



BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

**BISHOPSTONE GROUP NEIGHBOURHOOD
DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SUBMISSION DRAFT MAY 2018**



<http://bishopstonegrouppc-herefordshire.co.uk>

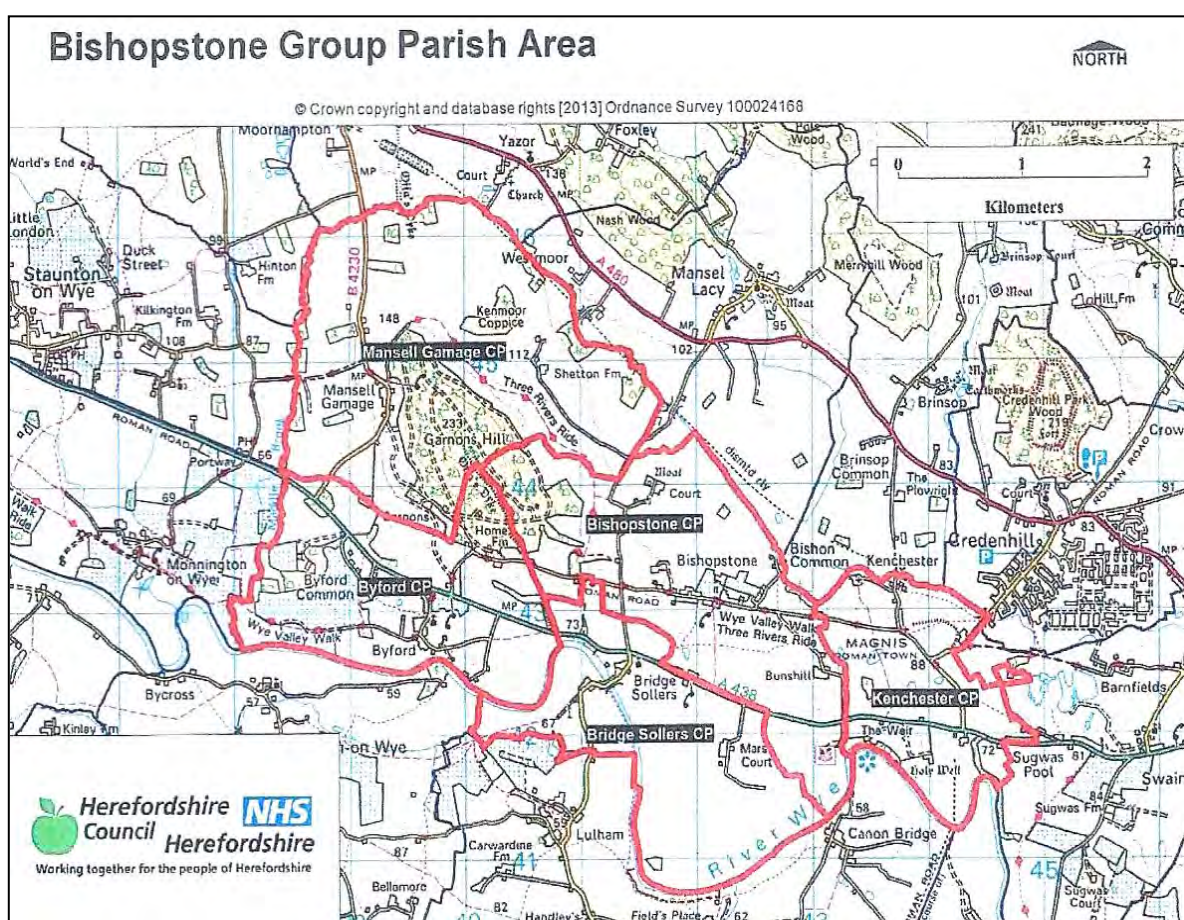
Contents

Introduction.....	3
Preparing the Plan.....	4
Background.....	6
Policies.....	9
Housing Policies.....	11
Housing in Bishopstone.....	15
Housing in Byford.....	21
Housing in Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage.....	24
Group Policies.....	26
Monitoring and Review.....	33

Introduction

This Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been prepared by Bishopstone Group Parish Council, which represents the parishes of Bishopstone, Bridge Sollars, Byford, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage, under powers granted by the 2011 Localism Act. At the end of 2012 the parish council applied to Herefordshire Council for the whole of the five parishes to be designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area and following the required consultation period the application was approved on March 18th 2013.

Figure 1 Map showing Approved Neighbourhood Development Plan Area outlined in red



The NDP sets out policies for guiding new development in the parishes for the period up to 2031. The policies accord with the over-arching Herefordshire Core Strategy and have been formulated as a result of consultation with residents and stakeholders. The policies are divided into two sections, Housing Policies which relate to individual parishes within the group, and general Group Policies.

Preparing the Plan

This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by a steering group made up of parish councillors and residents in consultation with the local community. The process was as follows.

At the end of 2012 Bishopstone Group Parish Council agreed to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) to cover the whole area of the Group Parish and this was approved by Herefordshire Council in March 2013. In order to involve the community in the Plan as early as possible the parish council organised an Open Evening for residents of the five parishes to explain the NDP process, to seek members for the steering group and to find out what issues concerned residents and what they wanted to see included in the Plan.

The steering group prepared a questionnaire using the information obtained at the Open Evening. Every resident was asked to complete the questionnaire and 85% of households responded. The steering group analysed the questionnaire responses and presented the results for comment at a Drop-In Open Day as well as publicising them on the parish website and in local venues.



Open Day at New Bridge Community Centre

The steering group drew up Draft Policies based on these results and on the policies of the Herefordshire Core Strategy. A copy was delivered to every household and comments were again invited. Further consultation was again carried out by means of a Drop-In and publicity on the parish website and at local venues. Throughout the consultation process comments and suggestions were recorded and fed into the writing of the NDP as it evolved.

The Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan was put out for Regulation 14 Consultation over the period 17 October to 17 December 2016. The Draft NDP and supporting documents were placed on the Neighbourhood Development Plan pages of the Parish Council website and the Regulation 14 Consultation dates were advertised in the Hereford Times and on parish notice boards with details of how to access the relevant documents and make comments. We also emailed the Draft NDP and supporting documents to relevant stakeholders, to neighbouring parish councils and to landowners living outside the parish, with an explanatory letter and request for comments.

In order to ensure the fullest possible consultation with residents a paper copy of the Draft NDP was hand delivered to every household in the five parishes together with a letter which explained the process, gave details of how to access the supporting documents either through the website or as paper copies, and invited comments by email or post. We also

held an Open Evening in the Community Centre on October 20th 2016 from 7.30 - 9.30pm when we displayed copies of the Draft NDP and background documents.

As a result of Regulation 14 Consultation, as well as comments from Herefordshire Council we received 4 comments from stakeholders and 19 comments from residents. Full details of consultation are given in the Consultation Statement. The comments received during Regulation 14 Consultation have been used in preparing this Submission Plan.

Our NDP will be submitted for Regulation 16 Consultation in May 2018. The consultation will run for 6 weeks. The Plan with the comments received during Regulation 16 Consultation may then be approved by Herefordshire Council to proceed to examination by an independent examiner, and, if the examination is successful, to a referendum by our residents. If a majority of our residents who vote in that referendum approve the Plan it will be signed off by Herefordshire Council and adopted as part of the Development Plan for Herefordshire.

Background

The Bishopstone Group of parishes comprises two small villages of Bishopstone, and Byford with the outlying hamlets Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage. It covers 10 square miles and situated 4-8 miles west of the city of Hereford. There is no shop, doctor's surgery, school, post office, pub, or petrol garage in the group and the residents have to travel to neighbouring villages or to Hereford and other market towns for these amenities. A



Service bus in Bishopstone

very limited bus service between Hereford and Eardisley serves part of the area. A small community centre was opened in 2011 in part of Bridge Sollars church.

The parishes vary considerably in size and population, ranging from Bishopstone, the largest with just under 200 residents, to Bridge Sollars which has a population of around 30.

Bishopstone is the most nucleated village with much of its housing running

along the old Roman road and some small outlying groups of houses. The other parishes consist of smaller dispersed settlements and individual houses.

Bridge Sollars has only 11 houses widely scattered over its parish area. Byford's houses are mainly divided between three settlements on either side of the A438 – Lower Byford by the church and the river Wye, Byford Common to the west, and the Home Farm and estate cottages at the base of Garnons Hill.

Kenchester is also divided into three with one small settlement stretching along a single track road from Lady Southampton's Chapel to the church; another comprising the Old Weir Farm and New Weir Nursing Home with related cottages on the A438; and a line of modern bungalows further east along the A438 at Swainshill.

Mansell Gamage has a single line of dwellings strung out along the B4320, and a separate small settlement at Shetton, on the other side of Garnons Hill with no direct connection between them by road. Garnons house is also in this parish but has more natural connection with Byford to which it is more closely linked by road.

There is a variety of housing of differing periods and sizes including a development of social housing at Bishopstone and four almshouses also in Bishopstone, run by the Berrington Trust, which are let out to people who need low cost rented accommodation.



Almshouses at Bishopstone

The majority of residents in employment travel outside the Group to work. The main employment within the parishes comes from agriculture and related businesses, tourism and home working. Opportunities for running a business within the Group are sometimes made difficult by poor broadband speed and mobile phone reception.

Travel within the Group is along narrow country lanes, mostly single track with passing places. Problems from heavy goods vehicles and speeding often discourage residents from walking or cycling. Routes through Mansell Gamage and Bridge Sollars are used as distributor roads for through traffic for which they are not suited. The A438 runs east to west through the centre of the Group and so acts as both a link and a barrier for residents.

The villages lie in the flood plain of the river Wye and on the rising land to the north of the river with extensive views southward to the Black Mountains and Hay Bluff. Their history of traditional mixed farming has created an attractive landscape which is a patchwork of arable, pasture, orchards, hedges and woodland.



Humphry Repton's designed landscape Garnons Park

Garnons Park was landscaped by Humphrey Repton in 1794 shortly before the mansion was rebuilt. Byford village then became an integral part of the Repton designed landscape, lying within the view of the house, and the landscape here is still remarkably preserved. The remains of another Repton park are partly incorporated in the National Trust Gardens at The Weir.

The Group contains numerous listed buildings as well as important historical and archaeological sites. It is particularly rich in Roman sites with a marching camp at Byford, a villa site at Bishopstone, and at Kenchester a riverside trading and villa complex and the walled market town of Magnis. Part of a pillar from Magnis is in Kenchester church re-used as a font. The Norman church at Bridge Sollars has carvings of the Herefordshire School and 15th century wall paintings in Byford church include rare early representations of the Mater Misericordiae and the Weighing of Souls. Garnons Park is included in the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

There is a network of footpaths and bridleways within the parishes. The long distance Wye Valley Walk from Chepstow to Plynlimon and the Three Rivers Ride, part of the National Bridleroute Network developed by The British Horse Society, pass through the Group.

The river Wye is designated as a Special Area of Conservation due to its importance as a key breeding ground for many nationally and internationally important species of special interest and its associated plant and animal communities.

Bishon Meadow is registered as a Site of Special Scientific Interest as a herb-rich neutral grassland. It is home to two nationally scarce species, the marshy grassland plant Orange Foxtail, and a hoverfly *Neoascia geniculata*.

Special Wildlife Sites include ancient woodland at Kenmore Coppice and a small section of Garnons Hill where wild daffodils are abundant and the many species of animals and birds include deer, polecat, woodcock and raven.



River Wye at Bridge Sollars

Policies

Our Vision for 2031 is:

By 2031 each settlement in the Group will have achieved a level of growth that suits its own individual needs in order to flourish as a strong, viable community with Bishopstone as the centre of development for the Group. The new housing and business development will be of a type and scale that suit and enhance the local environment, while preserving the beauty and tranquillity of the rural landscape for residents and visitors.

Key Issues

Through consultation we have identified a number of key issues that are of particular importance to our residents:

- Need for sustainable growth throughout the Group to encourage a mixed age population to keep our communities strong and viable
- There is a need within the Group for a mix of housing types including smaller market housing that local people can afford
- Development should be of a size and scale suited to each individual settlement
- Because of the small size and dispersed nature of our settlements in most cases new housing should be in small developments containing between one and six houses on any individual site and suited to the rural character of the settlements
- Bishopstone should be the main focus for development within the Group where a larger housing development in the centre of the village would create a more defined village centre that will maintain the street pattern and not expand into open countryside
- Small scale local businesses should be supported, especially home working and those connected with agriculture and tourism
- Speed and size of traffic on local roads is having a detrimental effect on communities. Where necessary any new development should include appropriate measures for traffic management and safety, bearing in mind that most of the roads linking the settlements to the A438 are single track
- Impact of new development on existing levels of flooding already experienced by residents in all parishes
- Sewerage and drainage provision in Bishopstone is barely adequate. Proposed improvements to drainage and sewerage may be necessary as part of any planned new development



Footpath Byford to Byford Common

- Need to improve the network of footpaths and bridleways within and between settlements
- When considering any new development there is a need to protect the landscape and historic sites which are an asset valued by our communities

The policies listed in this Plan are designed to achieve our Vision and address the issues identified by our residents.

Objectives in creating our policies

BO1 To encourage provision of housing which answers local needs, provides future sustainability for all our communities and answers the wishes and needs of the residents of each individual community



Shetton barn conversions at Mansell Gamage

BO2 To encourage business development of a type and scale that suits our communities especially by supporting home-based business enterprise

BO3 To protect the historic landscape and built heritage



Humphry Repton's landscaped park at the New Weir Kenchester

BO4 To support thriving settlements with residents of all ages contributing to strong and vibrant communities.

Housing Policies

Background

Bishopstone Group is made up five separate parishes, Bishopstone, Byford, Mansell Gamage, Kenchester and Bridge Sollars. Bishopstone is the largest settlement and lies at the centre of the Group with the other four smaller parishes in a circle around it. The population of the Group is just under 400 of whom 15% are aged under 18 and 35% over 60. These figures exclude the residents of the Weir Nursing Home which has a transient population of around 30-35 elderly people. In order to maintain a strong community there is a need for a mix of properties including some smaller market housing which would encourage young families to live here and enable older residents to down-size while staying in the area.

Herefordshire Local Requirements Study 2012 forecast that population growth in rural areas is likely to be primarily through an increase in those aged over 75 with moderate growth in the 30-44 and 60-74 age brackets. As a consequence, rural areas will need to provide more 3 bedroom homes, with more 1 and 2 bedroom homes required in the affordable sector. At present Bishopstone has 14 houses owned by a housing association. There are also four 1 bedroom low-rent almshouses available for local people of all ages.



Housing association homes at Bishopstone

Responses to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire show that our residents want to see a level of development that will keep all our communities viable and strong without harming the rural characteristics of the area. They consider that there is a need for a mix of 2 bedroom and 3-4 bedroom homes and for homes affordable by local people; that new homes should be situated within existing housing areas; and that new developments should use brownfield sites where possible. The Housing Needs Survey included with the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire shows a current need for 15 new dwellings of differing types and sizes in the Group. Seven people said that they needed 3-4 bedroom properties, five needed 2 bedrooms and two needed 1 bedroom. The preferred tenure was owner-occupied. Two people said that they needed affordable housing.

Under the policies set out in the Herefordshire Core Strategy the five parishes that make up the Group fall into three separate categories for housing development.

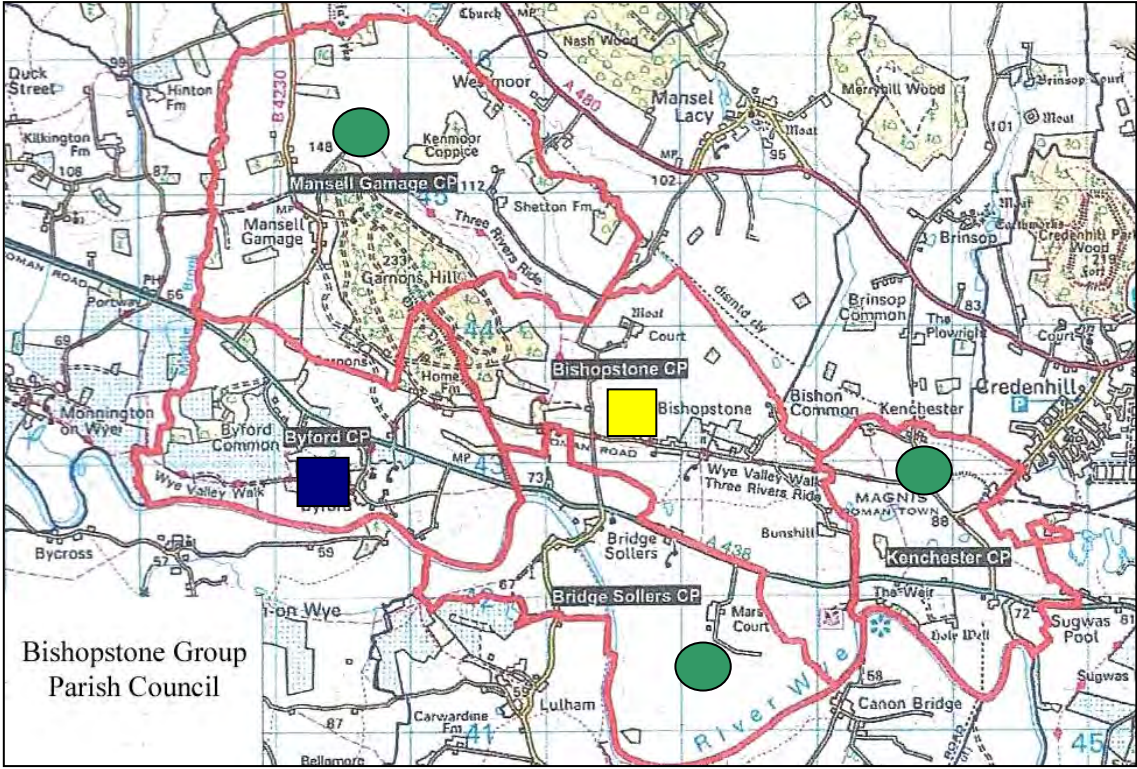
Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA1 *Rural Housing Distribution Strategy* states that new dwellings will be broadly distributed across the county's rural areas on the basis of seven Housing Market Areas (HMA.) The indicative housing growth targets in each of these HMAs will be used as basis for the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans in the county. Local evidence and environmental factors will determine the appropriate scale of development. Bishopstone Group is placed in Hereford HMA which has an indicative housing growth target of 18%.

Core Strategy Policy RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns* states that in order to maintain and strengthen locally sustainable communities across the rural parts of Herefordshire sustainable housing growth will be supported in those settlements identified in figures 4.14 and 4.15.

Bishopstone is included in figure 4.14 *Settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development* and Byford in figure 4.15 *Other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate*. Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage are covered by Policy RA3 *Herefordshire’s countryside* which places strict limits on residential developments.

In forming this Plan we have taken the Core Strategy indicative housing growth target of 18% as our minimum growth target for the Group.

Figure 2 Plan showing the relative position of the 5 parishes and their status under the Herefordshire Core Strategy



- Bishopstone - identified as the main focus of proportionate housing development
- Byford – identified as suitable for proportionate sustainable housing growth.
- Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage – settlements classed as being in open countryside where any new housing will be strictly limited

Herefordshire Council’s housing growth figures show a total of 141 houses in Byford and Bishopstone giving an indicative proportionate growth target of 25. However during the period 2011-2017 there was a net gain of 3 units completed leaving a target of 22 new dwellings in the period up to 2031. In framing this Neighbourhood Development Plan we have had to balance the growth targets set by the Herefordshire Core Strategy, the desire of all our communities to maintain sustainable growth, the need for sensitive and appropriate growth which respects the dispersed settlement patterns of our parishes and the constraints imposed by the policies of the Herefordshire Core Strategy which mean that many areas within the Group are allowed only very limited development.

We have therefore chosen to place the main focus for development in Bishopstone which will provide nearly two thirds of our target growth and we have identified a site for a housing development of up to 16 dwellings in the centre of Bishopstone. We have drawn settlement boundaries round the main housing areas of Bishopstone and Byford, as requested by residents, which will allow the development of housing on windfall sites within the boundary and we will particularly encourage development on the brownfield sites within these settlement areas. Outside the settlement boundaries, and in the hamlets and settlements classified as open countryside, we will support development in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4 and RA5 and will particularly encourage developments which involve the re-use of rural buildings.

Because of the way our parishes have developed historically they all contain small settlements which have grown up away from the main settlement areas. These would often benefit from a small amount of carefully controlled growth suited to their scale, lay-out and setting. In most cases this would only amount to two or three new houses but it would help to keep small communities thriving and enable families to remain or move into these communities. At the moment the Herefordshire Core Strategy prohibits such building in what is classed as open countryside but we will monitor the situation and will revisit our Plan and carry out new consultation with residents if the Core Strategy policies should change in the future.

During the period 2000 - 2015 permissions were granted for 21 additional dwellings as windfall in the NDP area, divided between new build and conversion of existing buildings. Based on this history and on informal discussion and comment during consultation our forecast is for a minimum of 10 - 15 additional dwellings as the result of windfall during the Plan period up to 2031. The combination of a planned new development in the centre of Bishopstone with individual windfall sites and conversion of existing buildings should enable us to satisfy local needs and meet or exceed our target of 22 additional homes in the NDP area during the Plan period 2011 - 2031. However, we will monitor housing growth within the Bishopstone Group and will review our housing policies against our targets every five years to see if changes are needed.



**New build Bungalow
Bishopstone**

Intention

- To encourage provision of housing that answers local needs and is of a size and type that suits each of the individual settlements within the Group.
- To encourage a level of housing growth that will keep our communities viable and sustainable for the future and will meet or exceed the targets of the Herefordshire Core Strategy
- To encourage a mixed-age population by making it possible for younger people to find housing within the Group while enabling older residents to remain within their home villages.
- To encourage the best architectural design taking into consideration the style and size of buildings in the location in which it will be placed
- To ensure that all development in the group meets our design and environmental criteria, and that development will only take place if infrastructure including drainage and sewerage is suitable and adequate to make the development sustainable and if there is sufficient off-road parking.
- To strengthen the local economy by supporting housing which includes home working facilities on suitable sites.
- To preserve the high quality of our landscape and environment

Housing in Bishopstone

Background

With just over 90 dwellings, Bishopstone is the largest village in the Group and the one with the biggest central core. The Herefordshire Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2 identify it as a village which is to be the main focus of proportionate housing development during the Plan period 2011 -2031 with a growth target of 18%.

Most of Bishopstone's housing lies along the line of the old Roman road (C1097) with a few scattered clusters of dwellings lying dispersed towards the edges of the parish. The C1097 is mainly single track with passing places but widens in the centre of the village. At the western end of the village is the Old Rectory which is a Roman villa site and to the east the settlement is bounded by Bishon Lane leading to Bishon Meadow which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The church lies detached from the main village down a single-track road.

The buildings are a mixture of older stone and timber framed properties, some dating back to the 16th century, and modern houses and bungalows built mainly during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1965 a small development of eight bungalows was built at the east end of the central core at the junction of Bishon Lane and the C1097. In the centre of the village there is a small development of social housing and also four almshouses, run by the Berrington Trust, which are let out to people who need low cost rented accommodation.

A limited bus service to Hereford (four buses a day) passes through the village. Credenhill where there are shops and a doctors' surgery lies two miles to the east but there is no bus service to connect Credenhill with Bishopstone.

A settlement boundary was placed around the central area of Bishopstone in 1991 but the settlement area it defines does not contain enough possible sites for housing to enable us to meet the growth target set by Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA1 or to satisfy local need. As part of our 2014 questionnaire we asked residents to identify any particular sites in their parish that they thought suitable for additional housing. Of the 36 suggestions from Bishopstone residents 26 identified Bishon Orchard - a site adjoining the road at Bishon Farm in the centre of the village but lying outside the 1991 settlement boundary. In answer to further questions residents indicated that they did not want new housing to be built on productive agricultural land or on the south side of the C1097.

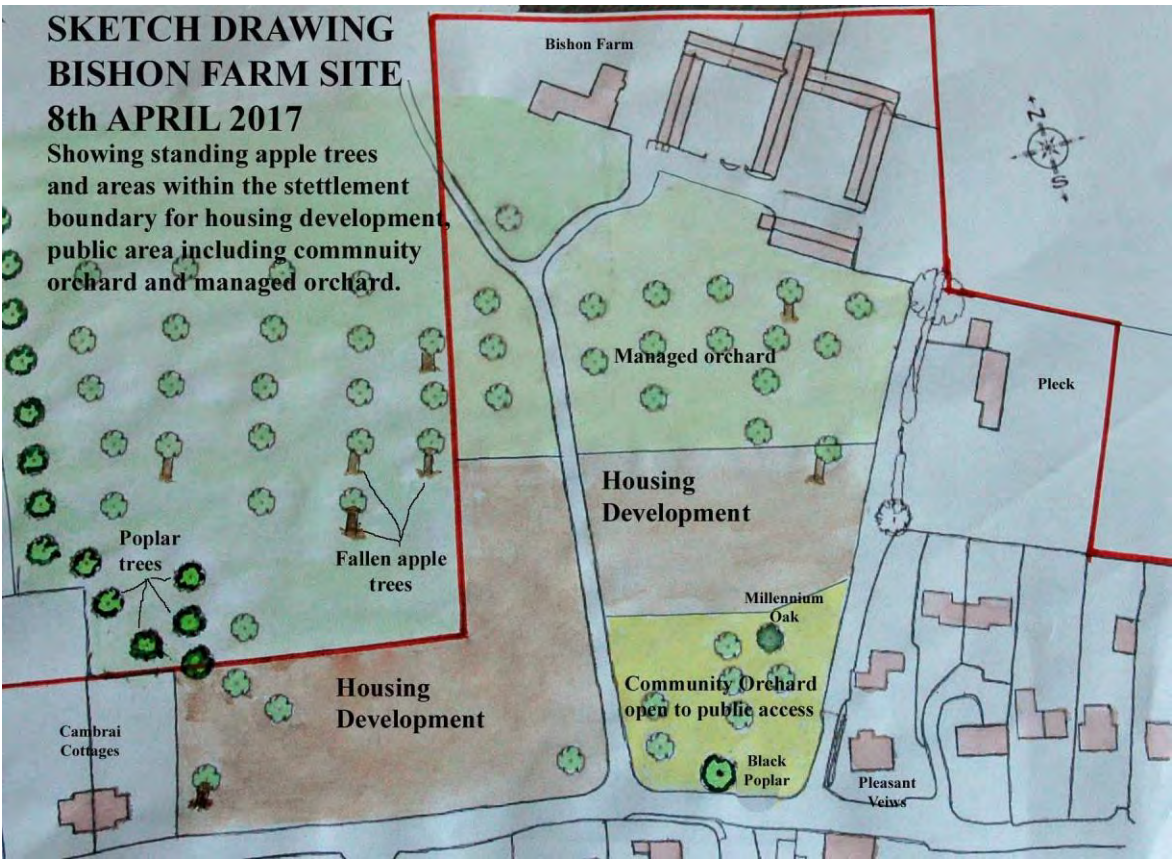
Bishon farmhouse is situated in the centre of Bishopstone village on the north side of the C1097. The house and buildings stand back from the road, surrounded on three sides by traditional orchards. The house, which is Grade II listed, is not currently occupied. In 2006 the landowner obtained planning permission to convert redundant farm buildings into seven houses and bungalows with a mixture of two and three bedroom properties. This planning application was supported by the Parish Council. A new drive entrance was put in through the orchard but the conversion has not yet been carried out. Part of the area between the buildings and the road has been used for village events for many years, from the Coronation celebrations in 1937 to the Millennium Party in 2000, as well as for fundraising events for Bishopstone church. An oak tree was planted on the site in 2000 as part of the millennium

celebrations and residents would like the area around the tree to be kept as a community space with a seat to provide a meeting place for the village.

Bishon Orchard is designated as a Traditional Orchard, a UK Biodiversity priority habitat. Until the 1980s the orchard formed an active part of the farm's economy with the fruit used to make cider for the farm and local women employed in harvesting the apples. In recent years the orchard has not been maintained and is used only as rough grazing for cattle. The trees are old and are beginning to die and more are being lost each year through a combination of storm winds and natural decay. In the last year alone six trees fell and were cut up for firewood and without intervention there could be nothing left in twenty years' time. Herefordshire Core Strategy recognises the importance of biodiversity assets and seeks to restore and enhance them (Core Strategy policy LD2).



Bishon Orchard storm damage 2017



During Regulation 14 consultation concerns were raised about the potential for housing at Bishon Farm to impact on the Traditional Orchard habitat, and the need for measures to be put in place to protect it. Following a site visit in March 2017 the Senior Planning Ecologist commented “the best way to conserving what is left of the orchard for the future would be to allow some development on part of the site and have an orchard management plan in place to conserve the remaining orchard areas.” [See Consultation Statement]



Revised Settlement boundary (2014) —————

As a result of the questionnaire responses we decided to extend the Bishopstone settlement area to include land between Bishon farmhouse and the C1097 to be used for housing development. At a Parish Council meeting in March 2015 the owner of the Bishon site presented outline plans for 12 new dwellings on part of this site. The owner put in a pre-application submission request to Herefordshire Council but following discussion with Planning officers he also put forward an additional proposal for development on a site adjoining Pleck Cottage, a Grade II listed building (now derelict) to the east of Bishon farmhouse, which lies outside the extended development area.

During Regulation 14 consultation residents strongly supported development on the Bishon orchard site. Development on the Pleck site is actively opposed by residents for several reasons. The first is that neighbouring properties have had problems in the past with flood water running from the proposed Pleck site into their homes and this is likely to be made worse by additional run-off from the new buildings and road. The ground in that area of the parish has a high water table and running sand which caused considerable difficulty when a sewer was installed in the 1970s. There is also concern because development on the Pleck site would extend the area of village housing into open countryside currently used for agricultural purposes.

At a parish council meeting in July 2017 the landowner showed two possible schemes for development, Option 1 on the Bishon Orchard site and Option 2 on land adjoining Pleck Cottage. After discussion councillors expressed agreement with Option 1 but rejected Option 2 due to its position outside the new settlement boundary and to the strong opposition of residents expressed both before and during Regulation 14 consultation.

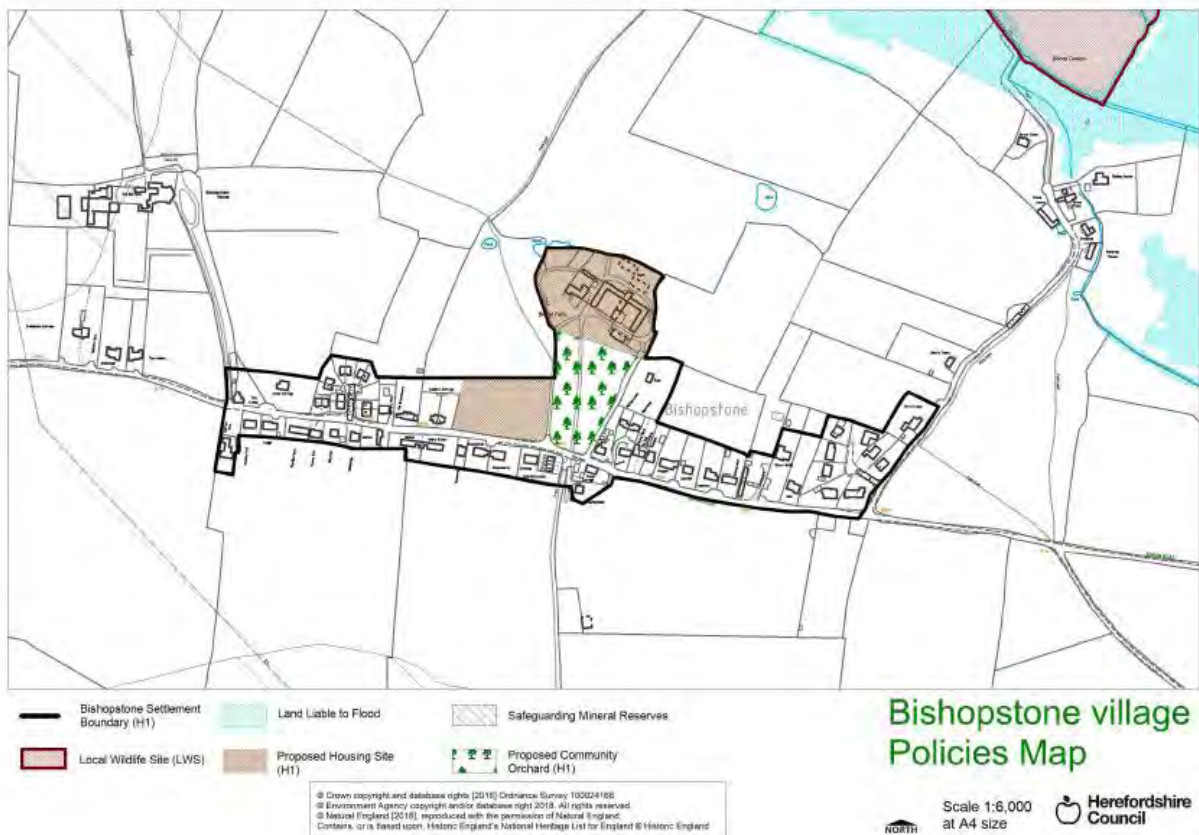
In creating a housing policy for Bishopstone we have looked for a way to answer the wishes of residents and provide a proportionate and sustainable level of housing development while at the same time helping to preserve the Traditional Orchard habitat which is an important ecological asset to the village.

Policy H1 Housing in Bishopstone

- 1 Bishopstone will become the main focus for housing development in the NDP area.**
- 2 The previous UDP settlement boundary for Bishopstone will be extended to take in Bishon farmhouse and a small portion of Bishon Orchard. Most of the orchard will remain outside the settlement area and so will be protected from future housing development.**
- 3. We will support housing development of between 12 and 16 dwellings on the farmhouse site including the part of Bishon Orchard which lies within the extended settlement area, with a mixture of 2 bedroom and 3-4 bedroom houses and bungalows, to include a proportion of affordable housing for local people in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy policy H1. The development must have its own appropriate systems for disposal of sewage and waste and surface water which will augment where necessary the existing systems in the village.**
- 4 Any application submitted for housing development must be in keeping with Policy G1 and must include a proper ecological assessment and details of measures to be taken to minimise harm to existing orchard trees within the development area. The development should include a community space with a seat near the Millennium Tree to provide a focus for the village and a meeting place for residents.**
- 5 The parish council will support the landowner in creating a management plan for conservation of the remaining orchard. The area of orchard adjacent to the community space will be left permanently open for public access as a community orchard which could include information displays about the history and ecology of the orchard.**
- 6 Within the settlement area we will encourage the conversion of redundant or disused buildings to housing provided that**
 - a) conversions respect the scale, form, lay-out, character and setting of the settlements in which they are placed**
 - b) the design is in keeping with Policy G1**

7 Proposals for additional dwellings on in-fill sites within the settlement area will be supported providing that the plans are in keeping with Policy G1 and no detriment is caused to adjoining properties.

8 Outside the settlement boundary development will be supported in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4 and RA5 and with Bishopstone Group policies G1 and G2. We will particularly encourage the re-use of redundant or disused buildings



Justification

Policy H1 accords with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA1 *Rural Housing Distribution*; RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns*; RA3 *Herefordshire’s countryside*; RA4 *Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings*; RA5 *Re-use of Rural Buildings*; and LD2 *Biodiversity and geodiversity*.

Bishopstone is the largest village in the group, the most central and has a development target of 18 % set by the Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA1. It has reasonable access to services and the residents support the provision of a sustainable level of housing growth within the parish. There is not sufficient capacity from building conversions and from in-fill

sites within the 1991 settlement boundary to satisfy the target set by the Core Strategy and local need. Consultation has shown that Bishon farmhouse and Orchard is residents' preferred site for a small housing development and communal space which will help to create a "heart" which they feel is currently lacking from the village while maintaining its character.

Bishon Orchard is a Traditional Orchard (one of a number in the village) and as such is recognised as UK Priority Habitat. The trees have not been maintained and there is a danger that without active conservation measures the orchard may be lost. Herefordshire Core Strategy policy LD2 states that development proposals should conserve, restore and enhance the biodiversity assets of Herefordshire through the retention and protection of nature conservation sites and habitats, and important species in accordance with their status. We believe that the best way of fulfilling this aim at Bishon Orchard is to combine a sensitive housing development on the site with an action plan that will begin to conserve the remaining Traditional Orchard habitat. Working on the action plan will provide an opportunity to bring different strands of the community together and could provide a basis for further projects such as a community archive and exhibitions which will help to develop the village identity.

Housing in Byford

Background

Byford is the second largest settlement in the Group and has been identified in the Herefordshire Council Core Strategy Policy RA2 as a village where there should be proportionate sustainable housing growth. It is made up of three main settlements – Lower Byford, Byford Common and Garnons/Home Farm – with a few outlying houses. The settlements are small, consisting of 23 dwellings at Lower Byford, 13 at Byford Common and 11 at Garnons/Home Farm. Existing buildings are

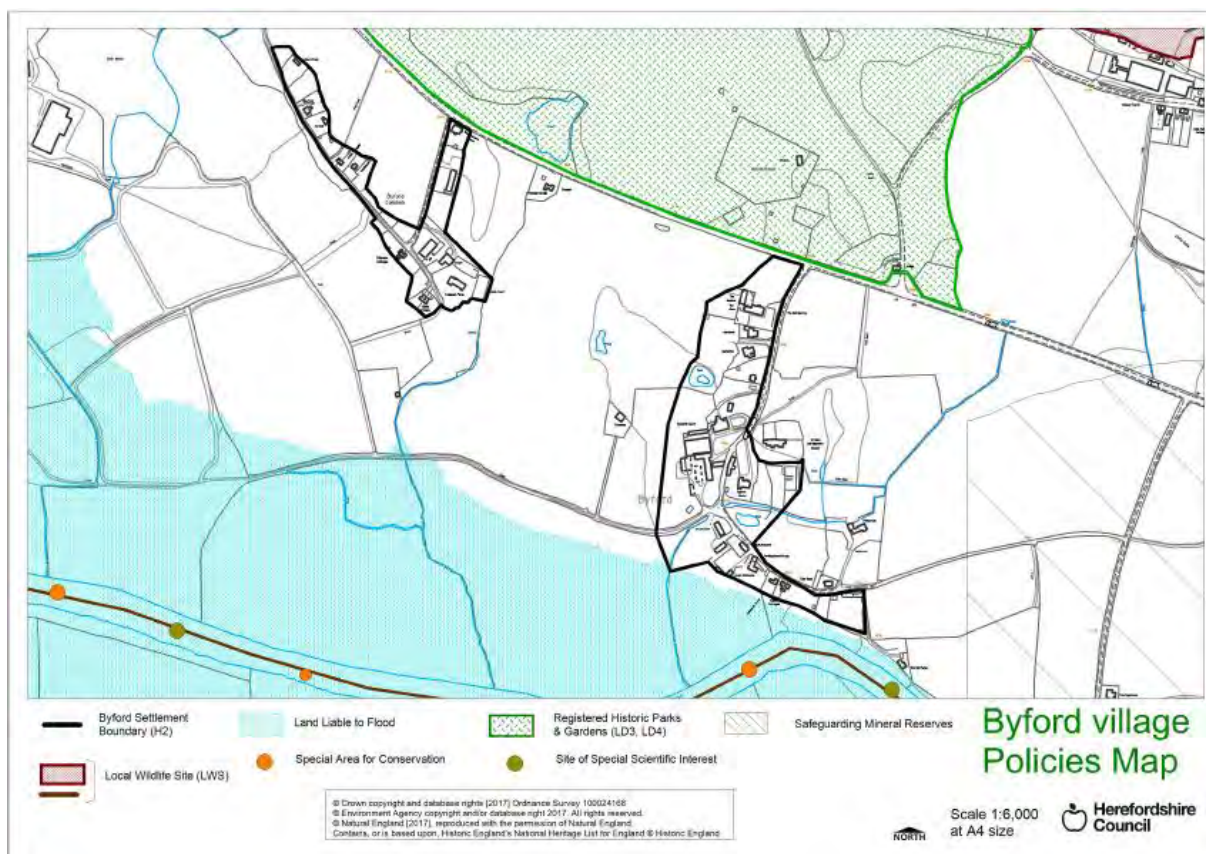


Timber framed houses at Byford

in a mix of styles and sizes ranging from the imposing stone-built Garnons mansion to 19th century brick estate workers cottages at Byford Common and Home Farm, and large 16th century stone and timber framed houses at Lower Byford. Repton's landscape design for Garnons is still recognisable in the pattern of fields, roads and settlements of the parish.

Policy H2 Housing in Byford

- 1. Settlement boundaries will be created around the main settlements at Lower Byford and Byford Common.**
- 2. Within these settlement areas proposals for new dwellings will be supported provided that**
 - a) the number and size of new dwellings is in keeping with the settlement and the location in which they are to be placed with between one and six houses on a site**
 - b) new buildings respect the scale, form, lay-out, character and setting of the settlements in which they are placed**
 - c) the design is in keeping with Policy G1**
 - d) development re-uses brownfield sites wherever possible**
- 3. Within the settlement area we will encourage the conversion of redundant buildings to housing provided that**
 - a) conversions respect the scale, form, lay-out, character and setting of the settlements in which they are placed**
 - b) the design is in keeping with Policy G1**
- 4. Outside the settlement boundaries development will be supported in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4 and RA5 provided that the development is in keeping with Bishopstone Group policies G1 and G2. We will particularly encourage the re-use of redundant or disused buildings**



Justification

In framing policies for Byford we have been guided by Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA1 *Rural Housing Distribution*; RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns* and RA3 *Herefordshire's countryside*. Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA2 identifies Byford as a village which should have sustainable proportionate housing growth. The Core Strategy (section 4.8.12) also states that development should respect the scale, form, layout, character and setting of existing settlements and that an existing dispersed settlement pattern should be respected in the delivery of new housing proposals.

Questionnaire responses from residents showed that there is a need in Byford for a mix of house sizes and types that will enable families to live and work in the area, and will help existing residents who would like to downsize but wish to remain in their home village. Residents also wanted new development to be small scale and sited within existing housing areas.

We have drawn the settlement boundaries fairly tightly round the housing areas at Lower Byford and Byford Common in order to keep the integrity of the existing historic settlement pattern. The existing layout of these settlements makes them particularly suited to small scale additions through infill or on sites immediately adjacent to existing housing, rather than through a single larger development scheme. Both the settlement areas that we have defined contain a number of suitable sites, including brownfield sites, where we will support additional housing.

During consultation residents requested that a settlement boundary should also be created around the smaller settlement at Home Farm but we have been advised that this settlement is too small and isolated to sustain new build developments and should be treated as “open countryside” in terms of the Herefordshire Core Strategy policies.

Based on recent history of development in the parish and informal consultation we are confident that sufficient windfall applications will come forward, including brownfield sites and building conversions, to achieve or exceed our target for proportionate development over the period of the Plan. This policy will encourage a measured and sustainable rate of development, preserve the historic landscape and settlement pattern and enable both settlements to grow and flourish into the future.

Housing in Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage

Background

These hamlets are classed as countryside where only limited development can be considered and are covered by Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA3. The hamlets are small and dispersed. Bridge Sollars has only 11 houses widely scattered over its parish area. Mansell Gamage consists of two settlements, a line of dwellings strung out along the B4320, and a small group of houses at Shetton, on the other side of Garnons Hill, with no direct connection by road. Garnons house and the wooded Garnons Hill are also within the parish of Mansell Gamage. Kenchester consists of a small settlement along a single track no-through road running south from the C1097 and a number of dwellings situated about half a mile away on either side of the A438. These include the New Weir estate, now owned by the National Trust where work is planned to restore the original Repton park design.

Kenchester, Bridge Sollars and Mansell Gamage suffer from significant traffic problems, and this was highlighted in responses to the questionnaire. The main settlement area of Kenchester lies at the end of a single-track lane and Bridge Sollars and Mansell Gamage lie along narrow country lanes that are designated as distributor roads and carry a considerable amount of fast moving and heavy traffic.



View from Garnons Hill looking South over the parishes of Bishopstone and Kenchester

During consultation for this Neighbourhood Development Plan residents of Mansell Gamage and Kenchester suggested that the provision of a limited number of new houses over the Plan period would improve the sustainability of their communities. The residents of Kenchester also requested the creation of a settlement boundary within their parish to identify a suitable area for this development. We have not been able to meet their wishes as they run contrary to the policies of the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

Policy H3 Housing in Bridge Sollars, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage

1 Housing development in the three hamlets will be supported in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4 and RA5 provided that the development is in keeping with Bishopstone Group policies G1 and G2. We will particularly encourage the re-use of redundant or dis-used buildings.

Justification

This policy accords with Herefordshire Core Strategy policies RA3 *Herefordshire’s countryside*, RA4 *Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings* and RA5 *Re-use of rural buildings*. The three villages are only suitable for a small amount of development because of their size, the dispersed settlement pattern and existing traffic problems; this policy will allow for some growth within the hamlets to help their sustainability. In accordance with residents’ wishes we will monitor and review this policy over the Plan period in the light of possible changes to the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

Group Policies

The Policies in this section relate to issues that affect all the villages in the Group.

Policy G1 Housing development sites and design

1 Except for the Bishon Farm site in Bishopstone, where a larger development is planned, we will support the building of up to 6 houses on individual sites.

2 All new development must be designed to a high quality. The following criteria will be used in assessing proposals for such development:

- a. The orientation, siting, scale, proportions, massing, materials and detailing of the design**
- b. Planning and architectural integrity of the design and the way it fits in with the surrounding buildings and landscape**
- c. Construction design and materials should reflect the dwellings in the immediate area**
- d. Sustainable construction and design that uses recycled materials and renewable energy wherever possible**
- e. Preserving and enhancing the local built, natural and historic environment**
- f. Impact on existing natural horizons and regard to existing roof lines**
- g. Impact on residential amenity of existing residents**
- h. Highway safety and access including adequate off-road parking**
- i. Impact on local flood risk**
- j. Impact of existing development on future residential occupants**

3 All new development must have due regard for the importance of the creation and retention of green infrastructure and where appropriate should include measures for protection of priority habitat (including hedgerows and orchards) and inclusion of biodiversity enhancements such as bat boxes, bird boxes and native planting

4 All proposals for new development should identify and address any environmental issues specific to the site particularly with reference to the River Wye SAC

Background/Justification

Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework states “*neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for an area,*” Herefordshire Core Strategy states (4.8.17) *Given the importance of the Herefordshire landscape --- new dwellings should make a positive contribution to their*

rural landscape by being built to a high standard, incorporating appropriate materials and landscaping. As the buildings in our villages vary widely in their age, construction and design it is important to ensure that new buildings are compatible with neighbouring properties and contribute positively to the landscape of the settlements in which they are to be placed. Parish Councils have a duty to have regard to biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 117 stresses the importance of the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats.

In answers and comments to our questionnaire residents told us that good quality sustainable construction and design that is in keeping with their own neighbourhood is important to them when considering new development. In addition, 88% of questionnaire respondents felt that it is important to protect hedgerows, woodlands and wild-life habitats. This policy seeks to ensure that all new development is of a high standard which will enhance the quality of the built environment of our villages and protect the green infrastructure.

Policy G2 Flooding

1 Any proposal for new housing, business or agricultural development or change of use must examine possible risk of flooding at the proposed site and if appropriate should carry out sequential/exception tests and provide a full flooding assessment and report.

2 In order to protect existing and new properties and prevent damage to the highway system all proposals for new development or change of use must include adequate measures for sustainable surface water drainage.

3 All development or change of use must provide for surface water to be diverted into suitable drainage systems and must ensure that no pollution can escape into streams or into the river Wye.

Background/Justification

Flooding in all our villages has been increasing over the last 5 years and in some cases has damaged properties and blocked roads including the A438. The flooding comes from watercourses, ditches and run-off from fields and domestic properties. It has been particularly bad at Bishopstone and at Shetton where changes in agricultural practice have increased run-off from fields so that residents have at times been unable to use their normal



Flooded homes on Bishon Common

routes to work and school. We received 151 complaints and comments about recent flooding events in responses to our questionnaire.

Policy G3 Business development and home working

1 In accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA6 we will support proposals for new small scale businesses, especially those connected to agriculture and tourism which give employment to local residents, are of a size and type suitable to the individual location and do not adversely affect the neighbourhood through noise, traffic, vehicle parking, water run-off, noxious emissions or other forms of pollution

2 We will support applications for partial change of use or extension to a dwelling for home working provided that the worker continues to live there and that there is no adverse effect on the neighbourhood

3 We will support improvements to broadband speed and mobile phone reception provided they do not have an adverse effect on neighbouring properties or the landscape

Background/Justification

Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA6 states *Employment generating proposals which help diversify the rural economy in rural areas such as knowledge based creative industries, environmental technologies, business diversification projects and home working will be supported.*

Questionnaire responses showed that the types of business our residents would most like to see developed are home working and businesses connected to agriculture and tourism, and that poor broadband and mobile phone reception are hampering such development.

This policy will encourage a level of business development which will help to make our villages viable and which does not adversely affect the landscape, environment and traffic conditions.

The development of small local businesses will help to support the local economy and enable more residents to find work within the Group. This will help to increase the sustainability of the community.

Policy G4 Traffic and Transport

1 Where it is necessary for reasons of their size or siting new housing, change of use or proposals for enhancement of existing facilities should include appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse impact on traffic and road safety. These may include traffic calming measures or alternative routes that will encourage residents to walk or cycle within the parishes.

2 We will encourage and support initiatives to improve road safety in our villages including the use of speed limits, more and larger passing places, improved signage and road marking and restrictions on the size and weight of vehicles using the roads

Background/Justification

In order to be sustainable for the future the changes supported by our policies need to be underpinned by actions to address traffic problems which make our villages less attractive as places to live, especially for young families. Our villages and hamlets are composed of scattered settlements so that people have to travel for work, leisure or social interaction. The lanes are narrow (often single track) with dangerous levels of traffic volume and speed at times, especially in Bridge Sollars and Mansell Gamage.

In questionnaire answers and comments 60% of respondents (more in some parishes) said that local roads are unsafe, citing safety for walkers and cyclists as their main concern, and 74% named improving facilities for walking, cycling and horse riding as the most important factor in making our communities attractive and sustainable for the future. Residents also gave lack of road safety as their main reason for using car travel rather than walking or cycling to work.



Traffic congestion in Bridge Sollars caused by two HGV not able to pass each other

Policy G5 Tourism

1 We will support proposals for new tourist facilities or enhancement of existing facilities where:

- a. their size and nature are appropriate to their setting within the landscape**
- b. they do not have a detrimental impact on local residents.**
- c. they do not have a detrimental impact on the landscape, ecology, views or tranquillity of the area.**
- d. they do not lead to traffic, parking or road safety problems**

Background/Justification

Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA6 *Rural economy* states that *a range of economic activities will be supported including proposals which--- promote sustainable tourism proposals of an appropriate scale in accordance with Policy E4 – Tourism.* Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy E4 paragraph 2 encourages *the development of sustainable tourism opportunities, capitalising on assets such as the county’s landscape, rivers, other waterways and attractive rural settlements where there is no detrimental effect on the county’s natural and heritage assets or on the overall character and quality of the environment.*

Our Group of villages is situated in the Wye Valley between the major tourist destinations of Hereford and Hay on Wye. The Wye Valley Walk and Three Rivers Ride pass through the Group and the river Wye is a popular site for canoeists. The National Trust Weir Gardens attract many visitors from within the county and outside. Tourism already makes a small contribution to the local economy and this is likely to increase in future. This policy seeks to support growth in local tourism in a way that will be beneficial to the local community without harming the environment on which the tourism is based.



Garnons glamping site at Byford



National Trust Weir Gardens Kenchester

Policy G6 Historic Landscape and Green Infrastructure

1 All new development should respect and preserve the historic landscape and natural environment of our parishes including trees, hedgerows, woodland and watercourses.

2 New development should seek to enhance the existing green infrastructure and encourage access to it by promoting and extending the network of rights of way within the parishes.

3 We will work with landowners to support and encourage measures to improve and enhance access to rights of way within the parish

Background/Justification

Herefordshire Core Strategy policy LD3 states *Development proposals should protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure.* The landscape of our parishes is a mixture of designed parkland and farmland that still retains many ancient trees and hedges in its field patterns. It is an asset which attracts visitors and access to it helps to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing for our

residents. Consultation showed that our residents support the preservation of the historic landscape and natural environment and 74% of questionnaire responses named improved facilities for walking, cycling and horse riding as the most important factor in making our communities sustainable for the future.



Walkers on a loop off the Wye Valley Walk

Monitoring and Review

The Bishopstone Group Neighbourhood Development Plan will be delivered by the Parish Council and used in consideration of any proposed development within the five parishes. In order to ensure the continued relevance of the NDP and its ability to deliver our Vision for the Group we will set up a framework for monitoring and reporting as follows

- We will monitor housing growth and report formally to residents each year at the Annual Parish Meeting when residents will have an opportunity for questions and comments
- We will communicate continually with our residents through the parish council meetings and website
- We will review all our housing policies against our targets every five years to see if any changes are needed
- We will monitor changes to the Herefordshire Core Strategy and will revisit our NDP if there are any policy changes that affect potential development in our parishes
- If it appears that we need to change our policies or targets we will consult fully with residents and set up a working group of councillors and residents