

Folkestone and Hythe District Council Heritage Strategy Consultation

Lyminge Parish Council response

Introduction:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#32bc3c85-b29a-46f9-a658-dae0c17a01d8>

The Parish Council supports the service ambitions set out and agrees that the heritage of the district is widely important.

Vision:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#741029ab-15ca-4d80-bb92-cbe5bbd912c5>

Nothing to add.

Policy Background:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#105831f8-76f4-4c8b-95d5-236c5f8f59e1>

Nothing to add.

The District's Rich Heritage:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#a095f802-d205-4bd1-9416-3dc26dcd9c75>

1. Defensive Heritage: Nothing to add
2. Maritime Heritage: Nothing to add
3. Leisure Heritage: Nothing to add
4. Transport Heritage:

Stagecoach route:

The old stagecoach route travelled through Lyminge parish during the 1700s to the mid 1800s and was the main way that people and post travelled long distances. Lyminge served as an important midpoint between the coast and inland Kent where horses could be changed and passengers refreshed. Coaches would travel from Folkestone and stop at Etchinghill, Lyminge, Elham, Barham and Canterbury. Evidence of the important stagecoach route still exists in the form of the Coach and Horses pub (Lyminge) and The Gatekeeper Inn (originally The New Inn).

The stagecoach route was paramount in giving Lyminge parish an economic boost including inns, blacksmiths and acting as part of the turnpike and mail coach network. Later, the Elham Valley Railway paralleled the routes to continue the need for consistent inland travel.

Elham Valley Railway:

The Elham Valley Railway had an important impact on Lyminge and the surrounding areas, socially, economically and militarily. The life of the Elham Valley Railway was short lived due to World War II however it opened in 1887 and connected Folkestone and Canterbury via villages including Lyminge, Elham and Barham.

Even with the stagecoach route, before the railway Lyminge was isolated. The introduction of a railway brought new connectivity to the port at Folkestone and the Canterbury Cathedral. Goods and people were more accessible and this allowed the population to grow.

Improved connectivity allowed farmers to send produce further afield and allowed businesses better access to supplies and customers. This prompted an economic boom in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

World War II saw the railway occupied by the military due to the inland location and was used primarily for storage, troop movement and a rail-mounted gun. Civilians lost passenger access in 1940 and the railway closed permanently in 1947. The Lyminge station still exists to this day and is used as the parish library. Much of the track was removed after the closure but the route is used regularly as a footpath and cycle trail.

5. Religious Heritage:

Lyminge parish has a rich religious history which would be important to include in any policy or document relating to the heritage of the district.

Early Christianity:

Lyminge has some of the richest religious histories in Kent and played a pivotal role in the early Christianisation of England. The legacy is rooted in Anglo-Saxon royal connections, monastic foundations and worship that spans well over a millennium. Lyminge was founded in the 7th century and is one of the earliest known Christian sites in England. Kentish princess and abbess, St Ethelburga, returned to Lyminge after being widowed and established a Christian monastery in approximately 633 AD. The site was already a royal estate with religious associations. Ethelburga was the daughter of King Ethelbert of Kent who was the first English king to convert to Christianity. The St Mary and St Ethelburga Church in Lyminge stands on the original monastic church and the site has undergone substantial excavations, the findings of which are being featured in a book being worked on by the University of Reading.

Royal Kentish Camino:

The Royal Kentish Camino is a modern pilgrimage route which connects three churches in Canterbury, Lyminge and Folkestone. The route celebrates Kent's Christian routes and royal

history while encouraging walking, reflection and cultural exploration. As a parish we have received vast interest in Christians around the world visiting to complete the pilgrimage.

The religious heritage of Lyminge is arguably the most visible and well known aspect of heritage in the parish and allows people to reconnect with nature, early Christianity and garner a deep connection with historical figures. Lyminge is a spiritual landmark and should be highlighted as such and special significance should be given to the relationship between the parish and St Ethelburga, one of England's first saints and an iconic woman in religious history.

6. Landscape Influences:

The parish council agrees that historic landscapes underpin the character of the district and the parish features many seemingly insignificant landscape influences that are incredibly important to the identity and heritage of the parish and surrounding areas.

Chalk Streams:

While it is mentioned that much of the evidence of ancient movement exists only beneath the ground, Lyminge parish and surrounding areas are still home to increasingly rare chalk streams which date back millions of years in their original form. The actual streams and springs were formed around 10 to 12 thousand years ago.

There are thought to be around 250 chalk streams remaining globally with around 80% in southern England.

Chalk streams are beautiful features, however, their impact on history relates to far more than their aesthetic appeal. Chalk streams have shaped settlement patterns, economic activity and spiritual life spanning thousands of years. The impacts of chalk streams are deeply woven into the parish's natural and cultural heritage

Lyminge has a rich Anglo-Saxon archaeology including a 7th-century royal monastery, it is highly likely the proximity to the chalk stream as a water source was a key reason for selecting the site. In addition to this the chalk stream provided fertile land and natural resources which boosted early agricultural and social development.

The rarity of chalk streams globally also means that the chalk streams in Lyminge parish and surrounding areas are of a high international conservation value supporting species such as brown trout, water voles and mayflies.

Trees:

Trees are often overlooked, however, the trees in Lyminge parish are more than part of the landscape, they are living witnesses to the parish's long and varied history. There are a

multitude of tree types in Lyminge parish however there are several tree types that are more important due to their symbolic, ecological or cultural significance.

Those include:

- Yew Trees which symbolise eternity and resurrection in Christian tradition and are common in ancient churchyards. There is a prominent and very old yew tree in the churchyard of St Mary and Ethelburga Church.
- Beech Trees which feature in Lyminge Forest and are often found in historic woodland.
- Oak Trees which would have historically been used as boundary markers, meeting places or ancient royal hunting grounds.
- Elm Trees which were culturally significant and common around Kent, including hedgerows around Lyminge however they were largely impacted by Dutch elm disease in the mid-20th century.
- "Palm" Trees commonly referred to as "Kent Palms" are not native to the parish but were planted in Victorian times. The parish features rich folklore connecting the trees to Crusader safe houses.
- Hazel and Hornbeam which were key to traditional coppicing in Lyminge Forest and the surrounding areas.
- Ancient Hedgerows still feature in Lyminge parish and most commonly feature hawthorn, blackthorn, spindle and field maple. These hedgerows date back to medieval times and earlier.

Green spaces including village greens:

Green spaces in Lyminge parish are more than just scenic or recreational areas, they are deeply tied to the historical identity, land use and social fabric of the parish. The spaces reflect centuries of change in land ownership, agriculture, community life and spirituality.

In the 7th century, Lyminge was a royal estate and much of the land in the village would have been open pasture, woodland or managed commons and the land would have supported the early Christian settlers both economically and in their use for worship or assembly.

The green spaces in the parish would have been common land and local people would have had rights to graze livestock, gather wood or cut turf. The spaces would also have served as places for market gatherings, livestock fairs or for other community gatherings. Between the 17th and 19th centuries many of these open spaces were impacted by the Enclosure Acts and as such some of the land was retained by the parish or gifted back as public amenities.

Tayne Field is an incredibly important green space in Lyminge and is the home to substantial archaeological remains that date back to the 7th century. Tayne Field is more than a green space, it is a sacred and royal ground that was once the political heart of the kingdom of Kent.

The District's Settlements:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#38226758-2a35-49e9-b70a-1d331e62511d>

Nothing to add.

Definition of a Heritage Asset

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#18efd52c-a851-47f6-9280-8e40231ddab0>

Nothing to add.

Introduction to the themes:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#390c0d33-23de-46f4-884a-9ad91776a056>

Nothing to add.

Opportunities - Making the most of the district's heritage:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#4f63d29a-e229-4853-8c06-b0b2afaaef9d>

Nothing to add.

Vulnerability of Heritage Assets

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#e88304b0-aa28-4bb0-b73f-b7912f462ee9>

Nothing to add.

Taking the FHDC Heritage Strategy forward:

<https://placemaker.folkestone-hythe.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/6#14326b5b-121e-452b-95ed-bd16343177a6>

Nothing to add.