

A snapshot of Crowhurst – Our Village

Crowhurst is a civil parish and dispersed village in a rural part of the Tandridge district in Surrey, just over 24 miles from London and 3 miles from Oxted. It has been said of Crowhurst that it is a parish rather than a village for it has no central nucleus and consists of 9 dispersed settlements over 3.7 sq. miles.

Crowhurst has a long and rich history. The oldest living part of this is the 4000 yr old yew tree which stands in the churchyard of St George's Church, an attractive building of 12th and 15th century work, with alterations and additions occurring in the 13th and 14th centuries. The churchyard contains graves, many being well-kept, stretching back several centuries. There is a handsome lychgate dating from the 1930's.

The yew tree has long had a hollow centre which once hosted afternoon tea parties for villagers. It also featured in the civil war having been hit by (reputedly) one of Cromwell's cannonballs (available to view in the church). The Church is Grade II listed.

The nearby Crowhurst Place is a timber frame listed Grade I moated house dating in part from 1425 when it was built for the Gainsford family; it also has a Grade II* listed Granary and Barn. There are many other listed homes, mainly farmhouses in the village.

Sitting firmly within the Green Belt Crowhurst Parish benefits from areas of local landscape significance, has 16 listed houses, a number of listed barns and granaries and 9 Buildings of Character. The remaining dwellings are of no architectural merit, often resulting from the development of small farm cottages, although several were built using bricks from the Crowhurst Brickworks which produced bricks of no distinctive colour, therefore many homes within the Parish are painted.

Crowhurst has a strong sense of community, with well-established events and traditions that are characteristic of Crowhurst, examples include the annual Coronation of our King and Queen, New Year Walk, Christmas Party, Remembrance Day service, Crowhurst Fete and the celebration of St Georges Day.

Foreword

Neighbourhood Plans are the result of the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions which affect them. The Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the village and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period 2015 -2035. Unlike the Crowhurst Parish Appraisal 2002, upon which it builds, our Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory document that will be incorporated into the district planning frameworks and must be used by Tandridge District Council to determine planning applications.

Our plan has been produced by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group "NPSG" (a number of local residents, with the support of the Parish Council) and built upon the views of the residents of Crowhurst. The NPSG has consulted and listened to the community and local businesses on a wide range of issues that will influence sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in this document reflect views collected through engagement with Crowhurst residents.

A Neighbourhood Plan has many benefits. The Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by volunteers from the village to:

- protect and enhance the rural environment in which we live;
- maximise access to the countryside and protect the Parish assets;
- ensure development in Crowhurst meets identified needs;
- provide a good working environment for businesses.

LIST OF POLICIES

Land use Policies: L1 – L7

Policy No.	Policy Title	Page
L1	Preserving the openness of the countryside	8
L2	Business, employment and business communication	10
L3	Housing design	12
L4	Scale and density of new development	14
L5	Brownfield and infill development	14
L6	Homes for local people	15
L7	Listed homes and structures and buildings of character	16

Community Policies: C1 – C3

Policy No.	Policy Title	Page
C1	Countryside Access	17
C2	Parish Assets and local facilities	20
C3	Crowhurst Parish Council	25

Introduction and Background

Purpose

In April 2012, the Localism Act 2011 amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to influence the future of their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which will allow communities, including residents, employees and business, to come together and document what any future development will look like. This document is a Neighbourhood Plan as defined in the Act.

Landscape Strategy

The landscape strategy outlined in this assessment for the low weald farmland (Surrey SC designation) is to conserve its peaceful, unsettled character whilst promoting traditional management of woodlands and hedgerows including the restoration of hedgerow trees. There are several other guidelines including the conservation and enhancement of the low key, rural character of the footpaths.

Development Strategy for this landscape

Among the several guidelines there are references to built form. Most follow directly from conserving the landscape and rural feel. Notably these should protect the pattern and character of existing settlements, resisting spread and coalescence. They should conserve distinctive open areas, ensure conversions are sensitive to surrounding landscapes, and maintain “dark skies” (limited light pollution) within this sparsely settled area.

Housing Strategy

To help Crowhurst survive as a rural community a Housing Strategy could help achieve a number of objectives, whilst others can be achieved through increased utilisation of its open spaces and assets and their attractiveness for rural pursuits. A Housing Strategy can help Crowhurst:

- to achieve a more balanced demographic profile. Crowhurst has a mature community and in order to rebalance the demographic profile more young people and families are needed. However, the current shortage of affordable housing denies these groups the opportunity to live in the community.
- residents who wish to downsize in the community they love. Crowhurst has a large number of single storey residences which are arguably well suited to older people, however such homes typically have large gardens, which can become burdensome.
- as an unsustainable location Crowhurst is not suited to development on a large scale, however it could accept limited development on the following basis:
 - 1-3 Bed homes with smaller gardens for downsizing and affordable starter homes for families of local people;
 - Development of small housing clusters with appropriate parking;
 - Low density development, with maximum of 1 home per [.30 acres];
 - Maximum increase in number of dwellings over the Plan period of 20% of the number noted in the 2011 census (119).

Development should comply with the policies noted within this Plan.

Plan preparation process

Crowhurst Parish Council unanimously resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Crowhurst in July 2015 and in November 2015 Crowhurst Civil Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Planning Area. Crowhurst residents supported the submission and at an open meeting in Autumn 2015, 15 volunteers put their names forward to form the NPSG. Since this time a core group of 9 volunteers have served on the NPSG with others contributing from time to time.

Community Engagement

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community plan and must derive its objectives, actions and authority from the community. From the outset, the NPSG were determined that Crowhurst residents should be involved and have every opportunity to work with the NPSG in guiding the future for the village.

During the summer of 2016, Crowhurst Residents received a Neighbourhood Plan Survey (Survey) requesting views on a number of matters which could be addressed by the Plan. 55% of residents provided their input. An open session was held on 19th November 2016 to which all residents were invited. This, together with the survey feedback, resulted in four subgroups being created to focus on the key areas highlighted:

- Countryside and open spaces;
- Parish assets and local facilities;
- Housing;
- Business, employment and business communications.

A Housing Needs Survey was commissioned in Spring 2017, and discussion groups were held to take the views of key stakeholders including the businesses and the dominant age groups.

Definitions

A number of terms have been used in the Plan which may prove ambiguous therefore and are worthy of further definition to ensure that the reader is fully aware of the intention.

Term	Definition
Cluster	<p>A housing cluster - a small group of homes, of individual, but complementary design, creating a small community feel.</p> <p>Crowhurst has 9 distinct housing clusters including:</p> <p>Ardenrun</p> <p>Kingswood Farm</p> <p>St Georges Cottages</p> <p>The Church</p> <p>The Gate House</p> <p>Bungalows and Bowerland Lane</p> <p>Caterfield Lane</p> <p>Eliot Place and Willow Drive</p> <p>Dwelly Lane</p>
Negative impact	Intrude upon or unsympathetic to
Village design statement	a document that describes the distinctive characteristics of the locality and provides design guidance to influence future development and improve the physical qualities of the area.

Vision and Objectives

The vision for the Plan over the next 20 years reflects the priorities expressed through extensive community engagement.

Context

The first half of the 21st century is proving to be a time of rapid social and economic change. Technological developments are already changing the way in which we live and work, whilst medical advances are making it possible to lead longer and healthier lives. An increasing recognition of the impacts of climate change and of our reliance on fossil fuels to power our lifestyles is leading to changes in the frequency and the way we travel, the way we regulate the temperatures in our homes and the way we manufacture and recycle goods.

The country is continuing to experience a growth in population and local communities are having to address the need to accommodate this growth considering homes, jobs, transport infrastructure and services whilst addressing the need to sustain food production through support of the agriculture industry.

The Plan is set within this context and has set policies to allow the Parish to adapt to the changes taking place, providing the development needed to support a strong and viable local community whilst protecting what local people consider to be the most important aspects about the place in which we live.

Our Vision for Crowhurst over the next 20 years

We will maintain our agricultural legacy, rural environment, Green Belt and open spaces whilst highlighting our ancient heritage, promoting the community and character of Crowhurst and ensuring that any development is in keeping with our environment and supportive of our vision and objectives.

Crowhurstians value the rural environment in which they live, including open spaces, country walks and low light pollution and wish to preserve this as much as possible for future generations.

The Plan for Crowhurst supports the Vision and focuses on some key goals:

- To maintain the open and rural nature of the Crowhurst countryside for future generations. (Countryside and open spaces)
- To protect our parish assets and improve the local facilities for all age groups. (Parish assets and facilities)
- To preserve the rural nature of the Parish and the openness of the countryside, whilst ensuring that any housing development is limited and meets the aspirations of current residents and facilitates the longer-term viability of the village. (Housing)
- To continue to provide a good working environment for our niche businesses. (Business and employment)

Objectives

To help achieve the Vision and Goals, the Plan has set the following Objectives:

1. Countryside and open spaces

To establish a countryside and open space strategy which will:

- protect the countryside by providing greater access to ramblers, hikers, horse riders and the general public (C1);
- conserve the peaceful, unsettled character of Crowhurst whilst promoting traditional management of woodlands and hedgerows including the restoration of hedgerow trees (C1).

2. Parish assets and facilities

To establish a strategy for our assets and facilities that recognises the importance of Crowhurst history which we should preserve and the assets that should be maintained and improved for future generations:

- to identify, recognise and maintain our parish assets (C2.1, C2.2, C2.6);
- to maximize the history of our village and make this available to all (C2.3, C2.5)
- to identify and enhance essential facilities for modern life e.g. Broadband, and ensure provision is appropriate (C2.7)
- to improve road safety, where possible (C2.4)

3. Housing

To establish a Housing Strategy which will ensure the survival of the rural community for the longer term and ensure that any new development:

- preserves the openness of the landscape, does not obstruct significant views and enhances the environment in which it is situated (L1);
- is of high quality design, is built to high sustainability standards and is in keeping with neighbouring properties (L3);
- is of appropriate scale and density, but develops further small housing in 'clusters' (L4);
- utilises brownfield sites and appropriate infill locations (L5);
- provides for local people as a priority (L6);
- protects the environment of listed homes and grows the numbers of buildings of special character (L7).

Development which supports the above and is in full compliance with planning rules will receive sympathetic hearing / support by the Parish Council.

4. Business and employment strategy

To establish a Business strategy which supports the long-term viability of all local business, including farming businesses and encouraging local employment through:

- Supporting the plans of the local farmers which ensure the continued viability and development of their farms whilst remaining sympathetic to their neighbours and (Neighbourhood) Planning Policies (L2)
- Encouraging small businesses to thrive whilst recognising the rural nature of the village and proximity to residential properties (L2).

Policies

Land Use Policies

Land use planning policies influence planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and also set out the criteria against which development proposals will be judged in terms of design, access etc.

The Plan contains a series of land use policies (L1 – L7). If successfully applied during the plan period, these policies will help to achieve the community vision for the Parish and should encourage planning applications to be made for things the local community wants and serve to discourage applications for developments that the community does not want. The policies aim to be clearly written to allow easy application.

The Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies, except where this adds clarity to the overall approach of the Plan. The proposed policies therefore focus on the issues in the area as expressed by the Parish.

The proposed policies are listed below, each policy has a reference and title together with some background. The performance Indicators for each of the policies which have been set to allow management by the Parish Council, are included within Appendix 11 of this document.

Policy L1 Preserving the openness of the countryside

Policy L1 supports the open space strategy of the Plan, recognising the importance of maintaining the rural character of the Parish.

Residents have stated that, should development within Crowhurst be necessary, that they would prefer it to be conducted using disused brownfield sites or infill. Residents have also stated that protecting the openness of the countryside is of highest importance to them, particularly the peace and quiet and scenic views. It is important that infill development does not destroy the open character and natural beauty of the landscape or cause sprawling development outside of existing housing clusters. The policies should be considered collectively.

Proposals should be in keeping with the scale, density, massing, height, layout, materials, landscaping and access arrangements that currently exist in the community.

Any development within the Parish should meet the following criteria:

L1.1 – It should be sympathetic to the local environment and to potential sites of nature conservation (Appendix 5) and not have a negative impact on significant views of surrounding countryside from public vantage points (Footnote – in particular those defined in the Exceptional Landscapes Map (Appendix 3) within Crowhurst and especially those which have views of the North Downs AONB Surrey hills and the High Weald) or historic sites and listed homes (Appendix 4)

L1.2 – It should enhance areas identified in the Tandridge District Landscape Assessment for low Weald Farmland (summarised in Appendix 1) which have major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity.

L1.3 – It should ensure that the full impact of the proposal can be assessed, a detailed survey of the site showing contours, trees, landscape features and existing buildings will be required, where appropriate, together with plans and/or sections showing the relationship of the proposals to surrounding buildings, features and historic sites.

On such sites Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments of the proposal may also be required. These will include 'before' and 'after', summer and winter views, with and without any proposed mitigation measures. Where ridge top or valley side schemes are proposed, additional attention must be given to the protection of skyline views.

L1.4 - The elevation of any development will consider the elevation of neighbouring properties in addition to the elevation of surrounding land.

L1.1 – L1.4 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

Landscape value and sensitivity identified in the Landscape Character Assessment	No deterioration in areas of major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment
Impact assessment	<p>The Parish Council input must be recognised for all planning and development and consider the full impact of the proposal on the surrounding environment and community, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road access and safety; • Demographic change; • Visibility of development from neighbouring properties, footpaths, roads; • Appropriateness of elevation compared to local landscape and neighbouring buildings. • Design suitability for local environment and neighbouring properties; • Light pollution and environmental impact of proposal • Impact on the overall density of the Parish and proximity to neighbouring properties and existing housing clusters; • Proximity and impact to historical sites.

Exceptional views	<p>No partial or complete loss of identified views.</p> <p>Developments must have appropriate tree cover, in keeping with the environment.</p>
Elevation management	<p>Roof levels will be in keeping with the main dwelling and neighbouring properties, considering the natural rise and fall of the landscape.</p> <p>Actual roof levels will adhere to approved plans.</p>

Policy L2 Business, employment and business communication

Policy L2 supports objective 4 To establish a business and employment strategy which supports the long-term viability of all local business, including farming businesses and encourages local employment.

A successful and thriving farming industry lies at the centre of the community that is Crowhurst. It is the single most important key to the achievement of our future vision for the village.

To maintain the rural nature of Crowhurst we aim to support the growth and development of working farms through the Plan.

Our rural community benefits from 8 working farms covering a wide range of farming activity from prize winning dairy cows to large scale arable. In order to maximise income some farmers rent their surplus agricultural buildings for commercial use. This practice is partly responsible for creating the surprisingly vibrant, but largely invisible small business community in our midst. It includes in the region of 30 businesses, together employing approx. 100 people.

The Plan recognises and will actively support and encourage this thriving small business sector whilst it complies with relevant planning legislation.

We will also support the future development of commercial businesses in appropriate locations and in buildings suitable to the nature of the business and noise levels.

L2.1 - Development plans which aim to continue the viability and development of working farms, whilst being respectful of residents, should be supported by the Parish Council.

L2.2- Small businesses making use of the light industrial units should be encouraged and allowed to thrive whilst following appropriate planning laws; minimizing environmental impact and preserving sight lines/viewpoints. They should equally recognise and protect the rural nature of Crowhurst and their proximity to local residents, accepting appropriate noise and time restrictions.

L2.3 - Units made available for commercial use should be of appropriate build and size for the business, with sound proofing, as necessary, to maximise the possible hours of use without negative impact on local residents.

L2.4 - The Plan should encourage the letting of business units therefore creating employment opportunities in the village.

L2.1 – L2.4 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

Working Farms	Parish Council to develop relationship with Farmers to ensure there is an understanding of development plans.
Working farm development plans	Reviewed objectively to ensure beneficial to Farm viability, environment and residents – comments submitted to TDC
Small commercial use of light industrial units	Noise and time of use considered with local residents in mind. Traffic and access monitored Units are fit for purpose for industry Access and parking

Policies L3 – L7 Housing

Crowhurst Parish sits within the greenbelt and benefits from areas of local landscape significance, this, together with its lack of infrastructure and having a large area of flood risk does not lend it to any significant development or growth potential.

The Housing Needs Survey identified that no additional homes were needed in the Parish and it is with this context that the Plan is prepared. It is recognised however that some development may be necessary in Crowhurst and survey results indicated, by a considerable majority (75%), that if this should be the case the use of brownfield sites is preferred for such development.

Crowhurst is not a sustainable location compared to nearby villages, Crowhurst has no supporting infrastructure, no school, doctor's surgery, local pub, shop or post office. More specifically a number of properties don't have mains drainage or access to gas and almost all residents rely heavily on transport by private car.

In the 2011 census Crowhurst is recorded as having a population of 281 people in 119 households, a decrease from the 2001 census that recorded a population of 349 people in 128 households. In 2011 84% of homes were owned, including shared ownership, 11% privately rented and the remaining were social rented homes. The Housing Needs Survey, conducted as part of the neighbourhood planning work, concluded that there were 124 dwellings, an increase of 5 over the 2011 census.

Crowhurst, like most areas of Surrey, falls within the greenbelt, where typically new homes have been achieved either via infill, garden division or the demolition of single houses within large grounds and the building of 3-4 new homes in their place. An increasing number of the original 'village' type properties that have been extended has led to a loss of the smaller cottages which historically would have made ideal 'entry level' properties. This, combined with the loss of many traditional council homes through the 'Right to Buy Scheme, 'has resulted in a gradual decline for many rural villages. The consequence has often been, increasing property values, ageing populations, and the declining local population which in turn impacts on local schools, shops and bus service provision. The changes to rural communities has led to an over reliance on private vehicles to access facilities and services outside of the immediate area.

The average price of a home in Crowhurst in 2016 was £513,500, 6% higher than the Surrey average. Crowhurst is dominated by detached and semi-detached properties with the percentage of detached homes being almost 40% above the England average. When asked what type of housing was needed

in Crowhurst over half of respondents stated 2-3 bed family homes, with starter and retirement homes being a distant second.

Crowhurst currently sits almost 20% above the average level for home ownership and approximately 14% below average for socially rented homes. At the time of the 2011 census 83% of properties were owner occupied, and this had increased to 92% in the Housing Needs Survey.

There is no village design statement for Crowhurst, but the Parish has 16 listed houses and a number of listed barns and granaries. The more traditional houses are of a typical Surrey 'vernacular'; timber framed, rendered at ground level and tile hung above. Crowhurst has a number of 'Buildings of Character', however properties developed since 1950 are generally architecturally undistinguished and not in keeping with Surrey / Sussex / Kent style homes.

Being mindful of the need to develop larger sites in order to satisfy the stated housing need of the district, Crowhurstians were asked for their feedback on the potential for a new settlement in the Parish. 93% of survey respondents stated that they did not want this and 41% of these included additional comments which included "green belt", "flood risk", "unsustainable location", "destruction of village character" etc.

If Crowhurst accepts limited development, then most residents want priority to be given to development of affordable homes for local people, using redundant brown field sites and would consider infill to create housing clusters, with the type and style of home in keeping with neighbouring properties.

Development History

Recent development in the Parish has included a group of bungalows built in the mid 20th century which, whilst built in close proximity, include very large, long gardens that maintain the openness around them.

Further and more recent development in 2012/13, on the brownfield derelict brickworks site, close to the railway line. This site had a long and chequered planning permission history going back some 20 years. Eventually agreement with developers resulted in the building of 16 homes, including 5 social houses, developed in the style of a small cluster reminiscent of the Wealden parish, using vernacular materials.

Housing Policies

Policies L3 – L7 support Objective 3, To establish a Housing Strategy which will ensure the survival of the rural community for the longer term and ensure that any new development meets the stated criteria within the Plan.

This is broken down into a number of elements:

Policy L3 Housing design

Residents stated that, should development be necessary in Crowhurst, it should have a traditional look and feel (80%), be environmentally friendly (51%) and consider ground or airsource as energy supply (43%) and many Crowhurst residents want to maintain the rural nature of the village by preventing both light pollution and increasing urbanisation.

L3.1 - Proposals for all forms of development must incorporate high quality design and plan positively for conservation of local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Surrey/Sussex countryside.

L3.2 - All plans for new dwellings must be accompanied by appropriate off road parking provisions, with at least one parking space, excluding garage, per bedroom.

L3.3 - Plans that include the installation of street lighting or pay inadequate regard to issues of renewable energy technologies, landscape and biodiversity considerations will not be supported.

L3.4 - Applications for residential development must contain a Broadband 'connectivity statement'

L3.5 – All plans for the development of existing dwellings must be in keeping with the existing building and neighbouring properties.

L3.6 – All plans for the development of existing dwellings must ensure safe road access and adequate off-road parking for the size of the dwelling.

L3.1 – L3.6 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

High quality design, and in keeping with neighbouring properties	Neighbouring properties to be reviewed by the Parish Council and comments made on planning applications to include context.
Parking of one-off road space, excluding Garage, per bedroom – new dwellings	Applies to new and existing homes, external off-road spaces for parking to have this as a minimum
Street lighting and inadequate regard to renewable energies	The Parish Council should not support such development. Emphasise desire for limited light pollution and low carbon footprint
Connectivity statement	Required for all development
Development of existing dwellings must be in keeping with neighbouring properties and have sufficient off-road parking for dwelling size.	Neighbouring properties to be reviewed by the Parish Council and comments made on planning applications to include context. Development should not reduce front curtilage and therefore reduce parking space to less than 1 per bedroom, excluding garage.

Policy L4 Scale and density of new development

Crowhurst consists of low-density development of 124 homes in 9 housing clusters over 9.7 km². Residents have not expressed a need for any new development in the area, however should this be necessary 74% have stated that any new development should maintain a low-density approach. Recent development of the Crowhurst Brickworks site (brownfield land) saw 16 homes built on 1.6 acres, (having reduced the initial proposals from 56), which results in the highest density housing within Crowhurst.

L4.1 - Any development of housing clusters of greater than [5] homes are not acceptable to the community.

L4.2 - Housing density of any new development should not exceed existing maximum density within the Parish, 0.30 acres per dwelling.

L4.3 – An increase in number of dwellings in the Parish over the plan period should be limited to 20% increase on 2011 census figures.

L4.4 – Any new development should not negatively impact existing housing clusters.

L4.1– L4.2 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

Housing density management	Any housing clusters of greater than 5 houses will not be accepted. Any new home (s) will have at least 0.3 acres of land allocated, some of which may be protected public space.
Housing scale management	Limited to 20% increase in number of dwellings within the Parish over 2011 census numbers.

Policy L5 Brownfield and infill development

The Plan defines brownfield land as previously developed land that is not currently in use, usually industrial in nature. The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017, requires local authorities to set up a register of land which is considered appropriate for local development (Appendix 10 for more detail). Infill is defined as the rededication of land in an urban environment, usually open space, to a new construction.

74% of survey respondents would like any new development to be focused on brownfield sites, whilst 28% would accept development on infill sites.

L5.1 - Applications for small residential developments on brownfield sites within Crowhurst will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and meeting all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this Plan and supporting Village Design Statement.

L5.2 - Applications for development on infill sites within Crowhurst will be reviewed objectively and subject to meeting the requirements of all other policies within this Plan, particularly the density limits and the creation of new housing clusters or negative impact on existing housing clusters, will be supported.

L5.1– L5.2 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

Brownfield sites	All brownfield sites will be logged by the Parish Council, their use monitored and made available upon request. Brownfield land over the defined limits, must be registered on the Brownfield register.
Infill sites	Infill land will be identified and registered by the Parish Council.

Policy L6 Homes for local people

In 2016, the average property price in Crowhurst was £513,500, the housing stock consisting of 41% 3 bedroom homes, 20% with fewer and 39% with more. House prices are higher than the national average and there are an insufficient number of lower cost homes for local people.

Crowhurst has an ageing population, a large number of whom have lived in the Parish for over 20 years, most of which with large homes and large gardens and there is little opportunity to downsize whilst remaining in Crowhurst.

L6.1 - Development which provides for the requirement of affordable homes for local people (defined as with current or past connections with the Parish) and in keeping with all other policies in this plan will be considered favourably.

L6.2 - Development which provides for retirement homes for local people, in keeping with all other policies in this plan will be considered favourably.

L6.1– L6.2 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

The number of affordable homes built over the Plan period will be monitored	Affordable will be considered as those with 2 & 3 Beds as well as those which are within the nationally accepted affordable bracket. Affordable homes will equate to a minimum of 1 in 4 new homes developed within the Parish.
The number of new homes (initially) intended for local people will be monitored	Community led housing schemes.
The number of homes built which are suitable and initially designated for retirement / downsizing will be monitored	

Policy L7 Listed homes and structures and buildings of character

Buildings of Character are recognised by Tandridge District Council as those that the Council would wish to see retained, although they do not have statutory protection. Crowhurst has 9 buildings of character noted and would like to add more to the list and add protection within the Plan to preserve the character for future generations.

There are 16 listed houses in the Parish, and a number of listed barns and granaries. Listing a property marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest. Listed buildings are subject to special consideration under the planning system so that they can be protected for future generations. Additional protection can be afforded by restricting development within certain proximity of all listed properties within the Parish and to ensure that any development which takes place follows all policies in this plan and is in sympathy with the listed property

L7.1 - Crowhurst will nominate and seek recognition as buildings of character all buildings which are considered to have significant character and value to the village. Any development on or within the existing curtilage of any recognised building of character must meet all relevant requirements set out in other policies within this Plan and be in keeping with the building itself.

L7.2 - Any new development within 100 metres of the curtilage boundary of a listed home within Crowhurst will not be supported. Any new development within 150 metres of the boundary must meet all relevant requirements set out in other policies within this Plan and be in keeping with the listed building itself.

L7.1– L7.2 Monitoring / Performance Indicators Targets

Buildings of Character	All buildings of character recognized by Crowhurst Parish are included within the list noted in the Appendix to this Plan. Any development on or within the curtilage of all such properties must be in keeping with the main dwelling and not detract from its recognised character.
Listed buildings	No new development within 100 metres of the curtilage boundary. New development >100 metres <151 metres must be in keeping with listed building and comply with all other policies within the Plan.

Community Policies

Policies C1-C3 are general community policies for the Parish that are not principally concerned with land use albeit that they serve to protect the environment within which we live and recognise the rural nature of the Parish. The policies are focused on Parish driven factors and include local communication links, maximising Parish assets and helping residents to stay in touch with each other and take part in village life. The Parish Council will adopt the policies and integrate them into their annual business plan.

The layout of the village can lead to both physical and social isolation. The lack of centrally located meeting places and the problems of access make good communication all the more important to help residents to identify with the village and feel part of it. Their involvement is essential for village life and institutions.

Residents rely to a considerable extent for retail services on vehicular access to neighbouring villages and towns such as Lingfield, Oxted, and East Grinstead. Many commute out of the Parish for work and leisure.

The Policies are shown in the boxes and supporting background below, together with Monitoring / Performance indicators to enable oversight of delivery.

C1 Countryside Access

Policies C1.1 – C1.6 support Objective 1, To establish a Countryside and Open Space strategy which will protect our countryside through providing enhanced access which aims to conserve the peaceful, unsettled character of Crowhurst whilst promoting traditional management of woodlands and hedgerows including the restoration of hedgerow trees.

The recently developed Eliot Place and neighbouring houses, have blended into the rural countryside well and have not damaged any landscape or views. The land surrounding the development, including lake and woodland contains a number of rare and protected species of plants and birds.

Businesses are mostly limited to farming, equestrian activity, or small businesses run from converted farm barns or from existing homes. They have had very little impact on the farmland “feel” or the rural views and landscapes and Crowhurst remains overwhelmingly bucolic.

C1.1 - Develop an enhanced network of paths, using the procedure for “Permitted Footpaths” (This leaves control with the landowner ensuring the routes are followed; do not invade the privacy of the owner; do not cause issues with crops and livestock and makes use of the 6 to 10 metre field margins and buffer strips (set aside under the Defra Stewardship scheme - can add as footnote) allowing a greater number of circular walks and access without styles, linking existing footpaths within Crowhurst and with neighbouring parishes (Tandridge Border recreational path, a GMT route closer to the meridian)

C1.2 - Identify and procure locations for car parking at the end of footpath networks to enable easy access with off road parking.

C1.3 - Create bridleways to meet the rising demand of equestrian activity and reduce the hazard that horses pose on the narrow country lanes.

C1.4 - Develop ideas for the conservation of the woodland and lake on the remainder of the site of the old brickworks, now known as Eliot Place.

C1.5 - Enhance the countryside, landscapes and views by endeavouring to increase access for the community from both locally and wider afield.

C1.1 – C1.6 Monitoring /Performance Indicators Targets	
Enhance network of paths	Monitor length of permissive paths, ensuring increase, points of intersection with existing footpaths
Car parking access	Number of improved access points to footpaths with easy and safe parking
Create Bridleways	Km of new bridleway
Crowhurst Lake improvement	Fishing club to provide evidence to Parish Council of enhancements, annually
Countryside and landscape protection	Annual report to Parish Council by whom?
Enhance access to all	Annual report to Parish Council by whom?

Countryside, Farmland, Landscapes and Views

The countryside, farmland, landscape and the consequent views form a major feature of the character of Crowhurst and, as such, are an important focus for the Plan. The historical evolution of the Crowhurst countryside has shaped this important asset for this part of Tandridge District and this evolution defines what exists today.

Crowhurst, being originally a “Wealden parish”, is steeped in farming history having evolved from a large number of small farms with many labourers to a few large farms with diminishing numbers of employees as mechanisation and technology improve efficiency.

This resulted in housing being widely dispersed and made up of small settlements of labourers’ cottages surrounding each farmhouse. Over time and as farms consolidated and the requirement for labour diminished so the type of occupancy of farmhouses and cottages changed, but the number of houses in these small clusters increased very little.

This, in turn, means that the rural nature of the countryside in the area has also changed very little for many years, perhaps hundreds.

Communication links – roads and footpaths.

The roads that cross the parish are few, run north/south, are unclassified and are narrow country lanes with many sharp bends. There is no road crossing the Parish in an east/west direction, only footpaths link farms/house clusters from east to west and many of these connect with the ancient buildings around the Church, Mansion House and Crowhurst Place. These footpaths probably date back centuries, the best evidence of this so far are historic maps dated 1869 and 1873 (Appendix 2) which show that little has changed in terms of openness of the surrounding farmland nor the footpaths since at least mid 19th century.

Interestingly there are no bridleways in Crowhurst. There is no evidence as to why this should be. It is clear from the footpaths that the main routes to the church, to and from the main residences and the “national school” were pedestrian or on the main lane through the area, Crowhurst Lane. The equestrian focus is a relatively recent activity and would now benefit from a bridleway network to avoid horses being used on the few, narrow lanes.

More recently a well-known footpath circuit called the “Age to Age Walk” linking Lingfield and Crowhurst was created, encompassing the churches, the 4000 year old, nationally iconic yew tree in St George’s Churchyard and the stunning views of the rural countryside. More recently still the Greenwich Meridian Trail has been blazed and runs through the Parish. Unfortunately, the trail has to deviate from the meridian in places because the public footpaths do not run conveniently. More hiking traffic should be expected, with the use of permissive paths, it may be possible to improve this route.

The Tandridge Border Recreational Path also runs down the eastern side of the Parish and it may be possible to create more links with this route to enhance the network.

In 2016, the Parish Council commissioned the footpath warden to create a series of circular walks to take ramblers around the Parish. There are now 3 such routes that can be tailored in length to meet the walker’s needs abilities, these are available on the parish website.

The Views of Residents.

The modern-day residents of Crowhurst consist of farmers, retirees, home workers and commuters to both London and local towns. The Neighbourhood Plan Survey of residents provides overwhelming evidence that the countryside around Crowhurst and all that goes with it is the number one reason why people choose to live in the area. They do not want this to change.

Green Belt.

Tandridge is a District that has amongst the highest proportion of Green Belt in the country. Crowhurst is almost entirely Green Belt and so contributes substantially to the accolade that Tandridge earns and to which the rural character of Crowhurst is a major asset.

Landscapes and their assessment.

The landscapes are of rolling, open farmland dotted with farmhouses, barns and other agricultural buildings. Small clusters of traditional farmworker cottages surround the farmhouses. The applicable landscape assessment was one completed by Tandridge District Council in April 2015 using material from that undertaken by Surrey County Council. Appendix 1 is the extract from this assessment of the landscape designated “Low Weald Farmland” and applies directly to Crowhurst. There is also the link to the full assessment of Tandridge District.

This assessment describes the “Key Characteristics” which, in summary, are low lying, winding water courses, medium-large arable fields with occasional smaller pastoral fields, well maintained hedges, dispersed blocks of woodland and paddocks associated with dispersed farmsteads and dwellings. There are views across the majority of the character area, although woodland occasionally obscures longer distance views.

It also notes the comprehensive network of public rights of way, some Sites of Nature Conservation and local nature reserves. It may be possible, after investigation and procuring evidence, for the land that is to be acquired from the developer of the old brickworks site (now Eliot Place) to be designated in this way.

It concludes that it is a relatively peaceful landscape with limited settlement, particularly in the east of the character area with a higher degree of tranquility than the low weald farmland in the west. This is a significant statement about the area.

Low Weald Farmland – Evaluation and Guidance

The Assessment includes an evaluation and guidance. It summarises the positive landscape attributes that are generally as described above as well as the forces for change. Those that are relevant to Crowhurst include intensification of farming, loss of hedgerow and trees, increased car and commuter activity, pressure on rural lanes and more horse paddocks. In the future, it is predicted that the forces for change will be more decline of hedgerows and agricultural intensification, pressure for redevelopment of farmsteads and agricultural buildings, increasing traffic on rural tracks and roads

leading to urbanisation of through kerbing, lighting and signage, demand for horse paddocks and some others.

The Need for Policies on Countryside Protection whilst maintaining access

Given the pressure for housing, this countryside is constantly under threat, but to lose it is irreversible. Significantly, given the opinion of the current residents in Crowhurst to avoid development that damages this countryside it is important to have a policy to conserve, protect and enhance it. The Landscape Assessment is a very strong indicator of the need for appropriate policies for protection of the landscapes.

Nevertheless, in protecting this valuable countryside it should be recognised that it is not only a local asset, but a District one, a County one and indeed a National one. In so doing the Parish should endeavour to open up the access to the countryside to more people, with parking at key footpath access points, endeavouring to persuade landowners that it is in their interest to enhance the footpath network with a sensible establishment of permissive paths, replacing stiles with gates to improve accessibility, and, if possible, include some bridleway provision. This should be embraced by an objective, a policy and an action plan to be outlined in the Plan.

C2 Parish Assets and local facilities

Crowhurst has a range of assets and facilities that are valued by the community and were identified as such during the surveys and public consultations during the development of the Plan. These include:

The 12th century St George's Church, an ancient Yew tree, Village Hall, playing field with car park, Lake/fishing club and woodland, Bowerland Corner, Transport services, Defibrillator, established village communication networks and village charities.

Community spirit is highly valued within Crowhurst and the facilities contribute towards that spirit by providing locations as meeting places, spaces for communal activities, open countryside with a patchwork of footpaths and services which benefit residents and their families.

Policies C2.1 – C2.7 support objective 2, To establish a strategy for our assets and facilities that recognises the importance of Crowhurst history which should be preserved and the assets that should be maintained and improved for future generations:

C2.1 - Identify all monuments and historical find locations, list and publicise together with any available history via Crowhurstonline.

C2.2 - Identify all community assets and register as assets of community value, where possible establishing a small committee, where required, to maintain on behalf of the village.

C2.3 - Enable access to view historic sites via footpath network, where possible.

C2.4 - Continue to monitor the parking situation in the Parish with the aim of resolving issues identified with particular focus on the church and village hall.

C2.5 - Any proposal that will result in the loss of or restriction of use for the benefit of the Parish and the wider community of any recognised community assets or facilities within the Parish should be strongly opposed.

C2.6 - Resolve the long term future of the Village Hall and consider possible additional uses e.g. connecting it to superfast Broadband and utilise as a business hub for use by local business people.

C2.7 - Preserve ongoing viability of Crowhurst as a residential community by promoting strong Broadband connectivity to all residences and businesses.

C2.8 – Maintain sufficient volunteers for ongoing management of the speedwatch initiative.

C2.9 – Ensure that road quality is on the agenda for Surrey County Council.

C2.1 – C2.10 Monitoring /Performance Indicators Targets

Identify monuments and historical finds / sites	Identify the 83 archaeological sites and find spots across the Parish and share on the Parish website. Maximise access to such sites, where possible, via the network of footpaths and use of permissive pathways.
Identify and register community assets	Community assets registered as 'assets of community value'.
Access to historic sites	Maximise access to such sites, where possible, via the network of footpaths and use of permissive pathways.
Monitor parking issues	Identify parking overflow onto main thoroughfares where hazards are caused on a regular basis.
Review proximity of any development to historic sites and comment.	Include feedback in all council comments to planning applications
Maximise use of village hall and playing field for community	Village Hall usage increased Explore possibility of childrens play area and adult gym Continue use for village events
Promote strong Broadband and access for all	All Parish properties able to be connected to super-fast Broadband.

Identification and recognition of parish assets

Crowhurst has a rich and long history. The oldest living part of this is the 4000 yr old yew tree which stands in the churchyard St George's Church, an attractive building of 12th and 15th century work, with alterations and additions occurring in the 13th and 14th centuries. Although the open trussed roofs are of early date the wooden spire clad with shingles is of recent date replacing the original after a fire in 1946. The interior is simple with mosaic frescoes on the east wall with tombs of the Gainsford family flanking the chancel, one of which is in cast iron probably unique in this country. The font is of Saxon origin apparently and the linenfold panelled pulpit and lectern are reputedly from the Gainsford family house, Crowhurst Place.

The churchyard contains graves, many being well-kept, stretching back several centuries. There is a handsome lychgate dating from the 1930's.

The yew tree has long had a hollow centre which once hosted afternoon tea parties for villagers. It also featured in the civil war having been hit by (reputedly) one of Cromwell's cannonballs (available to view in the church). The Church is Grade II listed (and requires on-going maintenance).

The nearby Crowhurst Place is a timber frame listed Grade I moated house dating in part from 1425 when it was built for the Gainsford family; it also has a Grade II* listed Granary and Barn. There are many other listed homes, mainly farmhouses in the village.

St George's church, and the associated Yew tree, have long provided spiritual value and a focal point for the village. The plan survey results indicate that the church is also valued as a building of historic interest and pride to residents. Crowhurst has had a long tradition of celebrating St George's day extensively and the church, being dedicated to St George, contributes to the significance of the celebrations.

Crowhurst civil parish has a number of monuments and historical finds which are not generally known, although Surrey County Council had started collating the information.

The objective is to establish a strategy for our assets and facilities that recognises the importance of Crowhurst history, which we should preserve and our valued assets, which should be maintained and improved for future generations through our policies.

Safe off-road parking for use of parish assets and facilities and access to open spaces

Crowhurst is a dispersed and ageing community and as a result places increased reliance on the private car for access to the village facilities. The Village Hall has a small car park, but for larger events it is necessary to park on the roadside. Roadside parking is the only option for St George's church and for access to the network of footpaths. Crowhurst roads are narrow, winding and undulating. Roadside parking is dangerous, especially considering cyclists, ramblers, hikers, horse riders and cars have to share the remaining road space.

Community Spirit and Community locations

Respondents to surveys conducted during the information gathering stage of the Plan stated that they value both the community spirit within Crowhurst and the village atmosphere. Crowhurst has developed some strong customs over time and current and previous residents of Crowhurst strive hard to maintain these.

Crowhurst, due to its dispersed nature, has a few 'community hubs', including the Village Hall, Bowerland Corner and the Church.

The Village Hall dates back to the 1960's and is equipped with a kitchen and facilities to support the local community with 'clubs' and local events, these are held inside and/ or outside the hall on the playing field.

The Village Hall and car park and playing field are owned by Tandridge District Council which leases the Hall to the Parish Council (sub-let to the Village Hall Charity). The Village Hall, which was built

with the support of village residents over 50 years ago, is a registered Charity and is managed by the Village Hall Committee.

Survey responses showed some support for the development of a new Village Hall (over 20% of respondents), which could be used for wider community events. Other responses included the establishment of a children's playground and external toilet facilities for use when the hall has not been booked/is not open. The number of comments suggests a concerted interest in the Village Hall for village activities as an important factor which contributes to the enjoyment of life in the village and the sustainability of the community.

Bowerland Corner was developed as a new village hub, a place to rest, relax and meet, in the early 2000's to recognise an individual in recent history who was highly influential in creating the strength of the community spirit within Crowhurst as we now know it. Previously waste ground with a high bank, that made exiting Bowerland Lane very dangerous, it now boasts a Crowhurst sign, flag pole, benches, trees and makes the road far safer. Whilst some village events are held on Bowerland Corner, it is maintained by local volunteers and funded by donations.

Communication infrastructure

Crowhurst is approximately 24 miles from central London and experiences very poor Internet speeds in the majority of homes. Survey respondents cited that broadband service was very poor and viewed this as a priority need.

The dispersed nature of the village results in telecommunications being provided by different exchanges and this also influences Broadband provision. Good telecommunications are particularly important to support rural enterprise, home-working, children and families. Currently fibre optic connections are the most robust and a future proof method of delivering high performance connectivity, but only part of the village has a fibre optic connection.

One of Crowhurst's farms has invested in a fibre link for the light industrial units on the site, including surrounding houses. The area around the Village Hall is also fibre enabled. The remaining villagers await connection. The lack of a fibre superfast connection not only adversely affects businesses, but also impacts young people who rely on the Internet to do their homework and adults who wish or are required to work from home.

The Crowhurstian, a newsletter for Crowhurst parishioners has been produced for a number of years and pre-dates electronic communication. This is now supplemented by email communications from the Parish Watch and Parish Council, a Parish website, www.crowhurstonline.uk and a recent additional community communication forum, Nextdoor. Such electronic communication does not replace face to face or telephone communication, but serves to enhance it. The village also has 3 notice boards, 2 of which are owned and maintained by the Parish Council and are used for public notices.

Crowhurst Village Charities

Crowhurst has a few established village charities, including:

- Altar Cottages Charity (The Alms houses)
- Relief in Need
- Village Hall Charity

Altar Cottages were a row of 4 alms houses, two were sold to fund support for the remaining two, this is now occupied as one home. The remaining two are occupied by people from the local area who are in need of support, the selection of occupants is via a rigorous process laid down by the constitution of the Charity. Altar Cottages are Grade II listed and were originally monk's quarters, thus have significant historical interest within the village.

The Relief in Need charity is funded via the Henry Smith Charity and provides financial support for those in need in the village and also provides financial support to organisations that provide charitable support to village residents.

The Relief in Need charity is managed by a Committee consisting of a number of local residents and the Vicar and has been running for many years and is well funded. It has no aspirations to expand, but to continue on its present path. The Committee members have a combined residential experience of over 120 years within Crowhurst so are well placed to identify those in need within the village.

The Village Hall Charity has been in operation for approximately 50 years and is managed by a Committee with representation from the Church, Council and clubs. The objective is to manage the Village Hall for the benefit of the local community.

Lake and Fishing Club

Crowhurst Council owns, on a 999 year lease, an area of land and a fishing lake on the site of the old Redland Brickworks and quarry. The area was given to the Parish as part of the arrangement made with Linden Homes, who built the homes at Eliot place. This area is an identified parish asset, the woodland area is included in the Countryside and Open Spaces section of the plan (Section 6). The fishing lake has significant value to the Parish, not only in its outstanding beauty, but that it is leased to a local fishing club for an annual fee and obligation to maintain. This is an important contribution towards village funds and removes direct obligation to maintain the area which would otherwise require Parish Council funding.

Traffic and Transport

As a dispersed rural community Crowhurst residents rely heavily on the private car and our roads are used by neighbouring villagers as a 'rat-run' to avoid congested A roads. Traffic volumes at peak times and also speeds are generally not appropriate for the narrow and winding roads.

Traffic speeds and the condition of our roads was a dominant issue from the survey, with 85% of respondents stating that the road surfaces are poor and 69% were concerned about speeding.

Bus services operate in the form of a daily secondary school bus service and a twice weekly public bus to Oxted and East Grinstead. The East Surrey Rural Transport partnership also runs an accessible mini bus and a dial -a ride service.

Under 18's

Crowhurst has a relatively low number of people under 18 years old – just 42. There is a complete spread of all ages in this number giving no one group a particular edge on which to focus.

Crowhurst does not have the benefit of a 'local' school for any age group, nor doctors' surgery, library or shop. Children and young people therefore disperse beyond the village for both their school and social lives; where most will then have their focal point for friendship groups. On the other hand, many of these young people are friends and join together enthusiastically when they do manage to meet at village events amidst their busy lives.

We have canvassed opinion from the young people, as appropriate. The older ones amongst them are particularly concerned about our broadband speeds (or lack thereof). Otherwise, they are very happy villagers who benefit enormously from our open spaces, village hall and field and the many social occasions throughout the year organised primarily for their elders, but to which they are always welcome.

A policy has not been proposed for the Under 18's specifically due to numbers and there being vast differences in age, however they will all benefit from policy **C13**

C3 Crowhurst Parish Council

Crowhurst Parish Council role in managing agreed neighbourhood planning policies

C3.1 - Applications which are compliant with all policies within the Plan will be accepted and supported by the Parish Council.

C3.2 - Crowhurst Parish Council will establish a village design statement to ensure that the character of the village is maintained or enhanced, in the event of any planning taking place.

C3.3- Coordinate and improve electronic communication to reduce duplication and enhance the message to a wider audience.

C3.4 - Open up the Parish website for use by clubs and businesses within the parish in addition to extending use to individuals to aid communication.

C3.5 - Recognise the parish charities and provide support through council nominee representation.

C3.1 – C3.5 Monitoring /Performance Indicators Targets

Policy	Indicator
Applications which are compliant with all policies within the Plan will be accepted and supported by the Parish Council.	<p>Council response to planning applications to make reference to NP policies, where appropriate.</p> <p>Monitor TDC response to planning applications to ensure that they comply with the Plan.</p>
Crowhurst Parish Council will establish a village design statement to ensure that the character of the village is maintained or enhanced, in the event of any planning taking place.	<p>Village design statement will be produced by XXXXXXXX, approved by the Parish and added to the Plan.</p> <p>The Village Design statement will be used by the Parish Council as a reference for all planning applications and appropriate input will be given to TDC in response to statutory feedback requirements.</p>
Coordinate and improve electronic communication to reduce duplication and enhance the message to a wider audience.	<p>Identify communication 'champion' for the village and provide mailchimp access.</p> <p>Ensure consent is in place for all recipients of email correspondence via the website.</p> <p>Consider alternative methods of village communication e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat etc</p>
Open up the Parish website for use by clubs and businesses within	Identify the various areas in the village which could benefit from website access / communication by end XXXXXXX and a representative for each.

the parish in addition to extending use to individuals to aid communication.	Work with the various representatives to develop a web page for each area to enhance the crowhurstonline tool.
Recognise the parish charities and provide support through council nominee representation.	Ensure that council representation has appropriate voice on the Charity and provides feedback if not.
