



Dullingham Parish Plan







The Guildhall

Acknowledging our heritage

Dullingham has a long history and thousands of people have contributed to its development while deciding where to build a house, a barn, a wall, where to plant hedges and crops, where to dig a ditch or pond.

These choices were usually individual, not part of a formal planning process and the result is the charming village we know today – with the features that result from spontaneous, organic growth which make it such a typical English village.

We acknowledge the extraordinary heritage to which we are heirs, and of which we are temporary custodians.

There is a second group of people who have contributed to the heritage – the planners who drew up the 1973 Plan for Dullingham who did two things which mean we are forever in their debt: they created the Dullingham Conservation Area and the Village Development Envelope, both of which have served remarkably well to protect those features which make the village so unusually attractive – one of the gems of the Cambridgeshire countryside.

One of the tasks for the Parish Plan is to build on what we have inherited, to protect it and to enhance it so that subsequent generations will be able to enjoy the village and parish as we do today. We must try to ensure that changes are what we as a community want, that they are sustainable, and that they do not destroy precisely those unique features which make Dullingham what it is as a parish, village and community.

We are temporary stewards of a priceless inheritance and our duty is to treat it with the care and respect it deserves.

Dullingham has been changing for a thousand years and that process is not going to stop.



Dullingham House

Summary

- This Plan describes the steps that were taken to consult residents about the parish – to establish what they like, what they do not like, and what their aspirations for the parish are.
- It looks at the way history, from Domesday times, has shaped the layout and appearance of the village and how subsequent changes have affected it.
- It then formulates policies to preserve and enhance the unique character of Dullingham.
- The management of change in the parish is an important part of the Plan which proposes guidelines to control development and for the provision of affordable starter homes.
- The Plan also addresses the problems that residents identified as detracting from life in Dullingham and it makes recommendations which should enable the Parish Council to take action, safe in the knowledge that they have the support of the majority of residents.
- A final section argues for a new dynamic relationship between the Parish Council and the community and makes suggestions about how this may be achieved.

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View east down Station Road



Looking west along Stetchworth Road

Introduction

This Parish Plan results from a long consultation process during which the Dullingham community was able to express its views on a wide range of issues.

What emerged was very positive: we love the village and parish and enjoy living here. We are deeply appreciative of the landscape, the traditional rural nature of the parish, the beauty of the village and its architecture, the open spaces in the village, the extraordinary community spirit, the friendliness of the people, the welcome given to newcomers, the mix of older and newer residents, the way in which we care for more vulnerable residents. We are very fortunate to live here and most of us know this!

At the same time, we are aware that there are some things we would like changed. We are anxious about the threat of inappropriate development which will destroy precisely those things that we love about Dullingham: the beauty, the rural atmosphere, the sense of community, all things which have evolved over centuries but which could be destroyed forever by a few insensitive, short-sighted decisions.

Managing change

Change is inevitable – Dullingham has been changing for a thousand years and that process is not going to stop. The Parish Plan provides us with an opportunity to influence and manage change by allowing us to identify what we as a community value and to say what we do and do not want to see happen in the parish.

The authority of the Parish Plan derives entirely from the fact that it expresses the community's views. We cannot override planning policies decided at higher levels of government, but we can influence it by making our democratically expressed views clearly known and by providing reasoned objections if things are proposed which we as a community do not want.

This is not a task only for the Parish Council – we do need an informed, energetic group of Councillors with the time, energy, knowledge and commitment to act on our behalf, but they need and deserve the active, informed support of the community. This has to be a two-way process in which both parties have rights and responsibilities.

The Dullingham Parish Plan is an attempt to foster just such a working relationship between community and Parish Council and on page 32 there are specific proposals which we hope will help the process along.

The future

The publication of the Parish Plan does not represent the end of a process – it is the very beginning of a process which will require a great deal of energy and commitment. A large number of recommendations are made in the Plan and these have been put into an Action Plan identifying what needs to be done and who is responsible for doing it – we hope that a good number of residents will volunteer to help the Parish Council which is responsible for leading and monitoring the process.

Acting as a community we can be powerful, and this requires all concerned residents to get involved, because there is nobody out there who will do it for us – we have to take responsibility for what we want done.

The existence of a Parish Plan is a pre-condition for qualifying for certain grants.



View across the paddock to Tilbrook Farm Cottage

1 Background

What is a Parish Plan for?

A Parish Plan provides a framework for communities to influence and manage change; it is a statement of how the community sees itself developing and should:

- identify those features and local characteristics that the community values
- address local problems
- identify opportunities to improve facilities and services
- reflect the views of all sections of the community

Parishes and villages traditionally grew in an ad hoc way and as a result settlements closely reflected the nature of the community, which in the case of Dullingham was rural and agricultural. In the course of the twentieth century parishes came under new pressures from a more mobile population which produced demands for new housing and other buildings in rural communities. This led to attempts to provide guidelines – planning rules – for new developments, particularly from the 1940s onwards.

The planning legislation now provides communities with the opportunity, in the form of a Parish Plan, to express their views on how they see the future – communities are involved in the planning process and have to be consulted before plans affecting the community are decided.

The existence of a Parish Plan is a pre-condition for qualifying for certain grants.

Relationship with existing planning policy

The Parish Plan has been written keeping in mind the guiding principles of the *East Cambridgeshire District Local Plan 2000*:

- To ensure that most development takes place in those settlements that have a range of employment opportunities, shops and supporting infrastructure, which reduce the need for people to travel, particularly by car.
- The need to promote and encourage economic development and diversification.
- The need to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.
- The need to protect the historic environment and ensure that all development reflects the distinctive character and appearance of the area through design, the use of materials, layout and landscaping.
- To ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- The need to encourage energy efficiency, waste minimisation, the conservation of water resources and recycling.



Detail on St Mary's Church



Individual design in Bakehouse Hill



Georgian architecture in The Courtyard

The District Council has identified a number of particular challenges it faces at present as one of the fastest growing areas in the country: affordable housing, transport, economic development, access to services, and skills development. We have tried to respond positively to these issues.

The Dullingham Parish Plan has been influenced by the policy statements on Sustainable Community issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the District Council's *Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2005*.

The District Council is at present at work on new plans – to be known as the Local Development Framework – which will be implemented in 2008. Our Parish Plan is part of the consultation process that precedes the Framework: we have to ensure that the Plan expresses our views on what we want for our community, village and parish.

Who is the Parish Plan for?

It is for everyone who is concerned with the future of our community, village and parish:

- For residents of the parish it addresses the issues identified during the consultation process which started with the Appraisal Questionnaire in 2004. The Plan makes a number of recommendations based on the responses to the Questionnaire; these have been incorporated in the Action Plan published separately.
- For the local authorities it provides important information to be considered when dealing with any issues which affect the parish. This is now a statutory obligation on their part as the Plan is an authoritative expression of the community's view. Consulting local people is a cornerstone of the Government's planning legislation.
- For architects and builders – and any Dullingham residents considering changes to their property – it provides a clear statement about what the community values and how we would like to see the character of the parish maintained and enhanced by any changes.

The process

In 2004, after careful consideration, the Parish Council unanimously decided that there was a need for a Parish Plan and asked a small group of volunteers to undertake the task of producing one.

The process involved, among other activities:

- Consulting the Countryside Agency, Cambridgeshire ACRE and East Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Department.
- Applying to the Countryside Agency for a grant.
- Distributing a letter signed by the Chair of the Parish Council to every house in the Parish announcing the arrival of the Appraisal Questionnaire.
- Distributing and collecting the Questionnaire and analysing the responses – 167 forms with 80 questions and an average of 5 items in each meant that 65,000 items of data were processed. We achieved an outstanding return rate of 60%.
- The Parish Plan Team met monthly and reported regularly to Parish Council meetings; residents were consulted at three Parish Meetings and displays in The Boot and Dullingham Motors provided further opportunities to comment.
- Several surveys involving residents were carried out: Landscape History, Architectural History, a Tree Survey and a Bird Survey.
- Members of the Youth Club were interviewed to solicit their views on the village and community.
- Parish Plan Bulletins were produced and distributed to all the houses in the Parish; the parish website was regularly updated.
- The process of preparing the successful Dullingham entry for the Calor Village of the Year competition was a valuable part of the consultation process. Many people were involved in providing information for our submission, in discussing how best the village could present itself and in showing the judges around.
- Kettlefields Primary School participated in an artwork project, some of the results of which appear on the inside back cover.
- The more formal processes of reporting and consultation were supplemented by innumerable individual conversations with residents.

In time the village shop, the butcher, the baker, the milkman, the fish and chip shop and the Post Office all disappeared.



Chestnut Cottage by Old Maid's Corner



Dullingham village sign

2 The parish

History

The name Dullingham has been in use for over a thousand years – the first recorded use was around the year 975; it comes from Old English and means 'Homestead of the Dullingas, the people named after Dulla'.

The area had been settled many centuries before by successive waves of invaders from continental Europe, but there is no archaeological evidence of earlier habitation in Dullingham itself, or in the other two communities which now form part of the modern village: Cross Green and Dullingham Ley.

The first written description of the settlement is in the Domesday Book in 1085. By this time Dullingham was a centre of agricultural activity and Domesday records four separate landholdings here: the manor, two farms and a smallholding, held by four different lords. For tax purposes Dullingham was assessed at 10 hides (a hide was about 120 acres).

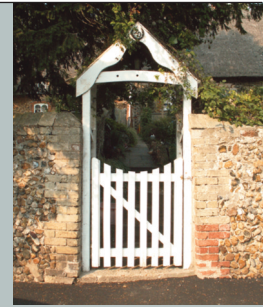




Thoroughbreds grazing in a local paddock



Keeper's Cottage



A charming gateway

The fortunes of the village fluctuated greatly over the centuries – there were perhaps 225 residents at the time of Domesday and possibly only 200 when the Poll Tax came into being in 1377 (though as the tax was unpopular it is possible that some people avoided being counted!). Infant mortality was high (around 1 in 4 in the first year of life) and the average life expectancy was only about 35 in this period. The Black Death in the fourteenth century may have taken as much as 50% of the population (estimates for some Cambridgeshire villages are as high as 70%). By 1728 the population had reached 378 and in 1881 it reached a peak of 835; a century later it had dropped to 501. Today just over 700 people live in Dullingham.

Agriculture remained Dullingham's business: the 1841 census describes every man as an agricultural labourer except for: 12 male servants, 2 gardeners, 1 groom, 3 carpenters, 1 miller, 2 stable lads, 1 parish clerk, 1 head keeper, 3 shoemakers, 1 blacksmith, 1 butcher, 1 shepherd, 2 gamekeepers, 1 wheelwright, 1 bricklayer, 1 returning officer and 1 publican (who was a woman). We do not know how many women were 'in service' in the large houses which is where the 12 male servants probably worked too.

The arrival of the railway in 1848, with other major technological changes in the course of the nineteenth century, had an enormous impact on the agricultural community; this process was speeded up in the next century when life in the parish was fundamentally changed by the effects of two world wars and profound economic, social, political and technological change.

The arrival of Council houses represented an enormous improvement in the standard of living of many people in the village – the first houses were built in 1927 and had internal running (cold) water, two living rooms, a kitchen and three bedrooms; the houses built after World War II had bathrooms and internal toilets and were wired ready for the arrival of electricity in 1949.

Increasing affluence meant that more people could afford first bicycles, then motor cycles and then cars, and so could move beyond the village for employment. This was important, as the increasing mechanisation of agriculture meant that there were far fewer jobs on the land; the growth of stud farms dedicated to the breeding of horses also meant that less land was given over to traditional farming.

The arrival of electricity meant, among other things, that refrigerators became common and as people were now more mobile they could buy their provisions elsewhere and had the

means to store them. In time the village shop, the butcher, the baker, the milkman, the fish and chip shop and the Post Office all disappeared. The bike shop turned into the service station which is now on the main road through the village. The number of 'ale-houses' was reduced from five to two.

The parish community today

There are about 280 occupied households in the parish; the great majority are three- or four-bedroom detached houses, owner-occupied. The population of just over 700 reflects the changing nature of the community, although there is still a good deal of continuity represented by the 41% of residents who have lived here for more than 16 years and 7.2% who have lived in the parish for more than 51 years; 12% of the residents were born in the parish.

A little over 30% of employed respondents work from home or elsewhere in the parish; the rest travel from the parish to work in towns up to 60 miles away. Residents are clear why they like living here – the most popular reasons are the environment, rural location, strong sense of community, social life, pubs, railway station and a good primary school.

While the profile of the residents has changed significantly from the traditional very stable locally employed rural community, Dullingham preserves some of its most important characteristics: an active church, two good pubs, a sports club, a thriving social life and a very strong sense of community.

The village also retains some of its most important physical features: a sense of openness, with houses set back from the road, and a feeling that the village is set in attractive countryside which is easy to access via a network of paths and bridleways. Despite the pressures of development and the inevitable changes this continues to bring, the parish remains a delightful place in which to live, much loved by its residents.



Cottage with arched top iron windows

Stone eagles on Eagle Lane

3 Map of the parish

Key

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Main roads | |
| Minor roads | |
| Footpaths | |
| Bridleways | |
| Railway | |
| View | |
| Parish | |





Modern houses on Balsham Lane



A shelter nestles snugly in the corner of a field



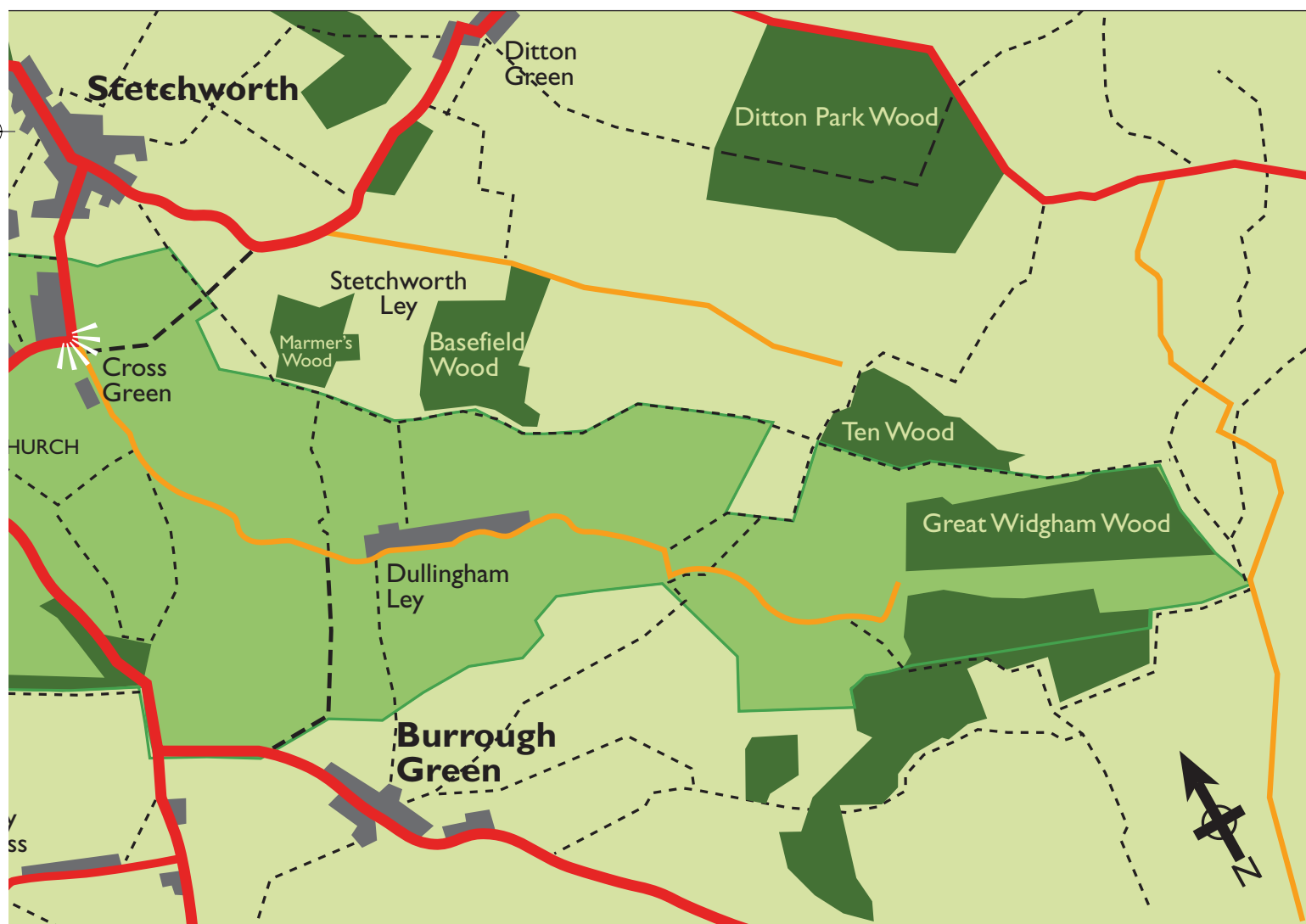
A tantalising glimpse of garden

Kilometres

1

2

3



Developments have gone so far that the domestic garden is rivalling the countryside as the most important habitat for Britain's wildlife.



View from the church tower

4 The parish landscape

Landscape character

Dullingham lies in a shallow stream valley surrounded by the smooth rolling hills typical of East Cambridgeshire chalkland which traditionally supported mixed stock farming (mostly sheep) and arable farming (mostly cereal and sugar beet). Most of the chalkland is a landscape of large fields and mechanically trimmed hedges, with relatively few trees; there are however some small woods in the parish and the village itself is very richly endowed with trees – when viewed from some vantage points the buildings are scarcely visible through the trees.

The geometrical field pattern resulting from traditional hedge enclosure is further subdivided in areas in which there are stud developments, resulting typically in small tree-lined paddocks planted with a single species of grass with the whole property being surrounded by immaculate hedges and grass verges, thus radically changing the traditional rural character of the area.

As District Council policy is to support the racing industry there is nothing that the Parish Council can do to resist further stud development; we can however draw lessons from the unhappy experience of a recent stud development immediately south of the village and attempt to mitigate the effects of any further such development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Adopt the principles for landscape improvement and management in the chalklands contained in the document *Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines* (a summary is provided in Appendix I, on page 33).

Consult the County Council on what help it can provide to implement the guidelines.

Communicate to the District Council the residents' feelings about the Hope Hall Stud development.

Request detailed consultation with the District Council in the preliminary stages of future Planning applications.

Insist on close monitoring by the planning authorities of the development to ensure that nothing is done for which permission has not been obtained.

Encourage the District Council to develop as a high priority a design guide for studs which will address, among other issues, heights of buildings, landscaping and boundary treatments.



View from Church Lane



Parishioners on a Parish Plan walk



A six-hundred-year-old hedgerow

Countryside amenities

The footpaths and bridleways in the parish, which include the Icknield Way and the Stour Valley Path, give enjoyment to residents and visitors alike, providing easy access to the countryside for walkers and riders away from traffic, without the need to travel outside the area.

They are a very important amenity and part of the parish character; constant vigilance is required to ensure they are not affected by development and that they are adequately maintained.

Views of the countryside from the village, and views of the village from the countryside, are important amenities to be considered whenever any development proposals are made.



RECOMMENDATION

Establish a project group of interested residents to monitor countryside amenities. This group could usefully also monitor other issues such as biodiversity, the annual survey of trees and the maintenance of ponds.

Biodiversity

Intensive farming methods have affected wildlife habitats adversely as have stud farm developments. Nationally, the destruction of ancient woodlands, meadows and wetlands over the last 50 years has changed the countryside dramatically. These developments have gone so far that the domestic garden is rivalling the countryside as the most important habitat for Britain's wildlife; each of the fifteen million domestic gardens in Britain is potentially a small nature reserve.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Join the Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust which will give the parish access to a wealth of inexpensive expertise on encouraging wildlife, planting native species and managing ponds.

Ask the Ellesmere Garden Club to devote one of its meetings each year specifically to methods of increasing biodiversity in gardens in the parish.

Investigate what funds are available from the County Council Wildlife Enhancement Scheme for pond restoration and other projects.

Investigate what opportunities are available from the County Council Living Land Project when it is launched in 2006.

Adopt as policy the five principles contained in the *Biodiversity Checklist for land use planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough* published by the County Council.

The *Biodiversity Checklist* is a key document for anyone responsible for planning decisions as it sets out the five main objectives that can be achieved through the planning process and which need to be considered for every development:

- Protect current key habitats and species by using development plan policies and restrictive conditions to amend plans and working methods, or by excluding from permission areas that are important for biodiversity.
- Enhance existing habitats or create new ones by routinely looking for opportunities to improve habitats for nature conservation purposes.
- Mitigate potentially damaging impacts by imposing conditions on design, methods, timing.
- Compensate where damage is unavoidable. Recreating quality habitat is very difficult and the loss of habitat continuity results in species loss; use the precautionary principle: can compensation really be achieved?
- Monitor and enforce to assess the success of enhancement, mitigatory and compensatory measures.

The County Council's Biodiversity Partnership Officer is the source of free advice on how biodiversity considerations fit into the planning process. Wildlife enhancement schemes run by the Council may offer grants of up to 50% for appropriate projects.

We have to blend the new with the old sympathetically – this should inform everything we do in the village.



The newly-built Vicarage reflects the local vernacular

5 Map of the village



Key

- Conservation area —
- Development envelope —
- Listed buildings ■
- Roads —
- Suggested conservation area extension - - -



Looking north west from the church tower



Dwellings in Station Road face onto open fields

6 The built environment

Village character

Remarkably, the layout of the village retains some of the characteristics of its Domesday origins, including some original field boundaries in Dullingham Ley. Its history is one of slow and piecemeal development supporting a relatively stable population through to late Victorian times.

A core of sixteenth and seventeenth century houses shows the grouping of dwellings into the three separate settlements joined by lanes: Dullingham Ley, Cross Green and the main settlement from the vicinity of Clare Farm to the bottom of Eagle Lane. Other early houses exist on Brinkley Road and in the vicinity of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, which dates from the twelfth century.

The largest settlement around Dullingham House can be reliably associated with a Domesday manor, although it is possible that Dullingham Ley was the site of one of the Domesday farms that later achieved manorial status. Later development has for the most part been focused around these settlements, with a few new areas settled in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, notably in Eagle Lane and around the railway station in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the second half of the twentieth century the gap between Clare Farm and Cross Green was almost completely closed on the north side of Stetchworth Road when Bakehouse Hill, Algar Drive, Taylors Field and Spooners Close were built. A few scattered houses from the eighteenth century onwards cluster around the site of Hare Park on the heath at the west end of the parish.

We have used extensive local consultations together with established conservation guidelines and expert advice to identify those features that define the particular character and sense of place the village evokes in people. There is a consensus that these include the overall setting and layout of the village, important views and particular buildings and artefacts that all work together to relate present to past.

Sense of space

The most subtle element is the feeling of space and openness: three distinct settlements linked by lanes and roads; in much of the village the dwellings are only on one side of the road and face onto fields or open spaces, with the houses often being set back from the road.

The section of Station Road between Old Maid's Corner and Eagle Lane is the only road in Dullingham where dwellings are consistently built on both sides. Even here the village manages to retain a very open character as the road is wide and houses on the south side are well set back, widely spaced, and not overbearing in aspect.

This open feeling is enhanced throughout the village because the houses are for the most part of modest elevation, present sloping roofs rather than gables facing onto the road and have been mellowed by age. Just how important this is can be seen clearly in two recent examples of buildings which are very obtrusive: a house on Dullingham Ley with a steep gable facing the road, and the large houses built on prominent sites on the Hope Hall Stud that dominate the landscape.

Views

There are a number of views that define our village and which are vulnerable in the face of change. Of these perhaps the most sensitive is the stretch of Station Road from Old Maid's Corner to the junction with Eagle Lane. Standing near Old Maid's Corner you can visualise life in eighteenth century Dullingham if you ignore the occasional inappropriately modernised frontage.

The view across the Repton landscaped park to the south of Station Road from the Guildhall to Old Maid's Corner was marked in the 1973 Village Plan as a 'Frontage of Special Attraction' and is still important, although the new high hedge obscures the view.

The views around the spacious village green define the centre of Dullingham – to the north The King's Head is a focal point; the Guildhall, the Wesleyan Chapel and The Boot are all part of the views that characterise the centre of the village; looking up Brinkley Road the old workhouses are important and from the green the church tower emerging above the surrounding trees is a prominent feature.

The area around the church and the village pond is important and has the potential to be a major feature – see the proposal made on page 27. The open space opposite Clare Farm with the view up Church Lane is characteristic of the village. The stream and Watery Lane on the Cross Green corner form a valuable open space with a view, as do several places in Dullingham Ley. These views are shown on the map on pages 8–9.



Open development at Elm Close



Clare Farmhouse – C18th brick covering timber frame

Modern developments

Dullingham is very fortunate that the twentieth century housing developments do not intrude on the centre – Taylors Field, Bakehouse Hill, Algar Drive, Spooners Close, Kettlefields, Elm Close (see above) and Vicarage Close are set back from the road. The Crescent is set around a generous open space as is the housing on the corner of Stetchworth Road opposite Cross Green. This is a most striking and welcome feature of imaginative modern development in Dullingham and a model for any other such projects.

Summary

The characteristic openness gives character and identity to our village, and is widely recognised as helping to define it. The stream valley historically offered ample sites for settlement and so an open feel was maintained; we must recognise and preserve this generous use of space even though it is at odds with the current fashion for high density developments.

RECOMMENDATION

Use the planning process to achieve the following objectives:

Preserve the historic plan of separate settlements with open countryside between.

Do not allow infill to destroy the generous spaces between dwellings.

Keep the traditional open aspects with buildings on one side of the roads facing trees or open countryside.

Ensure that any new development follows the pattern established by the modern developments described above, set back off the main thoroughfares, with a green buffer zone to prevent crowding against existing dwellings.

Respect and extend the current Conservation Area protection (see the section 'Conservation policy' on page 15).

Retain the essential character of the important village views.

Ensure that important views are not compromised by the inappropriate planting of trees and high hedges.

Buildings

The wealth of the village was traditionally concentrated around Dullingham Manor and so the density of old houses is highest in this area, with a few separated farms such as Clare Farm and Ley Farm (see above), and associated cottages, forming alternative economic centres.

Curiously, the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin is remote from Dullingham Manor, suggesting that it may have been built in association with one of the other two manors that existed around the time building started in the twelfth century. St Mary's is a pretty church, set in a traditional churchyard, and like most village churches carries the signs of restoration and extension from almost every period of its history. It represents the oldest use of field flints locally, and this links it visually to the extensive flint work of many later buildings and walls. It is by far the oldest and grandest building surviving in Dullingham today, and as such must be valued and preserved.

Timber-framed houses

As this was not a prosperous area in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there are few old timber-framed houses compared with many parts of nearby Suffolk. Those that do remain represent substantial buildings, yeoman farmers' houses and the cottages of prosperous freemen. They are scattered around the three old settlements, which each have a mixture of house types. The lesser buildings rarely survived the ravages of time, although fragments may still be found within later buildings.

Use of brick

In the seventeenth century, brick became fashionable for grand houses such as Dullingham Manor, but most cottages were still built of timber under thatch roofs and many of these survive today, though often incorporated within later buildings, or otherwise hidden. The local brick was rather friable and was not used commonly in buildings until the eighteenth century, when tiles, presumably brought at great expense from places with better clay, also became available.



Cottages

Around the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, it became fashionable to hide wattle and daub timber-framed cottage walls behind a skin of more permanent material, often brick, and to make other cosmetic changes to the exterior. Some of the Station Road cottages that were originally timber-framed had their walls rebuilt



around 1800 in flint, for example parts of Cables Farmhouse, and 20 and 22 Station Road; others were possibly new-build at that time, for example flint-faced Nappa House (shown here), which was originally three cottages, and the lath and plaster Keeper's Cottage. As part of this phase of building and



Ley Farmhouse



Walls built of gathered flint

rebuilding, a characteristic and unusual arched-top wrought iron window design was introduced. These cottages form a group that can be identified with Dullingham Manor and probably coincided with the remodelling of the grounds of Dullingham House in 1806 by Humphry Repton.

Walls

The extensive nineteenth- and early twentieth-century flint walls along the road from the King's Head to Eagle Lane are quintessentially Dullingham with their gentle, undulating surfaces and infinitely variable patterns. They are distinctive in that both walls and buildings use irregular flints picked directly from the fields without subsequent working.

New building materials

Building materials for ordinary houses had to be obtained locally before the coming of the railways in 1848, which led to the adoption of more cosmopolitan building styles, most notably the adoption of Welsh slate as the preferred roofing material, and the availability of good quality bricks in a variety of colours. Dullingham Manor used these new materials to build for its workers a splendid row of four cottages which remain a striking and miraculously unspoiled feature at 78 to 84 Station Road (shown here).



The village population grew substantially in Victorian times, and their great enthusiasm for all forms of building has left us many fine brick buildings, including the old school, the associated schoolmaster's house and Cables Farm Barn, a substantial agricultural building now converted into a house.

Summary

Our architectural heritage consists of buildings of different sizes, ages, styles and materials that encapsulate the history of settlement in Dullingham and contribute to the feeling of piecemeal development over many centuries that is the very essence of the English village.

The residents of Dullingham value this built heritage as an essential part of the village character, and choose to live in a village in which the heritage that surrounds them is respected. This is the business of Conservation Policy, covered in the next section.

Conservation policy

Our built heritage defines our village and to retain its character we must conserve and repair the walls, buildings and artefacts in such a way that we do not strip them of the mellow patina of age that gives them their unique character, or leave them more vulnerable to the ravages of time.

Traditional materials and skills

Effective conservation involves understanding how things were built, and the nature of the materials that were used, so as to avoid using incompatible techniques and materials that might be harmful. Conservation requires patience and skills, but above all an attitude of mind that values the original qualities of a building over immediate demands for change.

The skills involved in conservation work are somewhat different from conventional modern building skills, and it is sometimes difficult to find the necessary craftsmen. In consequence, conservation work can sometimes cost more than a modern approach, but set against this is the advantage that a true conservation approach will usually retain much more of the original structure, and so require less dramatic changes, and will often enhance the value of the property. These considerations apply to all old properties, since it is the diversity that is important.

New materials

Innovative building materials and methods that may be good for new buildings are usually not appropriate for older buildings and the old methods and materials usually give the best results practically as well as aesthetically. An example is the use of modern cement for repairs in older houses – whereas the old lime mortars are soft and permeable, and so allow walls to move and breathe, the modern materials are rigid, thus often damaging the bricks and cracking, allowing moisture to become trapped within walls and causing damp problems.



Windows in old buildings also require careful restoration. Replacing old wooden frames with UPVC or inappropriate heavy modern wooden ones spoils the look of a building, and modern flat glass lacks the subtle charm of the slightly wavy glass in use before the mid-twentieth century invention of float glass.

Use of flint

One of our biggest conservation challenges is Dullingham's single most distinctive feature: the widespread use of field-gathered flint walls in buildings and boundary walls. Now mostly at least 100 years old, they were built of mortar made with locally dug sand and locally burnt lime which gives a soft and flexible bed to hold the hard flints. They are vulnerable to physical damage, and to water getting inside the structure. Damage needs to be patched quickly or large sections of wall will disintegrate. Repairs with modern cement are inappropriate – they generate rigid patches that cannot move



The King's Head Public House



The Wesleyan Chapel

like the rest of the wall and, being less permeable, trap moisture. They eventually crack and pull out an even larger section of wall, worsening the damage.

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

People often think that Conservation Area status and 'listing' are bad for owners, but in fact they can bring real benefits. Both help to retain and enhance the local character of an area and thus increase the value of all properties affected and there are also more direct benefits to the owners.

Retaining period doors, windows and other details adds greatly to the property value, and listing gives exemptions from Part L of the Building Regulations and allows replacements that more closely match the original. New work on Listed Buildings is VAT exempt, which helps cover any additional costs involved.

Listing and Conservation Area status both help protect the area around a house from adverse development, and are often used by owners to protect their interests – this protection is likely to be enhanced in changes that have been proposed in the way listing is handled.

The District Council has a Conservation Officer who will advise on any changes owners wish to make to Listed Buildings, and it is always a good idea to consult early to make sure any idea you have is likely to be given Listed Building Consent – a necessary first step to making alterations.

Buildings can be put forward for listing as 'Buildings of Special Historical Significance' by anyone, and once set in motion listing is handled by a government agency which will consult the owner. Listing is an acknowledgement that a building and its environs is an important and valuable part of our built heritage, and that it gives the locality character; in other words it benefits society and not just its owners. Although the local authority is not involved in the listing process it is responsible for the protection of Listed Buildings. In contrast, Conservation Areas are established by the District Council in consultation with the Parish Council and residents, and are enforced as part of the planning process.

What is needed

Many of the of the individual historic buildings in Dullingham are Listed as being of architectural importance, and so already receive some statutory protection, and the Conservation Area affords a more general protection in the area around the Village Green and along Station Road. There are, however, other areas and buildings that are important to the preservation of village heritage, and Conservation Area Status does not manage many vital aspects of preserving our heritage. We must therefore take local responsibility for looking after our village.

We can do this in several ways: through lobbying the District Council to use its statutory powers to protect the existing Conservation Area and locally important old buildings; by being proactive at a Parish level in encouraging owners to maintain and renovate property appropriately; and by helping owners to identify expert advice and firms with appropriate skills to work sympathetically on old buildings.

An additional area that may meet the criteria for Conservation Area status has been identified at Cross Green and appears on the map on page 12.

There are several buildings that make an important contribution to the historic setting of the village, and should be recognised as such:

- The Wesleyan Chapel on the Village Green (see above).
- The Mission Room in Dullingham Ley.
- The cottage at Rosyground Stud in Dullingham Ley.
- The Victorian polychrome brick cottages at 78 to 84 Station Road.
- The Boot Public House.
- The King's Head Public House (see above).

The King's Head Public House is particularly important given its prominent location at the heart of the village, and there is a strong case for having it listed.

Dullingham has in the recent past worked actively in support of its environment at Parish Council level, through its representative on the District Council, and by the efforts of residents; this has not always achieved the results it sought. The clear framework that this section of the Parish Plan provides should inform and re-invigorate this process, and encourage everyone to engage with the issues involved.



Victorian cottages, miraculously unspoiled



The Crescent

Archaeology

We know that many traces of medieval Dullingham lie buried within the parish. It is therefore vitally important that all building work should be preceded by careful archaeological investigation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognise and preserve our built heritage through all possible means including:

- Use existing statutory protection in the form of Conservation Areas and Listed Building Status to prevent degradation of important buildings and spaces.
- Consult the owners of the buildings identified above as particularly important about how they may best be protected.
- Apply to have The King's Head listed as a Building of Special Historical Significance.
- Work to extend the areas and buildings covered during the forthcoming review of the Conservation Area planned by the District Council for 2006.
- Ensure through the planning process that due weight is given to conservation issues.

Support and encourage an appreciation of the parish heritage and its continuing importance by inviting a group of interested residents to form a project group which could, among other activities:

- Organise walks and talks to encourage an appreciation of our built heritage.
- Produce a booklet guide to notable buildings in the parish.
- Make residents aware of the importance of careful conservation as a means of enhancing the village and individual properties.
- Encourage the use of appropriate materials for repair of flint walls and soft brick buildings by providing useful information via the website.
- Support the retention whenever possible of original features such as doors, windows and glass when work is done on older properties.

Encourage owners to respect Conservation Area regulations and Listed Building conditions, and pursue breaches.

Ensure that all developments are preceded by appropriate archaeological investigation.

Development guidelines

The village we inhabit results quite literally from a thousand years of development and this process will continue. We need to ensure that we remain sensitive to the quality of the local environment and retain the characteristics valued by residents.

Respect

Even more important than the individual factors listed above which give the village its special character is the respect we give to our rich and varied heritage. We have to blend the new with the old sympathetically – this should inform everything we do in the village. New buildings should reflect the old, and sit in the village landscape, not on it.

Space

Land is a scarce commodity, but as our history shows – and this includes developments in the village in the second half of the twentieth century – by displaying some imagination we do not have to destroy precisely those features we so value when making space for new development.

Environment

In addition to co-existing with the old, there is a strong wish to conform to the highest practical environmental standards in any development, and to use development as a way of enhancing the community.

Balance

Houses in attractive villages like Dullingham gradually get extended and enlarged, so that the stock of smaller houses is reduced over time. Developers favour larger houses and this reinforces the gradual shift away from a balance of house sizes that mirrors the local requirement. Any development should seek to redress the balance by including an appropriate mix of house sizes.

Businesses

There are a number of commercial premises and small businesses in Dullingham and these play an important part in preventing the village becoming a commuter dormitory. It is vital that the stock of suitable commercial premises is preserved and enhanced, and not converted automatically to dwellings.



The Boot public house



Bell on church tower



Harmony created by flint and colour washed walls

RECOMMENDATIONS

General guidelines

Development should be within the established village envelope, except where development of an existing brownfield site would be of benefit.

To avoid becoming a dormitory the village needs its businesses and commercial properties; change of use to residential should only be allowed when it has been shown that non-residential use is not viable.

Preserving the openness of the village

The openness of the settlements and the gaps between them should be respected and ribbon development should be avoided.

Traditional building patterns should be followed by leaving one side of the street open.

Design of houses

Individual buildings should be designed to respect the gentleness and modesty of the existing architecture – domination of the skyline should be avoided and properties should be set back from the road.

Frontages should recede from the road rather than present tall gables that intrude.

Whenever possible, garages should be built so as not to come between the house and the roadway.

New properties should allow for the occupiers' vehicles to park off-street and preferably out of view so as to enhance the street scene.

Basements and cellars should be considered whenever practical, as they provide relatively inexpensive additional accommodation without enlarging the footprint of the building or adding to its apparent size. They also increase the overall thermal efficiency of the building.

Where new developments are in close proximity to old, they should be designed to enhance the setting and blend with the old in style and colouring.

Materials should be sympathetic in colour and texture to local traditional materials. Where possible, local materials should be used, such as the pleasing Burwell roof tiles used on the new Vicarage. Bricks should blend with the local soft red brick or old weathered gault clay Burwell bricks.

Modern materials used inside houses should be environmentally friendly.

New buildings should incorporate rainwater recycling from all roof areas to reduce the demands made on the parish

drainage system; for the same reason all new buildings should be built using Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) specifications as described on page 22.

All new buildings should meet the criteria set out in the 'Biodiversity Checklist' on page 11.

Consideration should be given to environmentally friendly energy sources such as ground-source heat pumps (already successfully used in the village). Solar power may be an option if the panels can be located unobtrusively. Wind power is unlikely to be an option as the visual impact of turbines makes them unacceptable. The website www.clear-skies.org provides useful information about available grants.

Affordable housing

The Appraisal Questionnaire identified a need for some form of subsidised housing in the village – the strong preference being for starter homes for sale or rental to local people. Young people are frequently forced out of the village in order to find accommodation when they leave home.



Village population

Dullingham is a living and working village, which is a major strength, and to remain so it requires a diverse population of young and old, single and families, covering a range of economic circumstances. To foster a sense of community we need to accommodate this diversity within the village by providing suitable accommodation, rather than allowing Dullingham to become a dormitory settlement, with growing numbers commuting out of the village to work and those who work in the village commuting in. To achieve this the village must provide an appropriate spectrum of housing.

House values

The available housing stock is biased towards larger, more expensive properties beyond the reach of many; people prefer to extend their houses rather than move elsewhere; some smaller houses have been demolished to make way for bigger houses and developers have their own reasons to build larger properties. Local Authority housing, formerly widespread, has now ceased. A shortage of building land has pushed up site prices making new building very expensive. The combined effect is a shortage of more modest houses.

Economic factors

House prices have almost doubled relative to wages, mostly in the last ten years. Although interest rates are currently low there is still a formidable barrier for a first-time buyer to get



View of Spooners Close



Residents enjoying the sunshine

onto the housing ladder. Rental properties are not readily available in the village, and as rents are based on property values, they are high. These factors, together with a shortage of social housing, make it difficult for those on lower incomes to stay in the village.

Towards affordability

To address the problem of affordability we have to plan for the right type and size of housing, working with agencies such as Hereward Housing and the District Council which have experience of providing houses through equity share, self-build or low-cost rental schemes.

Land availability

Affordable housing requires sites for building that meet the planning criteria in the Parish Plan (see 'Village Character', page 13) and, ideally, are situated within the village development envelope.

Where suitable brownfield sites are available, it may be acceptable to build on the edge of the development envelope; the semi-derelict yard opposite the railway station is an example – this would augment the settlement around the station and is convenient for trains although it is some distance from the few facilities in the village and from the school. The site may also be able to accommodate small business units – see page 17.

There may also be some appropriate greenfield sites in the village.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Set up a project group to study mechanisms for providing houses at below open market cost for local people. These properties should be secured in perpetuity for those in housing need.

Conduct a further survey of village housing needs so that planning can be guided by local rather than regional need.

Work with the District Council to provide new starter homes consistent with the definition of affordable housing used by the District Council Local Plan: 'housing accessible to those who cannot otherwise afford to meet their housing needs on the open market'.

Pursue the possibility of using the brownfield site mentioned above for affordable housing and/or small business units.

Encourage land owners who feel they may have sites with potential for affordable housing to put them forward.

Open market housing

Dullingham cannot be said to need any more open market housing, but residents accept that some development of open market housing is likely.

The relatively small developments identified on page 13 demonstrate that the village and community have successfully integrated occasional infill developments of modest scale and low-to-medium density. This should remain the pattern for the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Affirm the development envelope established in 1973.

Permit only infill development.

Ensure that new developments follow the pattern established by the existing modern developments in the village:

- are modest in scale: no larger than any existing development;
- set back from the road in a cul de sac;
- incorporate public space in the form of a green or similar;
- are not of greater density than any existing development;
- leave green spaces between the development and its neighbours.

Redress the imbalance in the housing stock by requiring that affordable starter housing is provided in the ratio of one affordable house to every three open-market houses in any development of four or more houses (this was the most popular option in the Appraisal Questionnaire).

Aim to maintain a balance of at least 25% of affordable starter housing in all new build; as the ratio cannot be applied to one-off individual builds this may in time require a higher ratio than 1:3 for developments of several houses.

Ensure that affordable starter houses meet the criteria proposed in 'Affordable Housing' on page 18: they are for local people and are secured in perpetuity for those in housing need.

Ensure that all developments fulfil the further design criteria on page 17.



Modern homes overlooking the pond



Where Eagle Lane meets Station Road

Iron lamp in the churchyard

Large-scale development

Dullingham is a small community: there are just over 280 occupied households in the parish and a population of a little over 700 (2001 Census figures). Large-scale development would be wholly inappropriate in a settlement of this size.

We estimate that the number of new housing units is growing by 1–2% a year or 5–10% every five years in the normal course of events. The floor area of available accommodation is probably growing at around 2–4% a year. In this situation we believe that an absolute limit on larger development of 5% of the current (2006) housing stock in any five-year period should be imposed.

Adding the two types of building together means that the village would be growing at up to 15% every 5 years – a very challenging prospect.

Growth on this scale raises many issues, among them:

- It threatens a thousand years of organic, piecemeal development as described from page 13 in this Plan. The feature which defines the very nature of the settlement is its openness, with houses facing open space and generous spaces between houses. No larger scale housing development could honour this tradition.
- It would threaten to destroy another feature which defines the settlement: the strong sense of identity and community which has this year been recognised by winning the DEFRA-sponsored Building Community Life award in both the County and Regional rounds of the Calor Village of the Year Competition. For more details see 'Community Matters' on page 28.
- Kettlefields School is consistently oversubscribed by the existing population in Dullingham and Stetchworth, the two communities it serves; designed for 120 pupils there are at present 140 in the school. Facilities such as the hall, toilets and kitchen are fully stretched.
- The village foul water drains – which also serve Stetchworth – are known to be working near capacity and on occasion are well over their designed capacity: see 'Drainage' on page 21.
- The village has very few facilities – a significant increase in its population would make this problem worse.
- The lack of facilities and jobs in the parish means that many more people will be forced to travel for shopping and work – two-car households would be the norm, with all that this means in terms of increased reliance on cars at a time when District Council policy is to reduce the number of car journeys.
- Any such development would be completely contrary to the expressed attitudes of the great majority of Dullingham residents.
- It would be contrary to the letter and spirit of the Parish Plan.
- It would be contrary to the policies of the District Council as contained in the Local Plan June 2000:
 - to ensure that most development takes place in those settlements that have a range of employment opportunities, shops and supporting infrastructure, which reduce the need for people to travel, particularly by car;
 - to protect the countryside from inappropriate development;
 - to protect the historic environment and ensure that all development reflects the distinctive character and appearance of the area through design, the use of materials, layout and landscaping;
 - to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- It is difficult to see how any larger development proposal could be reconciled with the District Council's declared objective of ensuring sustainable development '...by ensuring that future generations are not denied the best of today's environment' (paragraph 2.08 of the Local Plan 2000).

All of these apply to the proposal made by the owners of Hope Hall Stud that a large site adjoining Stetchworth Road be made available for residential development. Any such development would destroy precisely those features that define our village, parish and community and has nothing to recommend it to the local or wider community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That as more rapid development would not be sustainable in Dullingham, the Parish Council adopts the following parameters using the 2006 housing stock of 280 as the base:

no more than 1% growth a year in new houses built on a one-off basis;

no more than 5% growth in any five-year period in 'development' houses;

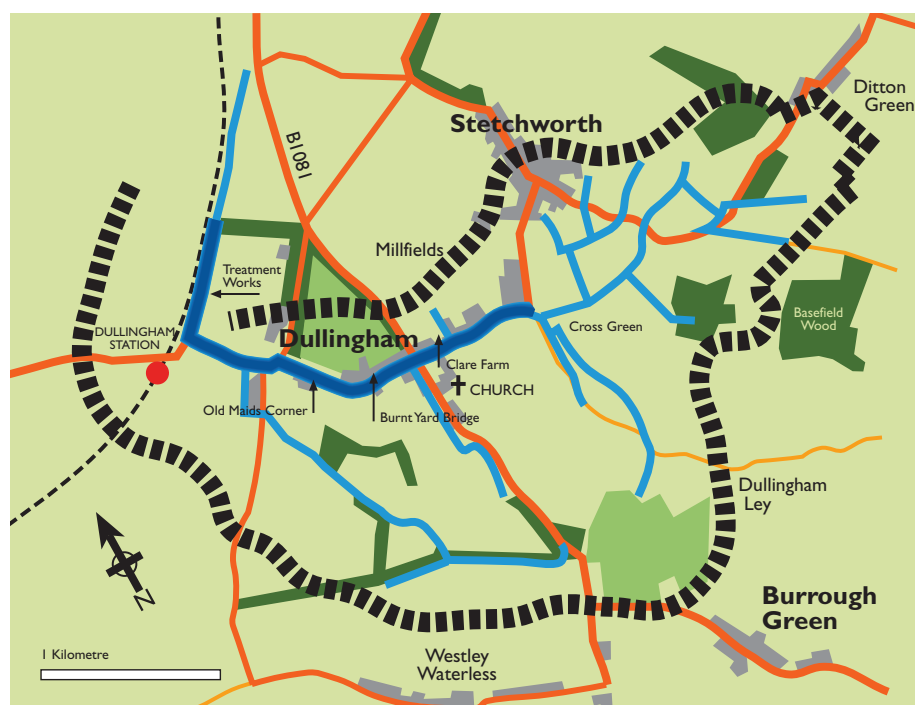
affordable starter housing to be excluded from these limits until such time as the balance of starter homes to other housing is judged satisfactory; the numbers of such units should be determined by the survey of affordable starter housing needs recommended in 'Affordable Housing' on page 19.



Now a private dwelling, The Old School has retained its bell



Taylors Field from Stetchworth Road



Key

- Catchment boundary
- Area of flood risk
- Stream and main ditches

Drainage

Surface- and foul-water flooding is a significant concern to residents, particularly those whose properties have been directly affected. A study of the problem was commissioned from a resident civil engineer whose findings and recommendations are summarised below. The full report – *Storm and Foul Water Drainage in Dullingham* – is available in print and on the parish website; it was developed using *Flood and Coastal Defence Project Appraisal Guidance* issued by DEFRA.

Surface water

The study adopted a Catchment Flood Management Plan approach to the problem and assumes that the flooding issues have to be managed both through the planning process and by involving landowners. The study confines itself to those parts of the village where there are recognised problems.

Dullingham and part of Stetchworth lie in the natural valley forming the upper catchment of the River Snail. The main

watercourse enters Dullingham from the east and flows the length of the village through a variety of bridges and culverts beneath roads, paths, property and gardens, leaving the parish beyond the treatment works off Station Road. The Environment Agency Flood Map identifies the area of flood risk as starting at Cross Green Corner, running right through the village and down to the treatment works off Station Road.



Over the last 30 years significant floods of similar size have occurred at about five-year intervals. In these floods ponds have formed at two points on Stetchworth Road and on the Cross Green corner which have been deep enough to stop cars for a few days – this occasional inconvenience is

accepted, as the costs involved in solving the problems would not be justified.

However, on the last three of these events the house at Burnt Yard Bridge on Station Road has flooded; the problem results from an undersized pipe built into the culvert next to the property.



Ornate brickwork is a feature of The Old School House



View from Church Lane into the Churchyard

RECOMMENDATIONS

Two things need to be done to deal with the flooding at Burnt Yard Bridge:

remove the undersized pipe and restore the culvert to the original size throughout its length;

reduce the peak flow level by creating a new channel to take the excess flow through the grounds of Dullingham House to relieve the pressure on the brick culvert there.

With changing farming techniques and land use, ponds and ditches have often been filled or allowed to fall into disrepair; the result is that the holding capacity within the parish has been reduced and water runoff is allowed to find its chosen route rather than an engineered solution. The steady increase in areas of hard standing and roof area has increased the rate of water runoff. Without adequate means of holding or channelling, this runoff can result in flooding of roads and property and increases the demands on the existing watercourse beyond capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Address the serious runoff problem at Old Maid's Corner; the large flow from land south of Station Road crosses access bridges and threatens houses. An Environment Agency report suggested that a ditch be dug on the private land on the south side of the road; the water would have to be piped into the stream across the road or in front of Old Maid's Cottage.

Ensure that all ditches in the parish are regularly maintained. Many are seriously overgrown and some contain enough debris to block culverts.

Ensure that culverts are adequately maintained – several are severely silted and one at the foot of Church Lane is more than half closed.

Move the grid on the culvert outside Clare Farm upstream or remove it altogether, as it reduces the capacity of the culvert once it has trapped a small amount of debris.

Remove excess natural growth from watercourses – but do this with care as it can increase flow-rates unacceptably.

Avoid the infilling of ponds, as these help to absorb peak flows.

Encourage the creation of ponds to help create a sustainable system and to encourage biodiversity – there is little open water in the parish.

Encourage landowners to manage ditches and ponds within their remit.

These proposals are necessary to deal with a five-year return flood (the size of flood that can be expected on average every five years). Normally engineers would work to a 100-year return criterion which would be a flow 2.5 times greater than a five-year flood.

Such an event would produce significant flooding in Stetchworth Road, but probably no properties there would be affected. Once the run-off problem at Old Maid's Corner has been resolved, and the ditch on Station Road cleared, the main watercourse from there on would probably be adequate, though culverts and bridges will need to be enlarged; this option would require a more detailed survey before being pursued, as the present study has been conducted with limited resources. While the best available source for such work has been used (the *Flood Estimation Handbook*), it is difficult to predict the size of floods with any degree of accuracy.

The future

In 2001 the Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions published *Planning Policy Guidance 25: Development and Flood Risk* which required that all new homes are equipped with SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems); this offers a range of techniques to reduce the impact of surface water drainage and the risk of flooding.

PPG 25 also announced as policy that:

- No development should lead to an increased risk of flooding elsewhere.
- The susceptibility of land to flooding is an important planning consideration.
- Any development plans should provide a detailed description of what provisions have been made to deal with relevant flood issues.
- Builders are required to fund the provision, and future maintenance, of flood defences and sustainable drainage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drainage is such an important issue for Dullingham that Parish Councillors should all be familiar with the contents of PPG 25 and *Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems – an introduction*.

All planning applications should be scrutinised to ensure that they meet SUDS provisions.

A suitably qualified resident should be asked to monitor the performance of drains in the parish and to advise Parish Council members on drainage issues as and when necessary.



Gate Cottage



Looking down Church Lane



A cottage in Dullingham Ley

Foul water

The sewer that runs down Stetchworth Road serves Dullingham and Stetchworth; it is duplicated between Cross Green corner and the King's Head crossroad and feeder sewers join it on its way along Station Road to the treatment works situated just north of the railway station. The study was limited to the main sewer from Cross Green corner to the sewage works, as all major problems have occurred in this length; beyond Balsham Lane it carries a daily peak flow of just over 70% of its full capacity. The sewer is unable to take the flood flow it receives after rain and it overflows at the inspection chamber on private property on the south of the road near the junction with Eagle Lane. During a five-year return flood it would have to deal with 120% of its full capacity. See the diagrams on page 33 for further details.

The recurrence of overflow in relatively dry periods from various manholes elsewhere in the village suggests that there are problems higher up the system – there may be broken pipes or tree-root intrusion causing constriction or an inflow of surface water from a pond or ditch. This was made to seem more likely by an overflow in December 2005 from the Stetchworth sewer near Kettlefields School. At the time of writing, Anglian Water is carrying out a camera survey of the relevant sewers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Do not allow new development to generate demand that exceeds capacity; the system for part of its length is running at 70% of capacity at peak flow and allowance has to be made for the surface water that is entering the system.

Ensure that new developments do not allow additional storm water to enter the foul system. This is a requirement of building regulations, but particularly careful monitoring is needed to ensure that this does not happen in Dullingham given that the system is so near capacity even in dry periods.

Insist that whenever new plans are being considered all relevant existing connections are checked and the opportunity is used to exclude surface water from the foul-water system.

Request the results of the camera survey by Anglian Water as soon as the report is completed.

Without these measures being taken the frequency of overflow will increase. Responsibility for such overflows and resulting damage belongs to the relevant water authority – this principle was established in *Marcic versus Thames Water Utilities*, May 2001.



We all have a role to play in ensuring that what we do with our own properties serves to enhance the village character.



Parishioners on an architectural tour of the village

7 The streetscape

The section 'The built environment' deals with the architecture of the parish. Under 'The streetscape' we include the other features which contribute to the visual appearance and 'feel' of Dullingham – what you experience as you walk through the village and everything which influences that very common reaction from visitors: 'What a pretty village!'.

The impression results from a number of features: some large (like the green, the sports field and the spaces around it, the splendid trees), others smaller (like the lanes, gates, walls) and some smaller still (the type and condition of benches, rubbish bins, and street signs). Large and small, the features all affect the impression that we and visitors have of our village. Residents feel passionately about Dullingham as a rural environment – ideally everything in the village would contribute to, and enhance, this rural 'feel'.

We all of us have a role to play in this, both in helping to maintain and enhance the public features and in ensuring that what we do to our own properties serves to enhance rather than detract from the village character.

Traffic and roads



The parish is crossed by two major roads. The road from Stetchworth which runs East-West through the heart of the village is a popular rat-run to the A1304 and the A11 and presents the usual problems: speeding vehicles making the road dangerous and noisy particularly at commuting times – the school is situated on the road and this is a constant source of anxiety to parents.

An even bigger problem is the B1061 which runs North-South through the village and is such a barrier that it effectively cuts the village in two – the junction in the middle of the village is dangerous (and particularly difficult for pedestrians) as much of the traffic using the road – which includes many heavy goods vehicles – travels well above the speed limit.



Street furniture requires regular inspection



This mobile police station now visits the village once a month

RECOMMENDATIONS

See the recommendations on page 31 for traffic calming measures.

Resist pressure for more roadside kerbs. Grass verges and banks are an essential part of the countryside scene – they add character, are visually pleasing and soften the impact of roads in the countryside.

Parking

In several parts of the village – for example on Station Road – parked cars are a hazard as they obscure the view of oncoming cars for other drivers. On Stetchworth Road parked cars are a danger for children leaving the school.



RECOMMENDATION

Insist that all plans for new houses in the parish should whenever possible provide off-road parking spaces and garages for at least two cars; encourage owners to use them. On-road parking on any road constitutes a hazard, is unsightly and should be kept to a minimum.



Street furniture

Overhead cables, poles and utility equipment can harm the visual quality of an area – this is demonstrated in Station Road, part of whose charm results from the absence of cabling and the use of elegant light poles and

fittings. Elsewhere in the village there is a mix of concrete, steel and wooden poles supporting overhead cables.

Benches and rubbish bins are a necessary part of the street scene; when rusted and broken they detract from the appearance of the village.

There are a number of railings in the village and outside – some are sympathetic but others are more suited to scaffolding in an industrial environment and they look particularly bad when broken and when painted bright yellow. They detract from the country environment and should when possible be replaced with more appropriate furniture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Bury major utility services or route them as inconspicuously as possible.

Conduct an annual audit of all street furniture to identify what needs repair or replacement.

Insist on seeing in advance the specifications for any new structures which the District Council proposes to introduce into the parish.

Signage

Signs of all kinds can make a significant difference to the 'feel' of an environment; crude obtrusive signing, or too much signing, detracts from the rural atmosphere and contributes to the inexorable process by which rural environments become more urban with each passing year.

Road direction signs

Some parishes have been able to retain traditional fingerpost signs. The Department of Transport Advisory Leaflet 6/05 allows for the reintroduction of such signs where appropriate and funding for such action is available from the Local Heritage Initiative of the Countryside Agency.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Act on the decision to reintroduce traditional signs, as such signs would make a valuable contribution to the streetscape.

Examine carefully any proposals for additional signing, using the principle that the fewer signs in the village the better.

Permit illuminated signs only when strictly demanded on safety grounds – they are generally inappropriate in a village setting.



Absence of kerbs in Station Road helps to retain rural character



The sportsfield is a dog-free zone



A blaze of colour in Station Road

Parish Council signs

These signs have been put up by different people for a variety of purposes over the years and there is considerable variation in materials, typeface, type style, and colour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use the minimum number of signs necessary; review existing signage with this principle in mind.
- Use the minimum number of words.
- Use materials consistently.
- Standardise on a colour combination; we suggest white lettering as at present, on a dark green background (Pantone 560C).
- Use one typeface consistently for headings and text; we recommend Gill Sans (as used in this Parish Plan).
- Use all upper case for titles (the name of a notice, e.g. PARKING).
- Use upper and lower case in the text.
- Review the condition of all signing as part of the annual inspection of Parish Council property.

Property boundaries

Boundaries are a very important part of the streetscape and contribute greatly to the beauty of the village.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage owners to ensure that boundaries such as walls, railings and gates should always be sympathetic to the environment, using materials and styles that are consistent with other structures nearby.
- Ask owners of soft brick and flint walls to ensure that all repairs use traditional methods to preserve the character of the walls.
- Encourage owners to plant hedges that consist only of native species, to tend their hedges well and to ensure they do not obscure sightlines – this is particularly important when a hedge may interfere with a significant view, for example views of the deer park on Station Road, or views which lead the eye out of the village to farmland and hills beyond.

Trees and gardens

Outside the village the parish has relatively little tree cover, but the village itself is unusually well endowed with trees, which are a striking feature.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Survey the tree stock annually with the assistance of the District Council's Tree Officer to create a programme to replace trees that need to be removed and to find opportunities for new planting.
- Encourage owners of gardens to keep them as visible as possible, as this makes a significant contribution to the generally open feel of the village.

Open spaces

One of the most striking features of the village is the importance of open spaces, as described in 'Village Character' on page 13. The single most important space is the green – a former 'camping close' or medieval football field – which is the centre of the village physically and provides a venue for a number of parish events as well as the itinerant summer fair, and is the location of the much admired children's playground. The adjoining space in front of the church, Taylor Hall and the pond has potential for some imaginative landscaping and a recommendation on this is made below. The sports field is another significant open space with an important role in parish life – it makes a valuable contribution to the sense of openness, as do the open fields that surround it.

Village pond

The village pond is a popular resource, particularly for children who enjoy feeding ducks. The steep sides are a hazard and the undergrowth around the pond is unsightly and is one important reason why the pond water is of such poor quality. The pond does not function as the major resource for wildlife that it potentially is, nor does it contribute what it should as a visual amenity.





Dullingham Cricket Team



Spooners Close Christmas lights

RECOMMENDATIONS

Take advice on what can be done to improve the quality of the pond water and the landscaping of the area.

Use the opportunity to think of the pond as an integral part of the open space in front of the Taylor Hall and the churchyard – a well designed scheme could make this area more of a feature in the village landscape, while making the pond safer for people and healthier for wildlife.

Watercourses

While they no longer flow as frequently as they used to, the watercourses along Watery Lane, Stetchworth Road and parts of Station Road remain an attractive feature. They are part of the source of the River Snail and their route turns north at the end of Station Road to flow through Newmarket and eventually join Soham Lode. We should resist any plans to enclose more of the open courses in culverts. In the winter the open courses need regular inspection to ensure that they do not become blocked by plant debris or litter.



RECOMMENDATIONS

If the opportunity arises, consider exposing watercourses which are at present obscured where this can be done safely. An example is provided outside Clare Farm Stables – the owners maintain the watercourse and its banks beautifully but these can only be seen through gaps in the hedge.

Resist proposals to enclose any more of the watercourses in culverts.

Ensure that the watercourses are regularly inspected to ensure that they are not blocked by plant debris or litter and are not a safety hazard.



We accept that change will happen, but it is vital that any development should be consistent with the fundamental character of the parish and village.



Parishioners investigating village history

8 Community matters

The Parish Plan has focused on the major themes that the community identified: the importance of the rural environment and the amenities it offers, the beauty of the village, the quality of the buildings, the crucial importance of the open spaces in the village and the strong sense of a supportive community, all things that we believe have characterised Dullingham 'since time out of mind'.

The Parish Plan has responded to this very clear statement about what we as a community value, by making proposals about how the inheritance can be protected and enhanced. We accept that change will happen, but it is vital that any development should be consistent with the fundamental character of the parish and village – development which by its nature or its scale destroys what we hold dear is not development but vandalism. The east of England is under unprecedented development pressure and to preserve what is good we have to be constantly vigilant – this requires a good deal of time and effort from us as a community. We cannot afford to be complacent.

A fortunate community

In addition to being passionate about the nature of the village and parish, residents also expressed broad satisfaction with a number of specific features addressed in the Appraisal Questionnaire: we are generally satisfied with the social and medical services we have; we are delighted with our postal service (95% approval rating!); we appreciate the facilities we have in the parish or close by and recognise how fortunate this makes us.

There are no serious social or major communal problems and there is an excellent support system for the more vulnerable members of our community – this was an important reason why Dullingham was so successful in the Calor Village of the Year Competition in 2005, winning the Fairhaven Trophy as Cambridgeshire Village of the Year and the DEFRA Building

Community Life award for the East of England. DEFRA sponsors this part of the competition to emphasise that the fundamental quality of a successful community is the way in which it includes all groups and individuals, particularly the most vulnerable, in a cohesive and mutually supportive community.





The Garden Club Show is a popular event



Santa on his annual visit to Dullingham

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin is a critical part of the supportive community; apart from regular services, including one every month specifically for children, the church is socially active, running fundraising events for charity, visiting the sick or lonely and running a soup kitchen, a popular monthly social event; it provides transport to these events for those that need it. The Church also produces the invaluable monthly community *News Sheet*.

The Boot Charity and Dullingham Charities both support residents in need, particularly older residents at Christmas time.

Emergencies

The more vulnerable members of the community are normally well supported with transport, visits and meals. However there is a need to ensure that they will be looked after in an emergency when the normal support systems may not operate. Heavy snow falls, prolonged electricity breakdowns, disruptions of the phone service or other eventualities could put vulnerable people at risk.

Similarly, flooding may create a crisis for those in the village whose properties are at risk.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Form a project group to look specifically at what needs may arise in any significant emergency that affects the parish.

Develop an emergency plan which will identify people at risk, name residents who will check on them, and list phone numbers for emergency contact.

Young people

The views of young people were sought as part of the Appraisal Questionnaire (forty-one aged between 9 and 17 responded) and in an informal Youth Club seminar.

Most felt that for such a small community there is a good range of sports and social activities in Dullingham; some said there should be more things to do locally so they do not have to travel to a nearby town. They were concerned that Dullingham does not have enough for teenagers to do in the evenings; they would also like a local shop, cash-point and skate park. Some felt there should be more adequate street lighting.

The bus timetable is not suitable for social purposes, and this is particularly important as the village is not within easy cycling distance of larger settlements where there is entertainment; a few comments referred to how dangerous the roads are for pedestrians and cyclists.

The young people were unanimous that the village should not be allowed to grow too much. They would like to see some new housing development, but they did not want to see large housing estates as they felt this would spoil the village. They all thought that once they went to work, they would have to travel to a town to do so.

When asked whether they would prefer to live in a larger settlement, the response was that Dullingham is a nice safe and quiet place with little anti-social behaviour. They enjoy communal events such as The Boot Charity Fund Fun Day and like mixing with adults on these occasions. They approve of the annual Dullingham Christmas lights display and appreciate the donations made to the Youth Club by the organisers.

Some members felt that adults have a bad opinion of young people in the parish and suggested that if they participated in a local community project they would be seen in a more positive light.

Kettlefields Primary School pupils participated in an art project, painting significant buildings in the village: some of the results appear on the inside back cover of this Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hold regular seminars with the young people of the parish and report the outcome in the *News Sheet*.

Invite young people to meetings to discuss youth-related issues and to encourage them to become involved in community projects.

Invite young people to normal Parish Council meetings to see what the Council does.

Recruit young people to participate in the regular village litter pickups

Taylor Hall

After some years of decline, the hall was little used until it was rescued by the dedicated efforts of a committee which started a programme of fundraising and renovation (the building – a generous gift to the community by the Taylor family – was showing its age). The result is that the hall has been given a new lease on life and is once again a much used community resource.

The hall is used daily by the Ducklings Play Group, and on most evenings; it provides space for meetings of the cubs,





Coffee and chat after Sunday church service



Dullingham Railway Station

scouts, guides and youth club; it is regularly used for classes and band rehearsals, by clubs and societies, and for parties and bingo nights. It provides space for the Community Computer Access Point. The Parish Council has traditionally met in the hall and this is where public parish meetings take place. It is the venue for polling booths in local, Parliamentary and European Parliament elections. The parish recycling centre is located in the grounds of the hall.

The Committee continues its work to bring the hall up to contemporary standards of comfort, convenience and safety, including exacting legal requirements. The community owes it a debt for the time and effort it devotes to the task; similarly, those who have donated their professional skills to the project deserve our gratitude and public acknowledgement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Explore with the Taylor Hall Committee whether the good offices of the Parish Council can be used to try again to obtain grants for the renovation and possible extension of the building. The existence of the Parish Plan may be of help in this as some grant donors insist on the existence of a Plan as a pre-condition.

Encourage the Committee to communicate their vision for the hall by reporting regularly to the community on progress, and by publishing a plan of what the Hall will look like when renovation is completed in order to encourage a greater sense of community involvement.

Engage the committee in the project recommended on page 27 to rethink the use of the space around the hall, church and pond.

Business

Residents are in favour of a shop with a much more comprehensive range of products than the much appreciated, but limited, range in the garage shop. There is also support for more employment opportunities within the parish. Recommendations about business premises are made in 'Development Guidelines' on page 17.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Support any move to expand the shop in ways which will service the local community.

Encourage small-scale businesses that are deemed appropriate to the village and parish environment and which can be appropriately housed.

Initiate the creation of a simple business directory so that residents know what services are available locally.

Transport

The Appraisal Questionnaire revealed the dilemma that many rural communities face: a huge dependence for work, shopping and leisure on private cars with very little walking, cycling or use of public transport for these purposes. The commonly cited reasons why residents do not use the available bus and rail services are the infrequency and unreliability of the services and the slow routes; cost features a distant third as a reason. The problem is very familiar: low usage leads to reduced services which leads to lower usage which leads to still more reduced services.

Breaking this pattern in the interests of sustainability, reducing pollution and improving safety in the village is beyond the power of the local community. However there are some things that we could and should do to ensure that available services are as useful as possible and that they are not reduced because they are not adequately used; in the past the community has been reactive when changes have been proposed – being more pro-active is likely to achieve better results in the longer term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a project group to investigate improving public transport services.

Liaise with the District Council and County Council to ensure that we are consulted at the bus route and timetable planning stage.

Liaise with other communities which share the bus and rail services we have – a combined voice is likely to be stronger than uncoordinated lone voices.

Investigate what scope there is for coordinating bus and train timetables.

Investigate the desirability of lighting Station Road beyond Balsham Lane to encourage use of the station after dark.



The War Memorial



Bell ringing in St Mary's



The monthly Soup Kitchen at Clare Farm is a popular social event

Be in regular contact with the rail operator to ensure that there is not a repeat of the serious breakdown in communication in 2005 when crucial services were withdrawn without consultation.

Investigate with the rail operator and other interested parties the possibility of improving rail services to Dullingham.

Encourage share-a-ride schemes to Newmarket and Cambridge and to Dullingham and Whittlesford Stations (the latter is used by many to get to London). The parish website may be able to act as a clearing house for such a scheme.

Investigate what could be done to create safer cycle routes to the Dullingham Station and to Newmarket.

Speeding

This was the most often cited issue when residents were invited to suggest what detracted from life in Dullingham. There is significant support for the following measures to reduce speeding:



- lowering the speed limit to 30 mph throughout the village
- traffic calming
- children at play signs
- extending the 30 mph speed limit along Station Road
- more warning signs outside the village
- rumble strips approaching the village.

The Parish Council has over the years attempted to get the responsible authorities to address the problem, with some success, although it has not always received the recognition it deserves for what it has achieved.

RECOMMENDATION

Invite a project group of concerned residents to develop a set of proposals for dealing with the speeding issue. This should be put to the community and then become formal Parish Council policy to add weight to the negotiations with the responsible authorities. The Council would benefit from being seen to take residents' concerns seriously and blame for any lack of action would rest squarely with the relevant authorities.

Theft and vandalism

Some residents expressed anxiety about petty theft and occasional mindless acts of vandalism. It is felt that even an occasional police presence would contribute to the sense that antisocial behaviour is unacceptable and likely to result in retribution. The absence of a police presence is felt to be a serious problem in the parish.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Treat this problem as the speeding issue is treated: invite a project group to put forward proposals to improve the situation. This provides residents with an opportunity to address the issue, gets them involved and removes the sense that 'they' ought to be doing something about the problem. It is a social and communal issue best dealt with locally.

Give the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme a high profile; residents should be encouraged to display window stickers prominently.

Maintain efforts to get a more frequent police presence in the parish.

Litter

Litter and dog fouling were mentioned frequently by residents responding to the Appraisal Questionnaire. These examples of antisocial behaviour are best dealt with by social pressure: it should be unthinkable that any resident would drop litter in the village or allow a dog to foul the village or any footpath close to it.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Invite a project group to offer ideas on how to deal with both problems.

Encourage residents to do as many do already: pick up any stray litter and dispose of it.

Make a concerted effort to recruit more residents to the parish-wide litter picks, perhaps by making it a more social occasion by offering refreshments afterwards.

Start a campaign – for example in the *News Sheet*, *Dullingham Matters* and on the Dullingham website – aimed at the irresponsible dog owners who persist in their bad habits.

For this to work satisfactorily, the Parish Plan assumes that there is a dynamic relationship between the Council and the community.



The Children's Play Area on the green

A display by The Parish Plan Team

9 The Parish Council

There is much goodwill towards the Parish Council; spontaneous remarks to this effect were made in responses to the Appraisal Questionnaire.

A significant number of residents (48%) said they were prepared to pay more Council Tax specifically for Parish Council use (36% did not wish to do so and 16% did not express a view). This can be seen as a vote of confidence in the Council – if an important issue were identified it seems safe to assume that a majority of parishioners would be sympathetic to the idea of paying more to deal with it.

One of the many benefits of having a Parish Plan is that it provides the community's elected representatives with a statement of what the community wants done – a clear sense of direction. The Council can therefore with confidence be pro-active rather than simply reactive. For this to work satisfactorily, the Parish Plan assumes that there is a dynamic relationship between the Council and the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Annual Report

That the Council produces an Annual Report which is distributed to all residents in which it sets out its achievements in the past year, the current problems it is addressing and what its plans are for the new year.

Communication

That the Council improves communication by:

- (i) Confirming that the Dullingham website will continue to be available as a community resource and then requesting that agendas and minutes of meetings, and the Parish accounts, are published on the site.
- (ii) Distributing agendas and minutes by e-mail to everyone in the parish who requests the service.
- (iii) Moving the parish notice board, to a site between The Boot and Dullingham Motors where there is much more pedestrian traffic.
- (iv) Keeping the notice board up to date with relevant parish-specific notices and information.
- (v) Notifying all households in the parish by flyer of the Annual Parish Meeting; arranging for the Annual Report and Accounts and the proposed Budget for the coming year to be available to residents in print and on the website before the meeting.
- (vi) Inviting residents to join project teams – with clear terms of reference – to address tasks identified by the Parish Plan and approved by the Council. It seems crucial to engage more residents in the process by which we as a community address the challenges we face.
- (vii) Ensuring that planning applications receive adequate publicity (65% of residents requested this).
- (viii) Liaise with neighbouring Parish Councils who are facing similar issues to those our community faces.

Mission Statement

Produce a mission statement so that the community understands how the Council perceives its role (an example is provided at Appendix 2 on page 33).

Action Plan

That the Dullingham Action Plan is a regular item on Council agendas.

That a formal review of progress – publicised in advance – takes place each quarter.

10 Appendices

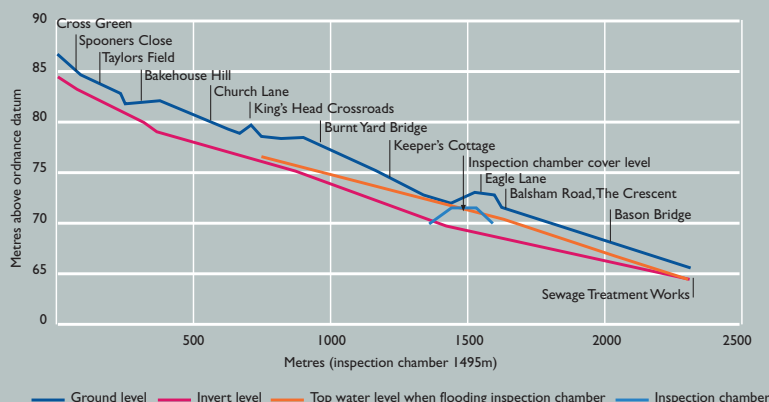
Appendix 1 Principles for landscape improvement

The document *Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines – a manual for management and change in the rural landscape* defines the future pattern for the chalklands as 'a large scale landscape defined by rolling hills, large fields, bold shelter belts, sweeping masses of woodland and occasional beech hangers'. Steps towards this vision include:

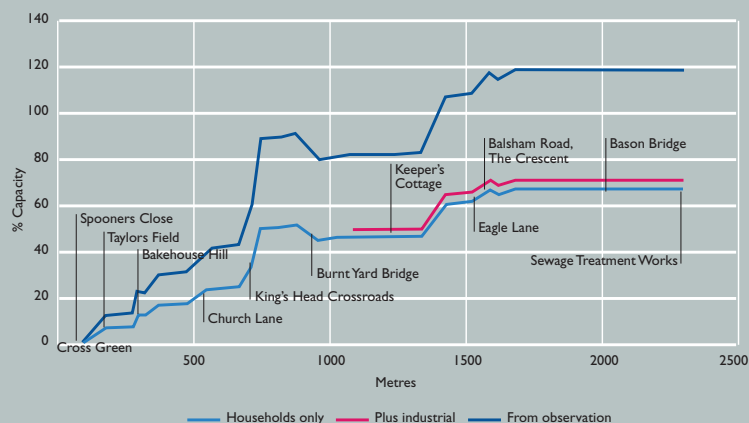
1. Planting new beech hangers on suitable knolls and hilltops to reinforce the local chalklands landscape character.
2. Managing and creating open species-rich chalk grassland for its visual features and to promote wildlife diversity.
3. Managing existing shelter belts which should be restocked to fill gaps.
4. Planting new mixed woodlands and shelter belts to emphasise landforms.
5. Creating landscape corridors along stream valleys.
6. Managing selected hedgerows for their visual and wildlife potential, carefully conserving historically significant hedgerows and ensuring that new hedges emphasise the existing landscape.
7. On stud farms, planning of shelter belts should be on less rigid lines, responding more to local landforms, hedges, copses and roads; the shelter belts should be planted with native tree and shrub species for visual and wildlife benefits.

Appendix 2 Drainage diagrams

Main sewer longsection



Percentage of capacity used



Appendix 3 Mission Statement

(Courtesy of Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council)

'We shall endeavour to ensure that the quality of life in our parish is brought to and maintained at a high standard, where essential services are accessible, where people feel safe and our children can grow and prosper. We shall keep in touch with the people and listen to them, giving a sense of ownership. We want all the community to feel proud to live in the parish. We shall try to ensure that the parish retains its natural beauty. We shall aim to provide for the whole community so that their needs are met.'

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<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk> Environment Agency.

<http://www.ciria.org/suds/> Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

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<http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/projects/bugs/BUGS2/bugs2-index.html> Biodiversity in Urban Gardens (BUGS2) 2004–2007.

<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1139866> What is a Sustainable Community?

<http://www.clear-skies.org> Gives householders and communities a chance to realise the benefits of renewable energy by providing grants and access to sources of advice. Householders can obtain grants of between £400 and £5000 and not-for-profit community organisations can receive up to £50,000.

12 Acknowledgements

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David Lord (legal advisor)
Sarah Simpson (community advisor)
Alan Misson (contemporary history of the village)
Marcus Ennis (footpath and editorial advice)

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Adrian Thurley – Energy-efficient housing
Kim Waterhouse and Mark Robertson – ‘Drainage’
Adrian du Plessis – The rest of the text.
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15 Sponsors

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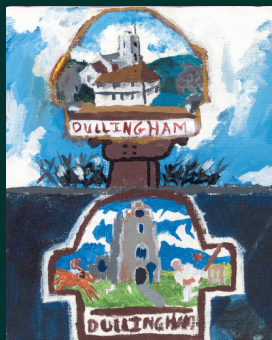
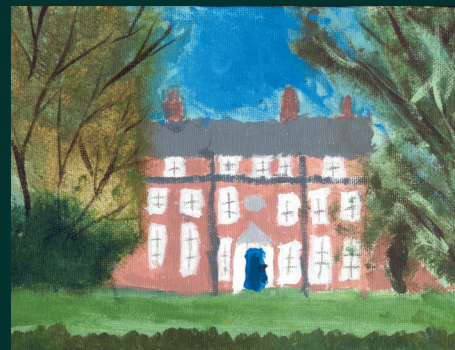
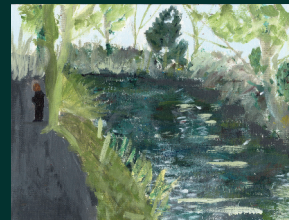
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Kettlefields Primary School pupils participated in an art project, painting significant buildings in the village: a small selection from the large number of paintings is reproduced here.