

2011



Kirdford Village Design Statement



Section 8 of the Kirdford
Community Led Plan

November 2011

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Kirdford Village 'Village Design Statement'



Glasshouse Lane



Petworth Road by New Barn



'Effect is of a French Green' Nairn & Pevsner

What is a Village Design Statement?

The Process

A Village Design Statement seeks to record the features of the built and natural environment of a village that are valued by its residents with the object of producing an advisory document for formal adoption by the Local Planning authority as 'Supplementary Planning Guidance'.

Aims and Objectives

Village Design Statements are prepared by local people and to achieve adoption must demonstrate that there has been full consultation with the community.



Residents collating 'walk about' information



Residents 'mapping Kirdford'

Their main purpose is to safeguard and enhance the character of each village and Parish by promoting sympathetic and contextually appropriate design in all new developments, large and small.

One third of Kirdford Parish, the southern part, lies within the new South Downs National Park whose purpose is as set out in the following statement:

The South Downs has been nationally recognised for its natural beauty and the space it offers for people to enjoy the countryside. This is why it has been made into a National Park. The twin purposes of the South Downs National Park are:

1. To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
2. To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public

The South Downs National Park Authority is the lead organisation responsible for promoting the purposes of the National Park, working in partnership with other Local Authorities and organisations. In delivering Park purposes, the Authority has an important duty:

To seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park

Chichester District Council is the local authority within which the remaining areas of the parish and village lie. The Chichester District Local Plan – ‘Rural Environment’ contains the following statement: *DUE TO ITS DISTINCTIVE HISTORIC CHARACTER AND THE SPECIAL QUALITY OF THE LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS, THE NORTH-EASTERN AREA OF CHICHESTER DISTRICT, OUTSIDE THE SUSSEX DOWNS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, (now the SDNP) IS CONSIDERED TO WARRANT, AND WILL BE GIVEN, SPECIAL PROTECTION. DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THE SITING AND DESIGN OF BUILDINGS AND ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC GENERATED OR OFF SITE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED WOULD NOT BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE AREA'S LANDSCAPE, CHARACTER OR HISTORIC FEATURES.*

Accordingly, the Kirdford Village Design Statement (VDS) aims to make all residents and developers aware of the assets that are unique to Kirdford and encourage the community to take responsibility for ensuring that future changes and developments preserve and enhance these assets.

How will our recommendations be applied?

Once adopted by the District Council, the VDS will become a tool in the formal Development Management process. Everyone proposing building works within the Parish from major new developments to minor alterations will be expected to address its provisions as part of the planning submission. The document will provide developers and their advisors with local information and guidelines which may indicate acceptable design solutions and help to avoid controversy. At the same time they aim to enable Councillors and the public to comment on applications with the benefit of local guidance based upon the characteristics of the locality.

Within the Development Management process the VDS would be one of a number of “material considerations” which have to be taken into account when reaching a decision, for example this may include national Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and representations from other agencies and local bodies.

Change is inevitable but the Village Design Statement provides an opportunity for the community to influence future changes and avoid the unfortunate loss of heritage arising from development pressures as in the past.

The objectives of the Community Led Plan and its Village Design Statement were summarised by the community in their **Vision Statement**:

‘To ensure that the special characteristics of the village, its rural feel and relationship with the surrounding countryside as well as its historic buildings, are enhanced and protected while at the same time recognising that some change is inevitable and desirable.’

In managing change any enhancement or future development should:

- **Build on the village’s character; its mix of building styles and uses, as well as their setting along deep verges, with mature trees and planting, and their relationship with the roads, paths and surrounding countryside.**
- **Contribute to integrating all parts of the village by extending these characteristics throughout.**
- **Reinforce and strengthen its heart around Butts Common.**
- **Ensure that the village is safe and attractive to all, including the young and very old, to walk around and access the central areas, village stores and other community facilities including the outer activity areas, namely the football fields and recreation ground.**
- **Aim to improve sustainability (social, environmental, and economic) by embedding them in all proposals.**

Status of the Document

The Kirdford Village Design Statement has been prepared by the residents of the parish of Kirdford to define the elements of the built and natural environment they value and to provide guidance to supplement the policies of the Chichester District Local Plan.

The final version of the Village Design Statement was considered and endorsed by Chichester District Council in July 2011 as a material consideration in the assessment of development proposals within the Village of Kirdford.

8.1 Introduction

Kirdford is a small, isolated rural village on the northern edge of Chichester District, which retains many of the qualities of a rural settlement with generous green spaces, countryside walks and a unifying architectural theme based on traditional details and scale and the use of local construction materials – handmade clay tiles, red and blue brick, and most importantly, the local winklestone (a type of Wealden greensand stone). There have been contextually inappropriate new developments but most are screened or have become softened by planting and in general do not detract from the historic core which has been designated a Conservation Area.

The Design Statement includes a section highlighting important historical events that explain the development and character of the village.

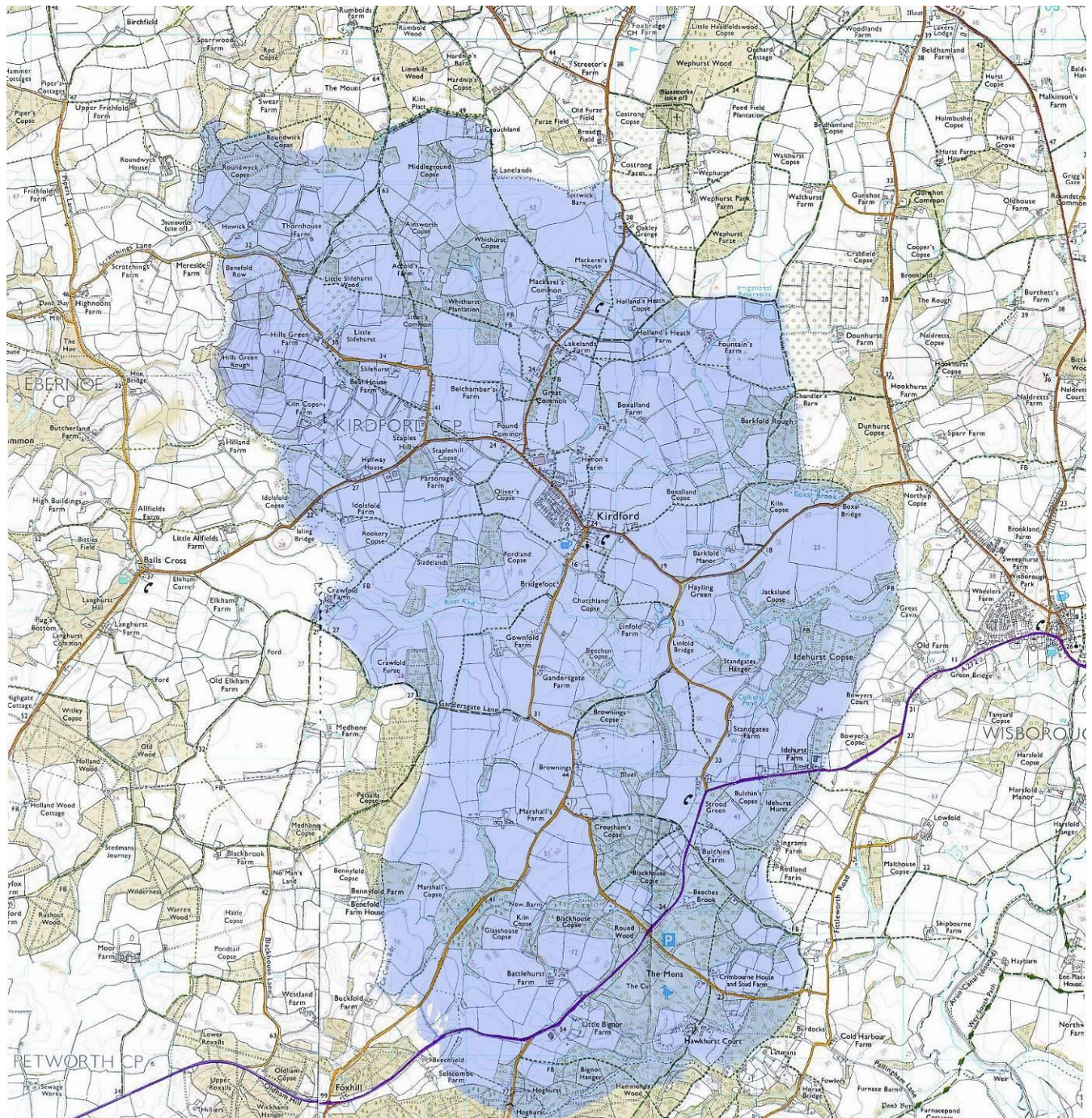
This Statement seeks to ensure that future developments preserve and compliment the essential character of Kirdford and to suggest opportunities for appropriate restoration or enhancement. Its aim is to safeguard the integrity and independence of the village so that succeeding generations will continue to enjoy, understand and defend its historic foundation.

8.2 The Village Context

8.2.1 Location and Activities

Kirdford is located in a rural setting in the north-west area of Chichester District Council on the northern border with Surrey. The village lies north of the A272, the main east west downs road linking East and West Sussex. The village is isolated and some six miles east of Petworth and north-west of Billingshurst. The historic core of the village is a designated conservation area and many of the buildings are listed. Uses within the village are predominantly residential with a pub, restaurant, village stores, village hall and a parish church. There are some small commercial units at the site of The Old Creamery and the old Kirdford Growers site.

Map 1 Kirdford Parish





The Half Moon Inn



Village Hall



St. John's Church

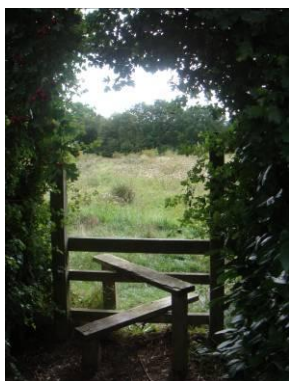


The Old Creamery

8.2.2 Topography and Geology.

The character of the Kirdford landscape is typical of the rural Low Weald and the part of the Parish that lies within the South Downs National Park. Kirdford can only be reached by small country lanes and is not on a through route to any other significant village. Also there are no developments for housing or industry outside the village centre and the countryside is relatively unpopulated. Kirdford has official recognition as an area of peace and tranquillity.

The village lies in undulating land which overlooks the River Kird, a small stream which flows around the southern edge of the village. Other small streams cross three further rural lanes that provide vehicular access to the village, each being bridged. The centre of the village is relatively flat, but the lane to the river drops down a gentle hill, providing the church with an elevated site which dominates this part of Kirdford. Approached via the many local footpaths through fields and woodland, the boundary of the village settlement is hidden by trees giving it a unique relationship between residential areas and the landscape. In the immediate vicinity of the village there lies a series of historic farm groups.



Footpath from Cornwood



View down Staples Hill



Footpath by Ellington

The underlying geology is a type of sandstone (Wealden greensand) which is known, locally as winklestone and is still quarried at nearby Fittleworth. This stone forms a ridge which runs roughly east to west. Despite the close proximity of the South Downs, there is no evidence of flint or chalk in the wider village area.

In 2003 West Sussex County Council produced a *West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment* which divided the county into 43 areas of distinct character, Kirdford lying in the 'Northern Western Ridges' character area. This Character Area forms part of a complex of wooded sandstone hills at the western edge of the Weald which stretches north into Surrey. Of note are the remains of hammerponds in the valleys and other remains relating to the medieval iron industry, namely iron workings and lime kilns. The remains of glassworks are also recorded on the modern map to the north west of upper Ifold. Around Kirdford are ancient tracks and lanes, and, just outside Petworth, in the Shimmings Valley, can be seen medieval and earlier field systems.

The characteristics of this area are as follows:

- Prominent, wooded sandstone ridges and plateaux;
- Steep, horseshoe-shaped escarpment enclosing the Milland and Fernhurst basins;
- Dense woodland cover with coniferous forestry and chestnut on higher slopes;
- Amongst the woodland are areas of fragmented heathland;
- Pasture and rough grazing in clearings and at the woodland edges;
- Hidden valleys and streams in deep gullies within the upper catchments;
- Narrow, twisting, often deeply-sunken lanes;
- Scattered, isolated farmsteads and small groups of cottages;
- Localised linear; suburban development along roads;
- Highly enclosed, secluded landscape, but with some long views across the basins.

8.2.3 Biodiversity

A *Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* confirms that the North Western Ridges' Character Area, on which Kirdford stands, retains important ancient woodland which needs to be conserved and managed to maintain its diverse woodland types, including coppice, hangers and mixed broad-leaved woodland. The River Kird and its immediate water meadows also provide a number of varied habitats for wildlife which should be preserved and, where feasible, enhanced, to increase its biodiversity potential.

Within the village, adjacent and within St. John's Churchyard, areas of land have been deliberately left to allow growth of wild flowers and the development of suitable habitat for wildlife – the area within the churchyard is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). As a result of this, owls and bats are frequently seen in the churchyard looking for food. To the west of the churchyard, a large field including marshland, below Townfield, has been left fallow by the owners for many years and this area is now showing signs of being a beneficial wildlife habitat and feeding ground. The Kirdford CLP action plan includes provision for this area to be surveyed and its wildlife and plants to be recorded to ascertain its biodiversity importance.



View to recreation Ground & St John's SNCI



Part of St. John's Churchyard



Looking across field below Townfield

Kirdford is the centre of the West Weald Woods Project which was started by Sussex Wildlife Trust and is supported by District Councils in the area, along with the County Council. Kirdford is particularly significant as it lies between the two most important forest sites, namely Ebernoe Common and The Mens, both of which are SSSI and SAC. The village, with its extensive tree cover, provides a biodiversity corridor for bats moving from one area of woodland to the next, and 15 separate species have been identified in the area. Nightingales are regularly heard in the locality and glow worms are prevalent along Glasshouse Lane.

The relationship between surrounding countryside and the village edges are particularly important and all the approaches to the village emphasise its rural setting and the sharply defined boundaries between its built up areas and the surrounding countryside. This serves to underline Kirdford's distinct importance in the North Western Ridges' Character Area as the only village where such a characteristic is readily evident.



View to Foresters Arms from South East



View to Townfield from South West



View to Bramley Close from South East

Guidelines 1

1.1 There should be no adverse impact on wildlife habitats, particularly those listed together with the wildlife corridors linking them.

1.2 The possible presence of rare species, particularly those listed should be considered in the appraisal of any proposed development.

1.3 The creation of new wildlife areas and corridors during development should be encouraged in accordance with the provision of the (Government Document) PPS9.

1.4 Existing woodland should be preserved. Any new building development should allow for the planting of trees and hedging. Long term schemes for planting and maintaining slow growing native species should be encouraged.

1.5 Watercourses, ponds, grassland and hedgerows must be protected in all future developments to safeguard wildlife habitats. Within major developments, new ponds and hedgerows should be encouraged to provide additional habitats.

1.6 Regulations regarding the control of Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Ragwort must be enforced.

Refer - Appendix 4 for further details of Flora & Fauna and Botany in the area.

The new South Downs National Park Planning Guidelines are anticipated soon after April 1st 2011 but no formal policies are expected to be in place until 2014.

Chichester District Council Planning –Saved Local Plan Policies

Paragraph 1.2.21 of the Chichester District Local Plan deals with the area northeast of Petworth and includes Kirdford and Plaistow. The area has its own special protection by planning policy RE5.

Paragraph 1.2.21 says: ‘The north eastern part of the District is an area of special character that deserves protection from insensitive development even though it lies outside the Sussex Downs ANOB. It is a predominantly rural area that is characterised by a feeling of remoteness and tranquillity which is rare in the South East. Much of the area is wooded and, generally development is scattered with small villages, mostly of Conservation Area status, tucked away down narrow lanes.

The special character of the area has been recognized in the former West Sussex Structure Plans since 1980. Policy RE5 provides for further control for this area, over and above the general policies protecting the Rural Area. This policy seeks to protect the specific features of the landscape and the settlement pattern of the area.

Policy RE5 also covers the areas of Wisborough Green and Loxwood. This lends support to the area of transition being much further east and north than Kirdford and Plaistow.

Policy BE6 – refers to the Kirdford Conservation Area



Church House



Vergers



View up Glasshouse Lane

8.3 Historical Development.

8.3.1 A Short History

Although Kirdford as a village perhaps dates from a period of colonisation that followed the Norman Conquest - the parish church is 12th century in origin - its name 'St. John the Baptist' indicates that the nearby ford was known in Anglo-Saxon times (when it was named after a woman called *Cynedryd*). The six cottages in the village listed as having '17th century or earlier' timber-framing may represent medieval replacements of the original houses built by agricultural workers tempted by the prospect of a new life in the Weald. A medieval moated site at Brownings Farm may have been associated with a deer park.

The earliest archaeological evidence for utilisation of the Weald are concentrations of flint implements, including tiny projectile points known as 'microliths'. They are typical of the *Mesolithic* period (from the last Ice Age until the start of farming in the *neolithic*, about 9000BC to 4000BC), when bands of hunter-gatherers set up temporary camps to exploit abundant game. They preferred slightly elevated sites near to water, probably to target wildfowl, and these are concentrated on the sandier soils in the southern half of the parish, such as at Brownings Copse and at Battlehurst farm; a number of other flint sites in the vicinity recorded as Bronze Age may in fact be mesolithic. The neolithic revolution seems to have passed Kirdford by, and later prehistoric and Roman settlement made little impact except for an Iron Age and Roman site at Steers Common and a small Roman site at Staples Hill.

We are advised that a Saxon charter of 898 AD confirms the existence of Kirdford (*Cynered's Ford*) however the earliest reference we can identify is in the "Close Rolls" the administrative record created by the medieval office of the chancery dating from 1228. Nevertheless Kirdford is a Weald settlement of ancient origin (Kinredeford in 1228, Kenredeford in 1241, meaning Cynethryh's or Cynered's Ford) which was probably at this time no more than a collection of farmsteads on a communication route rather than a place. It is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 probably because it formed a part of a much larger manor at that time.

Between the 11th and the early 14th century, much of the surrounding woodland was cleared for farming. The Weald came into its own with the medieval encroachments but its heyday was in the post-medieval period (16th to 18th centuries) when it was, until supplanted by the industrial centres of the midlands and the north, the centre for English glassmaking and ironworking. Both require suitable raw materials, i.e. sand and ironstone, water for power and charcoal for fuel, so tended to concentrate in the southern half of the parish. A pair of glassworks at Idehurst was worked by the Strudwick family in the 16th century (there were others at Glasshouse Lane and at Little Slifehurst). Glass making was a very expensive process and the technology for this industry was brought in by French glass makers who protected the secrets of their trade assiduously. The principal ironworking sites were Idehurst Forge and Barkfold Furnace, which were in production in the 17th century.

Other raw materials exploited industrially included clay, for bricks (e.g. a brickyard south of Marshall's Farm) and Petworth 'marble' (there is a minor area of former quarrying near Bennyfold Farm). The 'modernisation' of farming that led to the enclosure and amalgamation of traditional pasture into arable necessitated the use of lime to improve sand and clay soils. Limekilns were a common feature of the agricultural landscape of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Within Kirdford, there are two very early buildings, of which the most significant is St John the Baptist Church, which is listed Grade I. This building retains an early 12th century nave, a north aisle of the 13th century, and a tower of the 15th century. Close by, Church House dates to the late medieval period and is also listed.

After the importance of glass and iron making declined at the beginning of the 17th century, agriculture once again became the principal occupation with the establishment of several new farms in and around the village, such as Fountains Farm and Gownfold Farm. The principal crop was corn, although towards the end of the 18th century more mixed farming became popular. The nearest big house was Shillinglee Park, now in the Parish of Plaistow, Surrey, although the present house dates to the 18th century. Several of the listed houses or cottages in the village were built at this time, usually using timber framing, this has subsequently been refaced in brick of winklestone (the local building stone) or in some cases, and tile hanging was added at a later date.

Insert Tithe Map 1840 and Second Ed OS 1912 Map

The first school was built in Kirdford in 1819 and a new National School built in its place in 1890 facing Butts Common. In the 19th century one of the most dominant houses in villagers' lives was Ifold House, owned in the 1860s by John Napper MP, who was a major shareholder in the Wey Arun Canal, which passed just 500 yards from his house. The estate was broken up in the 1930s and the house demolished in 1936, with some of the land being sold to working class Londoners to use as a rural retreat – this led to the development of the modern-day village of Ifold. Other influential families were the Edes, who farmed in Kirdford for over 350 years, and the Downers, who owned Marshalls Farm for over 200 years.

At the end of the 19th century, the market for corn diminished due to foreign imports, so dairy farming became more prevalent. The map of 1912 shows a nucleated settlement, clustered around the road junction with the road to Staples Hill running through a succession of commons. Herons Farm is also shown, then as now the largest farm complex close to the village. To the north, Pound Common is notable for the Tustin Chapel and scattered cottages which lay to either side of the road. A large malthouse is also shown on the present site of Malthouse Cottage.

From the 1920s onwards fruit farming, based at the western end of the village (the Kirdford Growers), was a major local business. In the early 1950's the nature of the village's historical expansion along Petworth Road was changed by the building of the Townfield housing development below Petworth Road, providing over forty new houses. The former National School on the north side of Butts Common was demolished in the late 1960s and a replacement school opened in Townfield in 1969 – houses were then built on the former school site. Further affordable housing was developed in the mid nineties with the development of Cornwood, followed by the development of New Barn in early 2000 which resulted in the village housing stock having doubled in number in a relatively short period of time.

In 2001 the authorities closed the new school, leaving the village without any educational facility and removing the social heart from the community, this site was then also developed for affordable housing (School Court). The closure of the village shop in Townfield in 2006 and the redevelopment of the Growers site into a mixed housing development left the village without any facilities other than the pub and restaurant or any meaningful local employer. In 2010 the community opened their own Village Stores, a community owned enterprise, and embarked on developing their Community Led Plan, with a view to the residents seeking to better manage the future evolution of the village.

8.3.2 A short description of the village today – people/economics/prospects

Today the village, having seen extensive growth in housing in the last 10-20 years, with 139 new houses since 1991, has doubled in size to 261 houses in the village settlement area. Sadly, during the same period the range of facilities decreased with the loss of the school, shop and the main employer, The Kirdford Growers Co-operative Society. The consequence of this evolution has resulted in Kirdford village being categorised as the most deprived area in the Chichester District (as measured under the Index of Multiple Deprivation). On a positive note, the community after much voluntary work and fundraising was able to open its community owned Village Stores in 2010, resulting in basic essential shopping and other services being available again in the village. The other facilities still available in the village consist of one public house (the Foresters Arms), one pub/restaurant (the Half Moon), and a village hall, built in 1953.



The Foresters Arms



Kirdford Village Stores

Surprisingly, for a village located in an isolated rural location, Kirdford village has a wide range of housing types and value ranges, although not of an even distribution in housing types. This is particularly noticeable in the affordable housing stock which has been predominantly localised to one area of the village and given the high ratio of such housing type in the village (33%). Any future development of this type would better be distributed in other parts of the village. Whilst most of the older and latest properties in the village have been adapted or were designed to accommodate suitable residential parking off road, the developments built between 1960 and 1990 in the village did not provide for current essential car ownership and usage in isolated rural villages. This has resulted in certain parts of the village suffering from excessive on road parking, an issue that also applies to a number of the village facilities.



Townfield



New Barn



Pack House Green, the Kirdford Growers site

Following the demise of the Kirdford Growers in the early 1990's there has been a shift from mainly rural economic activity to home working and commuting, as well as a rise in part time workers and the retired. This shift in economic activity has resulted in the housing stock and format not reflecting the need. Older houses were not designed for home working, reliance on two cars per family or sole occupation by the elderly, all of which is exacerbated by a national trend to retire to the south of the country. Correspondingly, many farm houses and buildings in the outlying parish area have ceased

as commercial agricultural enterprises and been acquired by wealthier commuters as private residences, the land being utilised for grazing, hay making or open land preservation. Whilst some forestry activity still goes on this is minimal and most of the woodland in the parish remains without any regular maintenance being undertaken. The challenge for the next 20 years, if the nature and character of the area is to be retained will require suitable provision for home working, start up enterprises, sustainable agricultural/forestry activity and suitable housing for the elderly to be provided.

In the decade since the closure of the village school, the demand for school places in the community has increased to a point where a shortage of places in the wider area is evident at all age groups. Fewer and larger schools in a rural context are creating commuting pupils competing for inadequate transport services and greater reliance on parental transport, the latter impacting on the economic activity of parents. A similar situation exists in terms of access to training across the age spectrum. Whilst the provision of education and training is addressed at a district/county level rather than village level, in a rural situation consideration will need to be given to the demographics of a cluster of parishes in future, if a well balanced demographic community profile is to be maintained.

Unlike most Sussex villages, Kirdford is located 'on the road to nowhere' and consequently has limited public transport services, which combined with its lack of facilities means residents are heavily reliant on private car transport. The road system consists of minor winding country lanes unsuitable for heavy traffic and subject to high maintenance given the demise in maintenance of ditches and culverts resulting in flooding and regular surface water pooling degrading road surfaces. An increasing challenge with the decline of local garages and petrol stations is access to fuel in the immediate locality. The only potential to relieve this demand is for the community to look at opportunities such as car sharing schemes and enhancing the funding and provision of community bus services

8.3.3 Special considerations that affect development pressures such as housing, facilities, tourism and the new South Downs National Park.

The newly established South Downs National Park in April 2010 is anticipated as increasing the pressure on Kirdford for further development in terms of housing, facilities and tourism. The process of over-development and disappearance of the natural landscape has been evident in other boundary areas of the country where National Parks have been established, especially in the south of the country where the demand for new housing is ever greater. Chichester District Council Planning currently relies on its Local Plan saved Policies to manage the areas on the boundaries of the SDNP.

Guidelines 2

2.1 Planning permission for any development below the Townfield and New Barn areas which is likely to affect the volume and pattern of traffic movements within these areas should be conditional on funding the main access roads being appropriately upgraded with appropriate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, and the current on road parking problems being resolved.

2.2 The provision of adequate off street parking should be a condition of any new development, particularly within the village residential areas where there are evident existing parking problems. Development should also be designed to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement, within the development but, more importantly, creating good pedestrian and cycle links with facilities in the village and beyond.

- 2.3 Any new development for Affordable housing should be dispersed around the village and away from the existing Affordable housing built stock to ensure suitable social integration and community diversity is maintained in the future.*
- 2.4 Any new housing development should have a suitable mix of housing types to ensure that the requirements for home workers and the elderly in the local community are adequately provided for to ensure a lifetime rural community.*
- 2.5 Access to and availability of education facilities and places in the cluster of parishes adjoining Kirdford parish should be evaluated during the planning process of any future housing development and in the absence of suitable provision a financial contribution sought to assist the community to seek to provide further provision or sustainable school transport services.*

8.4 Settlement Pattern.

8.4.1 Layout and Street Pattern

The historical part of the village, within the Kirdford Conservation Area is centred on the junction of three roads, one from the east which connects to Wisborough Green, one from the south, a narrow country lane leading to the A272 (Glasshouse Lane), and one which leads in a north west direction past Butts Common to Staples Hill and Petworth (Petworth Road). The historic buildings which face this junction sit on generous plots with no common building line. The wide areas of grass verge, leading to St John's Church are of note, *Nairn and Pevsner in 'The Buildings of England' refer to 'the effect is of a French place done in a purely English terms'*, with several groups of mature trees and some traditional stone paving.

To the north, the road is lined on either side by grass verges which widen to form Butts Common, a village green, to the side of which is located the Foresters Arms, the village public house. Again mature trees and the low density of development on either side, most of which is 20th Century, reinforce the rural character.

To the south of the Petworth Road, the Townfield development, buildings dating from the 1950 s, sit on generous plots whilst the more recent New Barn and Cornwood developments are noticeable by their high density and small plots. Fortunately their location and landscape screening mean they do not intrude upon the views from the Petworth Road. This also applies to the latest development of the Kirdford Growers site.

Viewed on plan the organic growth of the village is evident as of a curved linear form with the historic centre at one end and community football fields at the other, and Butts Common forming a central focus or hub. There is an established connectivity between the different areas of the village provided by a network of footpaths within the village areas and around its perimeter.



Map of Kirdford Village showing public footpaths, green spaces and axis of village development

8.4.2 Open Spaces and Trees

There are four notable open spaces, the most important of which is Butts Common, which is close to the public house and village hall and therefore helps to provide the village with a discernible

‘centre’. Further wide grass verges along the roads and lanes within the village are of note, especially along Glasshouse Lane, the importance of the latter space is reinforced by the presence of the Kirdford village seat and sign. The churchyard is another important space, with groups of trees and a number of war graves amongst its many gravestones. Part of the churchyard is a SNCI. Lastly, the land behind School Court and a new green incorporated in the Bramley Close development (Kirdford Growers), reflects an attempt to maintain the village characteristic of open spaces, neither of which are used to their potential due to the fact that, amongst other things, they are not seen by many on a very regular basis by significant numbers of people as is the case with the historic green areas of Butts Common and the verges.



Tree by Ivy Cottage



Trees along Petworth Road



Trees surrounding Foresters Arms

There are many individual or groups of trees throughout the village, the most notable of these, but not all, are marked on the Kirdford Townscape Appraisal Map but are indicative only. Notable trees can be seen around and close to St John’s Church (particularly in the churchyard), around Gamel House, on Butts Common, where they are important in views along the lane, and around the garden of the Foresters Arms Public House. Some of the trees are horse chestnuts, such as the ones outside Chestnut House, where they have been pollarded. In and around Butts Common and Petworth Road a number of less mature trees, which may have been planted in the mid 20th century, are beginning to make a more visual impact. Trees around the whole of the perimeter of the village settlement area, both mature and young, reinforce the hidden aspect of Kirdford when viewed from the many footpaths in the surrounding area.

Guidelines 3

3.1 New development should respect the diverse origins and character of the village and avoid uniformity.

3.2 Housing development should provide a mix of house types, sizes, and affordability to provide for the diverse cultural, social and physical needs of residents.

3.3 The mix of roof heights, chimney stacks, details, plot sizes and buildings set back with wide verges and tree planting should be protected and maintained within new developments to provide visual coherence.

3.4 The gradual increase in building density towards the centre of the village should be maintained.

3.5 The prevalence of open spaces and trees along roads within the village and to the perimeter of the village should be maintained as part of the character of the village.

3.6 Plot boundaries are defined by use of stone and brick walls or hedging. New developments should maintain this tradition.

8.4.3 Focal Points and Buildings

There are three focal points in the village, the historical centre, Butts Common and the newly developed area of the old Kirdford Growers site. In the historical area, a conservation area, the high

concentration of well detailed but similarly sized listed buildings means that none stand out particularly apart from Black Bear and St John's Church. Looking across Butts Common, views focus on The Foresters Arms Public House, whilst a number of listed buildings visually blend with more modern dwellings by means of established trees, planting and hedges. Walking further along Petworth Road in the direction of Staples Hill, The Workshop, a single storey timber framed building, formerly the butcher's shop provides a focal point taking the eye along the wide grassed and tree lined verges. The Workshop is located just passed the modern New Barn housing development and opposite the newly built Bramley Close housing set around a new green.

Despite the substantial growth of the village over the last 20 years, a doubling in size, the range of different period architectural housing styles, has not detracted from Kirdford's rural and historical character mainly due to the nature and prevalence of the trees, natural or clipped hedging and other plot boundary materials such as stone or brick walls with simple copings and traditional timber fencing. These characteristics are reinforced in the village by their being set back from the roads and the settlements relationship with its setting in the landscape.



The Angle Cottage-left and Cobblers-on the right.



Black Bear



Forge and Ivy Cottages

Building types consist of mainly residential buildings, the Church, Village Hall, some small commercial buildings such as The Old Creamery, The Workshop and Village Stores and a few former stable, barns and other outbuildings as well as The Half Moon and The Foresters. The residential properties, listed, notable and 20th century are generally two storeys high though some have attic rooms with dormers to the front. Many are arranged as pairs with the majority being detached. Building types generally reflect the Weald vernacular in their use of materials and detailing with steeply pitched roofs, prominent (brick) chimney stacks, small, usually casement windows and a variety of walling materials, consisting of local stone (Winklestone, of a grey/green colouring) local reddish brick, clay hung tiles with roofs having stone or handmade clay tiles. Whilst some buildings have had brickwork over painted, the prevalent colour palette is of local materials with their inherent soft hues. The joinery is usually painted white or a pastel colour with a variety of doors from six panelled through to very simple doors being either stained or painted from a varied palette.



Thompson's Stores as it was.



The Old Post Office today.

8.4.4 Kirdford Vernacular Architecture

What is vernacular architecture? It is quite simply;



Ivy Cottage, Kirdford



A house of a yeoman farmer at Weald & Downland Museum

- The Common buildings, cottages and farmhouses
- The opposite of the 'polite' grand manor house
- Buildings were built using locally available materials and employed local, often distinctive, building traditions
- They are unpretentious and satisfy the simple demands of family life, farming ways and industrial processes
- They can be farm labourer's cottages or the home of a Yeoman farmer
- Basically all houses locally built for people other than very high status and erected before the end of the 19th century

Images of typical Kirdford architectural features.





Elegant local examples of new and old – Little Gables 20th C – 1-5 Creamery Cottages late 19th C or early 20th C.

Bricks were typical of the clay districts

Upper part of building tile hung

Roof clad in plain clay tiles with a steep pitch

Dormer and well proportioned windows

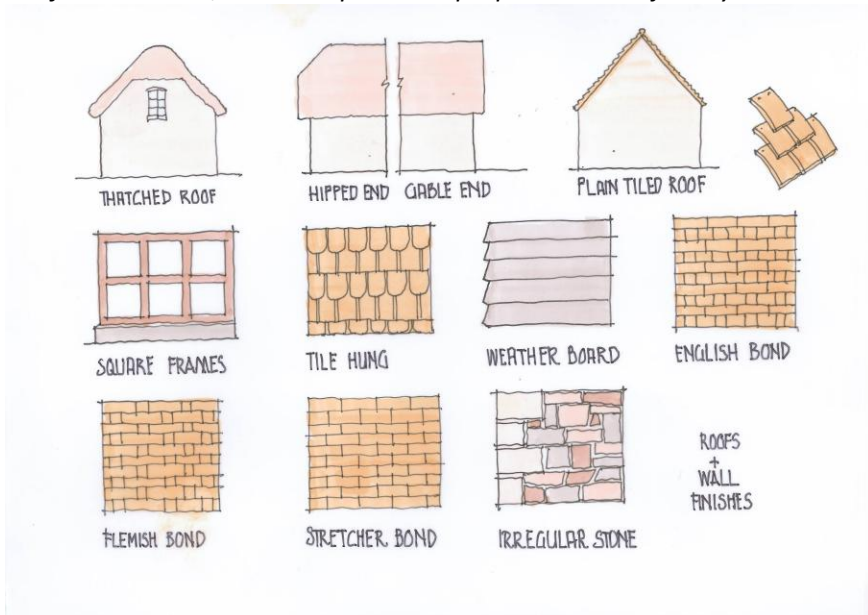
Wide Verges, stone or brick walls or hedges



Sketch details for features of particular reference.



Kirdford windows, door and porches - proportions and joinery details.



Kirdford roofs and walls.

Refer Appendix 2 for a schedule of Listed Buildings.

Guidelines 4

- 4.1 Kirdford is characterised by a pleasing jumble of roof heights and a variety of housing types. New developments should maintain this variation and avoid uniformity.
- 4.2 Local materials and details for walls, roofs and chimney stacks with good use of design detail are evident throughout the village and this tradition should be utilised in new developments.
- 4.3 Street parking is a significant problem. New developments should incorporate unobtrusive off road parking wherever possible.
- 4.4 Standard designs within new developments should be customised to reflect the character of the village. New developments should embrace a variety of contextually appropriate styles and details. Village scale buildings incorporating wide verges, open spaces, 'steps and staggers' and footpaths are preferred to executive style housing built on individual plots.

4.5 Green spaces and trees are an important feature of the village. New developments should incorporate sympathetic landscaping which reflects the local topography and utilises only local native trees and plants. Boundary walls and hedging should match the traditional materials and detailing and layouts should preserve and extend the existing network of footpaths.

4.6 These guidelines seek to encourage sympathetic and unobtrusive insertions and additions without discouraging contemporary design. The ruling criteria for ‘modern’ insertions are sympathetic scale, harmonising materials, planting and respect for context and energy conservation.

8.4.5 Views and Vistas



View to north-east from Ferrers



View to north-west from Dunnock Cottage



View to west from St. John's Churchyard

Kirdford is a village of two aspects in respect of views and vistas. Within the village there are few views out towards the surrounding countryside but a varied range of views and vistas within the differing settlement areas, occasioned by the range of open greens or commons within the village and its wide green verges. This characteristic makes Kirdford an unusual place as in many instances, when one is within the village area the view can be akin to being in a small hamlet or the countryside, houses being hidden by hedging fronted by wide verges. The numerous footpaths in the village augment this characteristic as well as giving access to the few outward views that exist which generally are notable, for example, the view from the footpath by Ellington across open fields towards Boxalland Farm and its adjacent hammerponds. In contrast, the views along the footpath leading from Herons Close to the football fields have classic tree and hedge lined fields, with the views from the churchyard providing long distance views across rolling countryside, an important landscape setting for the church.

Conversely, approach the village using one of the many local footpaths and one will not be aware of the village until you emerge within it. This lack of visual intrusion by a settlement makes Kirdford remarkable and is a wonderful attribute of its evolution considering its location within some of most beautiful countryside within West Sussex. Only the church spire is visible from any distance when approaching from the south west along the footpath below Townfield, otherwise the settlement area remains hidden from view. This aspect has been maintained over the years and even the more recent development in the village has maintained this landscape characteristic.



View to New Barn from the west



Townfield and New Barn from the south



View to Heron's Close from Petworth Road

Kirdford Parish as a whole has embraced a culture of welcoming visitors to enjoy its beautiful and ecologically rich landscape by creating and maintaining its numerous public footpaths. These can be identified in the local publication ‘On the road to nowhere’ published 2000. Similarly, Kirdford Village Stores seek to welcome cyclist, motor bikers, hikers and horse riders by providing a welcoming rest point for refreshment, given the desirability and attraction for

these activities in the area, this activity contributes to the sustainability of both the Village Stores and the maintenance of footpaths, green lanes and bridle paths.

Guidelines 5

5.1 All new development in the village and adjoining countryside should seek to preserve the special landscape characteristics of Kirdford with particular regard to the relationship between surrounding countryside and the village edges.

5.2 The special characteristics of the screening of the village settlement area within its countryside setting warrants special design consideration in the design, layout and landscaping of any proposed new development.

8.5 Highways & Traffic

8.5.1 Transport

Traffic through the village along its main road, Petworth Road, is generally not a problem with the exception of speeding by cars approaching from and to Staples Hill, as identified by residents and the Parish Council, which a traffic calming system would easily resolve. However the increased reliance of car use in the community, driven in part by the limited public transport available, has created a problem with parking in various areas in the village developed before such use became the norm. Particular areas of concern are Townfield, Butts Common and the Recreation Ground.



Parking on Butts Common



Parking by Recreational Ground



Parking in Townfield

8.5.2 Footpaths

An extensive network of footpaths link most areas of the village and provides an attractive alternative to using the car for local visits. These paths are well used, they link to open countryside and their flanking hedgerows ‘soften’ the built environment and provide a valuable wildlife habitat. It is important that this network is maintained and extended in future to embrace any new development.

8.5.3 Street Furniture

As a rural village Kirdford has no street lighting and no desire to introduce any. Road signage and street furniture is generally of a historic nature and style, albeit that there have been some recent modern items installed which are contextually inappropriate and introduce an undesirable urban characteristic.

8.5.4 Verges, Ditches and Culverts

The maintenance of verges, ditches and culverts are integral to the general maintenance, durability and wellbeing of the parish roads and country lanes as well as preventing water pooling on road surfaces and general flooding. Previous government policies and current national economic constraints have resulted in a lack of maintenance being provided in this regard, resulting in a poor standard of the roads and lanes in the parish. It is important that an annual programme of the cutting of verges and clearance of ditches and culverts is established to ensure safe and consistent access to the village can be maintained all year round.

Guidelines 6

6.1 Traffic calming measures should be unobtrusive and appropriate to a village setting.

6.2 Footpaths should be maintained and extended to include any new village developments.

6.3 New developments should include provision for adequate off-street parking. Developers should contribute to the cost of providing enhanced parking in established residential and recreation areas where there are clear opportunities to do so.

6.4 New developments should include provision for adequate water run off and an appropriate connection to the existing ditch network. Developers should pay a contribution to the Parish Council to cover the cost of providing emergency maintenance of the water dispersal system in the village and parish area.

6.5 Whilst shops and businesses are an asset, they can create traffic problems. New commercial developments must address the provision of adequate off street parking as a planning condition.

6.6 Street furniture should maintain the 'heritage' feel of the village and enhance its appearance.

6.7 Street lighting is not a desirable attribute in the village.

8.6 Energy Conservation and Low Carbon Footprint

8.6.1 Climate Change

'Our climate is changing rapidly, at a rate never seen before, because of human activity. We must plan for this change and together take action to reduce our contribution to it. Planning for this change is referred to as 'adapting to climate change' and reducing our contribution to climate change is known as 'mitigation'. Both of these actions are of equal importance.' *Extract from Chichester District Council Climate Change statement.*

The need to address energy conservation and a low carbon footprint is an essential requirement of sustainability in the 21st Century, the residents of Kirdford Parish endorsed this view in responses to the CLP Survey Oct. 2010, supporting further provision for re-cycling, local energy generation, allotments for 'grow your own food' and access to car share schemes.

8.6.2 Development Standards

In development terms the highest standards of insulation and energy conservation is sought, and for housing the best practice standards guide in the area is the Saxon Weald affordable housing development at Arun Crescent, Billingshurst built to Level 5 in the government's Code for Sustainable Homes.

The PassivHaus construction standards are considered essential in any future development within the Parish.

The term 'PassivHaus' refers to a specific construction standard for buildings which have excellent comfort conditions in both winter and summer. These principles can be applied not only to the residential sector but also to commercial, industrial and public buildings.

PassivHaus dwellings:

- are the worlds leading standard in energy efficient construction
- are designed and built using a step-by-step approach
- use efficient components and a whole house ventilation system to achieve exceptionally low running costs
- are comfortable, healthy and sustainable

PassivHaus dwellings typically achieve an energy saving of 90% compared with existing housing.

8.6.3 Sustainable Technologies

Sustainable technologies such as Solar PV Systems, Sedum roofs, Biomass boilers, Wind turbines and Ground and Air heat source pumps are to be encouraged, as they are all suitable for existing dwellings and implementation in a rural locality.

Guidelines 7

7.1 All new development should comply with the government's Code for Sustainable Homes to Level 5.

7.2 All new development should seek to comply with PassivHaus construction standards seeking to attain energy saving of 90% compared with existing properties.

7.3 All existing householders are encouraged to improve insulation and energy conservation standards and all extensions of existing dwellings should seek to comply with the best attainable standards.

7.4 All forms of sustainable technologies are to be encouraged subject to impact on the village character and the wider landscape.

8.7 The Consultation Process

The Kirdford Village Design Statement has been prepared by village residents to reflect the views of the community whose opinions were gathered through extensive consultation. The VDS records and analysis these opinions to arrive at guidelines which suggest measures to ensure that all future developments are contextually appropriate and of high design quality.

Kirdford Parish Council supports the VDS initiative and the Kirdford VDS also embraces consultation with Chichester District Council representatives to ensure that it meets the criteria for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Once adopted the provisions of the VDS must be addressed in the assessment of future developments.

Key stages in the consultation process included:

- A group of volunteers met on 23rd March 2010 to discuss the objectives and principles of establishing a Community Led Plan. This inaugural meeting established a Steering group, adopted a Constitution and agreed to establish a bank account and seek funding. Since then the steering group has met regularly and recorded its progress.
- Widely advertised, and with a leaflet drop, for a meeting of residents in the Village Hall on Wednesday 12th May 2010 explaining the principles of a Community led Plan and VDS inviting community participation. At the end of the meeting all who wished to take an active part were invited to complete a registration form stating their particular interest. All those that registered were added to a data base of residents, regularly kept advised of events and by news updates.
- A questionnaire survey of all Parish residents was delivered by hand by a group of volunteers in the week commencing 5th May 2010. Survey forms were returned by freepost to Action in Rural Sussex who were appointed by the steering group to undertake the independent analysis of returns. Costs for the survey were covered by generous grants given by the Parish Council and Chichester District Council.
- The survey results were published in two parts, Part 1 – Analysis, and Part 2 – Summary, at the beginning of September 2010. A public meeting was held in St. John the Baptist Church on 21st September 2010 where the results were presented and discussed by residents.
- The Glasshouse Charity helped us to run a series of events, facilitated by Liz Kessler of Urban Design covering a village Walk About on Saturday 25th September with a follow up Walk About covering the perimeter of the village on Saturday 2nd October, and concluded with a Mapping Kirdford workshop on the 12th October.
- The information of the previous events including photographs and notated maps, were collated at a workshop on 14th October and a final workshop 'Applying your knowledge' was held on Tuesday 19th October at which time a draft map of Kirdford was developed, with reference to the CDC draft Local Development Framework, Kirdford Conservation Area and other relevant information.
- A separate workshop 'Understanding Architecture' sponsored by Househam Henderson Architects was held on Wednesday 3rd November at which time the photographs taken during the Walk About were utilised to understand and record the local built vernacular.

- In November we launched a Kirdford CLP website on which all draft documents were posted for easy access by residents to review the same and comment or advise on corrections and/or amendments prior to the final drafts being adopted by the community.
- On Saturday 4th December a workshop 'The Planning System' was facilitated by Planning Aid, a Royal Institute of Town Planners charity, which focused on helping us understand how to better engage in the Planning process.
- Throughout the process residents have been invited to attend and contribute to steering group and event meetings and/or send comments to the steering group or post comments on the website.

Acknowledgements:

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The Residents of Kirdford Parish

Kirdford Parish Council

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The Kirdford Conservation Society and its members who provided access to all the information they had collated for their 'Yes' publication, which proved invaluable. The landlord of **The Foresters Arms**, owner of **The Half Moon** and **The Village Stores** management committee all of whom donated services or use of facilities, as well as the many volunteers who delivered leaflets, collated photographs, built our website and undertook many other tasks to fund and gather the research for this document.

Appendix 1 – Conservation Areas

Chichester District Council adopted a revised Kirdford Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management proposal on 2nd November 2010. The document identifies the character and qualities of the Kirdford Conservation Area, highlights key issues, and puts forward proposals for its management over the next five years. As part of the process, the conservation area boundary was reviewed and a number of changes made.

Details of the full plan are available on the CDC website, www.chichesterdistrictcouncil Planning and Development, Conservation Areas.

Appendix 2 – Listed Buildings

Kirdford has a wealth of listed and ancient buildings. From the latest Chichester District Council list, we see there is one Grade I listed building, The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, and Sixty Nine (69) Grade II listed buildings. This equates to about 28% of all Kirdford village households. A complete record of all the listed buildings is set out below. Nearly all are visible from footpaths or are in the village itself.

The conservation of these listed buildings and the area as a whole has ensured that the village has remained very much as it was in years past.

This is what Richard Williamson writes in the West Sussex Gazette of his experience in approaching Kirdford: ‘Along a rural road, dipping and turning between oak woods with wild roses, red campion and cow parsley. The village name was almost lost amid bushes: gardens piled over walls, shrubs half hid the houses, a line of limes and horse chestnuts gave shade. Nothing here was over manicured or torted up, and an air of peace and naturalness pervaded.

St. John’s Church stands almost among the cottages but hidden enough for its tower to look as though the lime tree has grown there instead. Its Horsham flag roof primitive and securely tight, its solid building looks like a well made barn. There are no problems with parking, for wide roads and little traffic gave us the feeling of being 30 to 40 years back in time.’



BALLS CROSS ROAD

Belchamber’s Farmhouse

Parsonage Farmhouse

Halfway House

Crawfold Farmhouse

OFF FITTLEWORTH ROAD

South Cowpen Cottage

HORSHAM ROAD

Crimbourne Farmhouse

Granary at Crimbourn Farm

Barn at Crimbourn Farm

Battlehurst Farmhouse

KIRDFORD VILLAGE

Church of St John the Baptist

The Parish Room/ Church Cottage,
(Formerly listed as No.1 Church Cottages)

Church House

Chestnut House/the Post Office Stores

Kirdford Village Design Statement

Vergers and Little Vergers

Malthouse Cottage

Tablet in the Wall of Old Vicarage

Black Bear Cottage

Pennygate

Forge Cottage

Ivy Cottage

Yew Tree Cottage

The Half Moon Inn

The Stables of the Half Moon Inn

The Old Post Office

Telephone Kiosk

Angle Cottage

Cobblers

Boxalland

Butts

The Foresters Arms Inn

Oakfield

Heron Pond House
 Pound Cottage
NORTHCHAPEL ROAD
 Palfrey Farmhouse
 Freehold Farmhouse
GLASSHOUSE LANE
 Bridgefoot Bridge
 Bridgefoot Cottage
 Gownfold Farmhouse
 Crouchams
 Marshalls Farmhouse
 Barn at Marshalls Farmhouse
PIPER'S LANE
 Frithfold Farmhouse
 Roundwyck House
 Hoe Bridge Cottage
 Little Bignor Farmhouse

PLAISTOW ROAD
 Message Cottage
 Appletree Cottage
 Chapmans
 High Barn
 Holland Heath Farmhouse

Fountains Farmhouse
 Calebs brook
POOK LANE
 Linfold Farmhouse

 Linfold Bridge
POUND COMMON
 The Cottage
SCRATCHING'S LANE
 Accold's Farmhouse
 Arnolds Farmhouse
 Beal House Farm
 Little Slifehurst
 Hillsgreen
 Highnoons
STROOD GREEN
 Strood Green Cottage
 Hertsmere
 No's 1 and 2 Hyffold Cottage
 Clarkes Farmhouse
 Hazlehurst Farmhouse
 Idehurst Farmhouse
WISBOROUGH GREEN ROAD
 Barkfold House

Gownfold Farm House

It was built around 1600 after the decline of the iron and glass industries. The Treadwell Family farmed this land for many years and maintained the farm and the farmhouse in its original form. The TV programme 'Kirdford in March', featured this farm as a living example of old farming practice continued today. Gownfold Farm is the first farm which is currently completely excluded from the Park in the South of the parish.

Holland's Heath Farmhouse

This was a tenant farmhouse and the village postman cum garage owner, Ron Snelling, who lived to be a hundred, was born there. The current owners have modernised and maintained it very much as Ron remembered it all those years ago.



Gownfield House



Parsonage Farm House

Parsonage Farm House

This Georgian house of about 1760 is very much in the Petworth tradition. Close by was another Georgian house "Sladelands", known to have existed as a dwelling since the early 1600's. For many years it was lived in by the Haines family who built up a large estate which included Parsonage Farm. The Sladelands Estate was bought by the 3rd Earl of Egremont for his second son, Henry Wyndham in 1814, and it remained part of the Leconfield Estate until 1976. Sadly Sladelands was demolished many years ago after falling into disuse, leaving just the Farmhouse at Parsonage and the Parkland that lay between the two houses. In the nineteenth century this was the scene of village

celebrations and a footpath crosses the area. Parsonage Farm is currently being sympathetically restored by its present owners and is one of the many Kirdford gardens open to the public in mid-Summer.

Chestnut House

Although no longer the village stores, the house has been completely restored to its former appearance before the late 19th Century. This house is another example of the Kirdford Georgian style.



Cobblers

What was once Enticknapps Boot and Shoe Shop has now become a dwelling place known as 'Cobblers'. Adjoining it is another cottage 'Angle Cottage' and the photograph shows how the appearance of it has been maintained, despite modernisation.



Appendix 3 – Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the area include, The Hoe and Common at Ebernoe, The Mens, Idenhurst Copse and Kingspack Wood with Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) in the parish including part of St. John's Churchyard, Benefold Row, Steer's Common and Roundwyck Copse.

Whilst the landscape around Kirdford is of High Landscape Quality, a number of areas in the Parish merit further appraisal as potential Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. There are fourteen Ancient Woodlands in Kirdford.

The landscape around Kirdford is perhaps one of the finest examples of the Low Weald countryside. It has a densely wooded character with a patchwork of small fields and its relatively unpopulated and deeply rural landscape remains largely unspoilt. It is, in fact, in one of the most well wooded parts of lowland Britain including sites which are both ancient and near-natural.

Appendix 4 - Flora, Fauna and Botany in the area.

Flora & Fauna

Kirdford is rich in the flora and fauna associated with the Low Weald. Some of the less common species are:

Insects - Oak Bush Crickets, Glow Worms

Birds - Owls (Barn, Tawny, Little), Nightingales, Night Jars, Skylarks, Lapwings, Red Kites, Buzzards, Peregrine Falcons, Corn Buntings, Woodpeckers (Green, Greater Spotted, Lesser Spotted), Kingfishers, Herons, Kestrels, Sparrow Hawks, Black Swans, Swifts, Swallows, House Martins, Gold Crest, Fire Crest, Nuthatch, Flycatchers, Gold Finches, Bullfinches, Song Thrushes, Coal Tits, Long Tailed Tits, Marsh Tits, Pied Wagtails, Cuckoos, Wrens and song birds generally,

Leonard Mann, Chairman of Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS), has advised us that most of the above are of particular interest and he was surprised that Night Jars, Skylarks, Corn Buntings, and Red Kites have been seen here.

Mammals - Hares, Otters, Badgers, Bats (15 varieties), Dormice, Shrews, Wood Mice as well as an abundance of Foxes, Rabbits, and Deer

Fish, Reptiles, Amphibians - Great Crested Newts, Grass Snakes, Adders, Eels

Trees - Wild Service Trees, Small Leaved Lime, and Oak and Hazel in abundance, both throughout the parish.

Plants - Blue bells (in abundance), Wild Orchids (Common Spotted, Early Purple & many other varieties), Wild Daffodils, Primroses, Violets, Cowslips, Yellow & Purple Vetch, Rosebay Willow Herb, Honeysuckle, Wild Roses.

The Sussex Rare Species Directory and Protected Species Register lists the following found in areas of Kirdford:

Lichen (*Lecania Suavis*), Narrow-Leaved Bitter-Cress (*Cardamine Impatiens* – 4 separate sightings), White-Legged Damselfly (*Platycnemis Pennipes*), Ruddy Darter (*Sympetrum Sanguineum*), a plant bug or grass bug (*Capsodes Gothicus*), Purple Emperor (*Apatura Iris*), Wood White (*Leptidea Sinapis*), Brown Hairstreak (*Thecia Betulae*), a hoverfly (*Epistrophe Diaphana*), Water Vole (*Arvicola Terrestris*), Adder (*Vipera Berus*), Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Bat sp., Water Vole (*Arvicola Terrestris*)

From the above species, where they are of particular interest and where the evidence is well documented, the following experts have given their own views on the importance of those areas of Kirdford which are currently outside the Park:

Bats - Dr. Tony Whitbread of the Sussex Wildlife Trust writes about the bats as follows: 'The barbastelle bat provides an excellent illustration of the importance of a high quality environment with a functioning matrix of inter-connected habitat. This bat breeds and roosts in Ebernoe, but spends a large part of its time foraging over a very large area. Some bats commute 72km in one night, and their territories radiate out from Ebernoe.

These bats are unwilling to cross large areas of open country-side, especially before dusk. In order to cover their required forage area they need strips of woodland, well-wooded stream-sides and belts of trees – an interconnected patchwork of woodland, hedges, meadows and streams. These are just the sort of conditions that are found to the east of Ebernoe over the whole of Kirdford parish. Conservation of bats at Ebernoe is therefore not only determined by what happens within Ebernoe Common. What happens to the surrounding countryside is fundamental to their survival.

What is true for the barbastelle is also true to a greater or lesser extent for other rare (Bechstein's and grey long-eared) and not so rare (e.g. Daubenton's, noctule and serotine) bat species.

Furthermore, what is true for bats is really only an indication of how important interconnecting matrices are for a range of wildlife'



Botany Generally

Meadows - Frances Abraham, a botanist from Ebernoe comments on the Kirdford Meadows: 'Species-rich unimproved neutral grassland is now amongst the rarest of habitats but there are some good examples remaining in Kirdford, including meadows and pasture alongside the Kird in the Roundwyck area, on and near Kymmings Hill Farm near Benefold Row, near Round Wood, and in the Whithurst, Ainsworth and Steers Common area. These grasslands contain species such as Adder's tongue fern, Pepper Saxifrage, Cowslip, Grass Vetchling, Betony, Devilsbit, Dyers Greenweed, Zigzag Clover and Common Spotted Orchid. There is a wide range of native grasses and sedges which includes Meadow Barley and other indicators of old unimproved grassland'.

River Kird - and Frances Abraham continue 'The River Kird has natural banks and is particularly attractive where it runs through meadows. The flora contains no particular rarities but consists of a diverse and colourful range of species including Yellow Water-lily, Arrowhead, Meadowsweet, Purple Loosestrife, Yellow Loosestrife, Marsh Woundwort, Gypsywort and Greater Water-plaintain. In a few places marshy grassland adjoins the river and species such as Tubular Water-Dropwort, Marsh Marigold, Wood Clubrush and Yellow Iris occur.'

Butterflies - Dr. Peter Gay of the Butterfly Conservation Group writes of the importance of local Woods, (Kingspark and Ashpark) for the Wood White butterfly which is a nationally important species. He indicates that there are several other local woods where restoration of former woodland management should enable this butterfly to extend its numbers.

Otters - John Openshaw, Countryside Ranger of the Low Weald, provided the following comments: 'Otters are being encouraged to return to UK rivers, after having almost been extinct. The River Kird is very important to otter re-population in this area as it provides the ideal habitat for them, particularly the area from the village East to Idehurst Copse.'

Owls - Since 1981 owl lovers J. Baldwin and P. Maynard have worked with the owl population in the Kirdford and Plaistow area. They have about 50 owl boxes of which 30 have recently been used as nest sites. In addition to maintaining the boxes, Messrs. Baldwin and Maynard have been ringing the owls on behalf of the British Trust for Ornithology. In this way the longevity, distance travelled and brood size of the owls has been determined. In talking about Kirdford as a habitat for owls they say: 'the area is great from the point of hedgerows and farming practices'.

Trees

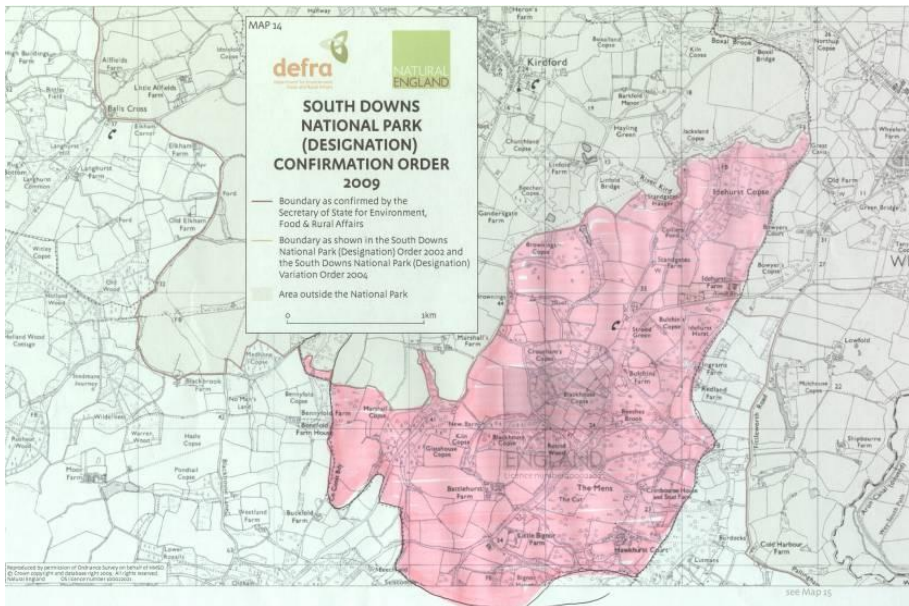
Trees and forests are crucial to life on our planet. They generate oxygen, store carbon and play host to a spectacular variety of wildlife. Ancient woodland is our richest wildlife habitat and is irreplaceable. 85% of ancient woodland is unprotected by statutory designations such as SSSI. Woodlands need to be at the forefront of environmental progress

Frances Abraham, comments on woodlands, hedge-rows and rews of the Kirdford area as follows: 'A high proportion of the numerous woods are of ancient origin, consisting of Oak, Ash, Beech, Field Maple, with a rich shrub layer including species such as Guelder Rose, Spindle, Butcher's Broom and Spurge laurel. Generally uncommon trees and shrubs such as Wild Service and Midland Hawthorn are widespread in the area and the scarcer Small-leaved Lime occurs occasionally. A similar range of species makes up the ancient hedgerows and rews.

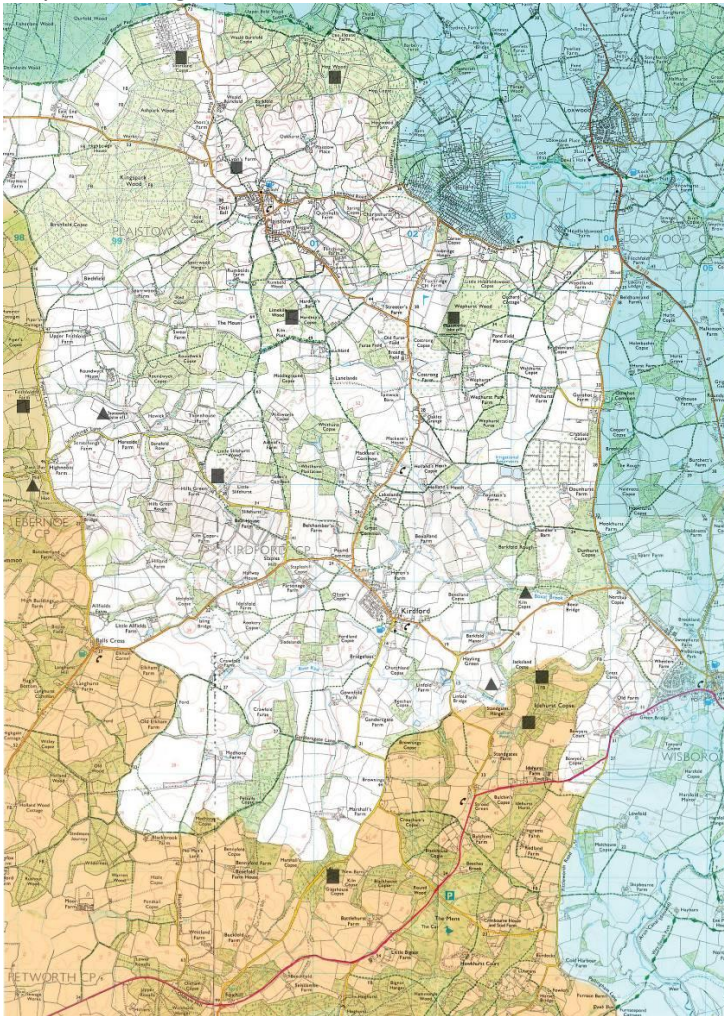
The ground flora is notably rich in the old copses - Greater Butterfly Orchid, Early Purple Orchid, bluebell, Pignut, Sweet Woodruff, Moschatel, Wood Anemone and Wood Buttercup are common and some are abundant. A few woods also have Wild Daffodil, Tutsan, and Orpine. Uncommon grasses and sedges include Thin-spiked Wood Sedge and Bearded Couch. Most notably, Kirdford, plus one or two copses just over the boundary in adjacent parishes, contain virtually the entire Sussex population of the nationally scarce Narrow-leaved Bittercress. Particularly notable woods within the parish are at Roundwyck, copses in the Whithurst and Benefold areas and near Boxall Bridge'.



Map 2 Area of Kirdford Parish Located within the South Downs National Park



Map 3 Showing Sites of Glass & Iron Work



Iron works Δ

Residents collating information from the village walk about in the Village Stores Meeting Room.

Winklestone also known as Petworth Marble, officially Paludina limestone consists of winkle-like fossil shells and is found between the layers of clay of the Weald. Interestingly, it was formed over 85 million years ago in the Cretaceous period when Sussex was covered by warm water inhabited by sea urchins and mollusks. Looking at geological maps of the area we can see deposits of Paludina limestone in both the South and North of the parish. The site at Crouchlands has extensive deposits. Petworth marble is a bluish grey in colour. It is used for paving, gravestones, fonts, fireplaces and decoration in general. According to the author Pieter Boogaart in his 'Ode to a Road', it has been used in Westminster Cathedral, York Minster and Salisbury and Canterbury Cathedrals. There are many local examples in the Parish and neighbouring Petworth where it was used extensively used in Petworth House. The baptismal font in St. John's church and the paving slabs in the porch area of the church are Winklestone.

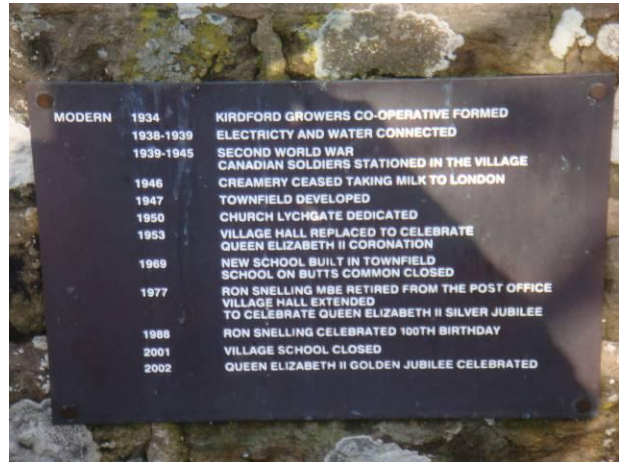
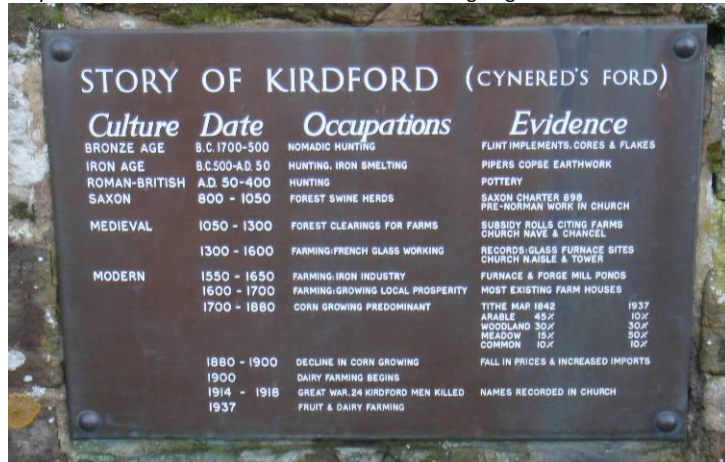
Straker in 'Wealden Iron' (1931) states there were four local furnaces associated with the making of iron located at Barkfold, Ebernoe, Roundwyck and Shillinglee. There were forges at Barkfold and also one in the centre of the village. Each of the furnaces had a likely output of 50 tons of cast iron a year. The most conspicuous relics of the industry are the hammerponds, which served a forge or a furnace or both. Water was fed into these special ponds to build up the mass of water needed to power the mechanical devices. From prior to Roman times until early in the 19th century there has been iron making in Sussex. This was made possible by the ready availability of ironstone in the clay formations, plus the abundant supply of wood for fuel, and water for power. Early making of iron (prior to the Tudor period) used the bloomery process which produced a comparatively small mass, or bloom, of wrought iron, fit for forging into small products such as tools, weapons, and wheels. With the introduction of the blast-furnace process in Tudor times, iron making became a big business requiring power, plants and permanent quarters. The blast furnace produced cast iron, which required working in a forge to convert it into wrought iron. From these guns, canons and shot were made. Straker tells us: 'The industry expanded during the second half of the 16th Century resulting in over a hundred blast furnaces and forges being established in the Weald, a number unequalled in any other region of Britain'.



Views of Glasshouse Lane clapper bridge and ditch behind Bramley Close.



Story of Kirdford commemorated on the Kirdford village sign



Just outside the village settlement and a view of the Workshop on Petworth Road.

