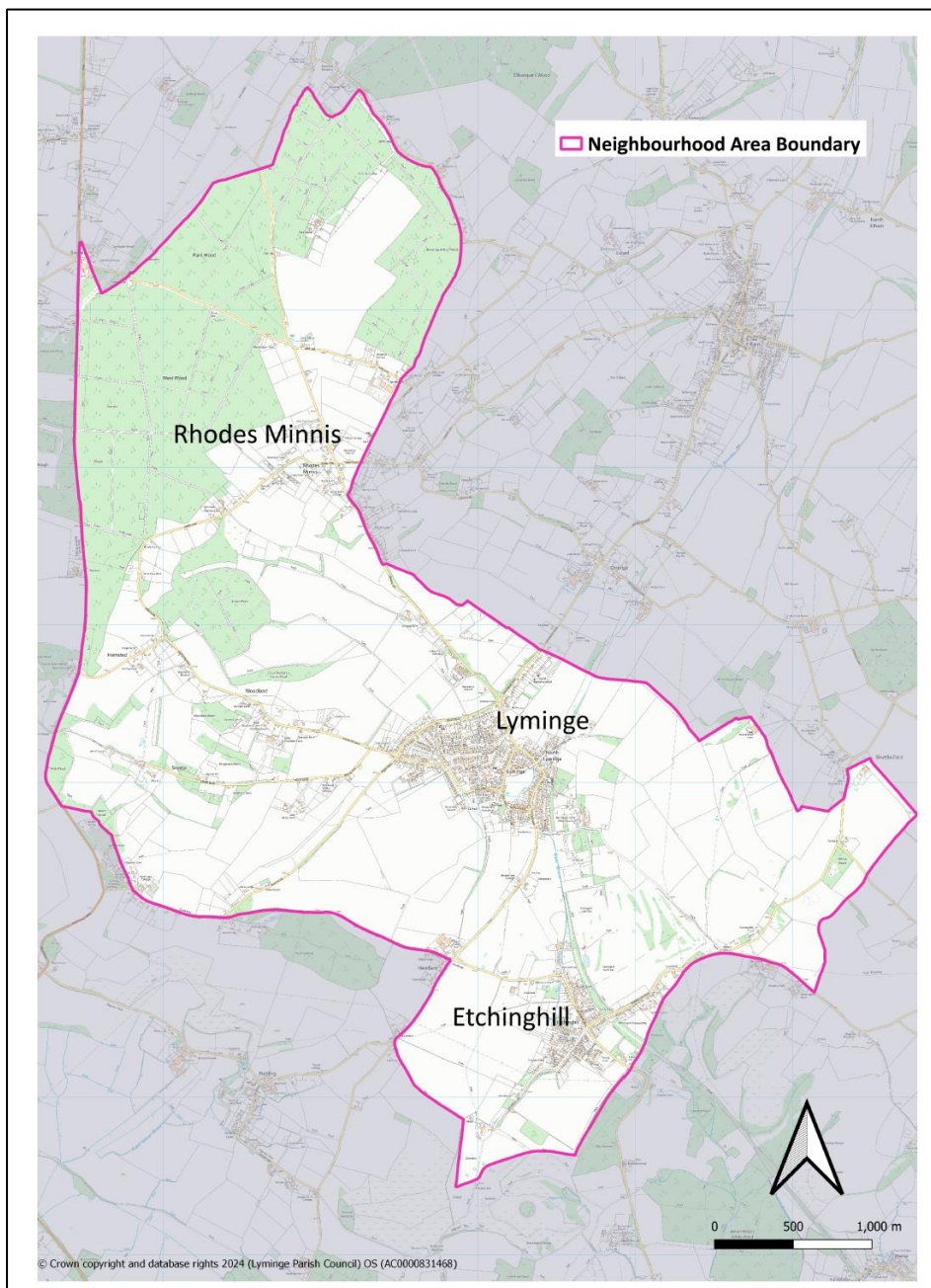


Lyminge Neighbourhood Plan

Looking to the Future – Drop in Day Report

Lyminge Parish Council

February 2024



Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Vision and Objectives	4
3. Housing, Character and Design Theme	6
Types of homes	6
Design and character	6
Sustainable design	6
4. Community facilities.....	7
5. Movement.....	8
Areas where footpaths can be improved	8
Bridleways.....	10
Public transport.....	10
Roads.....	10
6. Environment – Natural and Built.....	11
Preserving local heritage.....	11
Local Views and viewpoints	12
Flooding.....	13
7. Village Centre / Local Economy.....	14
Village centre	14
Tourism	14
Wider economy.....	14

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Lyminge Parish Council held a Drop In event, “Looking to the Future”, to relaunch the Neighbourhood Plan project. The purpose was to reinvigorate the process that had begun some years ago and to gain additional feedback from the work undertaken at the previous drop in events in Autumn 2022.
- 1.2. The event was promoted via the website, the local newsletter, social media, posters, the Parish Council mailing list and through word of mouth. The event was held at the Village Hall on a Saturday from 10am to 4pm to maximise attendance.
- 1.3. A reception area was set up to greet people and sign them in. Those attending were invited to join the mailing list or take a more active role – either on the Steering Group or to contribute to a specific theme. Attendees were able to mark on a Parish map their home location, to give an idea of the geographic spread of those visiting the event. There were visitors from each of the settlements.
- 1.4. An area of the room was laid out to introduce the concept of neighbourhood planning and what it can achieve. A table was set up for each theme to be covered by the Neighbourhood Plan:
 - vision and objectives
 - housing, design and heritage
 - community facilities
 - getting around / local movement
 - the environment
 - the local economy and village centres
- 1.5. Each theme area comprised display boards about the theme, supported by maps of the parish, and prompt questions designed to encourage discussion. Attendees were invited to post comments using post-it notes at each display. A copy of the questions was made available as an online survey for those wishing to respond at a later date.
- 1.6. In total, approximately 60 people attended the event. This report sets out the feedback received for each theme (including material submitted via the supporting survey). Some of the findings relate directly to planning and land-use while others are wider community ‘ambitions’. The feedback received can be discussed by the Steering Group and Working Groups and will provide evidence for emerging policies.
- 1.7. Any non-policy ideas can potentially be included in the final plan as community projects.

2. Vision and Objectives

2.1. The following draft objectives were presented for comment:

Objective 1: Protecting and enhancing our rural setting and enhancing opportunities for biodiversity:

- Protecting, preserving and enhancing existing valued green space and providing new ones.
- Supporting initiatives to protect and enhance wildlife, biodiversity and habitat provision.
- Maintaining and enhancing the connectivity of wildlife corridors.
- Identifying and safeguarding important local views/viewpoints.
- Limiting light pollution by protecting our 'dark skies'.

Objective 2: Celebrating our unique heritage and local character:

- Identifying and conserving local heritage assets
- Reinforcing our identity and sense of place and local character including through the preparation of Design Guidance for the parish.
- Celebrating the history of our area – how our settlements evolved and the communities who have settled here.

Objective 3: Providing homes to meet the needs of the local community:

- Supporting the provision of affordable homes.
- Influencing new housing that delivers what local people need, in terms of size and tenure and adaptable to changing needs.
- Considering flooding and drainage relating to new homes
- Mandating quality neighbourhoods that enable exemplary sustainable design to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Directing new housing to the most sustainable parts of the area, near to local facilities.

Objective 4: Enabling a thriving rural economy:

- Revitalising our village centres.
- Supporting sustainable rural tourism.
- Safeguarding existing employment areas.
- Providing a supportive environment for those working from home.

Objective 5: An accessible neighbourhood:

- Encouraging walking and cycling, particularly for local journeys.
- Enhancing the network of walking and cycling routes that link key services to housing and ensuring that new developments connect to this.
- Improving the bridleway network.
- Supporting initiatives to tackle congestion.

Objective 6: Celebrating and supporting our communities:

- Providing a range of facilities, services and recreational activities to meet the needs of different ages and interests across our area.
- Encouraging a friendly and involved community.

2.2. Attendees were asked for comments on the draft objectives and also their views on possible content for an overall vision. The following comments were received:

- Agree with Objective 1.
- Objective 1 – needs to include a point about climate change
- Particularly agree with the need for affordable homes
- Can we promote more diversity
- A green village
- Fewer cars, more walking and cycling
- A place that is welcoming to all ages
- We need our vision for the village, not that of FHDC
- All very good objectives
- Objective 5 – focus on year-round accessibility and usability
- Enable more people to access sustainable living (e.g. allotments etc.)
- Dark skies – agree – the Channel Tunnel lights re visible from here
- Youth activities needed
- Climate resilience
- These emerging objectives sound great. If people feel part of something and valued, they will care to contribute to it
- More sustainable transport links – bus/ cycle
- Promote green energy – particularly community-scale
- Keep green space
- Great, varied facilities
- Abundance of footpaths
- Make space for nature and appreciate nature
- Improve biodiversity
- Our history and heritage

3. Housing, Character and Design Theme

3.1. The following comments were made:

Types of homes

- We need adaptable homes to facilitate people at different stages of life
- Annexes would encourage multi-generational homes
- Starter homes for young families – 2-bedrooms £200-£250k
- Rent-controlled homes – rooms for under 25s to help them save up for their own homes
- Smaller homes with all the environmental credentials
- Affordable larger homes (for growing families / combined families)
- If they have to be built then it should be affordable housing.
- Family homes, for families with children.
- A mixture but with a bias towards smaller, affordable homes rather than large, expensive, "executive" homes.
- Affordable family homes and homes for young people leaving the family home - they're currently priced out of the area
- More affordable homes – lots of families cannot afford to live here

Design and character

- Can homes incorporate hedges, not fences
- Don't like flat roofs on housing. Don't like the lack of paths - Woodlands Road, Brady Road, Canterbury Street etc
- I think developments with gardens/green spaces are important for families (children space to play outside and for our local nature. It seems many new developments are all squashed on top of each other with little green space.
- The semi detached houses on the High Street- on the right going towards the village hall are v attractive.
- Concern about development in the National Landscape

Sustainable design

- Preferably moving towards homes that are not dependent on fossil fuels. Integrated solar and / or wind supplied.
- Wind turbines and solar panels would be ok in the area around Tolsford Mast
- Any new builds should be required to have solar panels on roof as standard
- More thought and consideration needs to be given to the sustainability of the proposed building and how it fits in with the surrounding properties. A look at new builds in north Lyminge is a prime example of design to avoid
- Can we make sure homes are sustainably designed – green energy e.g. solar panels and air-source heating
- New housing should meet highest levels of sustainability – passive house concept

4. Community facilities

4.1. The following comments were made:

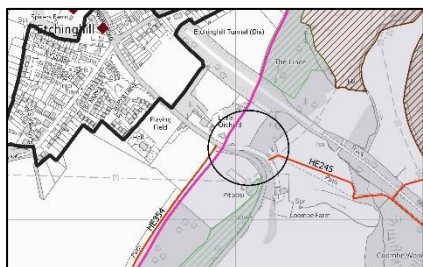
- Can we safeguard our local facilities? E.g. the pub, coffee cabin, library, GP, pharmacy
- Encourage new businesses
- Better broadband needed
- Improve wifi and telephone signal
- More allotments
- A bandstand on the Tayne Field
- Support the Community fridge – reduce food wastage
- Dog mess on pavements needs tackling
- Do we need more burial space – whole field available after archaeological excavations above Ethelburga Garden?
- Can we make better use of empty / unsold properties? E.g. Indian restaurant, Post Office?
- Can the library be safeguarded as a community hub? Can we work with FHDC/KCC to see if the library could be accessed by groups when it is not open? Problem that it is only open 4 hours per day. Could we acquire the library as a community?
- Electric charging points in Etchinghill Village Hall car park
- Concern about open public bins next to a school being used for dog poo. Surely that is a health and safety matter - shouldn't they have lids?
- I have young kids and I think the new play parks are great for them but often teenagers just hang out in corner of the village hall fields and litter it with cans and glass bottles, which the local pre-school use, which isn't ideal. It's an on-going issue and maybe there isn't enough for teenagers in the village?
- Would be lovely if we could have a village swimming pool (which seems to be a common thing in villages in France). Appreciate that cost and location are significant issues though!
- Think it is pretty good already.
- Can we find alternative uses for empty buildings
- More for teenagers

5. Movement

5.1. The following comments were made:

Areas where footpaths can be improved

- The footpaths in the Parish could be further linked up to enable people in the villages to reach the other villages and the amenities in them
- Safer link needs on the footpaths in this location (just south east of Etchinghill):

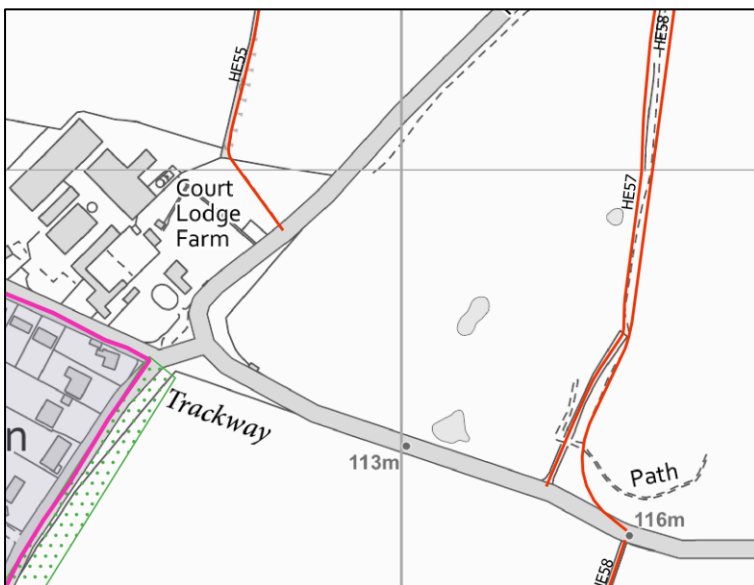


- Woodford Road has no pavement.
- The turn just north of Palm Tree Road is very dangerous and used by school children
- Reinstate all footpaths (e.g. Skeete to Longage Hill)
- FP beside Longage Hill is now dangerous through the field – barbed wire fence
- Can the disused railway line become a walk?
- Can we have gates instead of dilapidated stiles?
- Footpath along upper Brady Road
- Improve footpath along Longage Hill
- We have lost some locally used connective paths lately: Etchinghill Golf Course to the bridlepath and route locally used to link field to road avoiding watermeadow
- We need more local circular walks that are marked on a map
- There is a footpath missing in front of Broad Street house on Canterbury Road – crossing is dangerous here
- Dangers crossing the Golf course (golf balls)
- Ensure rights of way from the footpath past the orchards into the Golf Course is retained (it was purchased by private individual)
- There is a local footpath group – can we involve them in this part of the plan?
- Reopen the gap of fence next to the bus stop to allow access to the Elham Valley Way (received a number of supportive comments)
- A footpath is needed on the corner of Woodland Road by Ethelburga Grove bridlepath
- Wheelchair access is needed along vital footpaths- need to be suitable for powered vehicles.
- Link the villages safely

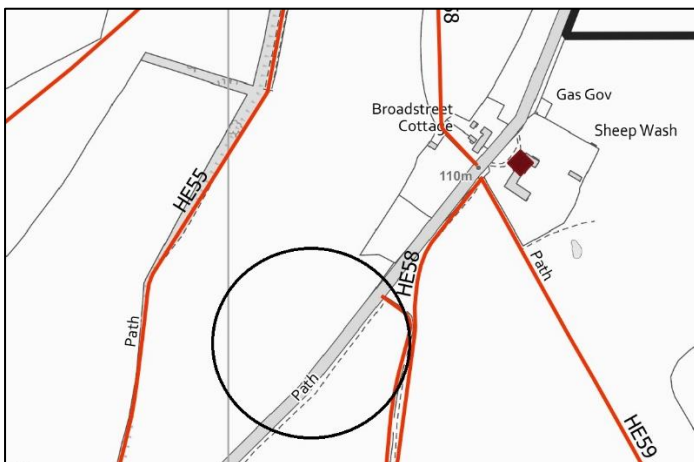
- Need a safe crossing point along Canterbury Road:



- Need a clear path to join up to the Gold Course paths:



- Need to reopen the path shown below to link to other paths:



- Signage – in France, villages often have a noticeboard in the centre of the village with local walks marked up in different colours. Can we do that?

- Many footpaths require crossing a dangerous part of a road.
- The track from the top of the bumpy field to New Barn Corner - a potential old track
- The track at Ethelburga Grove is important to retain for character purposes
- Footpath crossing Canterbury Road at Little Orchard is dangerous
- I think there are many walking areas that have been carved out by local walkers but maybe further signposts or wheelchair, cycling access is something to consider. Support from local landowners to use access across certain parts to connect up walks etc.
- Really good that many stiles have been replaced by gates recently. Very happy for this to continue! A real shame to have lost the later bus services, although I appreciate they were under used.
- Signposts for the circular walk around the village
- More circular routes needed
- Improve local access to the national trails
- Make more of the Elham Valley line – open it up as a cycle route

Bridleways

- Bridleway provision is very poor. E.g. out to New Barn is ok but nowhere safe to go from there

Public transport

- Better public transport needed – to anywhere!
- Public transport to Ashford Hospital needed.
- Better public transport
- The reinstatement of evening bus to Folkestone/Canterbury

Roads

- Need 30mph at the edge of the village (northern end of Lyminge)
- Slow down traffic through the village – 20mph?
- Make the Station Road/Canterbury Road safer
- Make crossing the road between the Barbers and the car park safer
- Can we have safe crossings around the shops
- Enforce double yellow lines outside Food and Wine – cars here make it hard to cross

6. Environment – Natural and Built

6.1. The following comments were made:

Preserving local heritage

- The following should be protected for their heritage value:
 - Library – a few calls for this to be safeguarded as an asset and possible community hub
 - Former station
 - Former chapel at St Mary's Hospital, Etchinghill
- The area around the Church and old village centre crossroads should be designated as a Conservation Area.
- The village has a unique heritage of national importance. We need to protect the identity of Lyminge' as such, not just as a 'rural hub'.

Important green space

Lyminge:

- Cricket ground
- Rectory Field
- Tayne Field
- Well Fields
- Nailbourne Stream
- Recreation Ground
- Small space by the Age UK car park
- Jubilee Field, sports ground and facilities (inc. tennis courts)
- Field for pasture near Mayfield Road
- The bumpy field (is a Village Green)
- Green space with trees and bench along Ethelburga Drive
- The "bumpy field"
- The cow field on the crossroads of Woodland Road and Brady Road
- The field coming out of North Lyminge towards Elham
- The woods alongside Brady Road and Loughborough Lane
- The field opposite Sibton Park
- Footpath which runs from Woodland Road, round the back of Dog Kennel Lane to Brady Road, runs through a field which already seems to be re-wilding on its own. Is this being managed in any way? If not then perhaps it could be (provided the owners are happy with this of course)
- Golf course

Etchinghill:

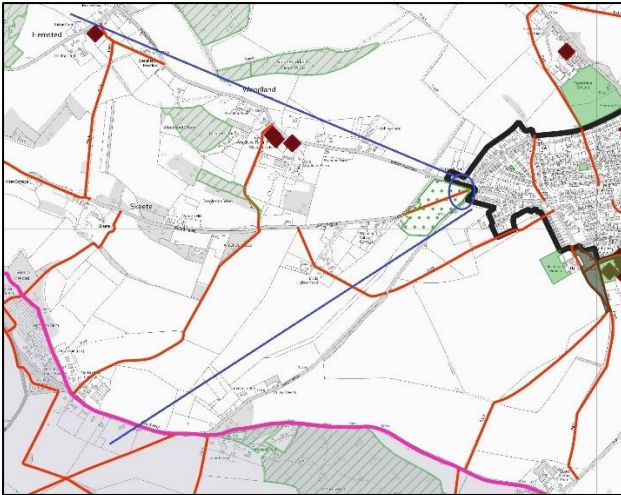
- Playing field – well used by locals and visitors. Also lots of trees here which need to be retained
- St Mary's Close Green Space – there are benches here, flowers and a footpath
- Former cricket pitch near Pentland HQ

Biodiversity opportunities

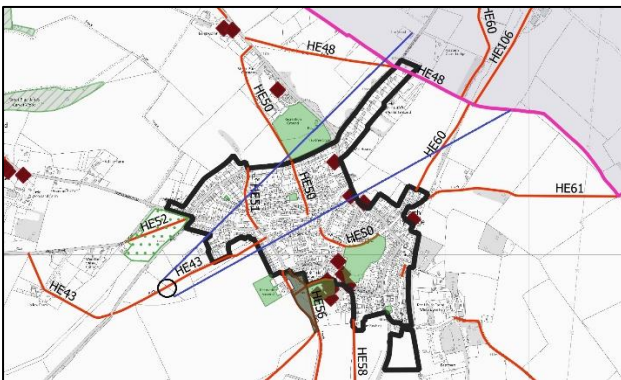
- Wildflowers in field next to Brady Road and bird life here
- Wide road verge along Sandling Road
- Love what is being done with Court Lodge Lane and Tayne Field
- Can we have a communal orchard on Bumpy Field?
- More hedgehog housing areas to protect them from badgers
- No mowing parts of green spaces
- Plant more trees
- Encourage residents to plan more
- Carry on with the biodiversity plan management of green spaces. There are species that have returned or increased in numbers due to that plan
- Protect the stream by keeping it clean. After the last clean up, lots of wildlife returned
- Making space for nature should be a priority – educating local residents
- Protect the chalk streams particularly Fast Brook, which runs through the golf course
- Is there a way we can involve young people through work experience, Duke of Edinburgh etc. to get involved in supporting the environment/ environmental design?
- Wildflowers on the MOD land behind EVH
- More hedges
- No mow May
- Conserve the National Landscape (formerly known as the AONB)
- I think further developing our wild spaces throughout the village is important for biodiversity and our own mental and physical health. Wilding of green spaces, supporting the development of hedgerows and less mowing of certain areas, to allow wild flowers to grow with in turn support our insect population, mammals and birds
- Would like to see more areas managed for wildlife and biodiversity
- The bumpy field lends itself to continued wilding.

Local Views and viewpoints

- The view overlooking Folkestone past Tolsford
- Most of our footpaths have fabulous views of the valley
- View southwest across the valley (shown in blue below). From the top of the wildflower field where there is a bench. At the crossing of Brady Road and Woodland Road, you get a beautiful view of the valley, especially at sunset. Residents come to view the sunset here over the cowfield:



- View of the Church Tower (Church Road, Lyminge)
- View from the main road up to the rectory
- Views of the church from the Tayne Field/ Well Field
- Views downhill from land west of Rectory Lane
- Views uphill from east of North Lyminge Lane
- View of the Church from the alley – Brady Road to Bedingfield Road
- Beautiful views across north Lyminge towards Shuttlefield (shown in blue below):



Flooding

- The wildflower meadow along Brady Road suffers severe flooding after heavy rain. It is impossible to walk to the village along this path at these times
- Not experienced flooding issues
- Longage next to Sibton always floods. But has been better draining away recently
- Drainage needs to be taken more into account
- Clear blocked drains

7. Village Centre / Local Economy

Village centre

- The village centre (Lyminge) looks very tatty and uncared for. Can we do something about this as a community?
- Can we clean up the village centre?
- Local pubs are very important – can they be protected?
- Please retain the village shop and post office. Since I moved to Lyminge, we have lost 2 butchers, bakery, drapers, dairy shop, fire station, off licence and garage/petrol station
- Good if the empty shop by the car park could be utilised
- I think it's important to support local business, such as our library, pharmacy, local shop, Ottinge Farm and support and welcome new ones.

Tourism

- Encourage more Air B&Bs so that visitors have places to stay when visiting residents
- Maybe promote our beautiful surrounding countryside and local walks on the North Kent Downs
- More info for tourists on local walks and wildlife to look for?
- There could be visitor guides for walks of different lengths and a guide for a historic trail around Lyminge. These could be available at the library. The library is where all visitors go...and The Cabin. Also via Lyminge Assoc website/ social media.

Wider economy

- Better use of unused buildings
- Would like to see no more industrial areas or any expansion to the existing areas