

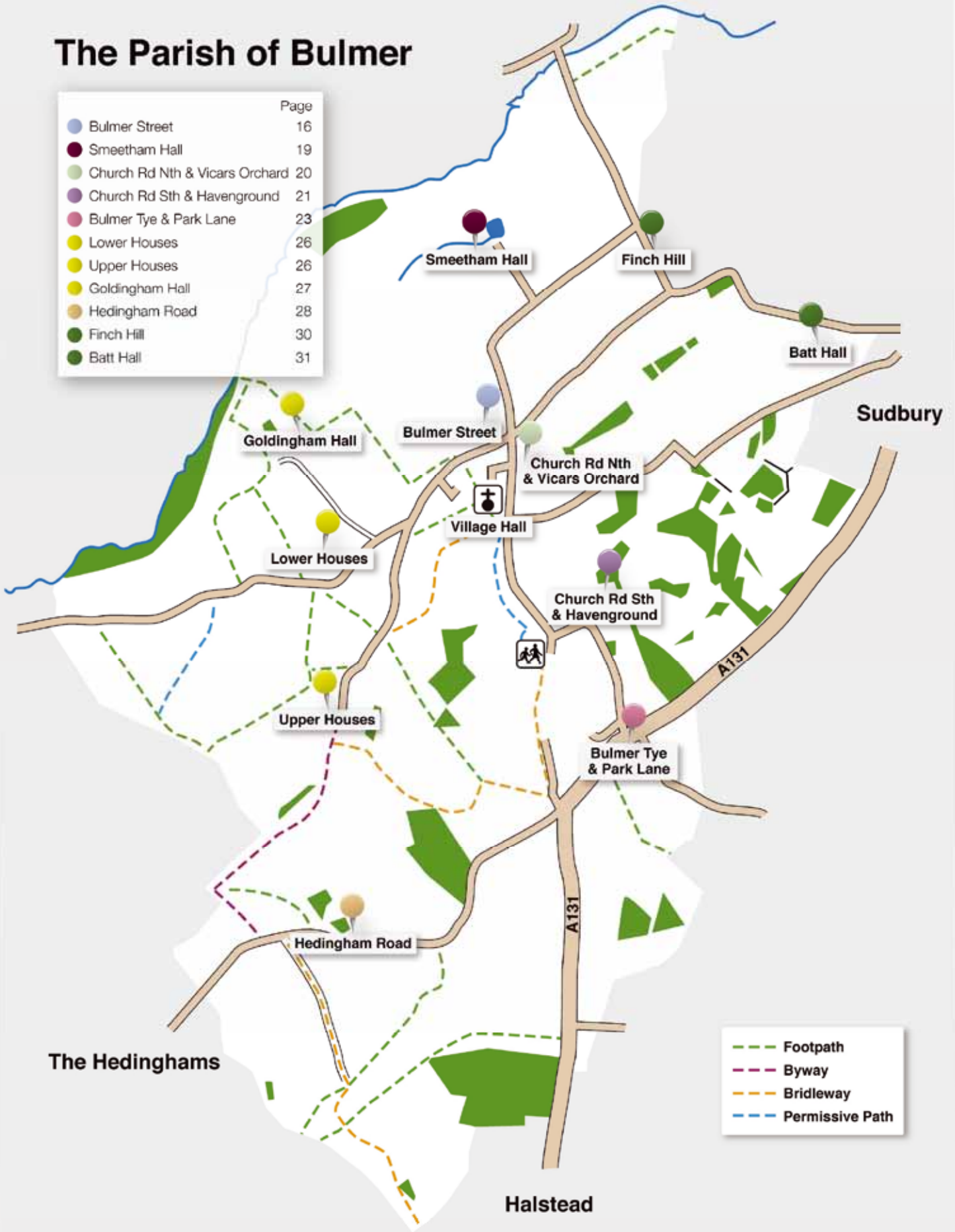
Bulmer

Village Design Statement



The Parish of Bulmer

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"Affordable housing for young people wishing to stay in the village should be a priority otherwise we will become a village of elderly people".

A comment from the questionnaire

The Purpose of the Village Design Statement (VDS)

The main purpose of Bulmer's Village Design Statement is a guide to help ensure that development in Bulmer is acceptable in relation to all aspects of the environment and demonstrates best practice in both design and quality. It has been prepared following consultation with the community. It is important that the design and density of future development, which is likely to be mainly extensions/re-developments and small infill sites within the village, reflects a clear understanding of the views of residents and follows the guidelines and concerns that are highlighted in this statement.

In addition the Village Design Statement is intended to help promote a sustainable approach to the shaping of Bulmer in the future, which will enable the community, and its residents to satisfy their needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

The aims and objectives of the VDS are to:

- Manage change but not prevent it;
- Promote sustainable development;
- Give designers and developers positive guidance on acceptable design from the community's point of view which can help avoid conflict later on in planning negotiations;
- Help protect visually important buildings and their setting and promote the use of appropriate building materials;
- Improve and protect the local character and appearance, particularly the use of open spaces and the street scene;
- Ensure that the valued physical qualities and characteristics of the village and its surroundings are conserved and protected;
- Assist Braintree District Council planning authority in their determination of planning applications.



Preparation of the VDS

Bulmer Parish Council instigated the preparation of the VDS at their meeting of September 2007. From this meeting a Steering Group was formed to start the process, whose objectives were to formulate a VDS in full consultation with the residents of the village and produce a document reflecting their collective views. This process involved the following:

An awareness programme from October 2007 to May 2008, by holding displays at various village events in order to inform and recruit volunteers for future processes in creating the VDS.

A Workshop and Photographic day was held in June 2008 when 24 villagers were formed into smaller groups to photograph and observe the various areas of the parish, also to complete character assessment forms to aid the preparation of full character assessments.

During the winter of 2008/09 the character assessment forms used on the photographic day and were studied and draft character assessments were produced for each of the areas. A questionnaire was also prepared in conjunction with the information contained in the character assessments.

A separate questionnaire was produced for those residents aged under 18, along with one for the children of Bulmer School.

The comprehensive questionnaires were distributed to every household in the village in February 2009.

In March 2009 the questionnaires were collected. This produced a 50% response.

During April 2009 and February 2010 the questionnaires were entered on a computer database and analysed. From this analysis draft 'guideline recommendations' were produced and approval was sought from Braintree District Council planning department.

A full Consultation display of the character assessments, results expressed in the questionnaires and the recommended guidelines along with photographs took place in the Village Hall in March 2010 to seek approval &/or comments from residents.

Between March 2010 and June 2011, the committee produced 5 VDS drafts.

Draft 5 was submitted to Bulmer Parish Council in July 2011 which was approved and also to Braintree District Council.

Braintree District Council granted approval in August 2011.

Copies were distributed to all Bulmer Parish households during August and September 2011.

Involvement and support from as many residents as possible has been obtained throughout this process and all their views have contributed to the preparation of this Village Design Statement.

The History of Bulmer

By Ashley Cooper

Geological and natural processes have largely fashioned Bulmer's rolling terrain.

Some seventy million years ago, chalk and flint were formed in the sea, which then covered our area. About fifty five million years ago London Clay—which is today used for making bricks—was deposited by rivers into a later sea, which lay over Bulmer. Around 600,000 years ago stones and pebbles were left by the River Thames when it flowed across Bulmer and North East Essex.

The great 'Anglian' Ice Sheet, (which may have been several hundred meters thick), crossed our district some 450,000 years ago.



This resulted in the deposition of sands and 'glacial erratic' boulders (pictured above), together with the creation of the 'chalky boulder clay' which covers parts of our parish.

With the retreat of the last ice age about 10,000 years ago, our local countryside slowly changed from tundra to thick forests. Hunter-gatherers followed rivers and open areas until around 3000B.C. when more settled agriculture began to be practiced in Southern England. Archaeological analysis of soils in the Belchamp Valley, suggests that they were washed down there

as erosion, following the clearance of woodland from the top of the hills in these centuries. Discoveries of flint tools and a flint *arrowhead further attest to human activity in Neolithic times.



Shards of a Bronze Age urn have been found close to Wesborough Hill. Although Iron Age finds are scarce at the moment, significant areas of our parish must have been farmed during the first millennium B.C. By the birth of Christ we can imagine a scattered network of Celtic homesteads and trackways across our area.

From the Roman era, (A.D 43-410), there is evidence of three separate Romano-British 'hut sites' on the southern and western fringes of the parish. The major Roman settlement, which existed at Gestingthorpe, almost adjoins the parish boundary with Bulmer. The Roman road, which connected London—Chelmsford—Braintree—Gestingthorpe—Long Melford—Brancaster (on the north Norfolk coast), almost certainly passed within half a mile of Bulmer Street.

With the coming of the Anglo-Saxons from around circa A.D 450, place names provide clues to our village's heritage. Bulmer itself is thought to mean 'Bull's Pond'. Part of the parish was in the 'half hundred' of Thundersley—or 'Thunor's Hill'. (Thunor was the Saxon god of Thunder, War and Farming.) In

'*Bulmer; Then and Now*', Basil Slaughter pondered whether 'Thunor's Hill' was the knoll where St. Andrew's Church was later built, and which has stunning views and a commanding position.



** Arrowhead from between 2300 – 1500 BC found in Bulmer by Ashley Cooper*

In the Domesday Book of 1086 there are references to four manors in Bulmer. Goldingham, Smeetham, and Binsley, (the latter being in the Kitchen Farm - Ballingdon Hill area), together with an un-named manor considered to be Butlers Hall.

From 1178 comes our earliest reference to a Church in Bulmer, when a dispute over tithes occurred with neighbouring Brundon

The latticed lanes and track ways that we know today were almost certainly in existence in late Saxon/early Norman times. However Bulmer Tye, (which means 'common' or 'green'), probably gained greater significance following the building of Ballingdon Bridge about 1200. This enabled significantly more traffic to use Ballingdon Hill, thus placing the Tye alongside the direct route from London to Sudbury. With the expansion of agriculture in the same century farmsteads may have begun to develop in this part of the parish (later to manifest in the splendid sixteenth century timber work of Jenkins Farm).

Medieval Bulmer was thus a parish of several parts. By 1250 its landscape would be largely recognizable to us today, although it would have been more wooded. Extant records from the Manor of Goldingham reveal how accurately fields and woods were being measured in 1314—together with the human misdemeanours, which occurred in Bulmer Street!

In the late Middle Ages another large house known as Grandons was built near the Tye, later being superseded by the Auberries. In the eighteenth century the twenty-three acre Tye was used for grazing, cattle fairs and games of cricket, whilst hostelries met the needs of travellers along the road.

Bulmer's most famous residents are surely Mr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews, owners of the Auberries, who were depicted so exquisitely by the artist Thomas Gainsborough in about 1750. Andrews was an outstanding agriculturalist and committed parishioner.



In 1831, an Enclosure Act resulted in Bulmer's common land being rationalised. It is thought that as a consequence, allotments were created around the parish. Today several have been converted to wildlife habitats, (such as 'Little Dean Spinney' near Upper Houses, and 'Bakers Field' which adjoins the School). Others are used as paddocks for animals. All provide a pleasant diversity within the village.

Considerable mention has been made of Bulmer's soils. Not only have they influenced farming and flora, but also the parish's long tradition of exploiting them for building materials; flints were used for walls, the London Clay for brick and tile making, and the sand and chalk for making mortar. (A medieval tile kiln existed not far from today's Brickyard, whilst in 1425 the tithes of one Bulmer limekiln were allocated to the Vicar.) The deep depressions of the old Chalk Pits still exist and can still be seen on several walks.

Flint walls, locally made roof tiles and both red *and white* bricks, together with timber framed buildings, thatched roofs and examples of pargetting (*pictured below), all contribute to the wonderful diversity of Bulmer's architectural heritage. A walk along Bulmer Street provides a delightful glimpse of the visual richness and variety that characterises the village.



Botanist Joseph Andrews (below left) is depicted in 1738, showing Dr. Samuel Dale of Braintree a very rare flower – The Military Orchid discovered on a meadow beside the Bulmer to Gestingthorpe road.



© Benjamin Perkins

The tree behind the horse and tumbril is a comparatively scarce Black Poplar, examples of which still grow in the same area. The Military Orchid however has not been seen in this location since the eighteenth century and is now only known to grow in two places in the whole of Great Britain.

Other orchids identified by Andrews in the Sudbury/Maplestead area at the same time include; (from left to right), Lesser Butterfly Orchid, Fly Orchid, Fragrant Orchid, Green Winged Orchid, Military Orchid (in the centre of the group), Early Spider Orchid, Pyramid Orchid, Bee Orchid and Marsh Helleborine.

** This example of pargetting records the three threshing contractors who were once based in Bulmer Street.*

Acknowledgements

'*Essex Rock*' by Gerald Lucy. Published by Essex Rock and Mineral Society 1999.

[A superb introduction to our local geology.]

'*The Place Names of Essex*' by P.H Reany.

Published by English Place Names Society 1935 & 1976. [The standard reference book]

'*Bulmer Then and Now*, edited by Basil Slaughter. Published by Bulmer W.E.A. 1979. [The definitive guide to Bulmer's history.]

'*Guide to the Church of St. Andrew, Bulmer*' by Richard Slaughter. [A most informative booklet, available in the Church.]

'*The Essex Landscape*' by John Hunter. Published by Essex Record Office 1999. [Another excellent reference work, especially helpful in understanding the likely evolution of parishes in northeast Essex during the Middle Ages.]

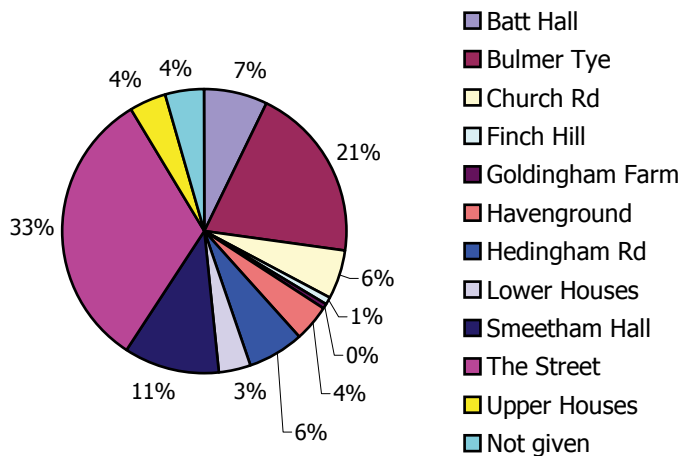
'*Sudbury: History and Guide*' by Barry Wall. Published by Tempus, 2004. [An outstanding publication, invaluable in the above article for information on the building of Ballingdon Bridge.]

GUIDELINES, OBSERVATIONS & POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

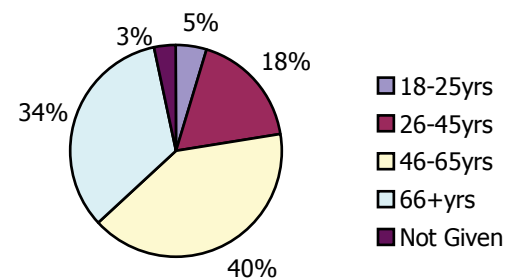
INTRODUCTION

This section has been derived after analysing the results from the questionnaire distributed to every household within the parish, which received a 50% response. Any observation or suggested improvements have been referred to the Parish Council for further consideration.

Location of Respondents within the parish of Bulmer



Age of Respondents



These results have then been used to establish Guidelines by "Principle Issues" to be observed in any future development, not just new builds. The design and feel of a village is affected by small alterations such as the use of open spaces, house extensions, window & door replacement or changes to boundary fences and hedges. Bulmer Parish Council & Braintree District Council has approved these guidelines.

The observations and any potential improvements have also been taken from the questionnaire where a significant number of respondents have registered the same observation.

This section is therefore of particular interest to anyone considering, or overseeing, development within the Parish of Bulmer. This could include:

- Current or future householders
- Local businesses and farmers
- The Parish Council
- District Planning Officers
- County Planning authorities and historic building advisers
- Architects and designers
- Developers and builders

This document has been distributed to every household in the parish of Bulmer. Copies have also been lodged with Braintree District Council and can be viewed at www.braintree.gov.uk or the Parish Council website at www.essexinfo.net/bulmer, further hard copies are also available from the Parish Council.

Principle issue:

The open countryside and spaces

Guidelines

The countryside views both within looking out and on the approaches to the village should be protected.

Open spaces, such as Church Meadow, Coe's Meadow, Plough Green, Lt. Dean Spinney, allotments (Turnpike Piece) at Park Lane and the paddocks at Almhouse Field, Lower Houses and those behind the south side of Bulmer Street, should be protected and maintained.

Development outside the village envelopes should be resisted.

Encroachment of built development from abutting parishes will be resisted.



Observations/Improvements

Almost 80% of the forms returned responded to the question "Which views from/to the village are important to you?". This indicates that to most people the landscape in and around the village is of great importance.

In the vast majority of the views selected, the emphasis is on "countryside", trees, hedges etc. With the exception of the church and the distant views of neighbouring villages, the built environment has relatively few mentions.

The two most popular comments, way above all others, were that "**All views are important**" and "**Views including the church**". The latter was mostly general, but occasionally specific, such as "**View of the church from the footpath behind Upper Houses**".

Unsurprisingly, given Bulmer's elevated position at the junction of the Belchamp Valley with the Stour Valley, the other most mentioned, or implied views, were looking out of the village. The majority of these pinpointed the panorama stretching from Gestingthorpe, through Belchamp and beyond into distant Suffolk. This view was admired from many viewpoints: - from Green Lane; from the old bridleway; from the church; from the permissive footpath beside Church road; from behind the Street.

In fact, views from practically every part of the village were mentioned at least once.

One view of Bulmer from outside the village, which several people selected, was of the Street and church, seen across the valley from Belchamp Walter.

Key words & phrases used by residents were Tranquillity, open countryside, unspoilt countryside, beautiful views and peaceful.

Residents indicated in their responses to the questionnaire that the development of villages open space would be **strongly resisted**.

Principle issue:

Trees

Guidelines

Existing trees are a significant and valued feature of the parish. They should be protected as far as good sense and safety allow.

Trees that make a particular contribution to the village character should be considered for Tree Preservation Orders.

Removal of hedgerows should be resisted, and new planting of trees and hedgerows should use native species. Ditches should be well maintained to encourage wildlife and minimise road drainage issues.



Observations/Improvements

About 73 % of the forms returned responded to the question "Which trees and hedges are important to you?". By far the most popular answer was the general statement "**All trees, hedges and verges are important**", and many commented that they add to the appearance of the village.

Where visually significant trees or hedgerows are on private land, owners should be encouraged to care for them appropriately.

A record of visually significant and old trees, groups of trees such as those around the Church, hedgerows and woodland areas should be maintained and reviewed by the Parish Tree Warden on a regular basis.

Principle issue:

Footpaths

Guidelines

Existing footpaths should be retained and maintained.



Observations/Improvements

We value the footpaths, which link communal facilities, and those with outstanding views. The new permissive footpath from the village hall to the school is a big success!

The footpaths are to be kept clear and cut back during the growing season. Any that cross arable land should be re-instated clearly after ploughing has been completed.

Suggested improvements:

- More dog bins and encourage their use
- Village Hall to Upper Houses – no vehicles
- Goldingham Hall track should be a right of way

Guidelines

Any new development or extensions should wherever possible provide storage for all refuse and re-cycling containers out of view from the road, particularly within the Conservation Area.

Any new developments should provide off-street parking and owners of existing off-street parking provision should be encouraged to retain it.

The planting of native hedging should be promoted.

Where boundaries constitute an important part of the street scene, the removal of such boundaries should be discouraged.

All boundary features whatever material is used should be maintained in good order to avoid obstructions to pavements.

A small amount of residential development may be supported in the parish, but the number should be limited to 10 in one place to avoid damaging the character of the Parish.

'In-fill' sites for new builds are preferred, but should wherever possible retain views to the open countryside, and where possible open up new vistas to the countryside.

All new developments should be in keeping in terms of scale, design and materials; and respect the integrity of the village and keep the linear style of the village.

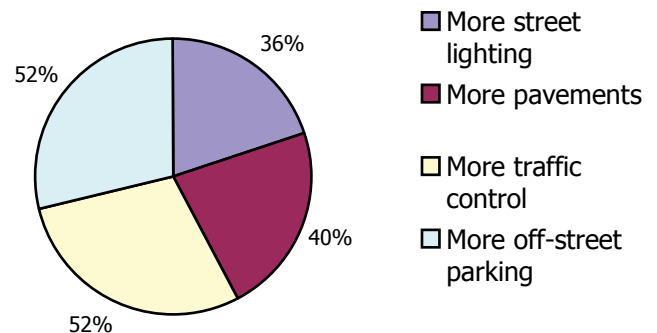
Affordable housing for local people should be based on a strict needs assessment.



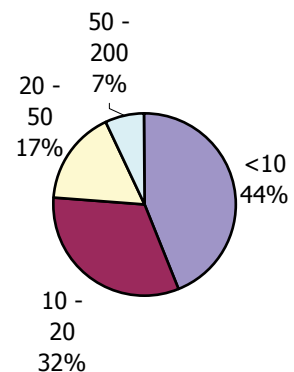
Observations/Improvements

Please note: The answers to some of the questions asked required multiple answers, therefore charts may add up to more than 100%.

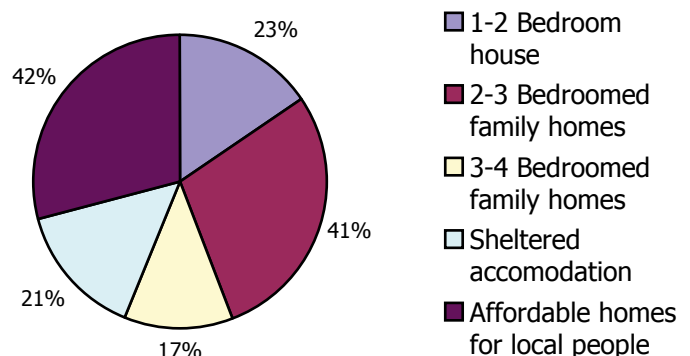
Percentage that said YES to the following:-



How many houses?



Most needed types of housing required:-



Principle issue:

Development/Extensions Continued

Guidelines

A potential exception site identified by residents for affordable housing, subject to further consultations and survey: -

Between Havenground and Bulmer Tye at the southern end of Church Rd between the Housing Association properties and Park Lane (around the area of the red circle, shown on map).

There is little support for new developments of Office or Business space, but there is support for conversion of agricultural premises.

Residents would be supportive of a suitably located local shop or pub within the parish.

The District Council following their policies should control the design of extensions, materials and new builds.

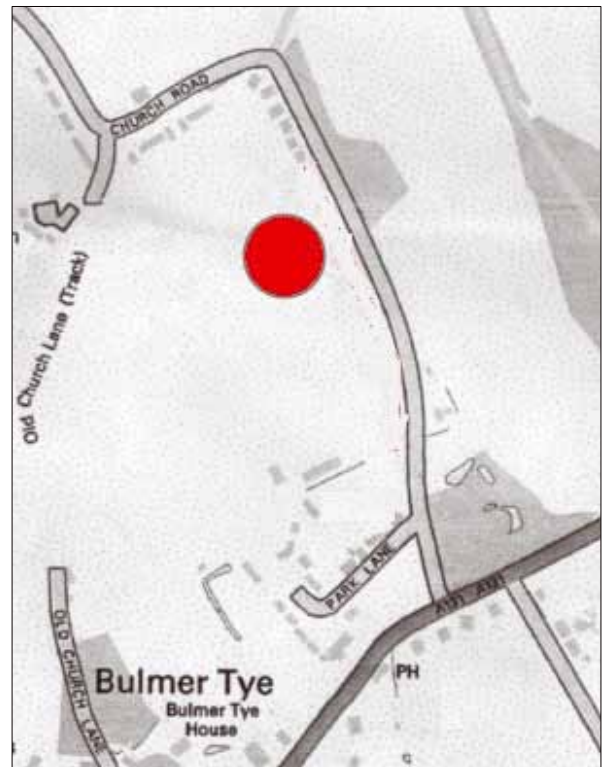
Development of back gardens should be discouraged especially where plots are restricted.

New 'Estates' are to be resisted in areas other than the potential area identified above.

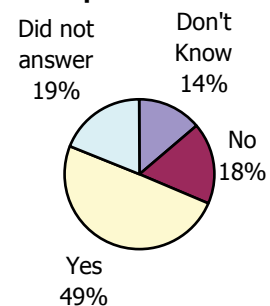
New or expansion of Industrial/Retail areas, particularly any that are outside the village envelope or within a designated special landscape area are to be resisted.

In the questionnaire residents expressed their opposition to **any** development on the paddocks behind the South side of Bulmer Street between 'Lime Avenue' and St Andrew's Rise, as this provides vistas to and from the Church.

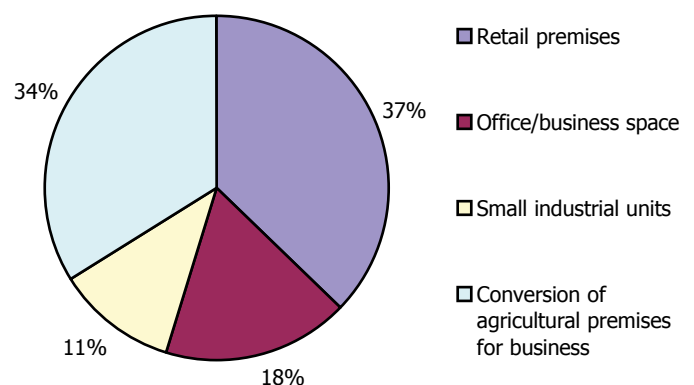
Observations/Improvements



Restrict development to Infill sites only



More provision in the village for:-



Guidelines

Materials used should reflect the style of the existing or surrounding buildings, particularly for extensions.

Traditional building materials of Red brick, Exposed timbers, Flint, Thatch, Rendering and Weatherboarding should all be encouraged to maintain the harmonious variety and texture of current materials that exist on properties within the Parish.

Chimney Stacks should be retained.

New roofs should be pitched or hipped where there is the possibility of overlooking neighbouring properties. Also to soften the effect on the skyline, protecting views in and out of the Parish and minimise the loss of light.

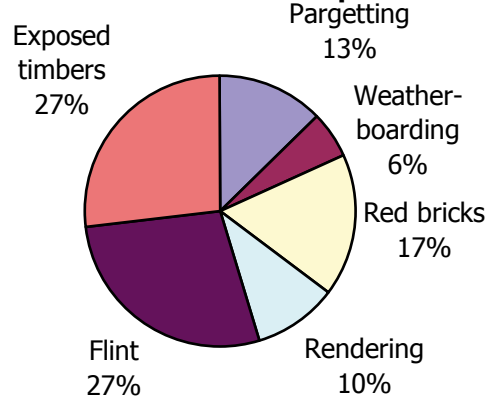
Roofs should use traditional materials such as clay and slate tiles rather than concrete tiles.

The style and pattern of windows and doors should be maintained in extensions to existing building.

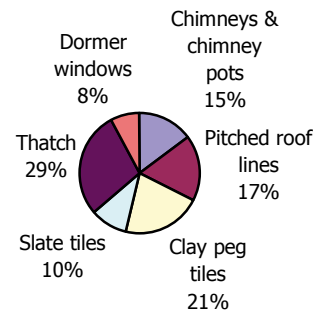
Brick or flint walls and picket fences should be encouraged, providing the height is in accord with the surrounding built environment.

Observations/Improvements

What features contribute most to the character of the parish?



Roofing features?



Guidelines

Utility companies and developers should be encouraged to place all statutory services underground especially within the Conservation Area and beyond wherever possible.

Satellite dishes should be unobtrusive and where possible not visible from the street, particularly within the Conservation Area.

New Street lighting should be discouraged.

Security lighting should be of the type that is movement sensitive and located not to be an intrusion to nearby properties or traffic.

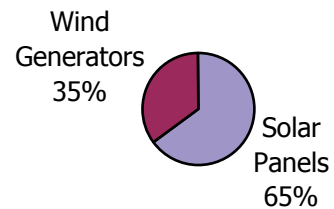
Solar panels should be encouraged and placed on the roof. Wherever possible they should be unobtrusive to neighbours and in the Conservation Area and on Listed properties, be in positions so as to avoid being seen from the roadside or footpaths.

Wind generators are desirable but their size and position should be unobtrusive to neighbours. Advice or approval from Braintree District Council should be sought before being installed.

Further traffic calming measures should be considered for the A131 and Bulmer Street.

Observations/Improvements

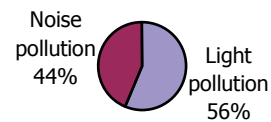
On balance, do you think their installation is desirable?



"Wind turbines are only suitable for isolated properties".

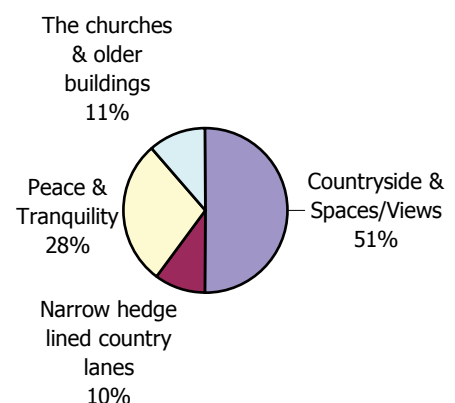
"Wind turbines should not be put near other houses because of noise".

Is there a problem with Light or Noise in the parish?

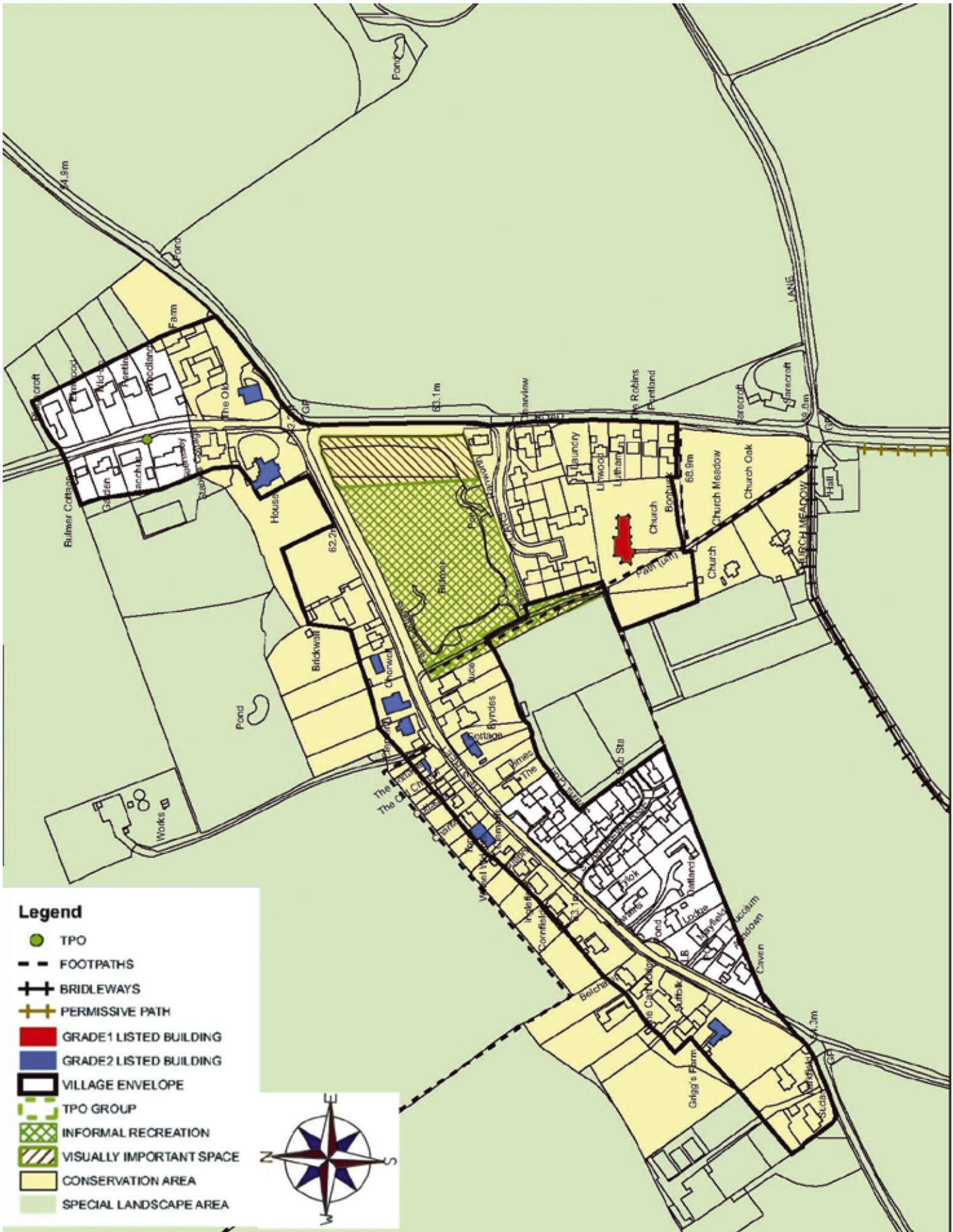


"Pollution from aircraft noise at Stansted is considered to be an issue, therefore any future expansion would be considered as a further intrusion to the peace and tranquillity."

What gives you your sense of being in Bulmer?



Bulmer Street



- Legend**
- TPO
 - - - FOOTPATHS
 - + + BRIDLEWAYS
 - + + PERMISSIVE PATH
 - GRADE 1 LISTED BUILDING
 - GRADE 2 LISTED BUILDING
 - VILLAGE ENVELOPE
 - TPO GROUP
 - INFORMAL RECREATION
 - VISUALLY IMPORTANT SPACE
 - CONSERVATION AREA
 - SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA



Scale: 1:2,750

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Bulmer Street

Bulmer Street is essentially a group of dwellings that have grown up haphazardly over several centuries, alongside a meandering country road. Approaching from Sudbury, the road into the Street is lined with banks and hedges bordering rolling slopes of arable fields. On the right stands Black House Farm (*townscape merit). The Old Vicarage, with its elegant stuccoed facade and the red brick Dower House stand on each corner of Smeetham Hall Lane. Both these fine Georgian residences have Grade II Listed status. Visible to the south, standing on higher ground, is the Grade I Listed parish church of St Andrews, with its flint walls and square tower.

Nearly all of the Street lies within a Conservation Area, and includes a wide variety of detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings. The oldest part is mainly on the north side, where the cottages were built with their main rooms facing south, towards the Street. The only remaining thatched cottages on the south side are also built in this manner, which means they have their "backs" to the Street. From the Old Vicarage to Clematis cottage, all the buildings on the north side are Grade II Listed or have Townscape merit, and on the south side there are a further three properties meriting Grade II Listing or Townscape Merit. With no less than 8 Grade II Listed dwellings in the Street, this part of Bulmer is of great historic importance.

Distinctive old farm buildings, a converted barn and granary, farm cottages, a converted chapel and a traction engine shed, preserve the rural history. Their construction material is interesting by the sheer variety: red and white brick; knapped and uncut flint; timber frame and render (some with modern pargetting); pebbledash and weatherboard. There are roofs of slate, peg tile, pan tile, thatch and corrugated iron. The roofs have a range of heights and pitch and the Old Traction Shed has a full curved iron roof. Chimney pots also show a wide variety of style and height. The charm of these buildings is reflected in their Townscape Merit status. The rest of the Street comprises an eclectic mix of cottages, Victorian and modern houses and bungalows.

St. Andrew's Rise is a small 1980's development leading south off The Street. The houses, constructed of red brick and tile, are all in a very similar style. Numerous trees, shrubs and other greenery sprouting from the small front gardens, soften the overall appearance of the houses.



* Townscape Merit is a building that contributes to the character of the street, but is not Grade II listed.

From top: the Old Vicarage; the Paddock South side of The Street; The Street looking eastwards; the Old Chapel; Traction Engine Shed

Bulmer Street

Several factors contribute to the pleasant rural nature of this area. At the west end beyond Griggs farm and large barn (Suffolk Hall) there are wide panoramic views across open rolling countryside. There are also many points along the Street between buildings where there are clear views of the open arable farmland and undulating landscape behind the linear development.

Several footpaths link The Street to other nearby hamlets. Although there are a few grass verges, many boundaries are hedged or are open gardens, with some walled or fenced properties. There are trees in many gardens. Opposite the Brickwall buildings, Coe's Meadow is an extensive village recreation ground, incorporating well-mown green areas, natural wild flower meadows, wildlife areas, a pond and a well-used timber built play area. It also includes the historic Lime Avenue, which leads from the Street to the Church.

Nearly all of the older dwellings with smaller gardens in front have a low-level roofline, and most of the modern larger houses are set well back from the road behind large gardens. Most buildings have drives, garages or off-street parking areas. There are few visible satellite dishes and television aerials are not obtrusive. The only street lighting is on the housing development at St Andrew Rise. There is continuous pavement on the north side and small stretches on the south. There is a red telephone box, an old post-box and large wrought iron village sign reflecting the rural nature of the neighbourhood. There is a 30mph speed restriction running the entire length of the Street.

The pleasant and distinctively "green" nature of this section of the village is marred at the east and west ends by the large unsightly "BULMER" signs and obtrusive overhead power cabling criss-crossing the road.



From top: Coe's Meadow; the village sign; St. Andrew's Rise; the Street looking eastwards. Left: Clement Cottage

Smeetham Hall Lane

Smeetham Hall Lane is flanked on either side by two large detached Georgian houses, The Dower House to the west and The Old Vicarage to the east. 'Stables Cottage' behind the Dower House, the 'Old Lodge' and a development of two red brick bungalows in 'The Hidings' behind The Old Vicarage are all within the north eastern corner of the conservation area. The Lane has surface signage at the crossroads junction, together with non-obtrusive Give Way signs.

Proceeding northwards there is a mix of property styles and sizes. The large modern properties on the eastern side are set well back behind very wide gardens, screened by a number of mature trees and hedges, giving them a secluded feel. They are all of slightly different design, with white UPVC windows and all feature large double wooden front doors. Most are constructed of red brick, with just one of beige brick. The pitched roofs are of modern concrete tiles. The only garden walls are around 'The Old Vicarage' and at the entrance to 'The Hidings', the other gardens being open.

On the western side there is a mature Sycamore tree (with a Tree Preservation Order), five properties all of different design again mainly of large individual design and a variety of materials, including red and white brick and rendering, the roofs are clad with tiles of varying size and age. The modern bungalow features a distinctive chimney. All of these properties are within of the village envelope and the restricted speed zone of 30mph. There are no pavements on either side of the lane, giving it a rural character despite the dwellings. There is an unsightly intrusion of overhead power lines crossing the lane with a high mounted transformer next to Bulmer Cottage.

Beyond this developed area, the Lane winds on, with open farmland on both sides, with fine open views westward to the village of Belchamp Walter and its church. There are several pollarded oaks bordering the Lane, one is recorded as a 'veteran' and another as 'ancient' in the National Ancient Tree Hunt website. Interspersed with these oaks are hedgerows, grass verges, banks and ditches. To the North is Smeetham Hall, a substantial Victorian brick building reached by a long private road, which passes Smeetham Hall cottage, a single storey rendered building. In front of the Hall is a large pond and a large ancient barn, now refurbished and used for weddings and other social functions.

Past the entrance to Smeetham Hall there is a clutch of cottages that are part of the Smeetham Hall estate. The ornamental brick plaque shows a date of 1887. Beyond some garages are two modern detached red brick houses and a pair of semi-detached cottages with brick and pebbledash. The lane continues eastward through farmland on each side, to Finch Hill, with wonderful views across the rolling fields to the south and east, towards Kitchen Farm and Sandy Lane.



From top: Smeetham Hall cottages plaque; eastern side of Smeetham Hall Lane; the view of Belchamp Walter; Smeetham Hall.

(See map: p16)

Church Road North and Vicars Orchard

Approaching from Bulmer Tye, The Village Hall stands on the left of the minor crossroads between Church Road and Sandy Lane. It is a modest structure built in the 1920's with rendered walls, corrugated sheet pitched roof, plus extensions in brick with felted flat roofs. It is an integral part of village life, run by a working committee and much used by the Parish Council, clubs and associations etc. From the car park a permissive footpath has been created inside the adjacent field primarily for safety of parents and children walking between The Street and St Andrew's Primary School.



At the junction of Sandy Lane and Church Road, are a pair of timber gates and large brick piers, which screen a large bungalow, dominating the approach from Church Road; beyond this the single-track lane has a fine country character with grass verges and hedgerows. Far reaching views northeast across fields to Sudbury and Borley are somewhat marred by overhead power lines. Opposite there are views to Havenground and a fine range of mature cedars, screening the Auberries estate.



Church Meadow is a public open space, owned by the Parish Council on which there is a particularly fine specimen oak tree in the centre. A tarmac track provides vehicular access to the Church and the properties on the western side of the meadow. These "arts and crafts" style houses are masked from view by extremely high leylandi hedging.



The 11th century St Andrew's Church stands on relatively high ground and can be seen at distance from north and east. It has flint faced walls and clay tile roofs, around the tower is a decorative feature of chequer-board pattern forming a dado with alternating square blocks of flat stone and knapped flint panels. The southern approach across Church Meadow is through an avenue of old lime and horse chestnut trees, which frame and focus the main entrance. The church is set within its original churchyard surrounded on all sides by old red brick walls. Lime Avenue is a tree-lined path providing direct access from the Street to St Andrew's Church. The path continues to the Village Hall where it links to the permissive footpath to the Primary School. On the western side of Lime Avenue is an open paddock with stabling and horses, with Coe's Meadow and Vicars Orchard to the east.

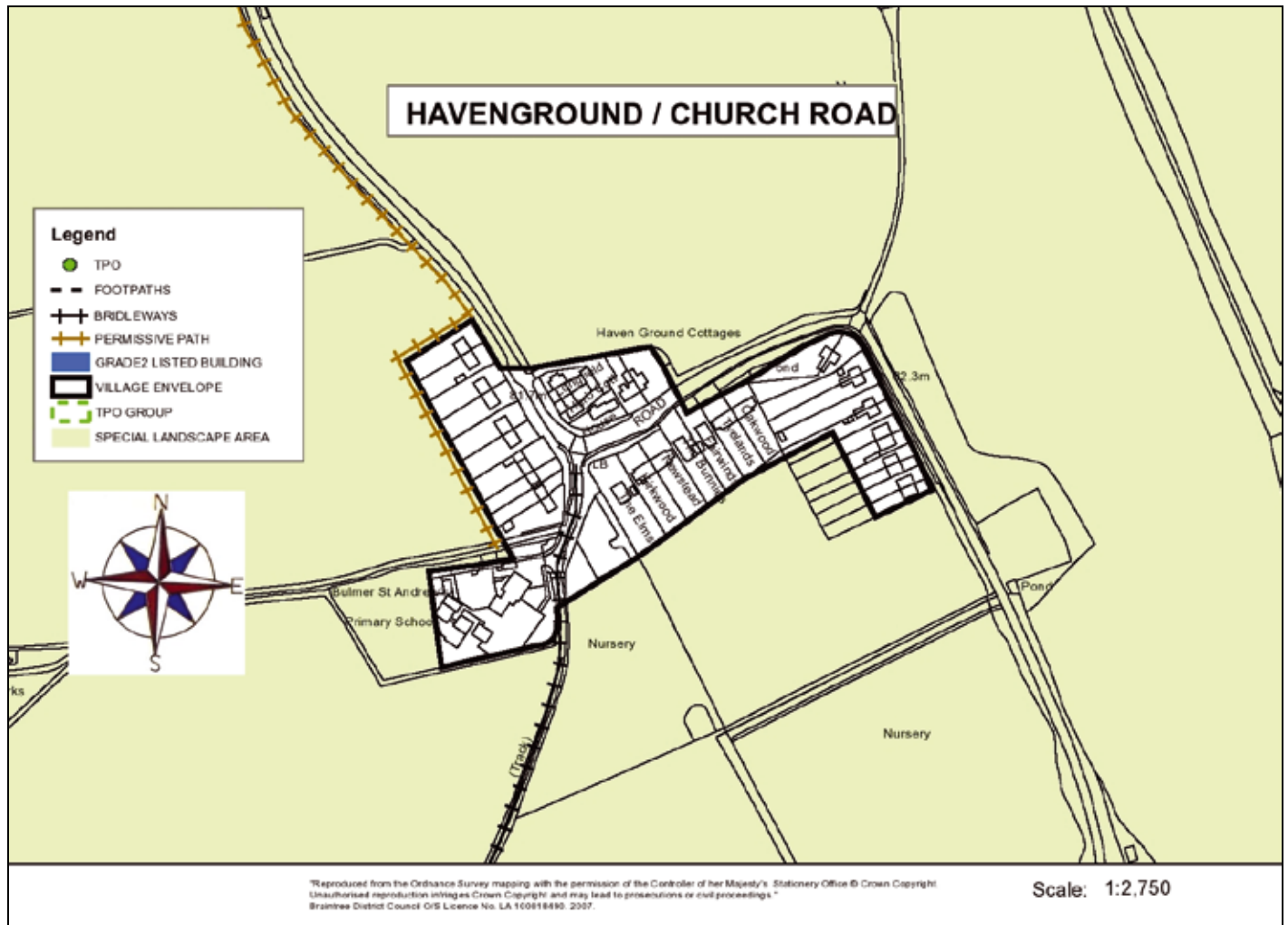
From top: St Andrew's Church; Lime Avenue; Vicars Orchard

From Sandy Lane to the Bulmer Street crossroads there are a mixture of 1960s & 70s houses and bungalows. These dwellings are classic of their time, in sand faced brick or brick and half render, which is painted, the roofs of concrete tile, some with detached or integral garages. Being set well back from the road, with shingle drives and well-maintained gardens, reduces the impact of these properties. Set between the houses and the bungalows, Laundry Cottage stands well back from the road. This Victorian cottage has been sympathetically renovated with traditional sash/casement windows.

The entrance to Vicars Orchard lies between detached bungalows, which have undergone front landscaping and resurfacing, all neat but quite urban in style. Vicars Orchard is a development of brick-built semi detached and linked bungalows, which are fairly sympathetic to the surroundings, with pitched main roofs and lower projecting gables in tile. All are fronted by open gardens.

(See map: p16)

Church Road South & Havenground



From Bulmer Tye travelling northwards along Church Road, open fields to the west, ancient oak pollards and orchards lead on to three pairs of modern well-designed houses of brick and render under tiled roofs. A further three pairs of older houses are of white brick and render under hipped slate roofs, two of which are 'Greenfields Community Housing'. The house fronting the sharp bend of the road has no off street parking.

Well past the bend, Havenground Cottages are an attractive pair of arts and crafts style farm cottages of red brick with Tudor style elevations. These are complemented by Church Field Cottages consisting of a terrace of four dwellings and one detached house. They were constructed in 2007 in a style sympathetic with the Victorian cottages, displaying jettied fronts and plain-tiled roofs. Facing Havenground Cottages and standing well back, is a row of 1960s bungalows, both semi- and fully detached, in brick and render under tiles.

Around the right-angled bend in the road there is a terrace of four 1950's houses with painted brickwork. Alongside is a row of six, semi detached, 'Greenfields Community Housing' bungalows for the elderly, of mixed brick and render under tiled roofs. Opposite these, stands an attractive wooden bus shelter with a raised area in front to facilitate access to buses.

Church Road South & Havenground

Off the bend in Church Road a short road leads to St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School. New extensions and demountable classrooms now surround the original octagonal building of the 1960s. The school has a wildlife area adjacent to the car park.

All properties in this area benefit from good views over the surrounding countryside: most also benefit from large gardens. A mixture of hedges, fence and low walls borders the frontage. A pavement passes along one side of the road to the school but not in front of the 'Greenfields Community Housing' bungalows for the elderly. There is a 30 mph speed limit throughout the area.

A bridleway leads from the school to Plough Green and a permissive footpath connects the school and the village hall. Both paths afford beautiful views over the fields, valleys and woods around.

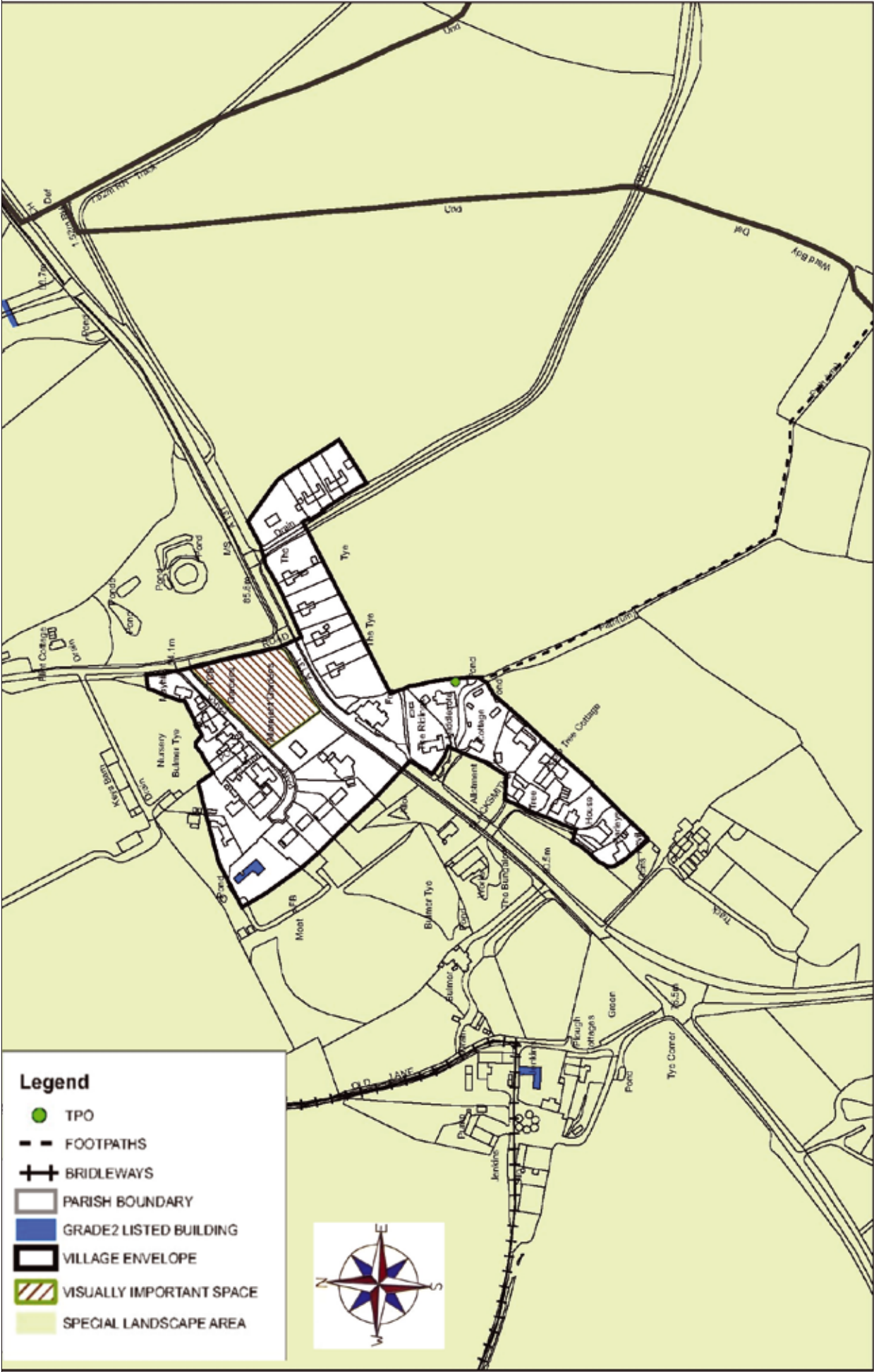
Unfortunately, parked cars can cause problems at the start and end of the school day, with many vehicles parked dangerously on the corner or blocking driveways.



From top: Bulmer St Andrew's Primary School; Havenground Cottages; Church Road at Havenground. Left: View from Havenground towards the Stour Valley and Bulmer Street.



Bulmer Tye and Park Lane



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Bulmer Tye and Park Lane

The Tye sits across the A131 – Sudbury to Halstead Road. The outline of an ancient common is preserved on both sides of the A131, defined by the boundaries of Plough Green and the allotments to the southwest of the road, and three small parish fields on the southeast side. Behind the three small parish fields and paddocks there are 13 dwellings, a mixture of detached, semi and terraced houses and several bungalows. Access is via unmade roadways retaining a very rural village setting in sharp contrast to the traffic passing by on the A131. Many of the dwellings are brick-built with slate roofs. There are new terraced cottages built in sympathy with the adjoining Victorian cottages. New bungalows have been built in existing gardens of other properties. All of these dwellings are set well back from the busy road and back on to either arable land or paddocks.

At Plough Green the left turn from A131 Halstead/Sudbury road to the Hedginghams is masked on the west side by the hedges of Tye Corner farm. This 16th century farmhouse is an early timber framed building, rendered and colour-washed. The farm buildings have mostly flint walls with decorative diamond shaped brick venting. On Plough Green itself is a village sign, in the form of an obelisk. Built in the Millennium year of Bulmer bricks, it displays pargetted panels depicting village scenes. A narrow road skirts the Green, passing a pair of rendered and peg tiled farm cottages, previously the Plough Public House. These overlook Plough Green, as does Jenkins Farm, a large Grade II listed 16th century timber framed dwelling with tiled roof and handsome brick chimneys of six octagonal shafts.

The road continues past Jenkins to become 'Old Church Lane' passing the rear entrance of Bulmer Tye House ending at the flint built "Stone Cottage". Originally a gardener's cottage, it has a roof of tile and slate. The road then becomes a bridleway to Bulmer School and Church Road. A bridleway also leads from Jenkins passes the farm buildings behind, to Parsonage Wood and Upper Houses.

Bulmer Tye House is a large detached dwelling with a brick front dating around 1800, with the rear pre-dating this, from the mid 17th century. The building is now a bed and breakfast business with a workshop making bespoke furniture. The house is surrounded by mature trees, with a drive leading to the A131.

On the A131 towards Sudbury on the left is a builders yard masked by hedging, followed by a bungalow with a slated roof. Beyond this, further hedging bounds the rear gardens of properties situated in Park Lane and the parish allotments. Church Road links Bulmer Tye with Bulmer Street. Opposite the allotments, across the A131, and serving as a local landmark, is the Fox Public House, built in 1900 with hanging tiles and high gable ends above the upper windows. Recent extensions to the side and rear compliment the original design. Now it is a thriving bistro style restaurant – the only public commercial premises in the village to open every day.



From top: Jenkins; Old Church Lane; Turnpike Piece Allotments; Bulmer Tye House; The Fox

Bulmer Tye and Park Lane

Immediately after the Fox Public House, set parallel to the road are 4 pairs of semi-detached brick and rendered pre-war council houses, stretching to the junction with Ryes Lane. On the other corner of Ryes Lane is the old detached police house with an extended dropped tiled roof to the back. Along Ryes Lane are two pairs of 1940's council houses, before it opens out into farming land which spreads across all of the southeast side of Bulmer Tye.

The A131 continues towards Ballingdon Hill and Sudbury. The large Auberies Estate is on the west side with the main entrance on the left. A pair of stone cats guards the tree-lined drive to the hidden house beyond. The present house is early 19th century, and the estate stretches far from the Tye on both sides of the A131 down to Ballingdon, across to Smeetham Hall Lane, Bulmer Street, Lower & Upper Houses. The estate retains arable farming and country sports, situated on a plateau above Sudbury. There are many views of rolling countryside including plantations of trees and ancient hedgerows. There is a large lake in the valley. As the A131 continues towards Ballingdon the view to Sudbury opens out and Armsey Farm, part of the Auberies estate nestles on the left of the road.

Park Lane is separated from the Tye mostly by allotment land. A modern barn style black boarded dwelling with a slate roof is at the entrance from Church Road. Opposite are a red telephone box, a post box and a parish notice board, which local residents have made into an attractive area. Just along the lane, a 1950s house of red brick and tile, sits between two pairs of restored timber framed Victorian cottages with rendered walls and slate roofs.

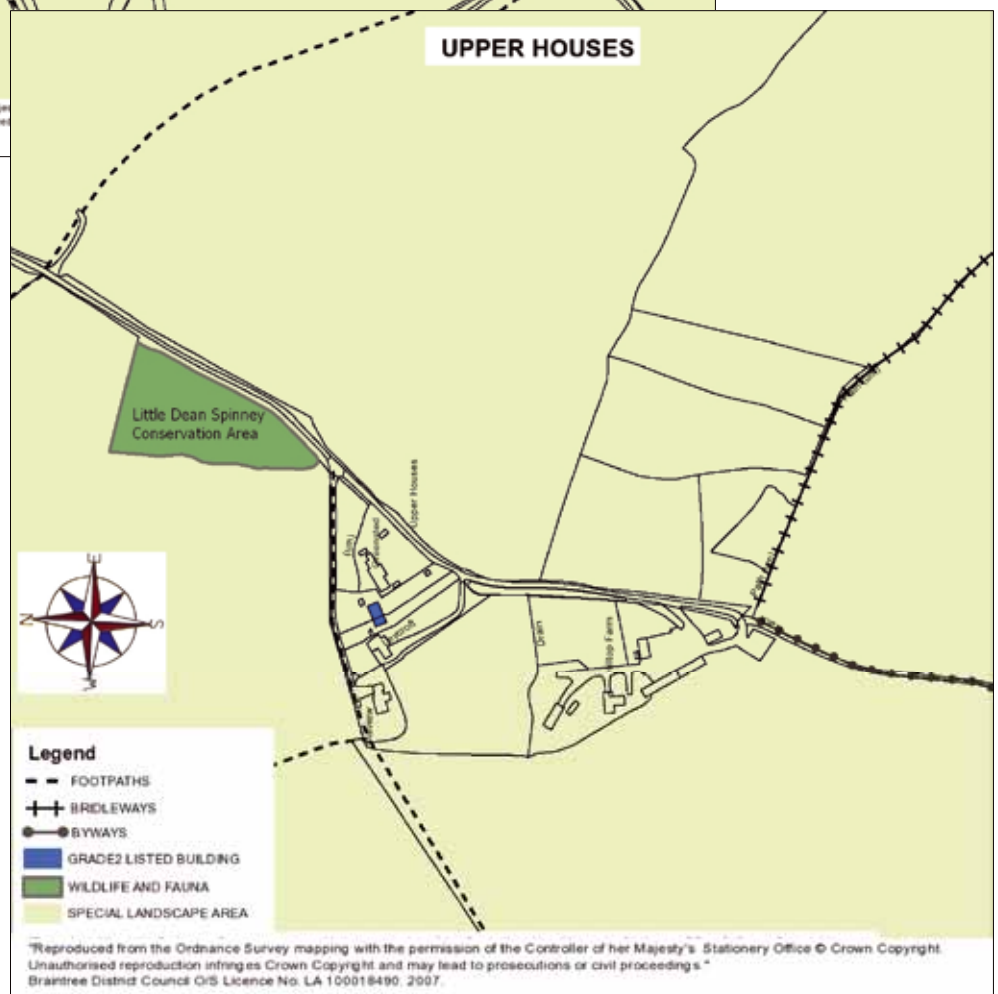
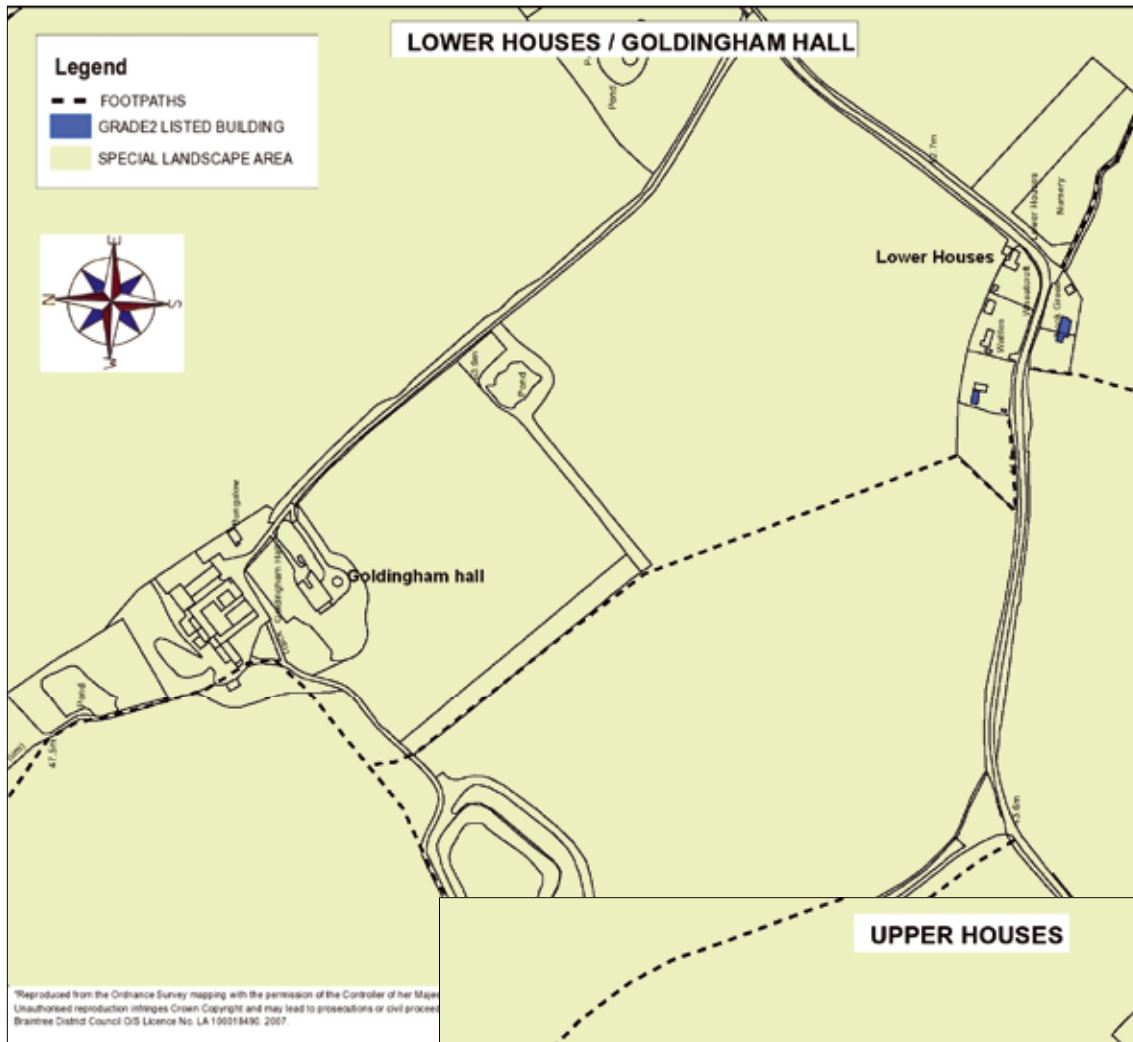
Eight 1960s built chalet style detached houses and two bungalows - all rendered under tiled roofs, and one post 2000 bungalow, are grouped around the further end of the lane. Beyond these and concealed by trees, is the Grade II listed Clapps farmhouse. Of timber frame and render, under a peg-tiled roof, the main section appears Georgian, but the large moated grounds indicate a much earlier origin. The whole area has a green feel with hedges along the first section, while wide grass areas, trees and shrubs, front the newer properties. All houses, apart from two backing onto the A131, have green open spaces behind their gardens. The woodland across Church Road adds to this leafy impression. There is a pavement along the lane but none on Church Road at this point. The scene is spoilt by a plethora of overhead wires, although an electricity substation is well screened.

On the right, just beyond Park Lane stands Flint Cottage, with rendered walls and a slate roof, set amid mature trees. Opposite, iron gates set in a tall red brick boundary wall give access to a piano showroom and dwelling, both recently converted from a modern farm building.



From top: The Old Police House; Stone cat guarding the Auberies; A131 approach to The Tye from Sudbury; Park Lane; Clapps farmhouse

Upper Houses, Lower Houses Goldingham Hall



Upper Houses, Lower Houses Goldingham Hall

At the western end of Bulmer Street the road leads on towards Lower Houses and Gestingthorpe. A long narrow winding lane forks to the left, leading to the hamlet of Upper Houses. On either side are grassy banks and verges with occasional lengths of hedgerow, and pleasantly undulating farmland beyond. As the lane climbs the hill to Upper Houses parish land on the right has been designated as Little Dean Spinney, a conservation area. It has been planted with a selection of native trees and grasses and slow worms and lizards have been released onto the site. Benches have been placed allowing pleasant views across the fields to Brakey Hill, the church and Bulmer Street.

Just past the spinney a private drive on the right leads up to Hill View, a detached bungalow that enjoys magnificent views across Bulmer to the Belchamps and beyond. After the private road there is a detached dwelling of the early 19th century comprising of 5 former cottages, in painted brickwork, with pan tile roofs, fronted by a pretty cottage garden. Next to this is a pair of timber framed Grade II listed 17th century cottages rendered and painted, with a peg tiled roof and a high central chimney in red brick with a decorative pattern. No.2 Upper Houses has a cart lodge built in brick, timber and tiled roof in keeping with the rural surroundings.

Beyond is a much extended, 1950s detached house mainly hidden from view by trees and hedging, followed by Hill Top Farm where the road ends. This is now a commercial yard of various old agricultural buildings, paddocks, and a detached bungalow and static home. There are extensive views across countryside to Gestingthorpe and beyond. The tarmac road ceases and becomes a 'byway' through to Wesborough Hill and Bulmer Brick Fields. At the start of the byway a bridleway goes off to the left towards Jenkins farm and Bulmer Tye. The byway passes through Deal Nursery, resplendent in daffodils and bluebells at springtime, a tranquil spot at any time of the year.

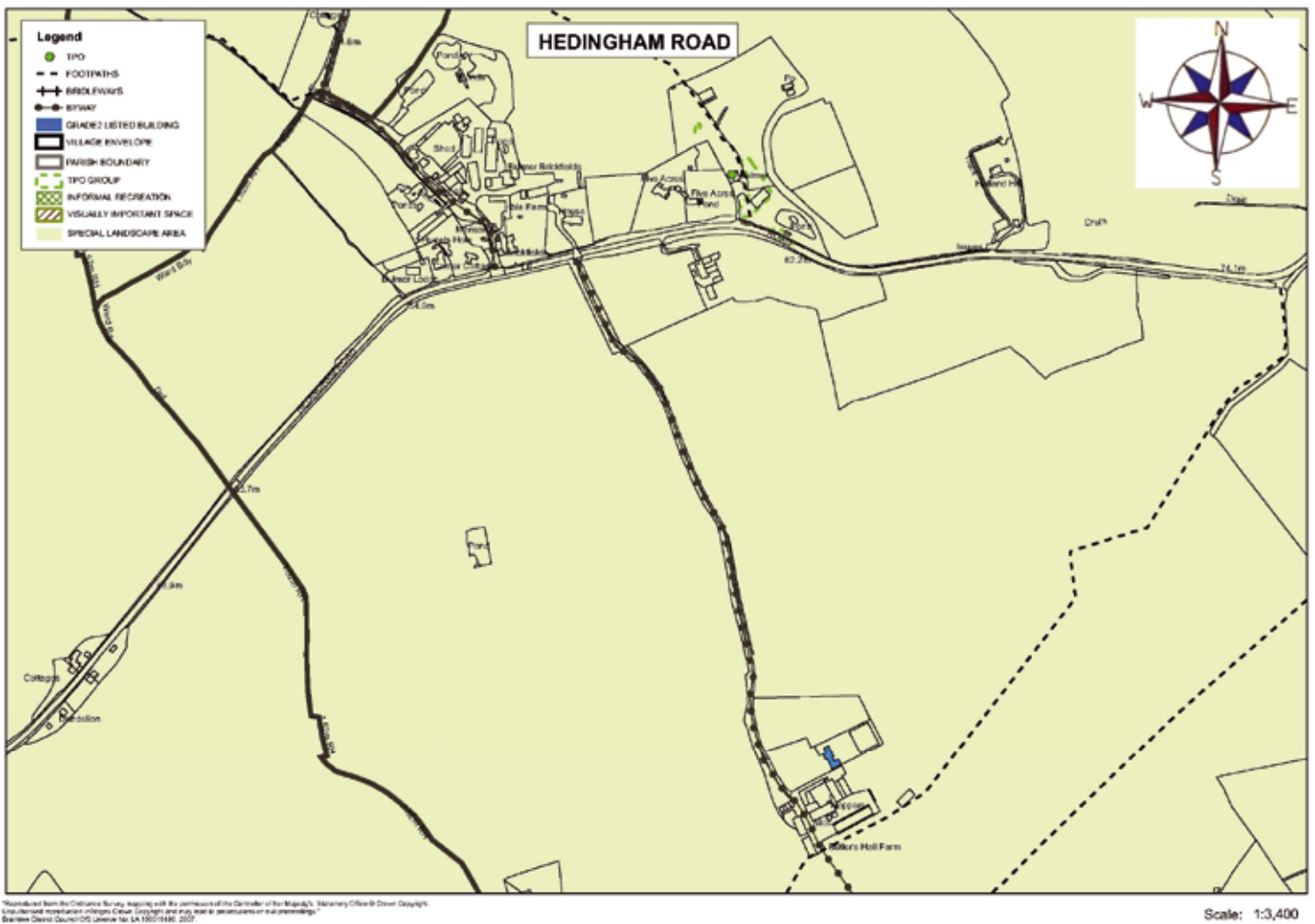
On the right, between Bulmer Street and Lower Houses, is the tree-lined drive to Goldingham Hall, original site of a doomsday Manor. The present 19th century Hall is built of white Suffolk brick with slated roof and surrounded by trees. The redundant farm buildings have been sympathetically developed for various commercial enterprises (light industry/ tradesmen) bringing employment to the village. Behind the Hall, a footpath leads across fields to the Belchamp Brook, and Belchamp Walter Church in the wooded valley.

Lower Houses sits on the road to Gestingthorpe, hidden from Bulmer in a valley at the lowest point of the village on the western side. On the left of the road is a pair of Grade II listed timber framed cottages, painted with peg tile roof and dormer windows. On the opposite side of the road are three detached houses, two of which are thatched, the other tiled. An unsightly electricity transformer atop a wooden pole mars the rural character of this pretty hamlet.



From top: Upper Houses with Lt. Dean Spinney in front; A Grade II listed 17thc cottage at Upper Houses; the 'Byway' to the Brickfields; Goldingham Hall; Grade II listed cottages at Lower Houses

Hedingham Road and Brickfields



This hamlet of Bulmer is situated to the south of the Parish, on the B1508 road leading from Bulmer Tye and Sudbury to the Hedinghams. Trees dominate the landscape on both sides of the road, many protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

Approaching the hamlet from the east there is Holland Hill on the north side. Near 'Five Acres' stands a beautiful example of a copper beech. This corner of Bulmer is a very important archaeological and historical area, and a pleasantly rural and tranquil place to live, apart from traffic noise on the Hedingham Road.

The area is best known for the business premises of 'The Bulmer Brick & Tile Co.' Bulmer's main employer. On the site are two kilns (one dating back to 1940) which are still used for making hand-made bricks for restoration and extensions of historic buildings such as Hampton Court, St. Pancras station and many National Trust properties. The clay for the production of bricks & tiles is still dug from the clay-pit adjoining the brickyard. The area occupied by the Brickyard and much of the surrounding area is within a designated archaeological site.

Out of the dozen or so properties situated on the north side not one is similar to another. Some are built with red bricks & tiles from the Brick & Tile Co. whilst others are rendered. Some have porches, dormer and/or bay windows. All are detached, apart from two cottages in the entrance to the brickworks, with

Hedingham Road and Brickfields

pitched roofs of thatch, slate or tile. Various extensions along with outbuildings have been built over the years, some more in character than others. The extensions and roof repairs have resulted in a mismatch of brick and tile colours. All varieties of window materials have been used including UPVC, but keeping to traditional styles.

Most dwellings are on a straight stretch of road, approached from both directions by hazardous bends marked by chevrons, 20mph advisory speed limits and anti-skid surfaces. With no pavements, only narrow grass verges and ditches, this is a very dangerous area to walk. All current properties have driveways, which alleviates the need for on-street parking.

On the south side there are no houses, only a few farm storage sheds and chicken sheds still in use. A bridleway leads from Hedingham Road to Butlers Hall Farm. Following this bridleway up the hill (after about ½ mile) to Butlers Hall, there are magnificent panoramic views to the north over and beyond the Hedingham Road across gentle hills and valleys with a beautiful tree lined horizon. One can see the hamlet of Long Gardens and the village of Wickham St. Paul to the south and south west. The farmhouse, the only residential property on this site, is a Tudor style (Grade II listed) mediaeval manor, dating from the early 17th century. There are various farm outbuildings and some livestock.

Rural footpaths connect from this hamlet via Wesborough Hill (Green Lane) with Upper Houses, Bulmer Street and Gestingthorpe to the North and Wickham St. Paul to the South via Butlers Hall Farm.

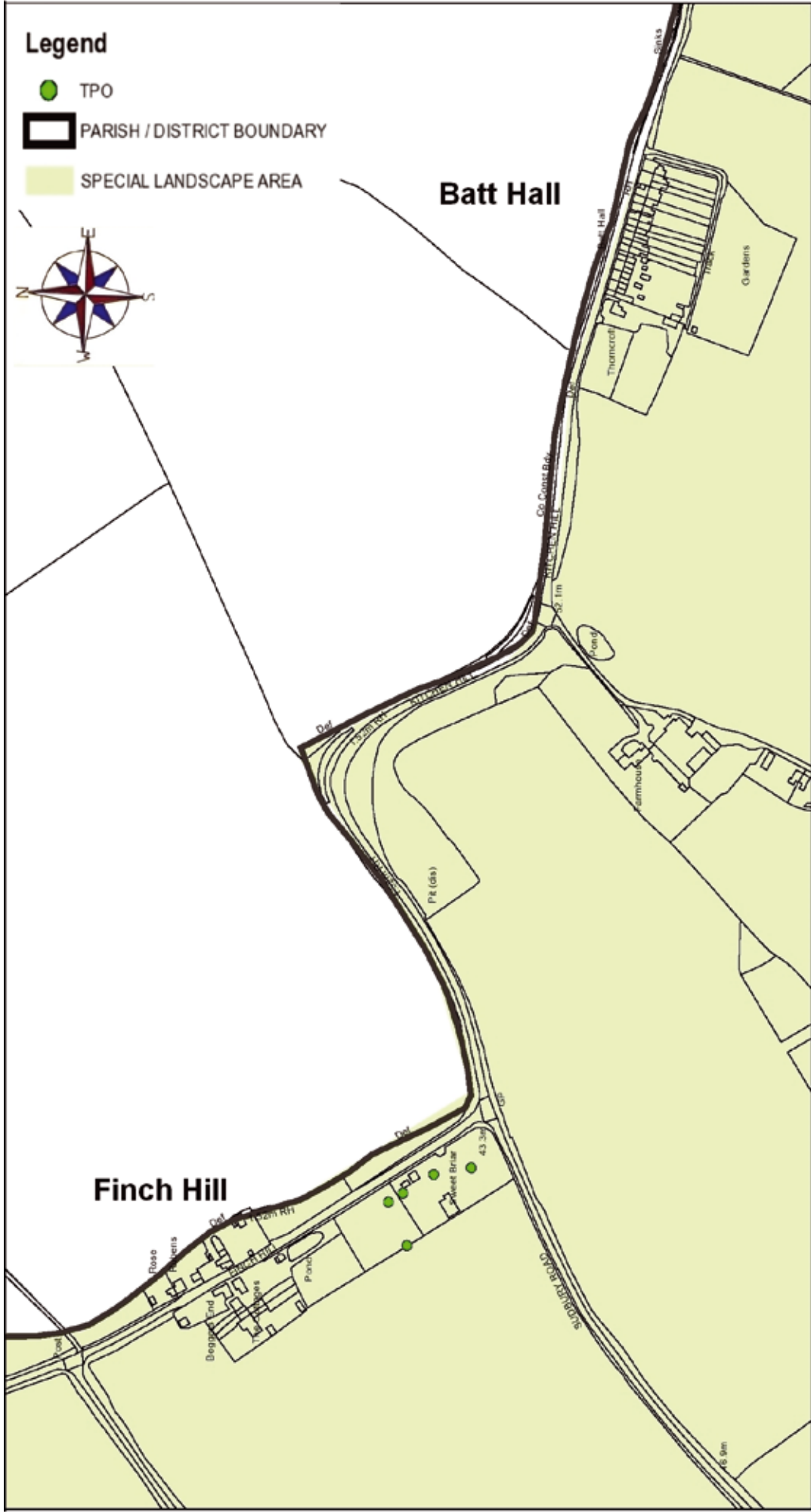


From the top: Cottages built with Bulmer bricks; Hazardous bend in the hamlet of Hedingham Road; Panoramic view from Butlers Hall; Grade II listed Butlers Hall;

To the left: The 1940s Kiln still in use.



Finch Hill and Batt Hall



Scale: 1:2,750

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Finch Hill and Batt Hall

This part of the parish lies not only on the eastern boundary of Bulmer, but also on the county border of Essex and Suffolk, next to Ballingdon and less than a mile from Sudbury.

Finch Hill is a small hamlet of thirteen properties, mainly terraced cottages, sitting on the northeastern edge of Bulmer. When leaving the village Street on the lower Sudbury Road, Finch Hill is a turning on the left leading to Bardfield bridge, The Belchamps and the back lane to Long Melford. It meets the far end of Smeetham Hall Lane. There are panoramic views all around. A narrow country lane, it is without footpaths. Plenty of hedging protects the properties close to the road. The fabric of the dwellings includes slate and tiled roofs, pebbledash, painted render, brick and weather boarding, and they are surrounded by arable farmland.

Batt Hall is on the Sudbury Road which has an unrestricted speed limit and is the main thoroughfare from Sudbury to Bulmer and beyond to Gestingthorpe, the Yeldhams and the Belchamps. The only properties here are one detached property and a terrace of eighteen cottages, all built in brick, some with rendering, under, for the most part, pan-tile roofs. Some of the terrace are traditional 3-storey weaver's cottages. These served the textile industry which was centred on Sudbury, and all stand on the south of the road leading up from Ballingdon, at the foot of Kitchen Hill. The road continues, passing the bottom of Finch Hill, and on to Bulmer Street.

Several of these cottages have now lost their front gardens to parking areas. There is a pavement in front of the terrace. Opposite the cottages is a green bank with views across open fields towards the town of Sudbury. To the rear there are also the open views across the rolling fields of the Auberries estate, with the A131 on the skyline leading from Ballingdon Hill to Bulmer Tye.

At the top of Kitchen Hill is a small pond with an unmade private lane leading first to the early 1900s farmhouse of Kitchen Farm (formerly part of the Auberries estate), past a fine set of Victorian farm buildings and on to a pair of semi-detached cottages.

From this lane there are significant views looking northeast across the 'Water Meadows' and the town of Sudbury and beyond.

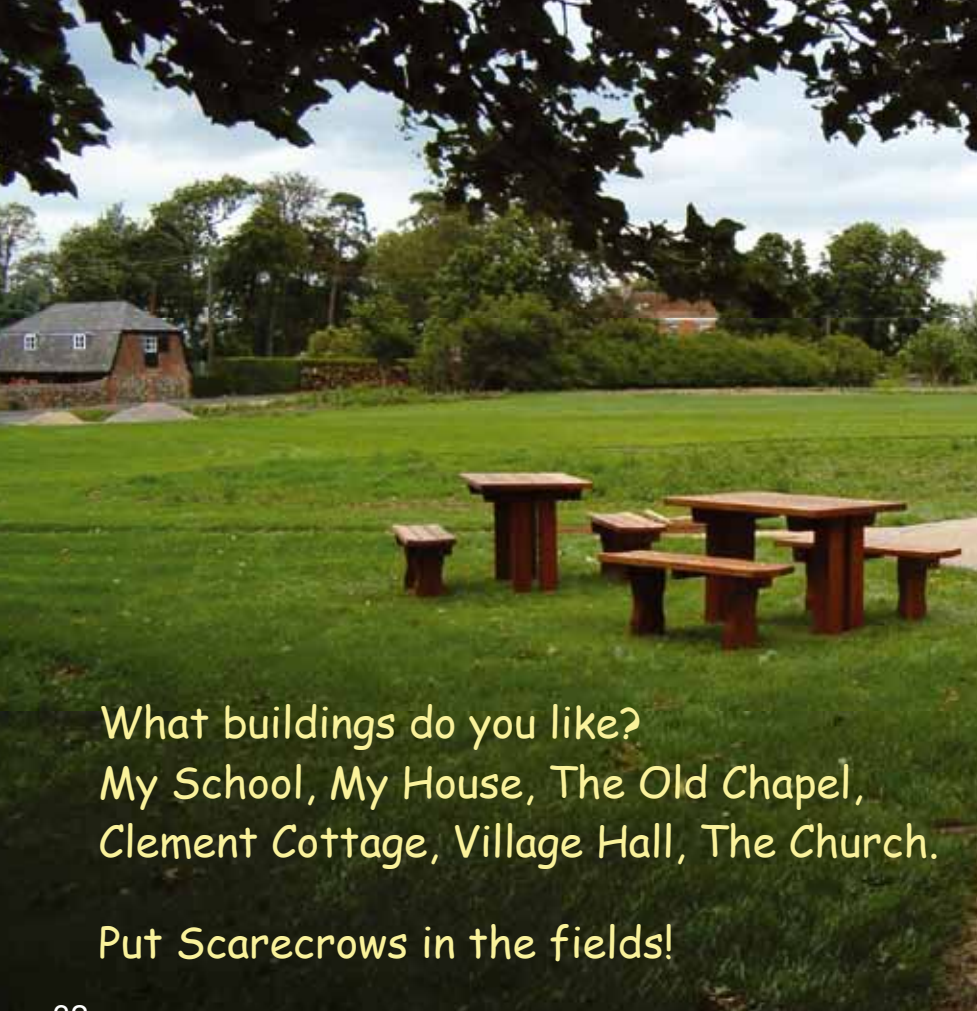


From top: Finch Hill; Batt Hall cottages; Kitchen Farm; Sudbury viewed from Kitchen Hill.

SOME PICTURES AND COMMENTS FROM OUR YOUNGER RESIDENTS



Don't build lots of houses that would ruin the village.
A safe cycle path.
More buses to and from Heddingham.
Village Shop.
Residents parking for St. Andrews Rise.



What buildings do you like?
My School, My House, The Old Chapel,
Clement Cottage, Village Hall, The Church.
Put Scarecrows in the fields!



Libby Conner Aged 9



Sian Evans Aged 8



Sam Ponty Aged 8



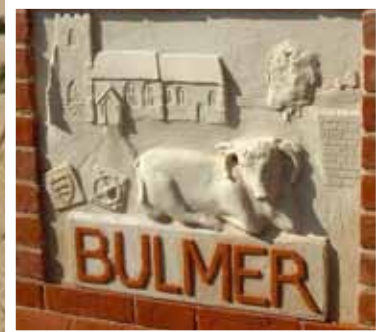
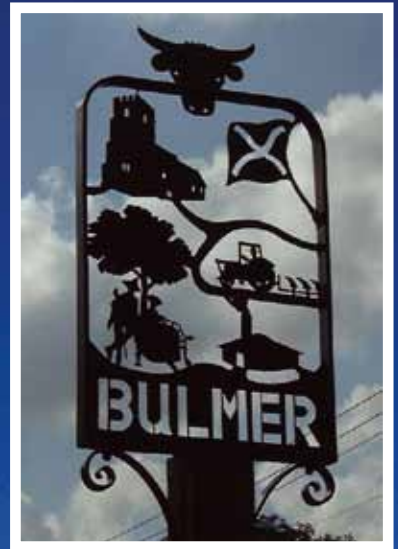
Robert Kinqe Aged 8½



Sian Evans Aged 8

Acknowledgements

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- To all who responded to the questionnaire, attended the photographic day and the exhibition
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Bulmer's Flora and Fauna

By Peter Rowe



For a relatively intensively farmed area, Bulmer still retains a wide diversity of native flora and fauna. Although much depleted since Joseph Andrew's day (see page 8) the flora still boasts species rare to north Essex. As an example, the chalk loving Dwarf Thistle, Rock Rose and Salad Burnet all grow on a steep meadow running down to Belchamp Brook. There are but a couple of records for these plants in Tarpey & Heath's "Wild Flowers of N E Essex" (1990) Elsewhere, ancient woods, hedgerows, conservation margins around fields, roadside verges and even gardens, support a huge variety of native plants. These in turn sustain a myriad of invertebrates: beetles, bees, butterflies, moths, etc. These all have their place in the intricate web of biodiversity, providing food for species higher up the food chain.

Larger mammals are well represented, with Brown Hare and Fox, maintaining their numbers, whilst Badger, Muntjac, Roe and Fallow Deer are on the increase.

Birds fare rather less well, with migrants such as Willow Warbler, House Martin, Swallow, Cuckoo and Turtle Dove having suffered a steady decline over the past years. Many others appear in smaller numbers than in the not too distant past, but are now more stable. Like some of the birds, amphibians have also suffered a drop in numbers of late, especially frogs and toads, hopefully they will recover with time.

Provided that the present wildlife friendly habitats are maintained, we can be reasonably optimistic for the future of Bulmer's wildlife.

A final word from one of Bulmer's younger residents



Harriet Fraser Aged 6

"I like the village as it is!"

A quote taken from the children's questionnaire

'Its beauty lies in the organic mix of housing; in its location; definitely rural yet within a stones' throw of Sudbury meeting all my shopping needs. Of course Bulmer could do with a tidy-up – a few less road signs and scruffy verges – but let's be grateful for what we have and focus on bolstering the community spirit not the housing stock'

A comment from the questionnaire

