



What do you want Lamberhurst to look like in 15 years time?

Visioning Workshop 27th September 2018 Report

Introduction

This workshop was organised by the Lamberhurst Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) as the next step in the Neighbourhood Plan process. Approximately sixty residents attended, viewed the results exhibition, listened to a presentation of the household questionnaire results (see Appendix A) and then took part in two workshop sessions to develop a series of Visions and Objectives to be included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The results of the household questionnaire had been circulated previously to every household (see Appendix B). This report summarises the key results from the

What do we mean by a vision?

‘Spatial planning is also called ‘place shaping’ and has a wider focus than traditional land-use planning. It’s about identifying a vision for the future of a place which responds to local needs and circumstances, including community views, and is based on evidence. This vision is translated into priorities, policies and [optionally for NPs] the identification of land for development.’

Guide to Neighbourhood Planning, CPRE / NALC 2011

questionnaire, the workshop process and the results.

Presentation

Graham White, Chair of the NPSG started his presentation by setting out the aims of the workshop:

‘To discuss, identify and agree a “Vision” for our Parish for the planning period covered by the Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018-33) or ‘What would do we want Lamberhurst to look like in 15 years’ time:

- A gated community?
- A new town serving London?
- A leisure resort?
- Something else?

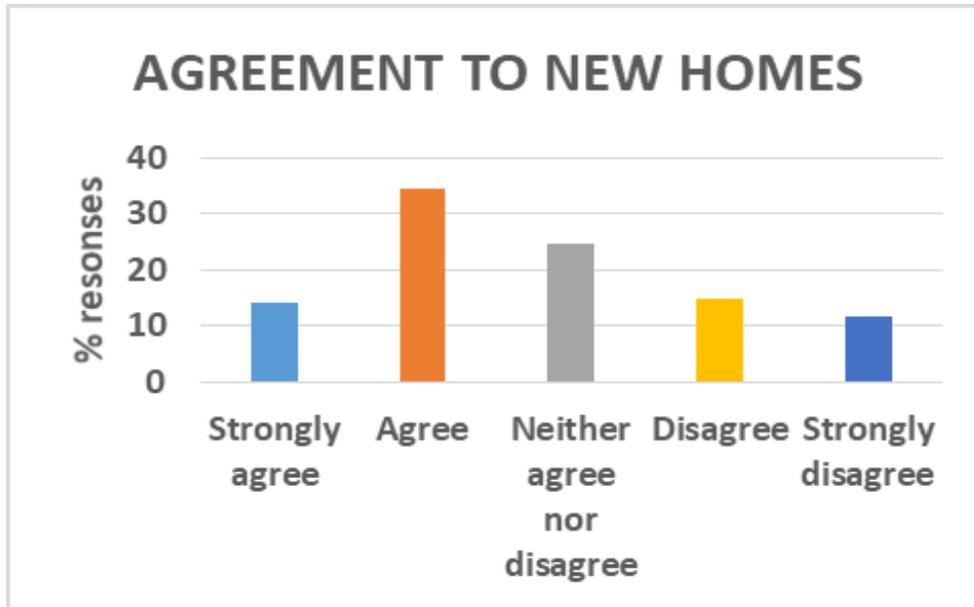
Also, to identify the objectives we need to set and be measured by to achieve our agreed Vision, covering:

- Housing and Design
- Traffic and the Economy
- Landscape and the Community.....IN OTHER WORDS HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

There were 330 questionnaires returned or a 46% response rate from a representative cross-section of the parish including from Hook Green, Lamberhurst Quarter, Down and Slade and the outskirts as well as Lamberhurst village itself.



Agreement to new homes



Nearly half of respondents (48%) strongly agreed / agreed to new homes with 27% neither agreeing or disagreeing and 25% disagree / strongly disagree with a strong preference for up to 60 new homes in the next fifteen years. The types of new homes needed were:

- Majority agreement to need for smaller homes and flats, social housing for rent and retirement.
- General agreement to build affordable housing for people with local connections and modest incomes.
- Parishioners, in general felt housing development should be through a range of small-scale developments
- Suggests mixed low-density small development may be the best way forward

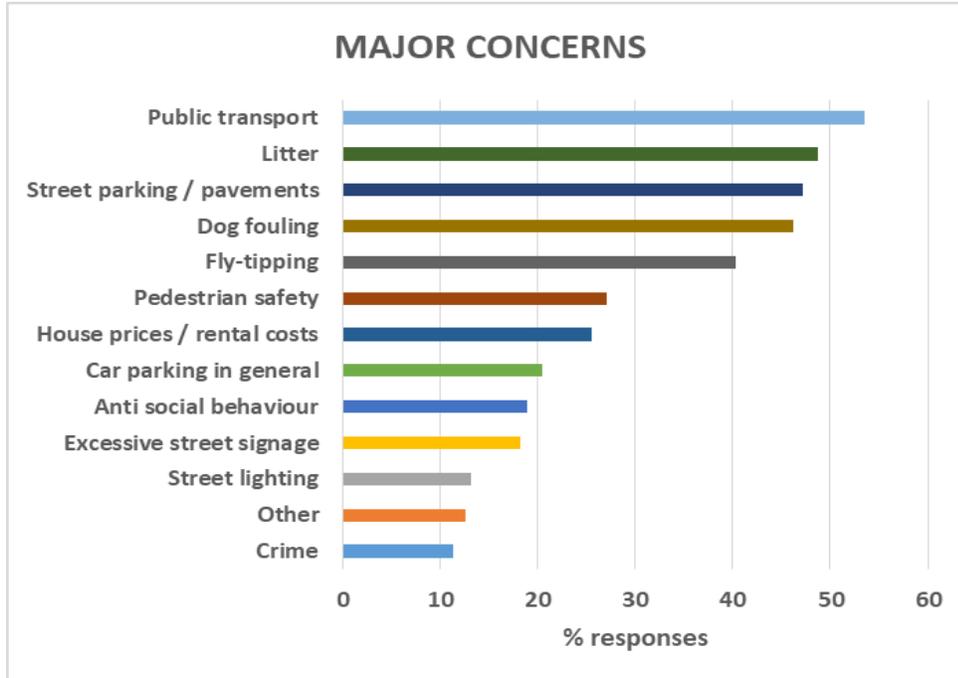
Design

There was very broad agreement to the design criteria detailed in the questionnaire and that development should be:

- Sympathetic to its surroundings
- Landscaping should be in harmony with surrounding area
- Adequate parking is provided
- Dark skies are important
- The size and mix of buildings are important
- Infill development should respect/maintain space between existing housing
- Provide adequate external amenity space for refuse and recycling storage.



Major concerns

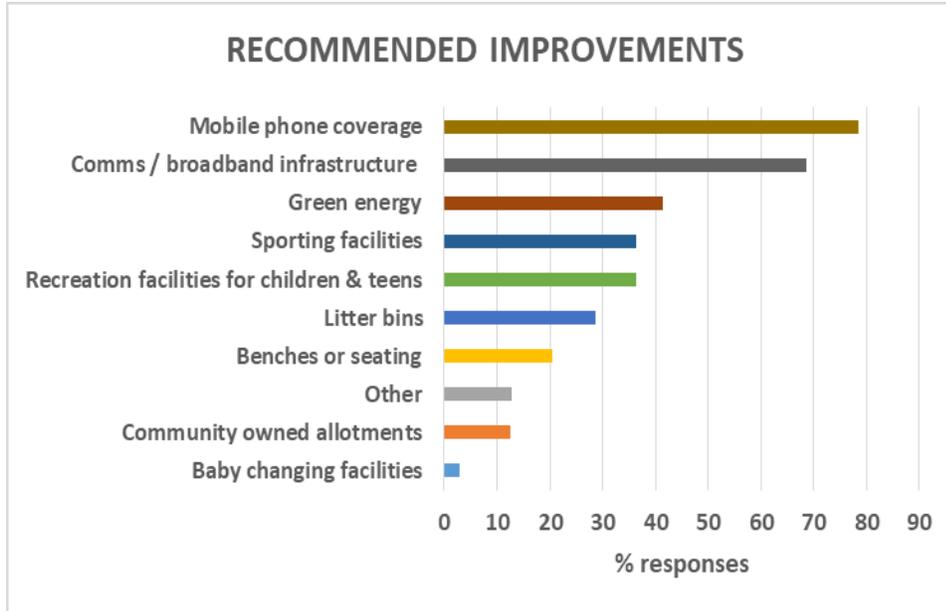


Some concerns raised by residents will be challenging to address such as public transport now that public subsidies to bus services are being reduced. Others such as litter and dog fouling are arguably down to the behaviour of individuals. However, nearly all can be addressed in part or in full in new developments by locally agreed planning policies, better design or by awareness raising and changing behaviour. For example house and rental costs can be addressed by making provision in the Neighbourhood Plan for affordable housing in new developments, and addressing car parking problems by ensuring that planning permission isn't given if adequate provision for parking isn't included in planning applications. Similarly, pedestrian safety can be addressed through careful siting of new development and / or the requirement to make contributions to help tackle existing problem areas.



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Recommended improvements



Recommended Improvements are harder to address but developers of new housing or businesses can be required to contribute towards improvements by the Neighbourhood Plan as well as ensuring that provision of play areas, benches or litter bins is commensurate with the size of the development.

Residents' comments

Lastly a number of direct quotations from residents responding the questionnaire were shown:

- "I am in favour of planned development within Lamberhurst, Village we have to constantly evolve to survive. And it will hopefully benefit the local businesses and school. Any development must be generous with parking or the village will become choked with cars, added to which it can cause huge disaster"
- "I strongly believe that new builds should show the character of local architecture"
- "This plan is vital to the village. We need to accept new housing, but we need to manage the sites so we protect the environment and wildlife. Unless we do we risk damaging the spirit and community of our village."
- "I would love to see some 2-3 bedroom affordable houses for sale"
- "I think development could be a good thing if local buildings are used and its done in a style sympathetic local style. The extra population would mean the shop/church etc would be much more viable"
- "More needs to be done to help older people who want to stay in the village and be close to their families"
- "....I value village life, the environment and biodiversity the village offers"
- "We enjoy living in Lamberhurst as it is presently"



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- “We have a beautiful village that could benefit from sympathetic expansion retaining the character, views, community, architecture and wildlife. New blood and commerce should be encouraged but Social Housing should be included.....”

Workshops

The next sessions were introduced by Jim Boot, a community planning consultant who has been engaged by the parish council to advise the NPSG. Examples of visions from other similarly sized communities were shared, including from near neighbour Goudhurst who are just about to go out for

Goudhurst's Vision

Our Parish in 2033 will be a vibrant neighbourhood, containing hilltop settlements that are safe, balanced communities, with sustainable housing standards, good local services, business opportunities, managed traffic and walkable roads – a neighbourhood that supports change and development yet remains quiet and unspoilt.

consultation on their draft plan:

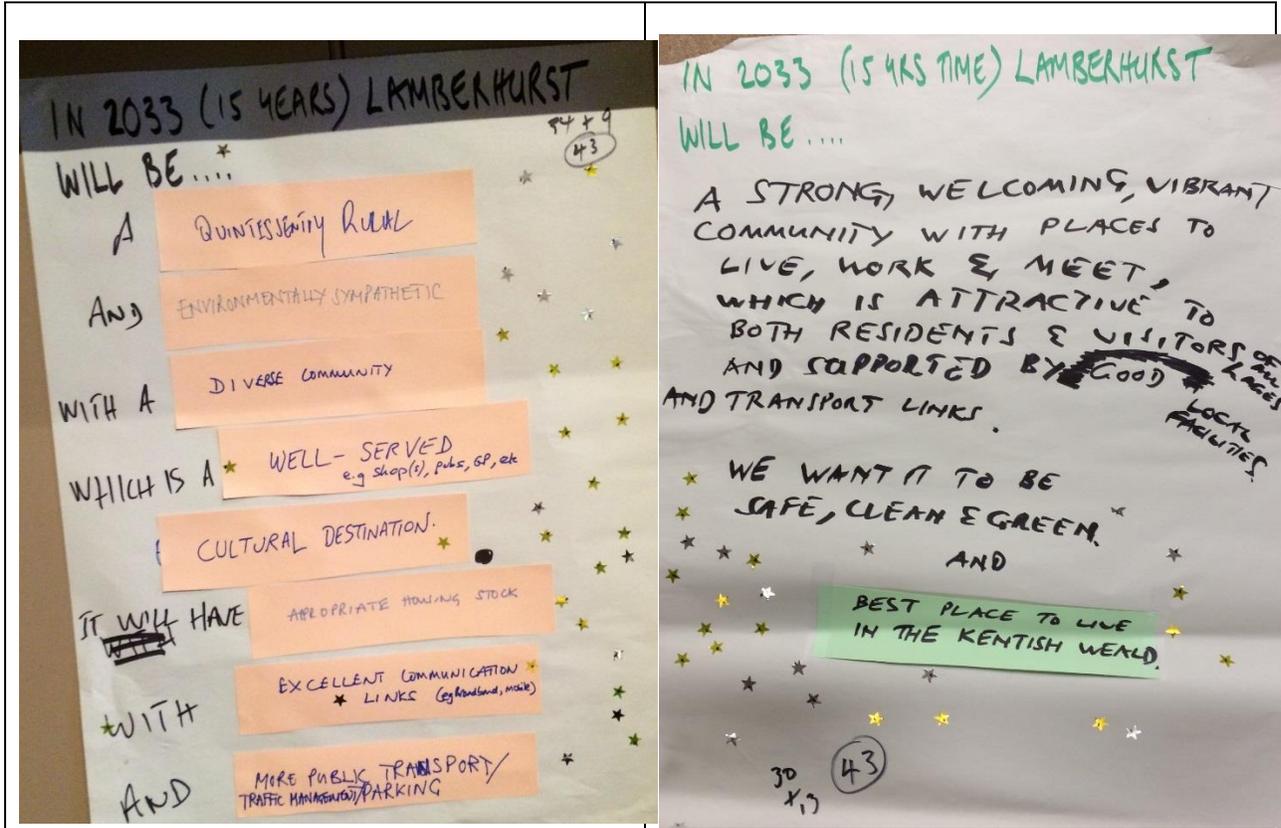
The audience were seated at tables in groups of 8-10. The exercise was:

1. Each table to answer the question: “What do you want Lamberhurst to look like in 15 years time?”
2. Write down key words or phrases that would describe your ideal Lamberhurst in 2033?
3. Then using these key words or phrases, try and create a sentence or short paragraph describing your ‘vision’ Lamberhurst in 2033 by arranging the key words or phrase onto a blank flip-sheet.
4. Write in ‘link’ words.
5. When you’ve written your vision, glue to the sheet and hang on the wall nearest your table.

Following this exercise, everyone was given a gold (1st choice) and a silver (2nd choice) star to ‘vote’ on their preferred vision. Two visions ‘drew’ first place. All of the visions will be used to make up a composite / ideal vision for inclusion in the draft.



Visions



These two visions each scored 43 points (gold = 2 points and silver = 1 point). They are:

In 2033 (15 years) Lamberhurst will be [a] quintessentially rural and environmentally sympathetic with a diverse community which is well served [by] shops, pubs, GP [surgery] etc. [A] cultural destination, it will have appropriate housing stock, excellent communication links (eg broadband, mobile) and more public transport, traffic management [and] parking.

or

In 2033 (15 years) Lamberhurst will be a strong, welcoming, vibrant community with places to live, work and meet, which is both attractive to both residents and visitors of all ages and supported by good local facilities and transport links. We want it to be safe, clean and green and the best place to live in the Kentish Weald.



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Other visions

IN 2033 (15 YEARS) LAMBERTHURST WILL BE

24 + 10
34

Culture Learning Education and Knowledge for all ages
Vibrant
Healthcare facilities

1 A Growing + inclusive Community.

2 Maintains the character of the village.

A caring + peaceful village.

Supporting modern business needs - shared services - hubs

A vibrant high street.

A PLACE PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE IN.

Care Homes for older population with facilities.

IN 2033 (15 YRS) LAMBERTHURST WILL BE

VIBRANT + VILLAGE COHESIVE

County Village

Which RETAINS

Rural environments

LOCAL SHOPS - DECENT

PLAYING FIELDS + COMMUNITY CENTRE

HISTORIC ASPECTS - MAINTAIN

Village Hall -- Support it!

RURAL OUTLOOK NO RIBBON DEVELOPMENT

10 + 10
20

More Footpaths Links

More Cafe Parks

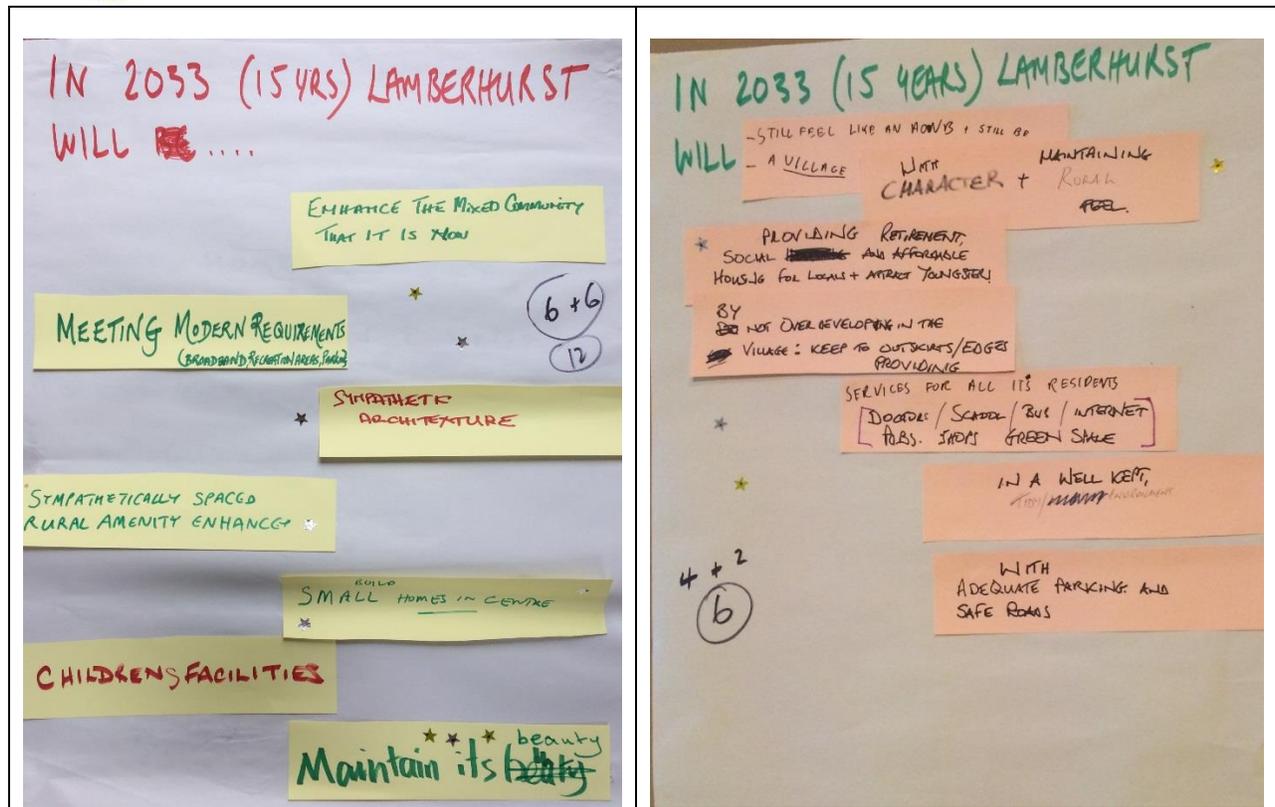
Walking + Cycling routes WITHIN THE VILLAGE.

Revitalize Local Shops - Keep Community as a Community

Where are houses to be built in parish? Remaining shops - important to keep open + support



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The next exercise aimed to identify key objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan. 'How to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan' states: 'Objectives are more specific and set out what the Neighbourhood Plan aims to achieve.'

The instructions to participants were:

1. Answer the question for your theme: "How did you achieve the vision?"
2. This time in themed tables (using the same themes as the sub-groups ie Design and Character, Environment and greenspaces, Transport and economy) write down the key words or phrases for your theme that helped achieve the preferred vision.
3. Once again arrange these on the flip sheets to make up a sentence or short paragraph for your objective (try and avoid writing a series of bullet points).
4. Write link words using marker pens.

The themes were based on the existing working groups and the objectives are set out below:



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<p style="text-align: center;">Economy</p> <p>INVEST IN IMPROVING COMMUNICATION NETWORK</p> <p>AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOCAL WORKERS</p> <p>MORE SPACE FOR BUSINESSES AND EASIER PLANNING FOR THEM</p> <p>HISTORIC VILLAGE SIGN TO BOOST VISITORS</p> <p>ADVERTISE LOCAL WALKS / BUILDINGS OF INTEREST</p> <p>LAMBERHURST PAMPHLET (IS BETTER THAN GOUDHURST...)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Traffic</p> <p>AVERAGE VARIABLE SPEED CAMERA</p> <p>ABOLISH TRAFFIC CALMING. SPEED MONITOR CAMERAS.</p> <p>LIMITED/TIME PARKING BAYS ROAD NARROWING AT VILLAGE ENTRANCES FLASHING SPEED SIGNS - IF SPEEDING</p> <p>TRAFFIC LIGHTS TRIGGERED BY SPEEDING CARS</p> <p>RE-SITE SOME TRAFFIC CALMING BUILD OUTS</p> <p>REMOVE BUILD OUTS OTHER</p>
<p>Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest in improving communication• Affordable housing for local workers• Make space for businesses and easier planning for them• Historic village sign to boost visitors• Advertise local walks / buildings of interest• Lamberhurst pamphlet (is better than Goudhurst)	<p>Traffic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average speed camera• Abolish traffic calming and speed monitor cameras• Limited time parking bays• Road narrowing at village entrances• Flashing speed signs – if speeding• Traffic lights triggered by speeding cars• Re-site some traffic calming build outs• Remove other build-outs



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<p style="text-align: center;">Design</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUILDINGS IN LOCAL VERNACULAR</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sympathetic materials (preferably local) in keeping with existing properties</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SCALE OF BUILDINGS IN KEEPING WITH EXISTING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HOUSING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">USE OF TRADITIONAL LOCAL DESIGNS WHEREVER APPROPRIATE POSSIBLE.</p> <p>TPO's on Veteran & Ancient Trees. Retention of hedgerows & green spaces DARK SKIES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NEW BUILDS MUST HAVE SOFT VERGES AND NATURAL LIVING BOUNDARIES WITH TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Community</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 - SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY ASSETS.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 - INCREASE CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY HALL + FC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 - INCREASE ACTIVITIES & FACILITIES FOR</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4 - SUSTAIN AND GROW COMMUNITY GROUPS BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE FACILITIES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5 - EXPAND THE RANGE OF COMMON INTEREST GROUPS - AND SUPPORT THEIR GROWTH & INVOLVEMENT WITH APPROPRIATE FACILITIES ie. Memorial & Playing Field</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6 - PROVIDE SUFFICIENT CAPACITY IN LOCAL SCHOOL FOR GROWING POPULATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 - Tap into communities ie Scotney school, church</p>
<p>Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings in local vernacular • Sympathetic materials (preferably local) in keeping with existing properties • Scale of buildings in keeping with existing • Environmentally friendly housing • Use of traditional local designs wherever possible • TPOs on veteran and ancient trees • Retention of hedgerows and greenspaces • Dark skies • New builds must have soft verges and natural lines with traditional, living boundaries 	<p>Community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustain and enhance community assets 2. Expand the range of common interest groups and support their growth and involvement with appropriate facilities ie Memorial Hall and Playing Field 3. Tap into communities ie Scotney, school and church 4. Sustain and grow community groups by providing appropriate facilities 5. Increase activities and facilities 6. Increase capacity of community hall and facilities 7. Provide sufficient capacity in local school for growing population



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Housing

- Social housing to be kept available for rent ie no right to buy
- No barriers between communities
- Social housing – local nomination rights
- Build along sides of roads and not in estates
- Housing to avoid large estates but develop in small areas / small developments (not estates) designed to suit environment
- Good parking facilities / ensure it has adequate parking provision
- Space for home working
- Ultra modern green housing to bring a new dimension rather than replicating the old
- Flexible adaptable housing to enable your home to be viable

Landscape

- List preferred views eg from Church Yard across valley, from top of school hill down to village, up Spray Hill from village
- Plant lots of trees and shrubs – evergreen and deciduous
- Planting hedges and native trees to enhance wildlife
- Maintain common land
- Ensure that all new development is properly landscaped and screened
- Roadside verges managed as meadows to preserve meadow habitat
- Preserve mediaeval character of existing landscape
- Develop management plans to create areas of conservation value



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through all stages of your life	
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Conclusion

The two front-runner visions are both excellent and have quite a bit in common. It is fair to say that some of the objectives have worked better than others. The traffic objective tends to focus on rectifying what some may consider the mistakes of the past. However, these can be worked on further by the steering group using the results of the questionnaire and other evidence gathering. However, these will give a strong steer to the working groups in developing the relevant chapters for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. In the meantime, the visions and objectives will be subject to further discussion and refining at the next series of workshops, which will dig deeper into the issues and consider options for future development and community projects:

- **Housing and Design** 1st November Memorial Hall, Lamberhurst
- **Traffic and Economy** 8th November Elephants Head, Hook Green
- **Landscape and Community** 15th November The Chequers, Lamberhurst

Doors open at 19.30 and workshop starts at 20.00

Acknowledgements

Lamberhurst Parish Council and its advisors would like to thank the steering group for arranging the workshop and further thank those residents who gave up their Thursday evening to take part. We look forward to seeing you again on 1st November for the Housing and Design Workshop back at the Memorial Hall. We would also like to thank the Trustees of the Memorial Hall for hosting the event.