

Background

Changes in the village and the accompanying increases in population have impacted on the demand for and development of the Infrastructure of the village. As the process was gradual and rather haphazard the necessary infrastructure to support this development was also rather piecemeal.

The Parish and village sits on top of the North Downs and the Parish runs down the escarpment face as far as the A25 in the south. In 1086 according to the Domesday Book there were 14 dwellings and the residents were in mainly rural occupations supporting local landowner estates. Very slow development took place over the next hundred years:

1841 census - 29 houses and 172 population;

1891 census – 81 houses and 380 population. (About this time parcels of land from large estates were sold for residential development.)

By the first quarter 1900s the population was more than 800. There were significant increases between two World Wars: Rag Hill council cottages in 1924, Lusted Hall Lane South in 1926 and North in 1930.

Then mainly individual houses until 1960s: The Square (1958), Shipfield Close (1967), Crossways Court (1974), and Wedgewoods Yard (1984), Verne Place (2004), The Copse (2005), Gresham Close and Bassetts(2011)

This pattern of piecemeal development on both hard surface and unmade roads obviously complied with all planning and highways regulations but has in some cases caused significant concerns of over-stretching drainage and parking provision.

Services:

- **Electricity** – Village centre mainly on mains electricity by 1930s, outlying parts by 1950s. Electrical services to households are supplied by overhead power cables which are however vulnerable to storm damage.
- **Gas** –Despite Biggin Hill plans for mains gas as early as 1928 and gas supply pipes running through the Parish Tatsfield was not connected until 1991. There are still some houses not connected to mains gas as their location influenced the cost of connection.
- **Mains Water/ Drainage** – In 1956 no mains drainage. Some dwellings still use cesspits.
- **Run Off Water/ Storm drains/ Gulleys & Soakaways** –

Whilst the village centre is quite high there are some steep slopes and valleys running mainly north/south. This creates significant problems in some places with surface water runoff, which leads to below surface undercutting and collapse of pipes and flooding for homes at lower levels.

Experience of neighbouring Caterham-on-the-Hill shows new development without strategic drainage plans can result in flooding from out-of-date/ insufficient drainage provision.

- **Street Lights**

Limited coverage mainly the Defined village, including School, shops, social centres for safety and ease of walking (winter/ night time). Contrary arguments on the levels of street lighting (maintaining rural environment v more suburban expectations) (Currently off 1.00 – 5.00am).

- **Broadband/ Mobile phone coverage** Very varied service dependent on distance from BT 'green box' / generally does not match promised speeds. Virgin not willing to service some areas. New 5G may affect reception.

- **Telephone – In 1907 - 5 subscribers to telephone service!!**
- **Access: Roads – made-up / unmade – adopted / unadopted – verges**

Mix of hard surfaced (Ricketts Hill Road, Church Lane, Clarks Lane, Clacket Lane, A25, Approach Road, Lusted Hall Lane, ½ Westmore Road, ½ Crossways, ½ Paynesfield Road) and unmade roads is a unique characteristic of the village.

56% of houses are on unmade roads.

Adopted Roads the responsibility of SCC Highways Dept. (also gulleys and verges)

Bridleways maintained to match status (for horses?)

1910 part Westmore Road, part Paynesfield Road, part Crossways

1929 Ricketts Hill Road, Church Lane, Ship Hill,

Property deeds usually explicit about maintenance of road outside property, but who enforces?
- **Pavements – not on unmade roads/ complaints re overgrown hedges where there are pavements – enforcement through SCC**
- **Transport – buses/ cars**

Public Transport – Between 1863 and 1900 eight schemes proposed bringing a railway through parish, (last one proposed a station actually in village centre, near site of current Village Hall). Westerham Valley single track branch line -Westerham Station opened in 1881 and closed 1961 (probably overtaken by plans for M25) .

In 1913 a weekly private bus service to Bromley and Croydon. The first proper bus service to enter the village in 1926 but withdrawn due to low usage. 1934 Green Line served the village, took just over an hour to reach London. A series of bus services started and suspended in 70's, 80's and 90's mainly running west. In 1998 impending Croydon Tram service and start of 464 route

2013 Appraisal – “Only 50 people (9.6%) use the bus as their main means of transport to their place of employment. However, 264 people use the 464 bus, at least occasionally and 60 people the 595 bus. Of these the majority consider the route timetable and reliability of the 464 bus to be good and the vast majority consider these aspects to be good or reasonable. Slightly more than half find the cost good. It is not clear to what extent this reflects the use of bus passes. Access for those with disabilities is also good or reasonable according to those that commented. Indeed ranking of “poor” for any aspects of the 464 bus was made by only a small proportion of users. In contrast to the favourable responses concerning the 464 service, the 595 bus scores relatively poorly for route, with only 34 out of 60 people considering it to be good.”

Cars - 2013 Appraisal - 294 Tatsfield households responded to this question, reported the ownership of 590 vehicles equating to an average of 2.01 cars per household and there are no records of households without cars but presumably the 26 other households that did not answer this question have no cars at all.
- **Parking / Speedwatch / Speed limits**

2013 Appraisal - “55.7% of responses who had an issue with parking mention Westmore Road as a problem area for parking, 40.4% mention the shops and another 21.6% Paynesfield Road but 85.9% have no problems with parking. It is certainly true that the area near the shops and the top of Westmore Road becomes crowded with parked cars when schoolchildren are being dropped off or collected. Whilst some people have criticised the school for its limited number of parking spaces, this was a central government policy to encourage more people to use sustainable forms of transport. Approximately 50% of pupils come from outside Tatsfield Village and the majority of these pupils are driven to school by car whilst the majority of Tatsfield children walk. The Paynesfield Road problem is partially caused by cars being serviced and repaired at Tatsfield Garage **but** the garage is a valuable service for many village residents.

New developments create problems on junction Paynesfield Road/ Johns Road/ Crossways.
Also on Junction Westmore Road and Crossways.

Respondents comment on parking near junctions, particularly Westmore and Paynesfield Roads and Redhouse and Westmore roads, causing obstruction of the view for drivers. Also mentioned are parking on both sides of the road, restricting access and exiting from driveways, and parking on pavements and across dropped pavements, making things difficult for pedestrians and particularly the disabled. Solutions suggested included yellow lines around the centre of the village and permitted parking only on one side of Westmore and Paynesfield Roads and even a one way system round these two roads. More draconian solutions suggested are fines, more policing, permits for commercial vehicles and reversion to the old traffic system in the centre of the village.”

SWOT Framework

<p>Strengths - positive attributes internal to the situation that are within your control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated village high on the N Downs with steep narrow access roads, discourages large scale / inappropriate development. • 464 bus service to Biggin Hill, Croydon, on to Bromley, London. • Locally based taxi service and Buses 4U • Good internet access for most homes particularly in village centre, patchy in other places. • Unmade roads deter 'cut throughs' and excessive speed • Community response 'fills in' if external provision falls short e.g. Helpline, 1st responder • Limited street lighting supports rural identity & green agenda (turn off at 1.30am consistent with rural identity) • Location could support wind turbines. • Public right of way / footpath / cycleway / bridleway network linking to AONB? 	<p>* Weaknesses - factors within your control that may impede your ability to meet your objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location high on the North Downs in the snow belt can result in the village being cut off. Narrow/ unmade roads. • Mobile phone / broadband coverage unreliable • Some homes still on cesspool drainage • Large number of unmade, unadopted roads require constant repair by residents. • Overhead power and telephone lines are vulnerable to damage during storms • Insufficient street lighting (off 1-5am) • Inadequate infrastructure prevents any large-scale housing development. • Narrow roads, homes with no off street parking result in road congestion at peak times. • Unmade roads inaccessible for elderly/ disabled • Bus service to the south (Oxted & Westerham very poor) • Bus service to train stations poor. • Parking on all roads getting worse.
<p>Opportunities - external factors that the project should (or could) develop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any significant increase in the number of homes built in the village should be conditional on significant investment in roads and infrastructure by the authorities or the developer. • Opportunity to do something for cyclists- e.g. – secure bike park near the bakery/ pub to encourage cyclists to stop and spend money in the village. • Ensure all applications for extensions/ new builds include adequate off-street parking. • Improved public transport links – i.e. bus service to Sainsbury at Chelsham. • Install car charging point in Village centre. • Signage re limited access on unmade roads • Flashing school signs • Improvement in roads / footways / cycleway • New village car park • Improved links to countryside beyond village? 	<p>Threats - external factors beyond your control that could place the project at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development without significant investment in roads and infrastructure, would overload current services • Development without adequate parking provision would make problem worse. • Increased numbers of large vehicles associated with new developments • Increased congestion of new development could have an adverse impact on public/highway safety

***Issues to be addressed in Neighbourhood Plan:**

- **The Parish Council should use all efforts to improve mobile phone coverage and broadband speed and reliability. This would include looking favourably at applications for Phone 'masts' and further broadband infrastructure.**
- **Any planning applications should have considered and taken steps to minimise detrimental effects on existing services, run-off drainage and on street parking.**
- **Proposals that may potentially improve transport links to areas outside the village should be actively promoted. Improving local transport.**
- **Enforcement of 106 undertakings to offset impact on adjacent road networks.**
- **Any new developments should have sufficient but not intrusive street lighting provision.**