful views, covering wide panoramic expanses of countryside across huge distances. The views of this landscape include natural and man-made features which provide an historic and cultural context. The importance of protecting AONBs is a national priority which is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.

#### Policy GP02 Views to and from the AONB

**Developments will generally only be supported if they conserve and protect the Parish setting including views into and out of the historic built and landscape setting of the AONB from any area to which the public has access.**

### Heritage

We will protect listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets together with other key buildings, or structures which are of significant local architectural and historic interest and other aspects which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Parish such as the brick pavements and lime trees in the High Street. These and other buildings within the Conservation area, will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

#### Policy GP03 Heritage

**Development proposals will be expected to complement and enhance the distinctiveness of the local vernacular, buildings, structures and their setting of historic significance.**

**Proposals for development that effect non designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Applicants should clearly demonstrate that any harm is both unavoidable and justified on the basis of the public benefits it delivers.**



#### Development boundaries

Burwash village, Burwash Weald, and Burwash Common are individual ridgetop settlements separated by beautiful countryside. These gaps are important to maintain a distinction between the built environment and the rural countryside.

The Parish has three well-defined development boundaries designated by RDC within which developments can take place subject to meeting normal planning criteria

#### **Policy GP04 Development boundaries**

**Development proposals outside the existing development boundaries (as shown in Appendix M) will generally not be supported.**

#### **Policy GP05 Design standards**

**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 High Weald AONB, in particular by:**

- a. Respecting/complementing in scale and form the character of existing buildings in the locality;**
- b. Respecting established building lines and arrangements of rooflines, front gardens, and boundary treatments;**
- c. Using good quality materials that complement the existing palette;**
- d. Adopting innovation to achieve sustainable energy design including the integration of renewable energy technologies, reduction in use of fossil fuels, efficient use of natural resources, recycling of resources, provision of low and zero carbon energy infrastructure and achieve best practice in sustainable drainage;**
- e. Providing sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape;**
- f. Providing access for people with restricted mobility;**
- g. If additional power lines are required, they should all be run underground;**
- h. Applications for extensions to existing buildings will also need to comply with the relevant and appropriate standards above.**

**Applications proposing development contrary to the above will not be supported.**

### **Policy GP06 Existing Open Spaces**

**Proposals for new development will generally be supported provided they do not impact on the existing open spaces in the Parish such as Swan Meadow, Burwash Common Playing Fields, Down Meadow and Hornbeam.**

### **Policy GP07 New Open Spaces**

**Larger developments of ten or more homes should be designed to provide new green amenity space, reflecting and extending the existing provision of accessible green spaces within the Parish.**

### **Sustainable Development**

Our goals are to reduce the demand that new developments place on energy resources and to reduce the running costs of new homes.

### **Policy GP08 Sustainable Development**

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

- a. Reduce the use of fossil fuels;**
- b. Promote the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy;**
- c. Adopt and facilitate the flexible development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies;**
- d. Link the provision of low and zero carbon energy infrastructure in new developments to existing buildings; and**
- e. Adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage.**

**Development proposals which can demonstrate that they meet the above requirements will generally be supported.**

### **Policy GP09 Resident Consultation**

**Developers will be expected to carry out open and meaningful consultation with the community about their proposals in a timely manner.**

**Planning applications where the applicant has failed to meet the above requirements will generally not be supported.**

## **Housing Policies**

### Housing tenure and mix

The Burwash Housing Needs Survey showed that the largest local housing needs are currently:

- a. Two and three bedroom homes for Social Renting to enable local families to remain within the community; and
- b. Single level access or accessible one and two bedroom homes for sale and rent to meet the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, enabling them to remain independent and within the community for as long as possible.

### **Policy HO01 Housing tenure and mix**

**Planning applications within the development boundaries of the Parish (as shown in Appendix M) will generally be supported where they provide a range of property types which meet local housing needs.**

### Rural Exception Sites

The Morris Close development is a useful example of how rural exception sites can help to bring forward small developments of affordable housing. This scheme provided ten affordable housing units all of which were taken up by people with a strong local connection.

Rural Exception sites can play a valuable role in developing much needed affordable housing on small developments in locations which would not normally be granted planning permission

### **Policy HO02 Rural Exception Sites**

**Proposals for the development of small-scale (up to ten homes) affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites in the Parish will generally be supported.**

## Local connections

The Burwash Housing Needs Survey identified a range of housing needs for local people. A key item that came up through the consultation process was a need for new affordable homes to be made available for local people and this is reflected in Policy HO01.

### **Policy HO03 Local connections**

**All new affordable housing in the Parish will be subject to a local connection requirement on the following basis. Applicants for affordable housing must meet at least *one* of the following criteria:**

- a. Have resided in Burwash Parish for three of the last five years;**
- b. Have close relatives (mother, father, sister, brother, adult children and corresponding step relatives) who have resided in Burwash Parish for the last five years;**
- c. Be in permanent employment of at least 16 hours a week within Burwash Parish or have a confirmed offer of such or;**
- d. Must have provided a voluntary or community-based activity in Burwash Parish of at least 10 hours per week for at least the past six months.**

The above housing policies are supported by the Housing Needs Survey in Appendix H.

## **Environment**

### Land Management

Extensive areas of land within the Parish are under management e.g. by the Forestry Commission, National Trust or operating land stewardship schemes with Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Natural England.

Landowners are encouraged to work positively to manage their land and working farms with active programmes to protect and enhance the landscape and biodiversity, including active soil and water quality management and in eradicating invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam.

### **Policy EN01 Land Management**

**Development will be expected to retain well-established features of the environment, ecosystem and biodiversity, including mature trees, ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows, watercourses and other ecological networks together with the habitats alongside them including ponds, green and wildlife corridors.**

**Proposals that would result in unacceptable loss or damage to existing land, including farmland, during or as a result of development will not be supported.**

## Landscape protection

The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty”.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan provides a strategy to conserve and enhance the AONB designated landscape. This includes the protection of the historic patterns of settlement, ensuring the scale, design and building materials of new developments are appropriate to and respect the character of the protected landscape. Their Management Plan has been adopted by the 15 local authorities whose areas are covered by the AONB designation, including Rother District Council.

The East Sussex Landscape Assessment 2016 (relevant extracts in Appendix I) describes the characteristics of Burwash Parish as follows: “As with most of the Wealden landscape the historic field patterns of small fields and significant hedgerows remain intact, apart from in the wider more fertile river valleys where farming is more intensive.” The area includes: spectacular long-ranging views from ridges across the valleys to the north and south, steep valley sides descend sharply from the ridge towards the Rother and Dudwell rivers, rolling, richly wooded landscape with ancient woodland and shaws, heathland and historic field boundaries, relatively open valley floors with small, winding, partly tree-lined rivers. The Rother often floods turning the valley bottom into a huge sheet of water-field and heath system of unimproved grassland, and extensive areas of extreme remoteness.

### **Policy EN02 Landscape protection**

**Any development will be considered with regard to the need to protect and enhance the AONB landscape character of the countryside. Development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances the natural beauty and village character of Burwash Parish. In particular, development must:**

- a. Protect and, if necessary, restore the natural function of all watercourses to improve water quality, prevent flooding and enhance wetland habitats including rivers, wet ancient woods, land with ghylls, and floodplains;**
- b. Reflect the historic settlement pattern of the Parish, use local materials that enhance the appearance of the development and support woodland management;**
- c. Relate well to historic routes and not divert them from their original course or damage their rural character by loss of banks, hedgerows, verges or other important features;**
- d. Not result in the loss or degradation of ancient woodland or historic features within it and, where appropriate, contribute to its ongoing management;**
- e. Retain and, where necessary, reinstate historic field boundaries, and direct development away from medieval or earlier fields, especially where these form coherent field systems with other medieval features.**

#### Natural environment protection

A Biodiversity report produced for Burwash Parish by the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre in November 2018 shows that, apart from being entirely within the AONB, Burwash Parish contains two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). These are statutory sites of national importance. There are also seven Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and one Local Geological Site (LGS). The Parish contains examples of seven significant habitats: Ancient/veteran trees, Ancient woodland, Deciduous woodland, Lowland heathland, Lowland meadow, Ghyll woodland, Wood-pasture and parkland, Coastal and floodplain grazing and Open water.

#### **Policy EN03 Natural environment protection**

**Development must preserve, protect and enhance the well-established features of the environment, ecosystem and biodiversity of the Parish as recorded in the Biodiversity records maintained for Burwash Parish by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre. These features include:**

- a) mature trees, ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows, unimproved and wildflower meadows**
- b) flora and fauna and ecological biomes together with their habitats such as watercourses, ponds, springs and wetland habitat and green and wildlife corridors.**

#### Green infrastructure: Footpaths and bridleways

The Parish is fortunate to have an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways. These provide access across the landscape to other areas, opportunities for exercise, horse-riding, dog-walking, enjoyment of the beautiful views deep within the remote countryside and are a great tourist attraction. Walking routes include stretches of many of the country lanes, which, with their notable verges and prolific, often rare species of wild flowers, form important pollinating corridors. There are no footways present on the majority of the lanes within the parish and increasing traffic, use of lanes as rat runs and the general pattern of driving, threaten the safety, exercise and enjoyment of residents and visitors.

#### **Policy EN04 Green infrastructure: Footpaths and bridleways**

**New development must ensure the continued upkeep and enhancement of existing public footpaths and bridleways.**

**Proposals will be expected to**

- a) provide improved opportunities for people and animals to use a safe network of footpaths and bridleways for leisure and exercise, and**
- b) maintain and keep safe existing links to other settlements and facilities of the Parish.**



## Dark Skies

The three villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common, like other rural villages in the area, maintain a tradition of being unlit. The preservation of the dark sky is extremely important to residents of the Parish.

At night, the Parish is profoundly dark compared to the bright lights of much of the south-east. The absence of street lighting allows the stars to be seen in the dark skies above and reduces the damaging impact of light pollution.

Our night skies have been monitored and are particularly dark with only a small number of places presenting significant light pollution.

There is increasing awareness of the impact that light pollution can have on wildlife, by interrupting natural rhythms including migration, reproduction and feeding patterns.

### **Policy EN05 Dark Skies**

**Development proposals which detract from the unlit environments of the villages will not be supported.**

**New lighting will be required to conform to the highest standard of light pollution restrictions in force at the time.**

**Security and other outside lighting that will adversely affect the amenities of other occupiers, neighbours or habitats or which cause unnecessary light pollution which reduces the quality of the dark night sky will not be supported.**

## Air pollution

The Parish currently enjoys relatively low levels of air pollution, despite the heavy volume of trucks and large vehicles travelling along the A265 through each village.

The Parish is determined to continue protecting this unique environment by retaining low levels of pollution and will continue to monitor and identify any deterioration.

### **Policy EN06 Air pollution**

**Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they retain current low levels of air pollution.**

**Where the function of any building may adversely affect air quality then a statement outlining mitigation will be required in accordance with national policies.**

#### Historic landscape environment

The character of our historic environment could be undermined and compromised by the cumulative negative impact of new development.

#### **Policy EN07 Historic landscape environment**

**Proposals that pose potential harm or threat to the historic landscape assets in our Parish will not be supported.**

#### Integration of landscaping

The East Sussex Landscape Assessment (see Appendix I) describes the types of landscape, natural, man-made and farming for Burwash which is largely unspoilt and tranquil rural landscape with few intrusive features.

Burwash Parish is located in an AONB. It is therefore critical that the design of all new landscape features is integrated into and complements or enhances the landscape setting. The design of new landscape features will happen at an early stage in the design process to ensure they are well integrated into new developments. New development proposals will have considered and correctly interpreted the landscape character of their location so as to produce the most appropriate design solution for the development.

#### **Policy EN08 Integration of landscaping**

**Developers will be required to submit an integrated landscape scheme as part of their proposal which is sensitive and complementary to the existing AONB, and to the local landscape character.**

The above Environment Policies are supported by the Burwash Environment Assessment in Appendix J.

### **Infrastructure including Leisure, Economy and Tourism**

#### Pedestrian safety

Residents across the Parish expressed a high level of concern about pedestrian safety, principally in respect of the A265 which passes through all three settlements.

#### **Policy IN01 Pedestrian safety**

**All proposals must incorporate features to assist those with mobility issues. Development proposals will be generally supported where the development:**

- a) incorporates measures to facilitate pedestrian safety;**
- b) integrates with existing or proposed footpaths, footways and cycle routes, ensuring that residents, including those with disabilities, can walk or cycle safely to schools, shops, green spaces and other Parish facilities and;**
- c) retains or improves existing footpaths and footways.**

## Parking

The extensive consultation carried out showed that parking is a very important issue for residents, visitors and for the survival of businesses in our communities. Parking is a particular issue in Burwash village with pressure on street parking. The current provision of parking in the centre of the village is often overcrowded. Similar parking pressures are being experienced by residents in Burwash Common. The Parish Council is in discussion with RDC to take over the car parks and is looking at ways to increase the options for off-street parking. This forms part of the Parish Councils Rolling Programme for 2019-2023.

Any development within the settlements must at least be self-contained in terms of the number of parking spaces it provides. No development within the settlements should result in the use of the existing carriageway or verge for residents parking. Where possible, additional parking provision should be considered as part of new development.

In Burwash village businesses are dependent to a great extent on passing trade and loss of parking which prevents passing trade from stopping, could impact the viability of our businesses and community facilities. By requiring adequate parking in all new developments, we will reduce the pressure on existing on and off-street parking within the village.

### Policy IN02 Parking

**All development must provide adequate appropriate car parking in accordance with recognised safety standards and the local identified need to support the viability of shops, businesses and tourism.**

**Development proposals that would result in an overall net loss of existing on-street and/or off-street car parking, or which fails to provide adequately for the development itself, will generally not be supported.**

## Integrated transport

The 2011 census showed that 81% of local households own and regularly use a car. Currently the bus service does not run at weekends, is not integrated to meet train services at Etchingam and does not run to Stonegate station. This forces commuters and other travellers to use their cars as the only reliable way of travelling. As part of its rolling programme, the Parish Council is looking at the business case for running a community bus with the service tailored to meet the community's needs.

### Policy IN03 Integrated transport

**Development proposals, where appropriate, should support and promote the provision of community transport including the maintenance of a good bus service between the villages and local towns and railway stations. New developments should include a statement which outlines how this will improve and maintain public transport.**

### Supporting businesses

The community and society are changing and we need to ensure that changes in working practices support new local services and enterprise and allow existing businesses to expand and remain within our community. We have a high, and increasing, number of people working from home and new services will be needed to support this growing group. The majority of our small business owners live and work in the Parish and we need to support local people in developing new business opportunities. The Parish's landscape is exceptional and is a base to explore nationally and internationally important sites. Tourism is important to our community, allowing our retail businesses and public houses to survive.

#### **Policy IN04 Supporting businesses**

**In the context of developing new and existing businesses, proposals for the change of use of premises from residential to commercial will normally be supported, subject to such proposals not otherwise being in conflict with other policies set out in this NDP.**

**Proposals for the development of new or existing businesses on isolated sites will only be accepted if the development:**

- a. makes appropriate provision for the necessary physical infrastructure (e.g., physical access, access to utilities) needed to support it where this does not already exist; and**
- b. makes a positive contribution to its setting and to the AONB.**

### Retention of existing business premises

Too many properties have obtained change of use to residential over the years and this is inhibiting the option of an expansion of new shops. In developing policy our objective is to retain retail and other business premises, including public houses, which provide for local employment and local services to our community.

#### **Policy IN05 Retention of existing business premises**

**Support will be given to the creation of new and the retention of existing retail shops, public houses and other businesses against any proposals for redevelopment or change of use.**

**Planning applications that result in the loss of businesses will generally not be supported unless it can be demonstrated by:**

- a) At least two independent valuation reports that the property has been marketed at the correct valuation; and**
- b) Clear evidence is provided that a publicly active marketing campaign, for sale or rent, for a continuous period of at least eighteen months has been carried out and that the premises cannot be sold or let on any basis for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses.**

### Provision of Telecommunications

All businesses are increasingly dependent on reliable and fast electronic communications - for marketing, for communicating with customers and for essential back-office functions. New classes of business have evolved in the last decade which do not depend on physical communications infrastructure and services (e.g., roads, trains, buses) but on reliable access to very high speed broadband and the internet. These are the types of business that Burwash, with its attractive location, is potentially well placed to host.

#### **Policy IN06 Provision of Telecommunications**

**Development proposals (including proposals designed to encourage home working) which offer improvements in the speed, quality and connectivity of the local communications infrastructure, particularly as this relates to the provision of superfast and ultrafast broadband, will in general be supported provided reasonable steps have been taken to:**

- a. Reduce to a minimum any additional physical equipment (e.g., masts, dishes, cabinets) needed to support the development; and**
- b. Ensure that such physical equipment is as far as possible designed (e.g., masts that mimic trees) and sited in a way which minimises its impact on the character and appearance of the local environment, particularly the Parish Conservation Area.**

The above Infrastructure policies are supported by the Burwash Infrastructure Assessment in Appendix K.

## SECTION 5: OUR FUTURE

### Future Projects

1. The community engagement undertaken as part of this plan identified numerous projects which the community would like to see implemented. Some of these aspirational projects are long term and others short to medium term.
2. Following discussions over the latter half of 2018 Burwash Parish Council (BPC) developed a strategy to undertake a range of projects and improvements across the parish. Aspirations for new initiatives were added to the BPC's programme and a rolling plan agreed which includes a number of these projects. The rolling plan is intended to be delivered within the next four-year Parish Council term (2019-2022).
3. The rolling plan and potential longer-term projects are set out below.

### Parish Council Rolling Plan

#### Community and Communications

- Establish a Community hub, reviewing siting options
- Continuing support for an Internet Cafe
- Develop communications – including website, social media presence, Business Directory and Burwash Village Magazine articles
- Partnership working – Bateman's, Burwash School, Fairfield Surgery, Police Community Support Officer [PCSO], local groups and neighbouring parish councils
- Parish Events including:
  - Love Burwash
  - Burwash in Bloom
  - Parish Assembly
- BPC presence at local fairs and festive evenings
- Coordination and support for vulnerable older residents
- Develop a Welcome Pack for new residents
- Develop a Parish Promotion Plan – including tourism and businesses
- Community Safety

#### Environment and Maintenance

- Planning and development issues, including AONB
- Neighbourhood Plan – actions arising
- Open Spaces including Down Meadow and Hornbeam
- Ecology
  - Wild flowers
  - Wildlife Protection
  - Dark skies
  - A Parish planting programme
- Parish maintenance:
  - Verges



- Grass cutting
- Bins (litter/dog/grit)
- Lime Trees
- War Memorials
- Allotments
- Seek listed status for village pavements, rights of way and footpaths

### Traffic and Transport

- Update and deliver on strategy 20mph pinch point (A265 between Flower shop and car park), bollards, crossing points
- A265 speed limits in Burwash Weald and Common
- Village gates
- Speed-watch programme
- Take over the two village car parks
- Look at key parking issues and identify new parking options
- Look into footways and cycle paths
  - Linking Burwash/Burwash Weald and Burwash Common
  - Linking Burwash and Etchingham (for station)
- Business case for a Community Bus

### Finance and Administration

Identify potential funding opportunities, including:

- Grant applications
- Local fundraising
- Crowdfunding
- Sponsorship

### Aspirational Capital Projects for the Future

4. Alongside the aspirations arising from the public consultations, the Steering Group considered some of the issues the village may face in the future. As a result of this a number of large-scale capital projects for the upgrade or replacement of existing Parish facilities were identified. These include:
  - Create all weather playground areas, including zip wires
  - Create more places, spaces and leisure pursuits for children and young people e.g. indoor venues, multi-use games area, wildlife areas
  - Create a community cafe
  - Upgrade or replace Swan Meadow Pavilion
  - Upgrade or replace GP surgery
  - Upgrade or replace pre-school and primary school
  - New Village Hall.
5. At some time in the future when these buildings and facilities reach the end of their useful life they will need to be replaced.

6. A coordinated collaboration between the stakeholders, community, local organisations and the Parish Council will enable these ideas to be taken forward. Proposals for consideration by the Parish Council would be subject to assessed need and the availability of relevant funding. At this stage these are not included within the Parish Councils' rolling plan programme, and no discussions have been held with the owners, trustees or other relevant parties. These are simply a look ahead to what might be our future challenges in order to meet the aspirations and needs of the community.

### **Funding for the Rolling Plan**

7. Funding for the Rolling Plan will be provided through a mixture of grants, the Parish precept, fund-raising and developer contributions. These contributions are collected primarily through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL allows local authorities to set a fixed rate charge per square metre of new development which is shared between RDC and the relevant Town or Parish Council.

## SECTION 6 APPENDICES, SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ACRONYMS

<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Schedule of Evidence Documents</b>	<p>A - Parish-wide consultation questionnaire</p> <p>B - Communication and Engagement strategy</p> <p>C - Character Appraisal inc. Listed Buildings</p> <p>D - Screening Opinion and Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>E - Planning Permissions</p> <p>F - Call for Sites report</p> <p>G - Call for Sites evaluation report</p> <p>H - Housing Needs Survey</p> <p>I - East Sussex Landscape Assessment</p> <p>J - Burwash Environment Assessment</p> <p>K - Burwash Infrastructure Assessment including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Survey</li> <li>• Traffic Survey</li> </ul> <p>- Consultation event records</p> <p>L</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wishes of children and young people</li> <li>• Wishes of local residents</li> </ul> <p>M - Development Boundary Maps</p> <p>N - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</p>
<b>Sources of information</b>	
<b>Links to external sources of information</b>	<p>Rother District Council Local Plan <a href="#">2006 Local Plan &amp; Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) -</a></p> <p>Core strategy <a href="#">Core Strategy - Rother District Council</a></p> <p>RDC Housing with SHLAA evaluations <a href="http://www.rother.gov.uk/background-evidence/housing">http://www.rother.gov.uk/background-evidence/housing</a></p> <p>Census <a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011">http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011</a></p> <p>East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) <a href="#">Welcome to ESiF</a></p> <p>Office of National Statistics <a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/">https://www.ons.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>High Weald AONB <a href="http://www.highweald.org/">http://www.highweald.org/</a></p> <p>CPRE Campaign for the Protection of Rural England <a href="https://www.cpre.org.uk/">https://www.cpre.org.uk/</a></p> <p>East Sussex Landscape Character assessments for Upper Rother Valley and the Dudwell Valley <a href="https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/landscape/">https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/landscape/</a></p> <p>Department for Environment Food &amp; Rural Affairs Magic Maps <a href="https://magic.defra.gov.uk/">https://magic.defra.gov.uk/</a></p>

## Acronyms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
ASA	Archeologically Sensitive Area
BNDP	Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan
BNPSG	Burwash Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
BOA	Biodiversity Opportunity Area
BPC	Burwash Parish Council
BUAB(A)	Built Up Area Boundary (Assessment)
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CPRE	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
DASA	Development and Site Allocation
DCLG	Department of Community and Local Government
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environmental Assessment
EA	Environment Agency
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
ESiF	East Sussex in Figures
FiTs	Feed-in Tariffs
HER	Historic Environment Records
HLAA	Housing Land Availability Assessment,
HNS	Housing Needs Survey
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IGT	Independent Gas Transporter
LDZ	Local Distribution Zone
LGS	Local Geological Site
LHA	Local Housing Assessment
LP	Low Pressure
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MOM(s)	Minutes of meeting
MP	Medium Pressure
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPS	Neighbourhood Plan Strategy
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PROW	Public Right of Way

## Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan

RDC	Rother District Council
RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SD	Sustainable Development
SGTN	Scotia Gas Networks
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SMART	(Vision and objectives): S = Specific M = Measurable A = Attainable (achievable) R = Realistic/relevant T = Time related
SO	Sustainability Objectives
SQMs	Sky Quality Meters
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities
SWF	Surface Water Flooding
SWS	Special Wildlife Site
SWT	Sussex Wildlife Trust
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
Triple SI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
UIP	Utility Infrastructure Provider
WRZ	Water Resource Zone
WTW	Wastewater Treatment Works