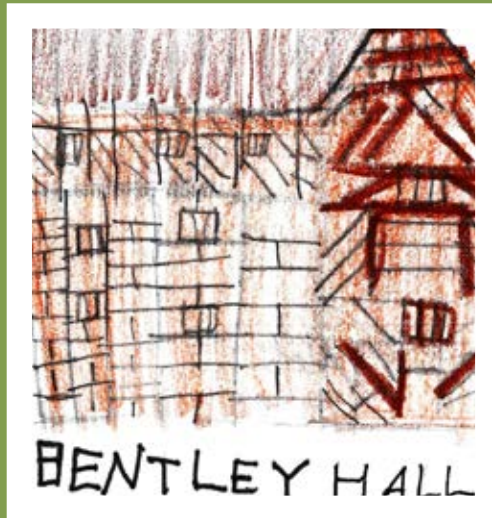


BENTLEY

Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2037



REFERENDUM PLAN
NOVEMBER 2022



Prepared by the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Working Group on behalf of Bentley Parish Council and supported by Places4People Planning Consultancy

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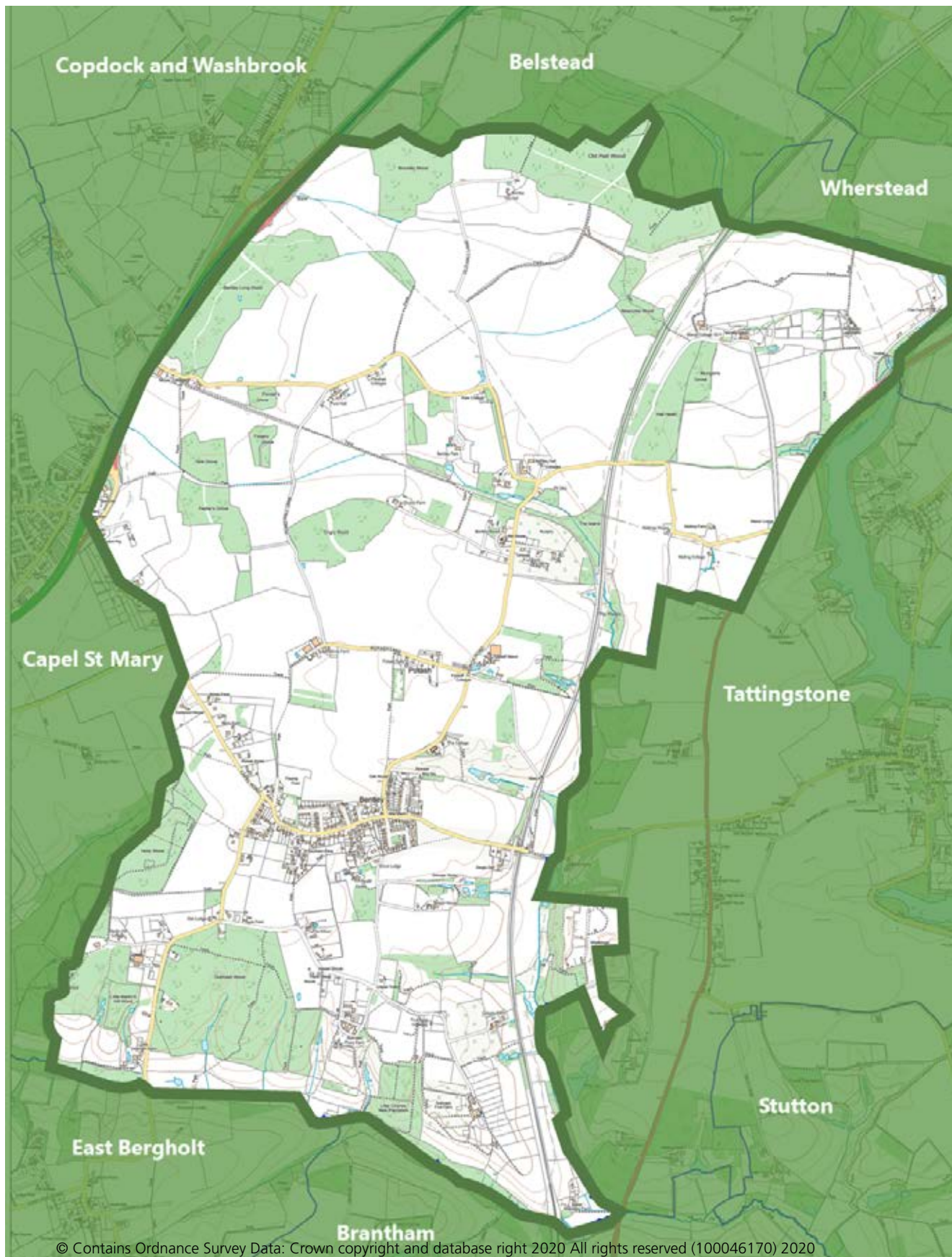
INTRODUCTION



FRAMEWORK

- 1.1** The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan) and has been prepared by Bentley Parish Council, which is the “qualifying body” as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2** A Neighbourhood Development Plan is a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration, and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and contains a vision statement, aims, planning policies, and proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or for allocation of sites suitable for development.
- 1.3** This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to conform with the strategic planning policies of the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan [hereafter, the JLP] whilst reflecting the aspirations of the local community. Importantly, the Plan has focused on housing matters in the light of the planning policy and housing land situation in Babergh at the time of writing. This is explained further in the Policy Context section of the Plan.
- 1.4** The Neighbourhood Plan contains planning policies that will form part of the statutory development plan which will be used for determining planning applications in the parish.
- 1.5** The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a Neighbourhood Plan to:
 - Be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy.
 - Contribute to achieving sustainable development.
 - Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area;
 - Be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.
- 1.6** The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Government’s Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and, in particular, has involved local community engagement to gather evidence to support the content of the Plan.
- 1.7** At the outset of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, an initial residents’ meeting was held on 12th June 2018 in the Village Hall to gauge support from the village for the Plan, and to share the Neighbourhood Plan process. 109 residents attended, and about 20 volunteered to sit on the Neighbourhood Plan committee. The Parish Council voted to go ahead with the Plan at its meeting of 12th July 2018.
- 1.8** On 16th July 2018, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Babergh District Council formally designated the whole parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area, as illustrated in Map 1. Details of the application, publication and designation can be viewed on the District Council’s website under Neighbourhood Planning in Bentley. There are no other designated neighbourhood plan areas within this boundary and the Parish Council is the “qualifying body” responsible for the preparation of the neighbourhood plan for this area.
- 1.9** The primary driver for the policies in the Plan is the responses to the Village and Children’s Questionnaires, both of which had an excellent response rate representing 38% of the population. The village continues to be involved, with regular updates in the Parish magazine and to the Parish Council, with Open Evenings, and via stalls at the Village Fun Days. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan team commissioned a Design Guide, a Housing Needs Assessment, a Master Plan for a proposed site, and a Landscape Appraisal, all of which have informed policies.

Bentley Neighbourhood Plan Area



Map 1

2. Vision Statement and Plan Objectives

Arising out of the Village Questionnaire, informed by the various studies commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan team (Landscape Appraisal, Design Guide, and Housing Needs Assessment), and in consultation with the villagers, the following Vision has been established.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to conserve the sense of community within Bentley, to ensure that we have the robustness to meet the challenges ahead - to enhance our rural nature and agricultural surroundings, for a safe and vibrant place to live for generations to come

To deliver our Vision. The Plan addresses six themes, namely

- Housing
- The Built Environment
- The Natural Environment
- Historic Environment
- Development of Infrastructure and Services
- Community Facilities

Housing Objectives

- 1 To encourage the development of appropriate housing for the stated needs of the village, in terms of size and style and across the age demographic.

Built Environment Objectives

- 2 To maintain and enhance a strong rural identity and sense of place for the parish, through environmentally sustainable and sensitive small-scale development.
- 3 To ensure new development is designed to reflect local character and incorporates measures that reduces environmental impact.



Natural Environment Objectives

- 4 To retain, encourage, and enhance local natural habitats, to conserve Priority Species and increase biodiversity, and to maintain the strong sense of rural place within the parish. To enhance habitat connectivity (wildlife corridors) to allow species to move into and across these habitats.
- 5 To have regard for our duty of care to the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the parish and its setting, and to protect its special qualities, particularly tranquillity and large skies in a rural landscape.

Historic Environment Objectives

- 6 To conserve and enhance our heritage assets

Development of Infrastructure and Services Objectives

- 7 To encourage safe and sustainable options for travel in and around the village for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders.
- 8 To support the creation of infrastructure, such as fast broadband and transport links that allow commuting via public transport, to encourage a broad age spectrum within the village.

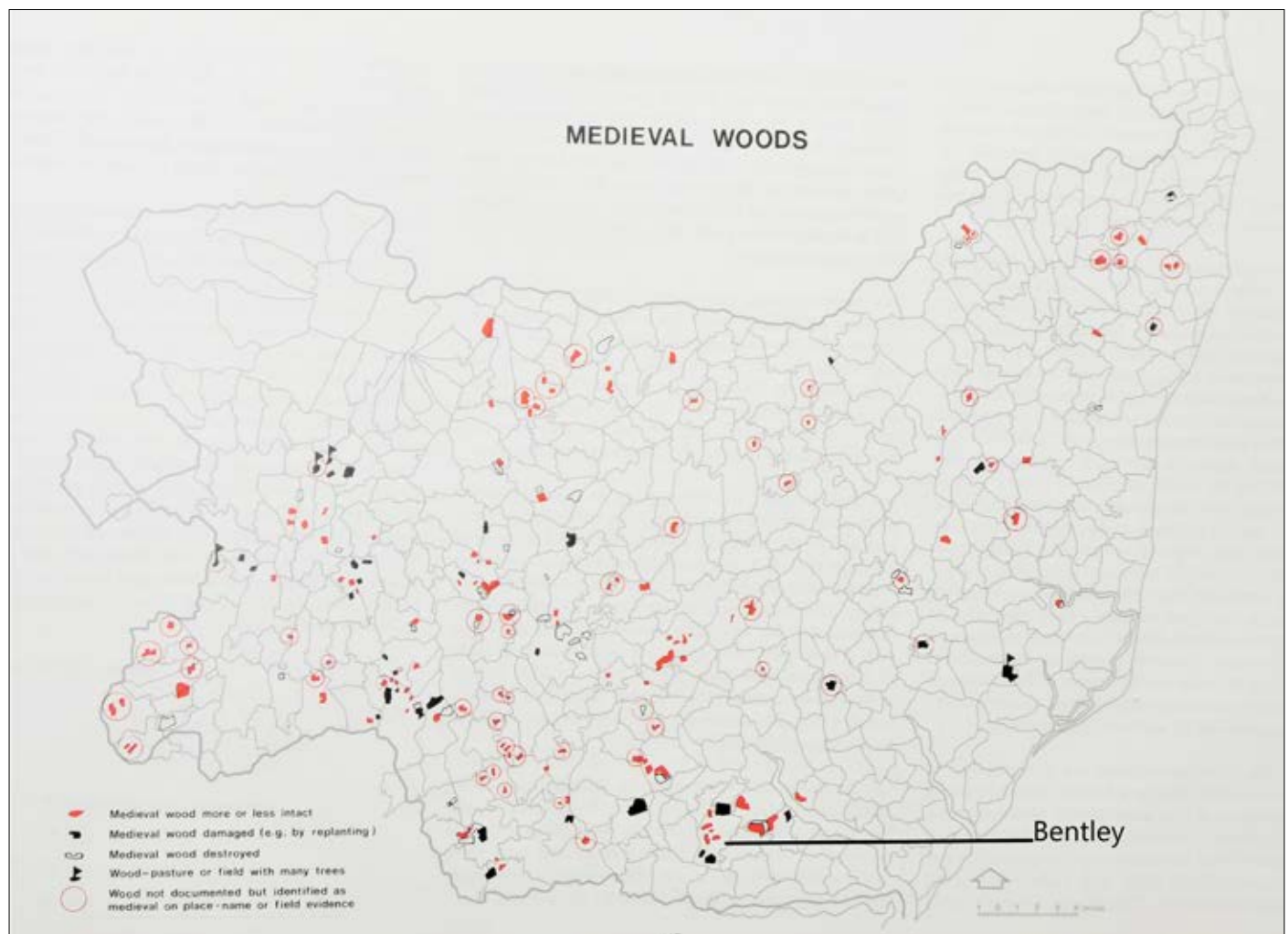
Community Facilities Objectives

- 9 To conserve and enhance the sense of robust, resilient, vibrant community within the village, maintaining the village as a safe and desirable place to live for all its residents.

3. Bentley in Context

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

- 3.1** The Heritage Suffolk report on the parish describes a setting that has been primarily agricultural in nature since records began.
- 3.2** In 1086, the Domesday Book described Bentley (population 31) as having:
- “12 acres meadow, woodland for 42 pigs, 8 cattle, 7 pigs, 42 sheep, 1 mill at Dodnash”



Map 2

Mediaeval woodlands in Suffolk, from An Historical Atlas of Suffolk, with kind permission of Edward Martin

3.3 The Domesday Book also mentions St Mary's church, with its 30 acres of free land; the early history of the parish is interesting, with Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Roman finds reported within the parish, and a Roman road forming part of its northern boundary. Around 1230 Dodnash Priory (founded in 1188 in East Bergholt) moved to Bentley, and its Augustinian monks served the parish until it was dissolved shortly before the Reformation.

3.4 In 1674, the number of inhabited houses was 39, and it did not change significantly until the coming of the railway (Bentley had its own station until the Beeching cuts). In 1851, the number of inhabited houses had rocketed to 94. In 1951, following the construction of a council housing estate, it had grown to 157; and in 1981, the number was 309.

3.5 In terms of public houses, the village boasted three in 1912; the village has bought the last remaining one, the Case is Altered, and runs it as a community pub, with a community-owned shop in its grounds.

Landscape and village

3.6 Bentley is set within a deeply rural landscape. The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (<http://www.suffolklandscape.org.uk/>) characterises most of the parish as "ancient estate farmlands", whose key characteristics are:

- A plateau of easily farmed rich loams with a planned estate layout and blocks of ancient woodland, with
- Flat central spine of land, with sloping sides dissected by river valleys
- Deep loamy soil that originated as wind-blow sediments from glacial sources
- Large-scale arable blocks divided into rectilinear fields
- Substantial number of ancient woodlands
- Suckering elm hedges with pollard oaks; also holly hedges
- Network of parks and designed landscapes
- Nucleated villages, but with some dispersed farmsteads and clusters of houses
- Localised development pressures

3.7 Hedges with mature trees abound, showing the maturity of the managed landscape. Large and small areas of woodland contribute greatly to recreational, historical, and environmental values. Watercourses form the southern and eastern boundaries, providing further environmental niches.

3.8 The recent extensions of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB encompasses our ancient woodland, recognising its special characteristics and the need to be preserved for future generations, and placing much of the parish in the AONB setting

3.9 The Babergh Core Strategy identifies a Special Landscape Area (SLA), although the emerging Joint Local Plan does not propose to carry this local landscape designation forward. The (SLA) designation particularly focused on:

- River valleys which still possess traditional grazing meadows with their hedgerows, dykes, and associated flora and fauna;
- Historic parklands and gardens;
- Other areas of countryside where undulating topography and natural vegetation, particularly broadleaved woodland, combine to produce an area of special landscape quality and character.

3.10 This attractive landscape adds to the amenity value of the village. Distinctive views are to be found looking into and out of the village settlement. Footpaths provide a link between the whole, with a well-used circular route and spokes providing many walks around and into the village. It brings the countryside to our doorstep.

Hedgerows

3.11 Ancient hedgerows support the great hedgerow diversity of plants and animals. Species-rich hedgerows, defined as those averaging five or more native woody species per 30 metre length, are generally recognised to have been in existence before the Enclosure Acts of 1720-1840. A notable finding of the Suffolk Hedgerow Survey 1998-2012 is that, in Suffolk, 20,179 landscape hedges (52% of those surveyed) were shown to have eight or more woody species, and 11,940 (31.2%) others contained five to seven species: a sum of 32,119 hedges (83.9%) that are probably between three and possibly twenty centuries in age.

3.12 In Bentley, a team of 28 volunteers undertook the task of surveying all the hedgerows (419) in the parish over the period 2001-2012. The data revealed that Bentley parish Ancient Estate Farmland comprised: 28% of hedges with four or less woody species, 37.3% with five, six or seven species, and 34.4% with eight or more species (i.e. 71.7% which are probably more than three and possibly twenty centuries old). The Suffolk Hedgerow Survey had specific requirements; to be classed as a veteran tree, the survey required a tree to have a minimum girth of 4.2 metres, measured at 1.5 metres above ground level. Bentley was found to have the highest number of hedgerow veteran trees (73) of all the parishes surveyed. Bentley was also revealed to have the highest number of different veteran tree species in one parish (9), a figure shared with Grundisburgh. Notable rare species: Black Poplar *Populus Nigra* and Butchers Broom *Ruscus Aculeatus*.

The above data is taken from: Guy Ackers (2012). Suffolk Hedgerow Survey 1998-2012. Suffolk Coastal District Council Greenprint Forum.

A study of ancient/notable and veteran trees in the village's Built Up Area was conducted using the Woodland Trust's criteria (slightly different from the above; a veteran tree is one which has survived damage, and an ancient tree is one past maturity. A notable tree stands out in its environment).

These are illustrated on Map 3



Map 3

Important trees (Ancient, Veteran, Notable) within the built-up area

Springs, Ponds, Streams, and Reservoirs

3.13 Ponds are present throughout the parish. In the southwest corner of the parish water from valley springs flows south into Stutton Mill Stream on the southern parish boundary between Bentley and East Bergholt. These springs fill large ponds in Dodnash Wood, Martins Glen, and Dodnash Priory's Grounds. A spring that rises in Dodnash Wood flows southwards onto the water meadow where there is another large pond. Other springs, which flow east from Teapot Hill and Dodnash Fruit Farm, have also associated ponds, outflows from which continue south along the eastern parish boundary to eventually enter the Stutton Mill Stream. Large ponds are also present at the following private locations: Bentley Old Hall, Bentley Hall (several), Bentley Manor, Falstaff Manor, Church Farm, Grove Farm, and adjacent to the entrance of Bentley Old Hall driveway/footpath.





3.14 Two large reservoirs are situated a short distance to the east of Bentley CEVC Primary School, between Church Road and the mainline railway. These are excellent wildlife habitats and are home to reptiles and amphibians, including marsh frogs, as well as dragonflies and many other insects.

Built environment

3.15 The village consists of a wide range of building styles, in a fairly tight cluster and a looser periphery. There is a historical secondary cluster around Bentley Hall, the Church, and the school, with many outlying cottages and farms. Many older houses use a red brick, slate or clay tile, and cream colourway.

Listed buildings outside the built-up area include Pond Hall, Old Hall, Hubbards Hall, Little Dodnash, Maltings Farm, Maltings Cottage, Maltings House and the pump outside it, Bentley Hall, Bentley Hall Barn, the Church, Bentley Grove, and the remains of Dodnash Priory. Inside the BUA, only the War Memorial is listed.



4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1** As noted in Section 1, the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations require Plans to:
- Be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy.
 - Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; as such, Neighbourhood Plans require that they conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

National Planning Policy

- 4.2** In July 2021, the Government published a Revised NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context of the revised NPPF. It notes that the national planning system has three overarching objectives:
- a) an economic objective - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 4.3** For communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans the NPPF states:
- Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

- Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.



Local Planning Policy

- 4.4** At a more local level, the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the current Babergh Local Plan, which comprises the Core Strategy (2014) and the "saved policies" of the 2006 Babergh Local Plan. These documents will be collectively referred to as "the Local Plan". The Local Plan provides the current strategic planning framework for Bentley which the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to. In November 2020 Babergh District Council consulted on the final draft of the Joint Local Plan (the pre-submission draft) ahead of submitting it to the Government and its subsequent examination by Planning Inspectors. The examination was largely conducted during 2021 and in December 2021 the Inspectors' wrote to the District Council proposing that housing sites across the districts are deleted and addressed in a new Part 2 Local Plan. The Inspectors also proposed that the Settlement Boundaries should revert to those in the adopted Development Plan which, for Bentley, is contained in the 2006 Babergh Local Plan. It is now unlikely that the first part of the emerging Joint Local Plan will be adopted until early 2023, a matter that has been taken into account in the preparation and independent examination of the

Neighbourhood Plan.

4.5 The adopted Core Strategy identifies a hierarchy of settlements ranked according to their size and the services they provide and recognises that there are several larger villages (core villages) that provide a range of services and facilities for a cluster of villages around them. It identifies Bentley as a “hinterland village” within the “functional cluster” of Capel St Mary, acknowledging that Capel St Mary provides a range of services and facilities to meet many of the needs of Bentley’s residents. The 2006 Babergh Local Plan defines a Built-Up Area Boundary for

Bentley which is carried forward until replaced by the Part 2 Joint Local Plan. In so far as Bentley is concerned, the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan and the policies in the Core Strategy are those by which planning applications will be judged until fully replaced by the Joint Local Plan.



5. Housing

Objective:

1. To encourage the development of appropriate housing for the stated needs of the village, in terms of size and style and across the age demographic..

What we know

At the time of the 2011 Census:

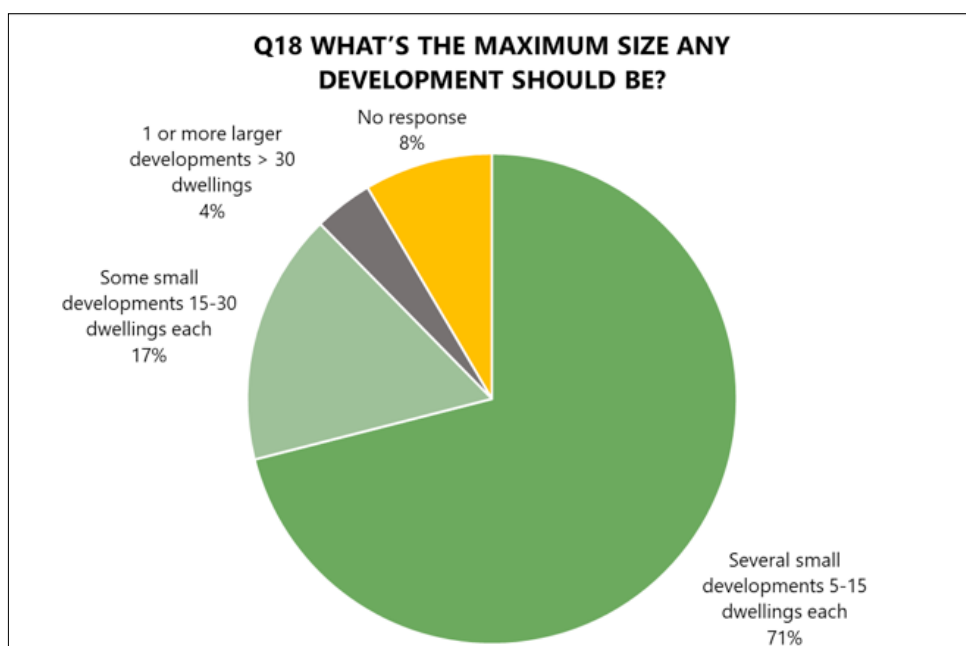
- The average household size was 2.3 people, the same rate as for Suffolk as a whole and only 0.3% of Bentley's residents were considered to be living in overcrowded accommodation.
- The village has a higher proportion of house with three or more bedrooms than Babergh as a whole
- 53.8% of homes were owned outright without a mortgage, compared with 35.7% across Suffolk.

A 2014 Housing Survey carried out in the village indicated that 4 families were on the social housing register and

were in need of affordable housing. The Parish has been working with a Housing Association to provide affordable homes, although this has not yet reached the planning stage.

The Neighbourhood Plan Household Survey identified the following key points:

- 71% of those that responded supported small housing developments of between 5 and 15 dwellings as a maximum size for development;
- Most people felt the village needed small (1 or 2 bedroomed) houses or bungalows;
- There was strong support for affordable housing.



Affordable Housing

5.1 Affordability of housing remains a significant barrier for many seeking their own homes. With government published figures indicating that, in Babergh, average house prices are over ten times the average household income, many newly-formed households will be excluded from the housing market.

5.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM January 2020) identified that the income required to buy an average market home for sale is higher than that available to those on median or even the Babergh upper quartile household incomes. The income required to buy an average entry-level home for sale is higher than

that available to those on lower quartile household incomes. The same Assessment concluded that a total of 18 affordable homes would be required over the plan period; broadly, half of which should be for social/affordable rent and half for affordable home ownership.

5.3 One way that the planning system can address this problem is through the provision of affordable housing as defined by the NPPF and set out in the Glossary. Affordable housing schemes can primarily be delivered through a percentage of a larger development of over ten dwellings or, as an exception, small-scale schemes, including entry level homes for purchase or “rural exception sites” outside the Settlement Boundaries (currently the Built-Up Area Boundary) where housing would

(contd)

Policy BEN 1 - Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes, including entry level homes for purchase (as defined by paragraph 72 of the NPPF) on rural exception sites outside the Settlement Boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported¹ where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:

- i. remains affordable in perpetuity; and
- ii. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices; and
- iii. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where there is no need, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.

To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot otherwise be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing.

Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed needs assessment and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.

In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where it can be demonstrated:

- a) that no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and
- b) the market housing is subsidiary to the affordable housing element of the proposal and the amount of market housing required is, as demonstrated through a viability assessment, the minimum required to deliver the affordable housing.

Where sites for affordable housing in the countryside are brought forward with an element of market housing, both housing tenures should be built to the same design standards and contribute towards the character of the area.

Proposals should establish whether there may be an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of Habitats in accordance with the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance and Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and provide appropriate on-site mitigation measures and off-site contributions in accordance with Policy BEN 9.

¹ In line with national policy, entry-level exception sites will not be permitted in the AONB

not normally be permitted. The exception nature of these sites means that they are not identified in local or neighbourhood plans. In order to deliver affordable housing through “exception sites” the following would be required:

- a need to be established
- a willing landowner being prepared to sell land at a price significantly below the market value for housing land
- a registered social landlord (housing association) willing to work with the Parish Council and District Council to fund and manage a scheme.

5.4 Where a “rural exception” site is proposed for development, it must be demonstrated that there is an identified local need in the village and its hinterland, and that the site is suitable to meet that local need. In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to permit an element of open market housing to facilitate the delivery of the affordable housing. This is in accordance with paragraph 78 of the NPPF which states that local authorities should consider whether this approach would help to provide additional affordable housing. The exceptional circumstances, where a small number of market homes will be permitted could include, for example, where there is insufficient government grant available, and it is demonstrated, through financial appraisal, that the open market housing is essential to enable the delivery of the affordable housing. In these cases, the applicant would need to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the District Council, that the inclusion of open market housing is the minimum necessary to enable the delivery of the affordable housing and is not being developed to generate uplift in land values for the landowner. This could be demonstrated through the provision of affordability/profitability modelling data. Where an element of open market housing is proposed as part of an affordable housing exception site, it should

be sympathetic to the form and character of the settlement and in accordance with local needs. Local needs can vary, and it could be that smaller market homes are required to meet the needs of first-time buyers or people wishing to downsize to a smaller home. This would need to be established at the time in consultation with the District Council’s Housing Service.

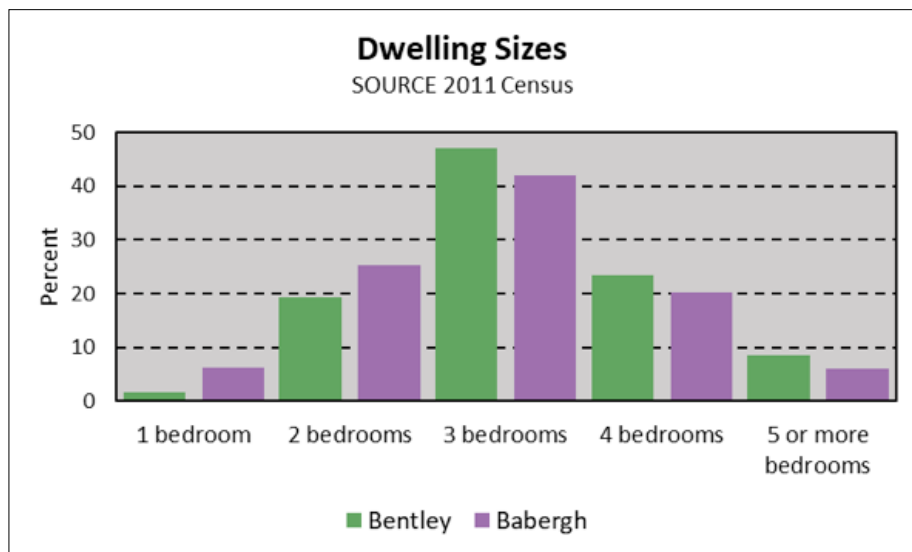
Housing Mix

5.5 The Village Questionnaire revealed a high demand for small homes of 1-2 bedrooms and a significant demand for family homes of 3-4 bedrooms. There was little recorded demand for homes larger than 4 bedrooms, which is the predominant style of recent developments. The Questionnaire also showed a strong bias towards bungalows, reflecting the village’s ageing demographic, as well as a desire for smaller homes and affordable housing.

5.6 Bentley has an ageing demographic, with over 40% of residents aged over 60 and the area in which Bentley is situated is projected to have a 48% increase in the 85+ population over the period 2017-2028. There is a growing need for bungalows and accessible smaller houses, as residents wish to downsize, and potentially need to access more support services as they age. This is supported by the wishes expressed in the Village Questionnaire where there is a clear need for downsized accommodation for older residents, as well as for affordable accommodation. Small-scale supported accommodation, or simply more accessible accommodation, would be welcomed, contributing towards the supported housing needs identified in Babergh. Given our geographical location, remote from specialist and hospital care (and also given the current overburdening of the Constable Country Medial Practice) Bentley is not a suitable venue for enhanced, extra care, or registered care housing.



5.7 The 2011 Census identified a higher proportion of 3 or more bedroomed properties when compared with Babergh, as illustrated on the chart below.



Bentley's stock of existing housing is made up of a different dwelling type breakdown to that of Babergh, with slightly more detached homes, and fewer semi-detached and terraced houses. The parish has three times the proportion of detached houses and less than half the proportion of terraced homes as compared with the national average. The housing stocks of Bentley are similarly characterised by generally large dwellings, with high percentages of homes over four rooms. There has been a significant rise in the number of very large homes of eight or more rooms in Bentley, and a corresponding decrease in dwellings of five rooms or less.

"The evolution of Bentley's dwelling mix in terms of size over the intercensal period also diverges strongly from trends observed for the wider geographies of Babergh and England. Most notable are Bentley's limited number of small dwellings (two and three room dwellings), compared with uneven but in

some cases strong growth in the comparator geographies, and Bentley's high increase in dwellings of eight or more rooms compared with a moderately lower increase in Babergh and England." Source - AECOM's Housing Needs Assessment for Bentley

5.8 The AECOM Assessment concluded that the following split in new houses sizes is required during the Neighbourhood Plan period to meet the potential demand.

1 bedroom dwellings	24.5%
2 bedroom dwellings	53.5%
3 bedroom dwellings	19.6%
4 bedroom dwellings	2.4%
5 bedroom or more dwellings	0.0%

Unless more up-to-date and robust data becomes available during the Neighbourhood Plan period or the particular circumstances dictate otherwise, such as meeting an identified affordable housing requirement on a site, new developments will be expected to reflect the above needs in their layouts.

Policy BEN 2 - Housing Mix

In all housing developments of ten or more homes, there shall be an emphasis on providing a higher proportion of two-bedroomed homes within the scheme, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i) the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise; or
- ii) the latest publicly available housing needs information for the Plan area identify a need for a different mix.

The provision of bungalows will also be supported where the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area in the vicinity of the site.

Proposals that would result in dwellings of greater than two storeys will not be supported.

Housing Space Standards

5.9 In March 2015 the Government introduced a 'Nationally Described Space Standard' for new homes. It sets out a prescription to encourage enough space in homes to ensure that they can be used flexibly by a range of residents. The standards also aim to ensure that sufficient storage can be integrated into dwelling units. It is emphasised that these standards are expressed as minimum standards.

The current standard requires that:

- the dwelling provides at least the gross internal floor area and built-in storage area set out in the table below;
- a dwelling with two or more bedspaces has at least one double (or twin) bedroom;
- in order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m² and is at least 2.15m wide;
- in order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin bedroom) has a floor area of at least 11.5m²;
- any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the Gross Internal Area

unless used solely for storage (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage, assume a general floor area of 1m² within the Gross Internal Area);

- any other area that is used solely for storage and has a headroom of 900- 1500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all;
- a built-in wardrobe counts towards the Gross Internal Area and bedroom floor area;
- one double (or twin bedroom) is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.55m wide;
- The built-in area in excess of 0.72m² in a double bedroom and 0.36m² in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement; and
- the minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m for at least 75% of the Gross Internal Area.

A summary table is provided below

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
		Square metres			
1b	1p	39 (37)*			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

Where a 1b1p dwelling has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39 square metres to 37square metres, as shown bracketed



6. The Built Environment

Objective:

- 2 To maintain and enhance a strong rural identity and sense of place for the parish, through environmentally sustainable and sensitive small-scale development.
- 3 To ensure new development is designed to reflect local character and incorporates measures that reduces environmental impact.

Development Design

6.1 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”

6.2 The Village Questionnaire demonstrated some support for “modern and innovative” design of new housing and examples of such an approach can be seen in new dwellings on Capel Road. In support of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan a Design Guide was prepared by AECOM (November 2019). The Guide has been produced to inform new development proposed in the area. It presents a summary of the key characteristics of the Bentley Neighbourhood Area. This, together with the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal, is used to inform specific design guidelines to promote sustainable development.

6.3 The Design Guide identified the following positive aspects of the character of the village:

- The junction of Station Road, Church Road and Silver Leys with large green verges and the War Memorial can be recognised as a centre of the village;
- A well-established network of PRoW [public rights of way] providing access to the countryside;
- Mixed land use helps sustainability of the village;
- Distinctive, often mature trees, green verges and front gardens contribute to the streetscape and its open character;
- Provision of private and public recreation grounds contribute to the green character of Bentley;
- Provision of large front and rear gardens which contribute to the well- vegetated streetscape;
- Multiple views across the countryside comprised

of distinctive blocks of Ancient Woodlands, farm land, mature hedgerows and dispersed trees and parkland;

- Distinctive short distance views across the village comprised of War Memorial, former shop and Bentley village sign;
- Low rise settlement with consistent roofline;
- High value surrounding landscape provides a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity;
- The surviving historic buildings in the wider Neighbourhood Area, some dating as early as the 13th century; and
- The surviving historic buildings in the main parts of the village including Bentley Grove; the Case is Altered public house; the Old Forge and several 19th century cottages.

6.4 At the same time, the Design Guide noted issues to be addressed:

- Numerous cul-de-sacs in the village reduce permeability and build upon suburban character of the village;
- A lack of distinctive gateway into the village to emphasise the sense of arrival;
- Poor quality isolated groups of garages separated from the building plots;
- The character of the modern developments is informed by a limited range of materials, the use of standardised housing types and layouts. These developments contribute little to the character and sense of place of Bentley;
- Buildings lack local and regional characteristics which contribute to the identity and sense of place;
- Regular building plot pattern which contributes to the townscape character;
- Diversified boundary structure in terms of height, materials and type affects streetscape character;



- There is a lack of local landmarks, which affect the legibility of the area; and
- The replacement of historic features in historic properties with modern materials that do not always respect the historic character of the host building.

6.5 In consideration of the aspects and issues highlighted above, the Design Guide recommends that new development proposals should include evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following general design principles:

- Harmonise with and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, movement pattern and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent long-distance views;
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets and other spaces;
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing landscape and built form features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;

- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking, and open space are well related to each other; to provide a safe, attractive and cohesive environment;
- Make enough provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours; and
- Sensitively integrate energy efficient technologies within the scheme at the start of the design process.

6.6 The Design Guide provides a development design checklist which development proposals should, as appropriate, seek to respond to. The checklist is attached as Appendix A of the Plan. Innovative and/or eco-friendly design that achieves the policy requirements would be welcomed. To reverse the decline of the native swift population, we would encourage the installation of swift bricks on every new house. Protecting wildlife is a major priority for villagers.

Important Views

6.7 Ten important views have also been identified. These are shown on the Policies Maps and numbered to align with the assessment contained in the Landscape Appraisal Final Report December 2019 prepared by Alison Farmer Associates. This assessment also describes the views and includes a photograph of each one.

Policy BEN 3 - Development Design

Planning applications must, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they meet the general design principles set out in paragraph 6.5 of this Plan and satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix A of this Plan and take account of the Bentley Design Guide (November 2019). In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

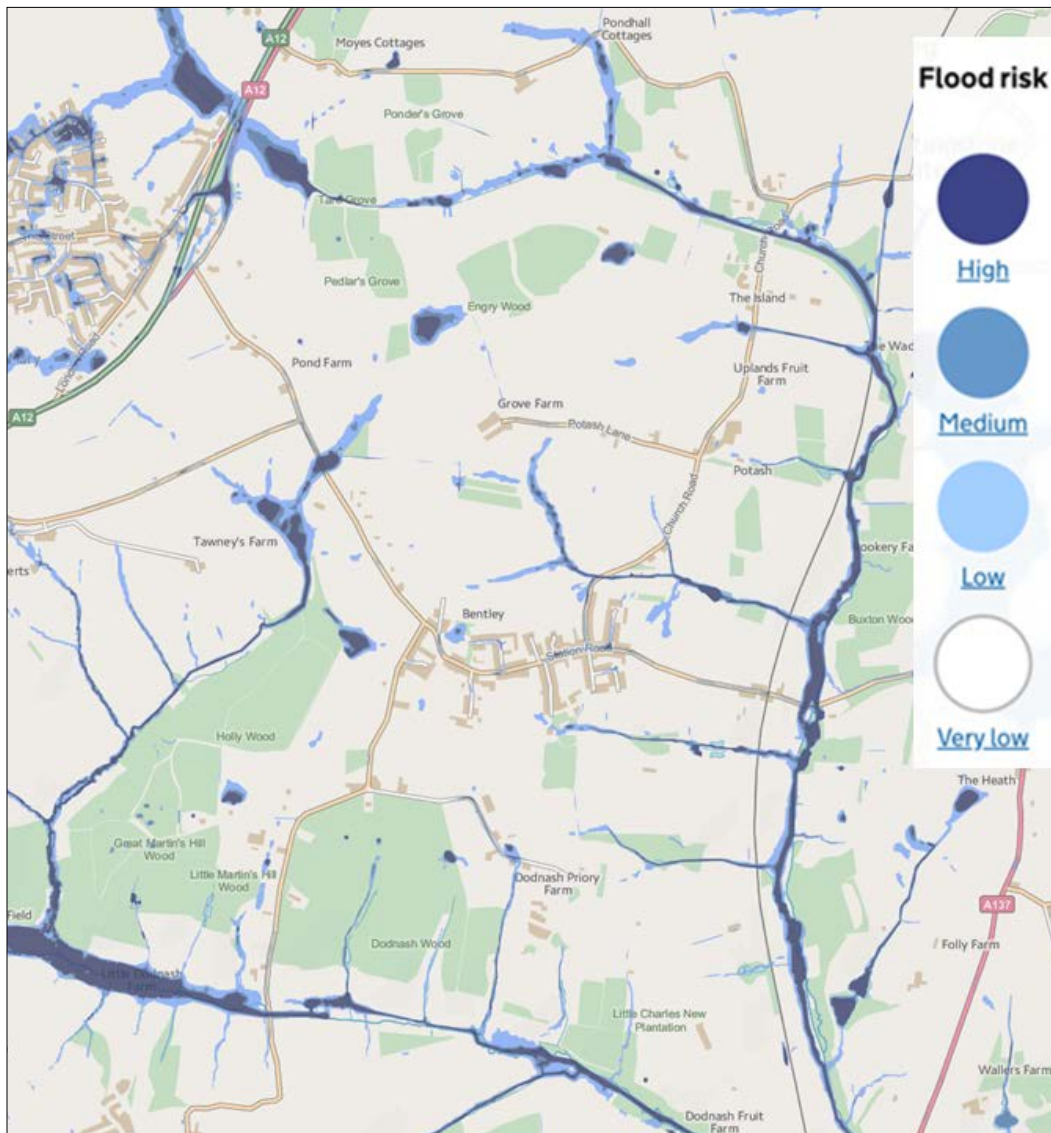
- a) maintain and enhance the quiet and tranquil character of the village and its setting;
- b) do not materially harm the amenities nearby residents by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overshadowing, loss of light and outlook, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated, and/or residential amenity unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- c) produce designs that respect and address the character, scale, height and density of the locality;
- d) reflect the qualities and character of the setting of the village within a high quality rural landscape, as identified in the Bentley Landscape Appraisal;
- e) ensure that there is no detrimental impact on the key features of important views identified on the Policies Map;
- f) provide open space, in accordance with adopted standards, and grass verges appropriate to the location and size of the development;
- g) as appropriate, include external front and rear gardens designed to take account of the context of the development, including the character of the surrounding area;
- h) incorporate measures to protect and enhance biodiversity, with regard to the NPPF requirement for measurable net gain in biodiversity, preserving trees, hedgerows, and other wildlife corridors, and including measures such as the installation of swift bricks on every new house;
- i) through the appropriate use of Sustainable Drainage Systems, prevent water runoff that would add to or create surface water flooding;
- j) where appropriate, incorporate grey water recycling and rainwater and stormwater harvesting;
- k) where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of wheelie bins out of sight from public view within each plot or, alternatively in developments of more than one dwelling, and provide for screened/obscured communal bin collection areas within the development;
- l) will not generate additional vehicles on a designated Quiet Lane such that it would result in that Lane carrying average vehicle movements in excess of 1,000 a day and/or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph; and
- m) where possible, maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings.

Flood Management

6.8 Several areas in Bentley are prone to surface water flooding as shown in the Department of the Environment's flood map below, particularly along Church Road, Station Road, Capel Road, Hazel Shrub, and Bergholt Road. Drainage of surface water throughout the village is mostly to soakaways, which are increasingly inadequate for the job, particularly when there is excessive rain or many days of wet weather. This is a historical problem, with the very first Parish Council meeting minutes in the 19thC discussing the issue! Any new development, even the smallest, that does not explicitly address run-off will make the problem worse, and hence all developers should, as appropriate to the proposal, provide a flood assessment, with details of mitigation methods where necessary. The installation of grey water recycling and rainwater and stormwater harvesting

within schemes will also be sought in order to reduce the potential for development to worsen surface water flooding.

6.9 Flood risk from rivers and watercourses (fluvial flooding) is limited to areas in the north, east and south of the parish and affects few if any residential properties. Should any proposals come forward within those flood risk zones they will be considered in the context of the sequential approach to development set out in the NPPF. Developments that do not take this into account and manage their own drainage properly, or that by nature of their construction send groundwater offsite to create flooding elsewhere in the village, will not be permitted.



Map 4 - Areas at risk of river or surface water flooding

Policy BEN 4 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage

Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes, appropriate to the scale of the proposal, detailing how on-site surface water drainage will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere.

Proposals should as appropriate, include the use of above-ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:

- wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and
- other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.

Renewable energy in developments

6.10 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF states:

- “To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:
- provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
 - consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
 - identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.”

6.11 Energy use in the construction and operation of development is currently a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, Babergh District Council voted to support Suffolk’s county-wide aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

6.12 Minimising energy demands from development and increasing the generation of energy from renewable sources can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. The starting point for minimising energy use is to maximise energy efficiency, both in new developments and through the retrofitting of existing buildings. This can have a direct economic benefit in terms of significantly lowering the running costs of new and existing

buildings, helping to address fuel poverty, as well as tackling the Climate Crisis. Exceeding the minimum energy efficiency requirements of Building Regulations will be necessary if emission reduction targets are to be met.

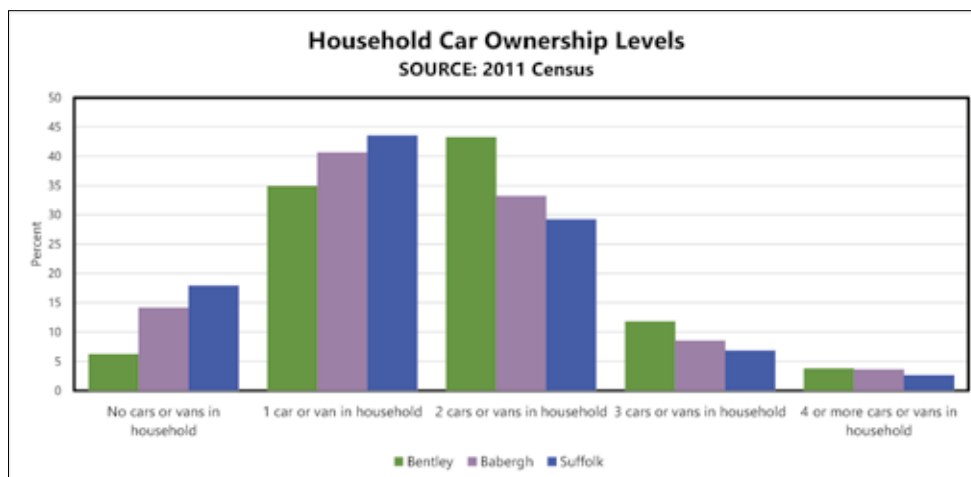
6.13 Where energy use is necessary, then priority should be given to utilising the most sustainable sources. Many energy-saving initiatives can be installed on homes within permitted development rights (when full planning permission is not required) but there may be occasions where schemes that do require planning permission could have a potential adverse impact on the character of the area and the amenity of nearby residents. Oil is unsustainable and polluting in its production, shipping, distribution and use. In line with national government policy, the long-term aim should be to reduce the overall use of all fossil fuels – gas, oil and coal.

6.14 The incorporation of passive housing design principles, such as high levels of insulation and solar gain, that typically require little or no additional heating will be encouraged, particularly those that also consider global warming and address severe climate weather conditions, e.g. the need for ventilation and shade in hot summers, as well as insulation for hot and cold conditions. The gold standard for development is (in 2020) the Passivhaus standard, and new developments meeting this standard would be strongly encouraged, as would carbon neutral homes.



Parking Provision

6.15 Owing to its relatively remote location and lack of public transport Bentley has a higher level of car ownership than both Babergh and Suffolk as a whole as shown in the 2011 census data, with significantly more cars per household in every category except single car ownership, and with far fewer households having no cars or vans. This trend is considered likely to continue, especially given the trend over recent years for adult children to remain in the family home for longer and the continuing decline of rural bus services (Bentley currently has no public transport that would allow commuting or even relaxed shopping). These higher levels of car ownership result in an increased pressure on space both within the grounds of a dwelling and on the roads in the vicinity. Many roads off the main Station/Capel Road are narrow, often single lane, further increasing the pressure for safe and suitable parking.



	Bentley	Babergh	Suffolk
No cars or vans	6.2	14.1	17.9
1 car or van	34.9	40.6	43.5
2 cars or vans	43.2	33.2	29.2
3 cars or vans	11.8	8.5	6.8
4 or more cars or vans	3.8	3.6	2.6

Figures are percentages

- 6.16** Paragraph 107 of the NPPF states that, "If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:
- the accessibility of the development;
 - the type, mix and use of development;
 - the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - local car ownership levels; and
 - the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles."



Suffolk County Council Housing Car Parking Guidance

Car parking

House size	Vehicle spaces
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

Cycle parking

2 secure covered spaces per dwelling.
(Satisfied if garage or secure area is
Provided within curtilage of dwelling to
minimum dimensions)

Disabled spaces

N/A if parking is in curtilage of dwelling,
otherwise a visitor/ unallocated

- Flats and houses are to be treated the same
- The requirements are specified as minimums in the Guidance

6.17 The Suffolk County Council Parking Guidance (2019) for residential development acknowledges that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not effectively discourage people from owning a car unless heavily restricted and alternative modes are available. It states that parking guidance for origins should be used as a minimum advisory standard. The 2019 standards for residential development are reproduced opposite.

6.18 As has been demonstrated, car ownership levels in the village are higher than those across Babergh and Suffolk and it is therefore reasonable that parking standards should also be set at a higher rate than the recommended minimum requirements. A significant number of residents are of limited mobility, meaning that they need direct access to vehicles from their houses; any inability to park cars outside their own houses, because other residents or visitors have parked in that space, can have a serious impact on quality of life.

Our often ancient and narrow roads mean that neither new housing nor visitor parking can safely be accommodated on the street, which in places is already overburdened.

There is no public off-road parking available within the village.

Policy BEN 5 - Parking Standards

Development proposals should maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is designed to be integrated into the site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.

In residential developments, all one, two and three bedroom dwellings shall provide:

- a minimum of 2 parking spaces per dwelling, within the curtilage of the dwelling; and
- within developments of 4 or more dwellings, additional guest spaces amounting to an additional half-space per dwelling with 3 bedrooms or more to be provided within the development site.

Dwellings of four or more bedrooms and other non-residential developments shall meet the latest adopted parking standards.

Cabling for electric vehicle charging provision should be fitted to each dwelling, in line with Suffolk parking standards.

All new non-residential development should include electric vehicle EV charging provision in accordance with the minimum standards in the current Suffolk Parking Guidelines.

Cycle parking provision shall be in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards and shall include secure and covered storage where appropriate to the development.



ECO FRIENDLY HOUSING

7. Natural Environment

Objective:

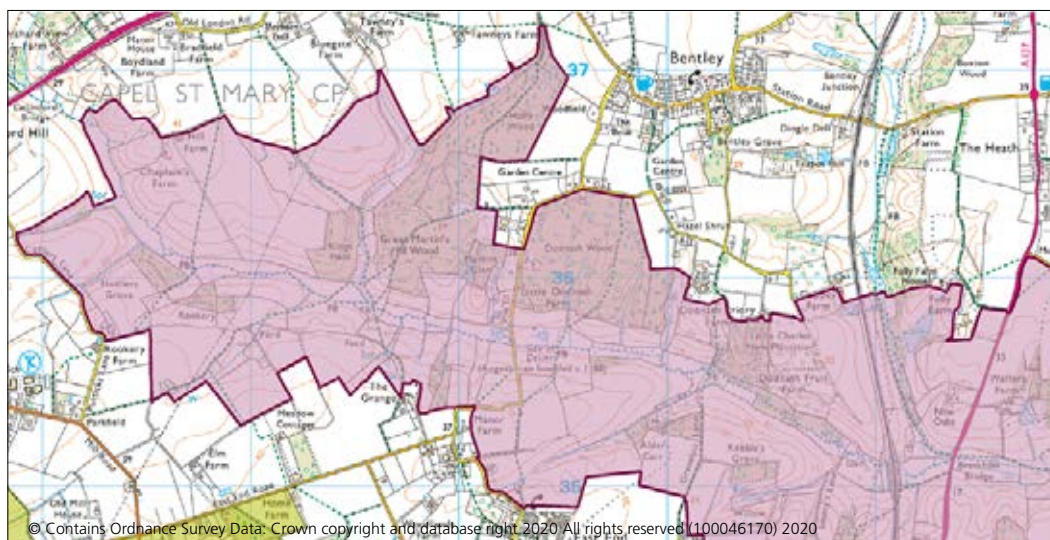
- 4 To retain, encourage, and enhance local natural habitats, to conserve Priority Species and increase biodiversity, and to maintain the strong sense of rural place within the parish. To enhance habitat connectivity (wildlife corridors) to allow species to move into and across these habitats.
- 5 To have regard for our duty of care to the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB within the parish, and its settings, to protect its special qualities, particularly tranquillity and large skies in a rural landscape

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

7.1 It is essential that new development should have regard to the character of the surrounding landscape and, in particular, to the setting of the nationally significant landscape of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The 2020 extension, as illustrated on Map 5, puts most of the parish in the AONB setting. In accordance with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership Position Statement (December 2015) the setting, including the views into and out of the AONB, is considered to be the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting, materials, or design can be considered to have an impact, positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the nationally designated landscape. Such an approach

to the consideration of development is supported in this Neighbourhood Plan.

7.2 Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”



Map 5 - Extension to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (July 2020)



Policy BEN 6 - Development Affecting the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is identified on the Policies Map. The scale and extent of development in the AONB will be limited. Any development should be sensitively designed and located taking into account the need to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty in the AONB as well as the consideration of wildlife and cultural heritage.

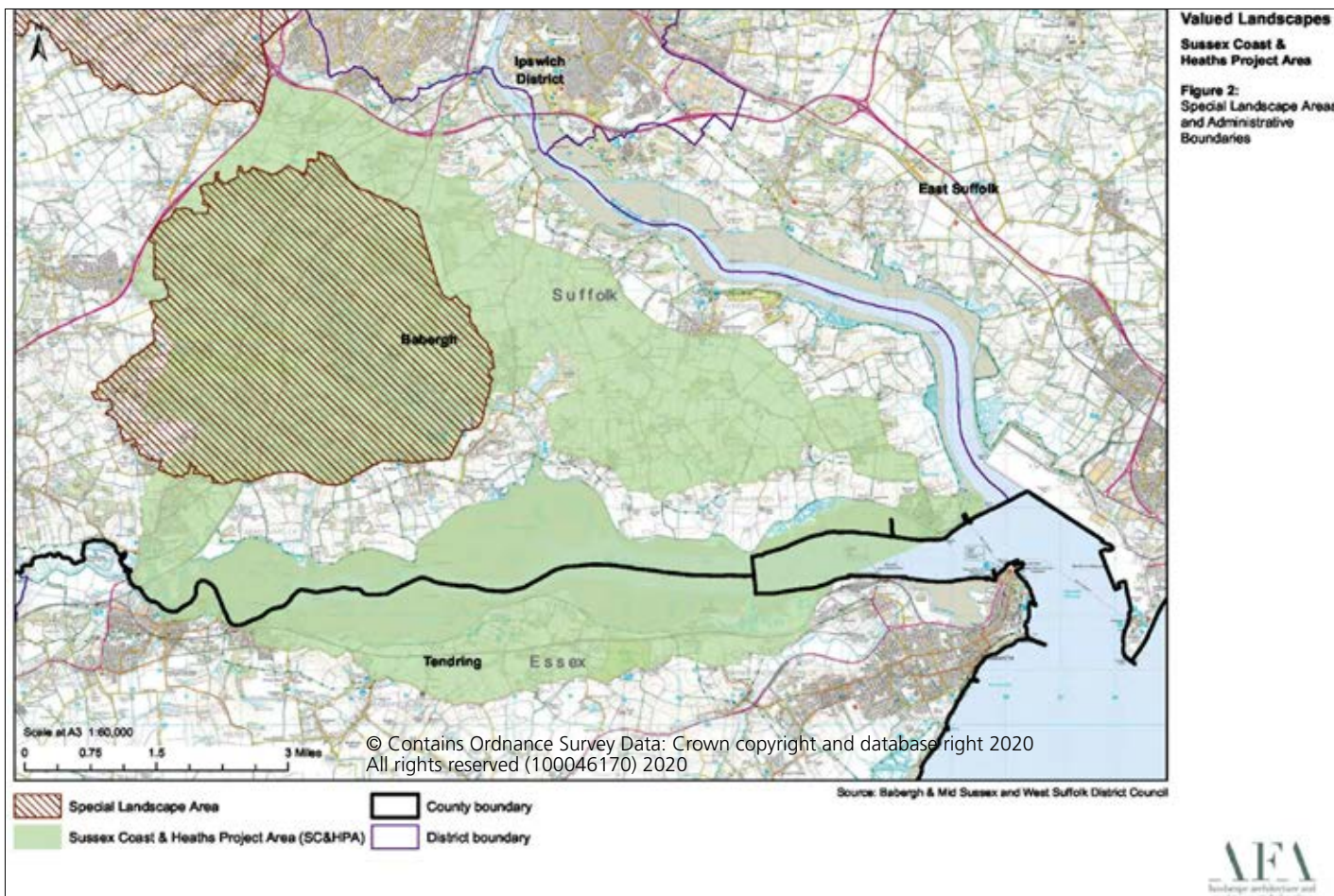
Development proposals within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or within its setting, should be informed by landscape and visual impact assessment to assess and identify potential impacts and to identify suitable measures to avoid or mitigate these impacts. Proposals should include measures that enable a scheme to be well integrated into the landscape and enhance connectivity to the surrounding green infrastructure and Public Rights of Way network.

Wider Landscape Qualities

7.3 Protection of heritage assets where they are expressed in historic estates and land management, and protection of wildlife, go hand in hand. A survey of cherished views (discussed elsewhere) clearly demonstrate the value that the villagers place on the wide-ranging views across this heritage landscape, set in its open skies. Whilst recognising that things change in a managed landscape, this character is, we feel, worth preserving.

7.4 A separate Landscape Appraisal of the Neighbourhood Area was prepared by Alison Farmer Associates in order to provide a robust evidence base to support the development of policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Bentley Neighbourhood Plan: Landscape Appraisal Final Report (December 2019) can be found in the Supporting Documents section of the Neighbourhood Plan website.

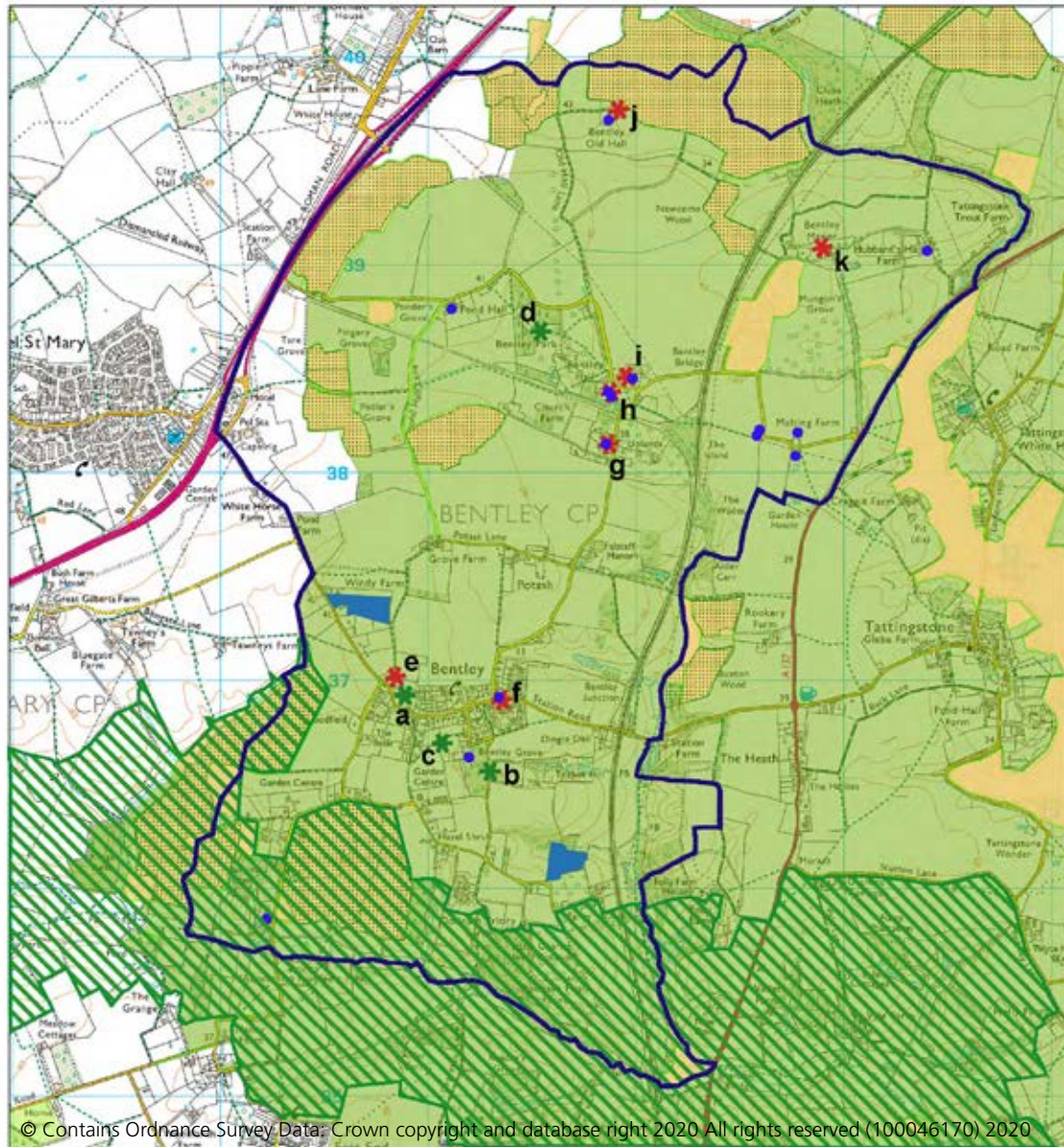
7.5 The Appraisal took account of the landscape character topologies in the Neighbourhood Area, as defined in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment as well as those defined in the Shotley Peninsula and Hinterland Assessment. The Landscape Appraisal also noted the existence of a Special Landscape Area across the majority of the parish which was originally designated in the Suffolk County Structure Plan in the 1980s and remains as a saved policy in the adopted Babergh Local Plan, albeit that the emerging Joint Local Plan (2019) did not propose carrying this designation forward. This Special Landscape Area is discussed in the document "Valued Landscape Assessment: Suffolk Coast & Heaths Additional Project Area" which can be found in the Supporting Documents section of the Neighbourhood Plan website.



Map 6 - Valued Landscapes - Extract from "Valued Landscape Assessment: Suffolk Coast & Heaths Additional Project Area"

7.6 The emerging Joint Local Plan does not propose to carry forward the Special Landscape Area designations across Babergh. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal noted that:

"the former SLA, where it lies beyond the proposed extension to the Suffolk Coasts & Heaths AONB but within Bentley Parish, has been reviewed as part of this landscape assessment in the context of the criteria for assessing valued landscapes set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 3rd Edition). This has revealed that the northern part of the Parish has a weight of evidence to support its recognition as a valued landscape due to its intact historic patterns of settlement, ancient woodland, remnant parkland and rural lanes."



Key

- Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Listed Buildings
- Ancient Woodland
- Local Wildlife Site
- Traditional Orchard
- Former Special Landscape Area
- Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

- Landscape Features
 - a. The Case Has Altered Open Space
 - b. Bentley Grove Limes
 - c. Small Scale Pastures
 - d. Historic Parkland

- Built Landmarks
 - e. The Case is Altered Public House
 - f. War Memorial
 - g. St Mary's Church
 - h. Bentley Hall
 - i. Bentley Hall Barn
 - j. Bentley Old Hall
 - k. Bentley Manor

**Bentley Neighbourhood Plan
Landscape Assessment
Figure 2: Designations and Features**



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Map 7 - Landscape Designations and Features

7.7 The Appraisal concluded that the area has some capacity to accommodate appropriately designed and sensitively located housing but that, due to the area's special qualities, development is most likely to comprise small scale schemes rather than a single larger development. It also identified development guidelines that should be used to inform the consideration of development proposals, namely:

- Soften existing urban edge at the eastern end of the village through additional planting such as new hedgerow and trees along the public right of way
- Ensure new development reflects the dispersed and varied vernacular of the existing back lanes that lead off Capel Road, with a mix of larger properties within grounds or smaller scale terraced cottages
- Avoid urbanising and uncharacteristic boundary treatments to development
- Avoid proliferation of individual dwellings along rural lanes in the wider Parish where this leads to ribbon development
- Residential and employment development away from the village should avoid urbanising and fragmenting the area's historic rural character
- Underground overhead wires to improve streetscape where feasible

- Retain lower density, leafy character of development around the former Bentley Station and south of the village
- Ensure new development does not urbanise or fragment the integrity of rural lanes through the introduction of multiple new access points.



Policy BEN 7 - Protecting Bentley's Landscape Character

Proposals must, proportionate to the development, demonstrate how the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity have been considered in preparing the scheme.

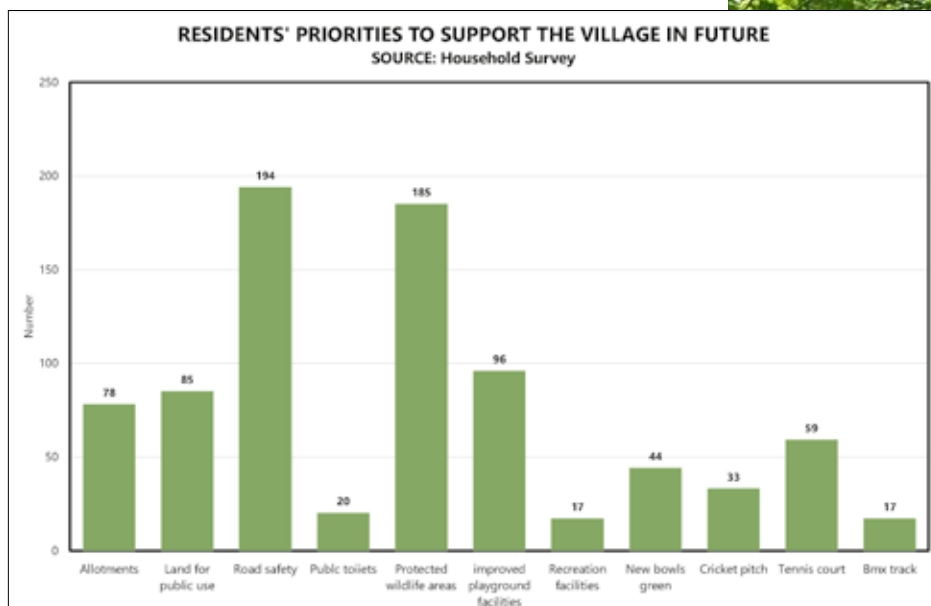
Proposals that result in any of the following will not be supported unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated, through a project level Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, that the resultant impact on the landscape character, referenced to the Landscape Appraisal, can be satisfactorily mitigated and appropriately secured:

- The creation of abrupt edges to development with little vegetation along the settlement edge; or
- The loss or erosion of the Vegetated Built Edge, recorded in the Landscape Appraisal and identified on the Policies Map; or
- Development on upper valley slopes that will be visually intrusive; or
- Housing estates with single housing types; or
- Erosion of rural lane character through introduction of new development, signage, kerbs and new junctions; or
- Development which, due to its location, alters the small scale and predominately linear pattern of the village on the edge of the plateau; or
- Development which masks the subtle changes in topography at the edge of the plateau; or
- Introduction of individual dwellings which do not reflect the scale or detailing of vernacular of properties in the area; or
- Introduction of street lighting or unnecessary signage; or
- Fragmentation of lanes due to the introduction of new access routes which can physically interrupt hedges, grass verges and embankments; or
- Proliferation of individual dwellings along rural lanes within the wider Parish, particularly where this creates linear development

Enhancement of the Vegetated Built Edges through appropriate reinforcement planting is encouraged.

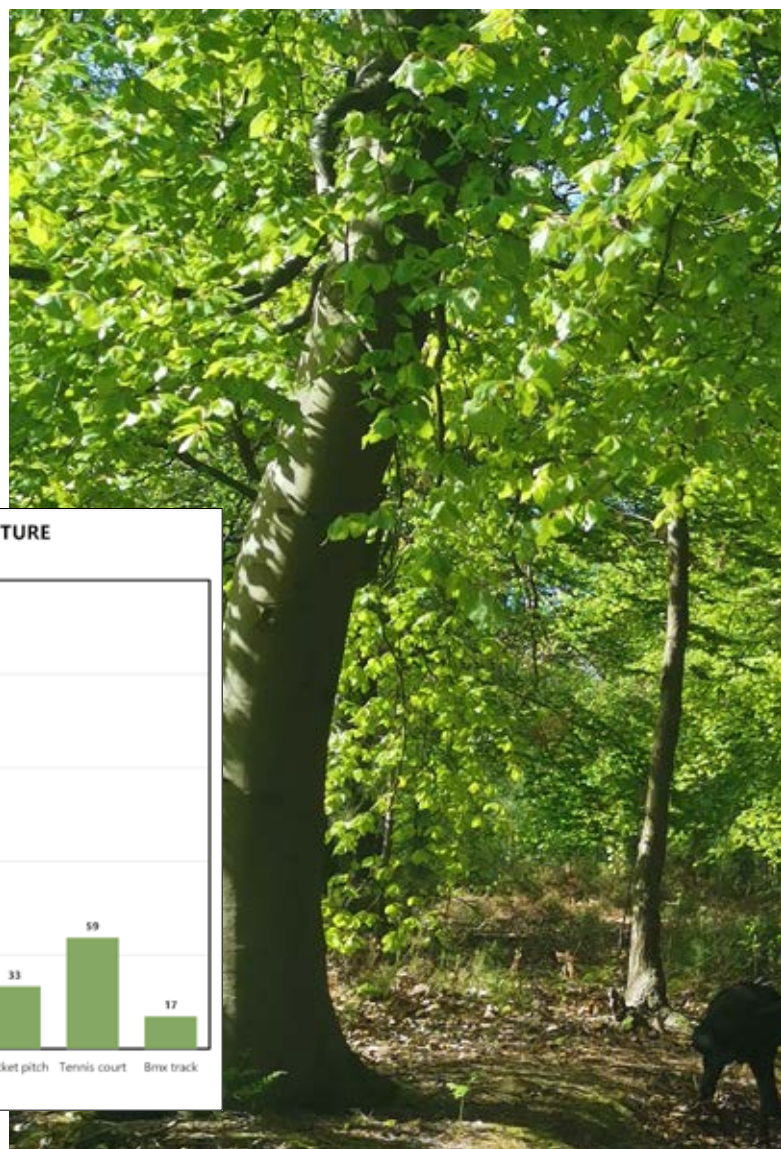
Bentley Habitats and Species

7.8 Bentley's ancient woodlands are encompassed in the South Suffolk Ancient Woodlands Cluster (Suffolk Nature Strategy 2014) and are designated County Wildlife Sites. These woodlands are well known for their spring display of bluebells. The native Bluebell is just one of 16 species of ancient woodland flora that have been recorded in these woods. Asked what they cherished in the Village Questionnaire, 251/286 responded "lovely countryside"; 205 wanted to be able to describe the parish as "Rural" in 2030. The bar chart below - where villagers were asked to choose 5 of 11 possible priorities - shows "Protected wildlife areas" second only to road safety.



7.9 Bentley parish is a hotspot for both dormice and stag beetles. Breeding Hazel dormice, a legally protected and Priority species, are present in all of Bentley's ancient woodlands and several of its ancient hedgerows. Disturbance of this species is not permitted. Stag beetles, which are classified as near-threatened by Natural England and a Priority Species in the UK and Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan, inhabit the woodland edges where they receive more sunlight. This flagship species breeds throughout the parish, its subterranean larvae feeding on underground decaying wood of hedgerows, trees, and shrubs in varied habitats including residents' gardens. Bentley's designated sites, priority habitats and species and protected species are listed in Appendix B.

7.10 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that "planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures". The "Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystems services" strategy mandates a 10% biodiversity net gain requirement on new development.



Impact of Development on Internationally Important Habitats

7.11 The Neighbourhood Plan area is located within a 13 kilometres "Zone of Influence" (ZOI) of the Stour and Orwell Special Protection Area (SPA) and Stour and Orwell Estuaries RAMSAR. Unless mitigated against, Natural England consider that additional residential development within the ZOI could have a detrimental impact on the designations due to an increase in residential trips.

7.12 Whilst the provision of well-designed open space/green infrastructure on site or contributions towards strategic green infrastructure in developments of under 50 homes is to be welcomed, Natural England advise that consideration of 'off-site' measures (i.e. in and around the relevant European designated site(s)) is required as mitigation for predicted recreational disturbance impacts.

7.13 Ipswich Borough, Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts and East Suffolk Council are taking a collaborative approach to strategic mitigation to support development and avoid impacts on internationally important designated wildlife sites. The Councils have produced a combined recreational disturbance,

Policy BEN 8 - Protecting Habitats and Wildlife corridors

Proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on designated sites, priority habitats and species and protected species will not normally be permitted except where it can satisfactorily be demonstrated that the benefits of the development clearly outweigh any adverse impact.

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, hedgerow, field boundary, mature or veteran trees and other natural features such as ponds.

Where such losses or harm are unavoidable adequate mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation measures will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, then planning permission should be refused.

Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

Otherwise acceptable development proposals will only be supported where they provide a net gain in biodiversity through, for example:

- a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- b) the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows, and;
- c) restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks.

avoidance and mitigation strategy (Suffolk RAMS) for the area. This identifies and costs measures necessary to mitigate recreational impacts and confirms how they will be funded and delivered over the lifetime of the Local Plans. Such measures are to be delivered strategically through the Suffolk Coast RAMS to make the sites more resilient to increased recreational pressures. A proportionate financial contribution should therefore be secured from proposed residential development in the ZOI in line with the Suffolk Coast RAMS.

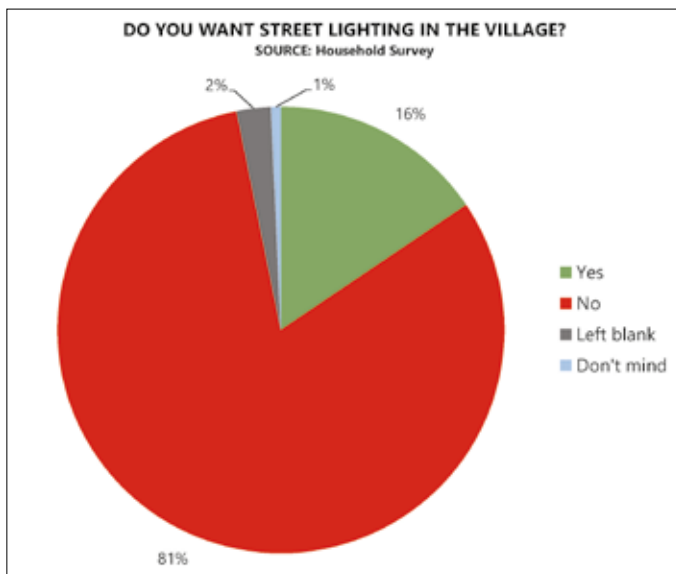
Policy BEN 9 - Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation

All residential development within the zones of influence of European sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), to avoid adverse in combination recreational disturbance effects and the integrity of the Habitats of the European sites.

Reducing Impact from Light Pollution

7.14 There is currently no street lighting in the village and, as the Landscape Appraisal noted, its introduction could have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the Village and add to light pollution. Paragraph 185 (c) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should “limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”. Artificial lighting of development, while increasing security, can also impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location or the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can also have a harmful impact.

7.15 The Village Questionnaire results (Q9. What Do You Cherish Most About Living In The Village?) identified that protecting dark skies is regarded as very important. This access to the night sky contributes to the rural character and sense of place within the village and is a highly valued asset.



7.16 It is a clear community aspiration that relates to keeping Bentley as a village with a rural feel, to preserve the tranquillity and dark skies quality of the landscape for current and future generations.

7.17 It will be essential to maintain the 'dark skies' and the strong rural feel in Bentley by avoiding the introduction of street lighting as part of any new development. Proposals will only be supported if they do not jeopardise the status of Bentley's dark skies.

Policy BEN 10 - Dark Skies and Street Lighting

While ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety, dark skies are to be preferred over streetlights. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment by being downward focussed and motion sensitive, not extend past the property boundary, and minimise light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife and subject to:

- a highway safety,
- b the needs of particular individuals groups, or
- c security

Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare.



8. Historic Environment

Objective:

6 To conserve and enhance our heritage assets

8.1 The Historic England Records database shows a rich history for the parish, with finds and findspots ranging from prehistory to a WWII Home Guard base (see map, with individual findspots and areas of heritage interest shown in purple). In all, the Suffolk HER lists a total of 58 records of historical interest for Bentley.



"SOURCE: Suffolk Historic Environment Record"

8.2 Data from the Portable Antiquities Scheme further deepens the picture, with 93 finds within the parish, from Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flint tools; Bronze Age and Iron Age jewellery; Roman coinage, brooches, and a steelyard; Early Mediaeval pottery and strap ends (and a curious pouring spout in the shape of a dog, shown); 41 pre-Tudor artefacts from a scabbard to small coins and a

leather-worker's lead palm protector; and 38 later artefacts including some interesting trade tokens, from both Ipswich and Nuremberg. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Historic Environment Record provides details of finds and the Service should be consulted at the earliest possible stages of preparing a planning application.



"SOURCE: The Portable Antiquities Scheme/ The Trustees of the British Museum."

8.3 There are a number of fine houses within the parish - Bentley Hall has 13thC roots, when Bentley was the seat of the Tollemache family (now of Helmingham Hall). Similarly, Old Hall, Falstaff Manor, Little Dodnash, and several other buildings show mediaeval origins. Of particular note is Bentley Long Barn, which with a coaching barn may have formed a pair of high-status buildings framing the approach to the 16thC Bentley Hall, built as a Tollemache dowry house.

8.4 The nature and management of the agricultural estates around these mediaeval grand houses, situated largely in the northern half of the parish and bounded by ancient woodland, has preserved the landscape much as it was since before the Norman invasion, as has the extensive ancient woodland in the south of the parish - recognised in its inclusion in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB extension).

8.5 A survey of Bentley Hall in June 2005 called the Hall and its outbuildings "one of the best preserved and historically important Tudor manor complexes in Britain". Bentley Long Barn, listed at Grade II* was built in 1582 as part of the renovation of Bentley Hall, as part barn and part Court House. It was

part of a matching pair of buildings flanking the drive to the Hall. Its companion building has long gone, but the barn still stands – just; it is in very poor condition, on the Historic England “At Risk” register. A sensitive treatment of the barn (which is inhabited by several species of bats) would be very much welcomed by the parish, particularly if such a development would result in a public venue – perhaps a wedding venue, with the church only a short distance away, or a concert hall.



- 8.6** The Local Plan policies for the consideration of development affecting Heritage Assets are significantly out-of-date and therefore planning decisions are reliant on the high-level guidelines provided in the NPPF. A planning policy is therefore included in the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that development proposals affecting heritage assets are given appropriate consideration.

Policy BEN 11 - Heritage Assets

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the Village’s designated heritage assets, proposals must:

- a. preserve or enhance the significance of designated heritage assets of the Village, their setting, and the wider built environment;
- b. contribute to the Village’s local distinctiveness, built form, and scale of its heritage assets, as described in the AECOM Design Guide, through the use of appropriate design and materials;
- c. be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment, and detailed design which respects the area’s character, appearance, and its setting;
- d. demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and
- e. provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that could harm a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

Proposals will not be supported where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided.

Where a planning proposal affects a heritage asset, it must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement identifying, as a minimum, the significance of the asset, and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the heritage asset. The level of detail of the Heritage Statement should be proportionate to the importance of the asset, the works proposed and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance and/or setting of the asset.

Policy BEN 12 - Buildings of Local Significance

The retention and protection of buildings of local significance, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest or of heritage interest, must be appropriately secured.

Proposals for any works that would cause harm to the significance of these buildings of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset to enable a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

Appendix C identifies Buildings of Local Significance which are identified on the Policies Map.

9. Development of Infrastructure and Services

Objective:

7. To encourage safe and sustainable options for travel in and around the village for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders.
8. To support the creation of infrastructure, such as fast broadband and transport links that allow commuting via public transport, to encourage a broad age spectrum within the village.

Highways

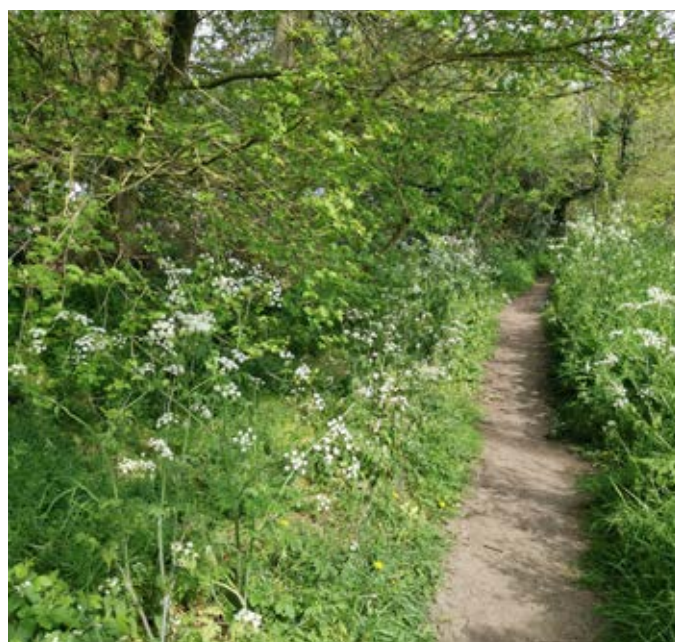
- 9.1 Many people in the village value the ability to walk to the pub and the shop, the school, and the village hall. However, speed is an issue along some of the village's roads, particularly the Station/Capel Road forming the main road through the village, which is used as an emergency cut-through route whenever there is a blockage on the A12 or A137, bringing heavy and unsuitable traffic through the village.
- 9.2 We would welcome safety improvements to pavements, and the provision of footpaths and bridleways where none exist currently. New developments must ensure that access is maintained or improved to the current footpath and pavement infrastructure; new footpaths or upgrades to existing footpaths linked to new development should provide TROD or Type 1 or similar surfaces, to provide connectivity whilst retaining the rural character.

Policy BEN 13 - Sustainable Transport infrastructure and services

Proposals must demonstrate, as appropriate to the development, that safe walking and cycling links to the wider countryside and the extensive Public Rights of Way network within the parish, and to key local services and community facilities including the village pub and shop exist or are capable of being created as part of the development.

Public Rights of Way

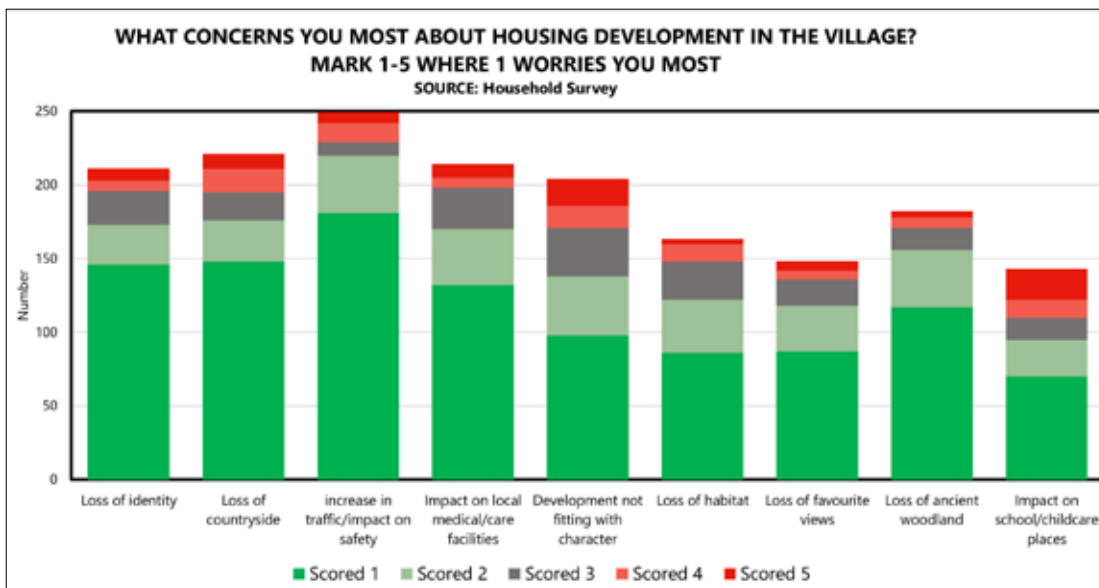
- 9.3 Bentley residents value their Public Rights Of Way network of 64 footpaths and 3 bridleways and regularly use the rural lanes in Bentley to connect to these. The current network is illustrated on Map 8. In the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire completed by villagers, Public Footpaths were considered the second most important facility after the village shop and show just how important the Public Rights of Way are to village life. Access to the local countryside contributes to the villagers' health and well-being in terms of both mental and physical health.





Map 8 - Public Rights of Way Map

- 9.4** The main road (Station Road and Capel Road) that runs through the village is used as a ‘cut through’ between the A137 and A12. There are footways alongside roads in only the very centre of the village and it is considered unsafe to walk or cycle to Capel St Mary or East Bergholt where many of our services are. Walkers and cyclists prefer to use the village’s ‘back lanes’ for recreation and sustainable travel.
- 9.5** The village has a large community of horse riders with a livery yard of over 30 horses at Dodnash Fruit Farm, as well as horses stabled at Bentley Riding School, and many other individual horse owners living in the village. Horse riders prefer to use the more rural roads such as Church Road to connect to ‘off road’ riding in Old Hall and Belstead Woods as well as Grove Road and Hazel Shrub to access Great Martin’s Wood.
- 9.6** In the recent Neighbourhood Plan Village questionnaire, villagers considered the most worrying concern about housing development was the anticipated increase in traffic/impact on safety and felt that Road Safety was the top priority to support the village in the future.
- 9.7** Bentley wants to protect its rural country lanes so that pedestrians (including school children), cyclists, horse riders and other non-motorised vehicle users can continue to use Bentley’s lanes safely for recreation and sustainable travel. Development should take all reasonable opportunities to promote the use of public and green transport, such as improving the cycle lane network and contributing towards community or commercial bus services to the village.



10. Quiet Lanes

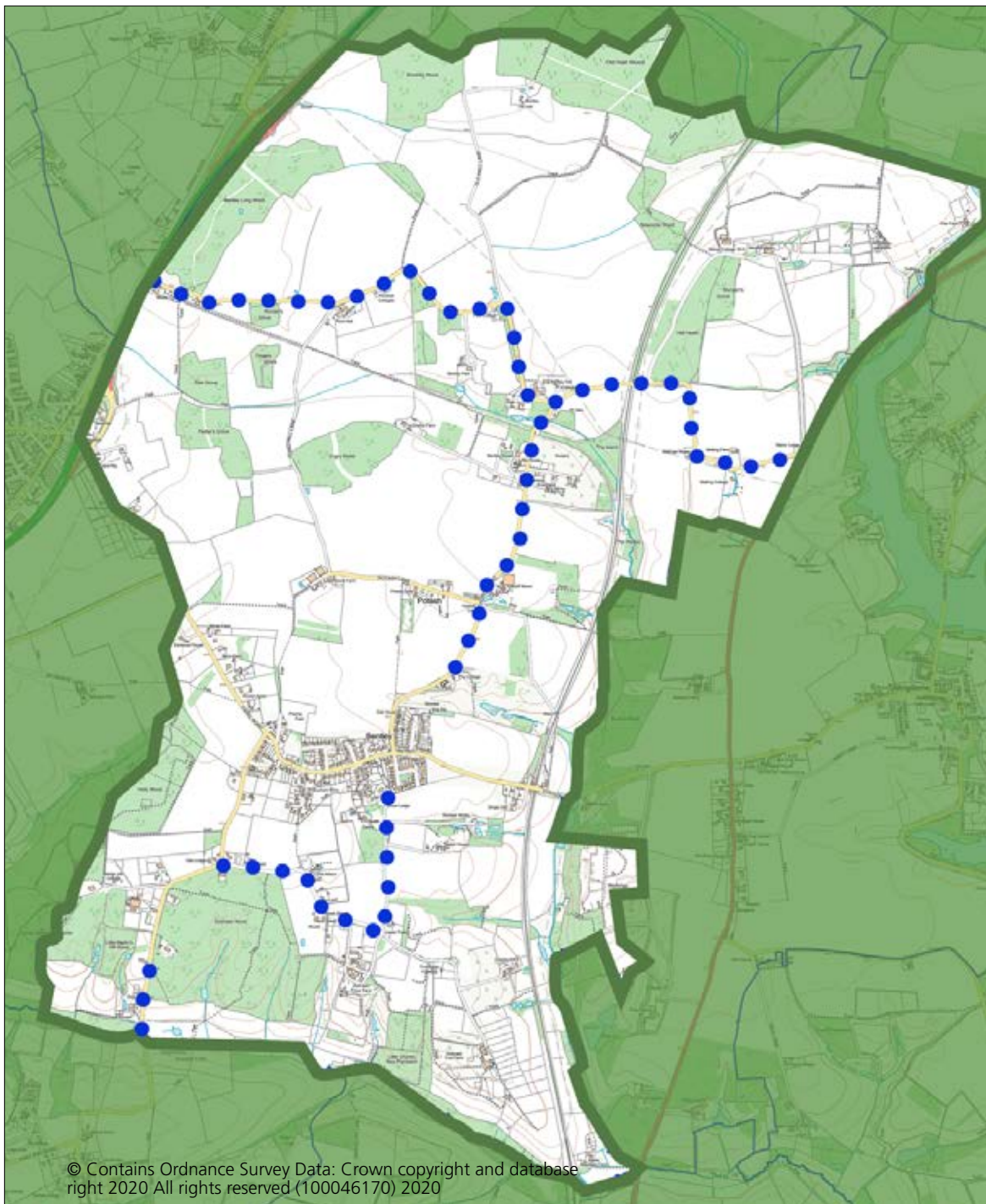
- 10.1** The village is working with Suffolk CC and other villages to designate some of the narrower lanes which are popular with walkers, cyclists and horse-riders as “Quiet Lanes” to provide recognition that these lanes are used for non-motorised travel and that drivers should expect to consider the needs of walkers, cyclists, and horse riders. Developments that generate significant levels of traffic that could result in average daily vehicle movements on a Quiet Lane in excess of 1,000 vehicles or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph could result in the designation being lost. Such development proposals would not be supported.
- 10.2** Quiet Lanes are minor rural roads, typically C or unclassified routes, which have been designated by local highway authorities to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other vulnerable road users, and to offer protection from speeding traffic. Cars are not banned from Quiet Lanes but these lanes are signposted to help drivers to ‘Expect and Respect’ other non-motorised road users who may be sharing the road.
- 10.3** Natural England recognise ‘the importance of providing and maintaining a network of green infrastructure, including RoW [Public Rights of Way], quality greenspaces, quiet lanes, greenways and corridors, for an effective non-motorised transport network threading through urban areas and linking to more rural areas’.



10.4 The Suffolk Green Access Strategy addresses access for walking and cycling on the wider highway network, including footways and quiet lanes. 'Green access is key to developing people's health and wellbeing. Inactivity is one of the top 10 causes of disease and disability in England and accounts for as many deaths as smoking'.

10.5 The following five lanes, as illustrated on Map 9, were designated as Quiet Lanes in 2021:

- Bentley Hall Road
- Church Road
- Grove Road
- Hazel Shrub
- Bergholt Road



Map 9 - Bentley's designated Quiet Lanes



11. Community Facilities



Objective:

- 9 To conserve and enhance the sense of robust, resilient, vibrant community within the village, maintaining the village as a safe and desirable place to live for all its residents

11.1 The provision and enhancement of community facilities and services, including shops, public houses, play facilities, education establishments, allotments and meeting places that serve the needs of Bentley will be encouraged where they contribute to the quality of village life and improve the sustainability of the village. However, it is recognised that demands change over time and it would be unreasonable to require the retention of facilities if there is no longer a proven need or demand for them. In such circumstances it might be appropriate for those uses to be lost where specific criteria can be met.

11.2 Replacement facilities are acceptable providing that they provide a facility that is of at least equivalent quality and in a location whereby it can be accessed by residents walking, cycling or using public transport.

Policy BEN 14 - Protecting existing services and facilities

Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services, as identified on the Policies Map and which support the local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:

- a. it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable and is not likely to become viable. Supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and
- b. it can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or
- c. alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.

11.3 The Village Playing Field is large enough to accommodate a football pitch although it has no changing facilities. The Hadleigh Under 11 Maritime Club has reached agreement with the Parish Council for a minimum arrangement of two years starting in 2020 for the club to protect and improve pitch quality and on-field parking in return for a small fee, with the aim of the pitch being the home ground for the club. The field is regularly used by children having a kick-around, for dog-walkers, as the venue for the annual Village Fair and Fireworks events, as a picnic spot, and there are a variety of bird and bat boxes and insect “hotels” scattered around the site. It is essential that these facilities are maintained and improved to support healthy lifestyles in future years. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to protect the Playing Field from being lost unless an equally good or better recreational open area is provided in an equally accessible location in the Village.

11.4 The Village Bowling Green off Grove Road is another sports facility that must be protected as it provides a popular facility for residents.



Bowling Green

Policy BEN 15 - Sport and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities, as identified on the Policies Map, will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:

- a. it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirements as measured against the local planning authority's standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a shortfall during the Development Plan period; or
- b. replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, which is of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.

Any replacement provision should take account of the current and future needs of the settlement where the development is taking place and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.

Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.

Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities must be of a high standard of design and internal layout. The location of such facilities must be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals which give rise to intrusive floodlighting will not be permitted.

Local Green Spaces

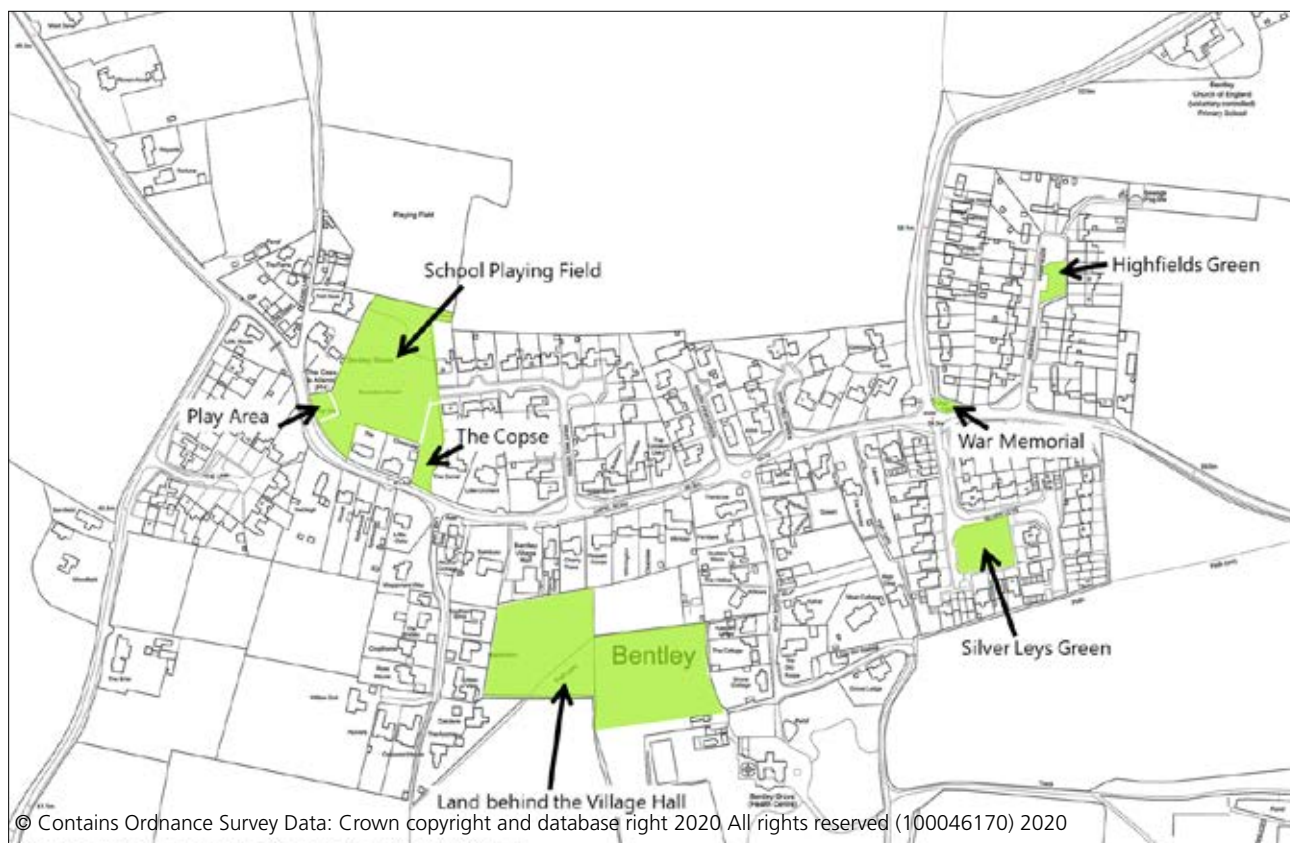
11.5 There are a number of open areas within the Village that make important contributions to the character and setting of the built environment.

11.6 The NPPF enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Spaces ('LGS') in neighbourhood plans. Such designations rule out new development on them other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife;
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development.

11.7 A separate Local Green Space Appraisal has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, which demonstrates how certain local spaces meet the criteria in paragraph 102 of the NPPF. The spaces that meet the criteria are identified in Policy BEN16 and are

illustrated on the Policies Map. The identification of these spaces as LGS means that development is restricted to that which is essential for each site, for example, the installation by utility service providers of telecommunications equipment. Because development cannot normally take place on playing pitches, the Plan does not designate the Village Playing Field or the Bowling Green as Local Green Spaces in order to enable buildings, such as changing rooms, to be built should a need arise. These are protected under Policy BEN15.



Map 10 - Local Green Spaces

Policy BEN 16 - Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in the Plan and identified on the Policies Map:

- 1 School Playing Field
- 2 Play Area
- 3 The Copse (off Capel Road)
- 4 Land behind Village Hall
- 5 Silver Leys Green
- 6 War Memorial
- 7 Highfields Green

Development in the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts.

Broadband and Telecommunications

11.8 Broadband and Mobile Communications are important to the sustainability of rural communities by enabling working from home and online shopping. Broadband speeds in the village centre are generally very good but this is not necessarily the case in locations away from the current fibre optic broadband cabinets. It will be important to ensure that future broadband provision in the village keeps pace with improvements to technology. The location of mobile phone masts can have a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside and this can cause a conundrum between trying to improve mobile phones signals and protecting the character of the village. Masts should be designed and sited to minimise intrusion and visual impact and proposals will need to be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment.

11.9 Whilst it is a requirement under the Universal Service Obligation (USO) to provide fast Broadband connections, developers are increasingly taking on responsibility for the connection from the street to the internal connection of a customers' premises. This may include providing ductwork in the street as the development progresses. The type of connection should be agreed between developer and service provider in advance of installation.



Policy BEN 17 - Communications Technology

Proposals from mobile phone network operators to improve mobile coverage will be supported where:

- i. the apparatus is designed and sited to minimise intrusion and visual impact;
- ii. the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and
- ii. proposals have been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the rural character of Bentley, having particular regard to the landscape character of the area and the important views identified on the Policies Map, and on the setting of the AONB.

Policy BEN 18 - Broadband

New development (residential, employment and commercial) will be expected to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services in the village. As a minimum, suitable ducting to industry standards should be provided to the public highway that can accept fibre optic cabling or other emerging technology. Other forms of infrastructure, such as facilities supporting mobile broadband and Wi-Fi, should be included where possible and viable.

Village Infrastructure

11.10 The village is relatively well provided for in terms of community facilities and infrastructure given the population size and is comparable to those provided in other hinterland villages across Babergh. At the beginning of the 2010s Bentley had a struggling pub, no shop, and little community outside of groups using the Village Hall. In recent years the purchase of the pub by the community, and the creation of the community shop, has greatly strengthened our social infrastructure. Maintenance of the relative tranquillity our physical infrastructure and setting provides, as well as access to our green infrastructure, is crucially important to us and to our identity as a hinterland village. We believe that our portion of England's green and pleasant land is worth preserving – not frozen in time, but growing sensitively and incrementally to meet future housing needs without destroying that which makes it special.



11.11 Some of the physical and social infrastructure that underpins the village was installed some time ago, to provide for an earlier, simpler, less demanding way of life. We strongly support the government initiatives towards clean fuel vehicles; however, we do not want a situation where new development swallows up the available grid capacity, meaning that existing residents wouldn't be able to have car charging points or would suffer voltage reductions or interruptions to power supply as a result of undersupply to the new demand.

11.12 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new, fixed rate payment that councils can charge on new buildings in their area to off-set the impacts of additional homes and businesses on facilities such as public transport infrastructure, schools, open space and health centres (infrastructure) and to enable sustainable growth. Babergh District Council adopted CIL charging in January 2016 and new housing developments have to pay the standard charge which is set by the District Council. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, the Parish Council will be eligible for 25% of the CIL collected for

chargeable development in Bentley. Appendix E contains the current Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the village. This will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Parish Council and published on the Parish Council website.

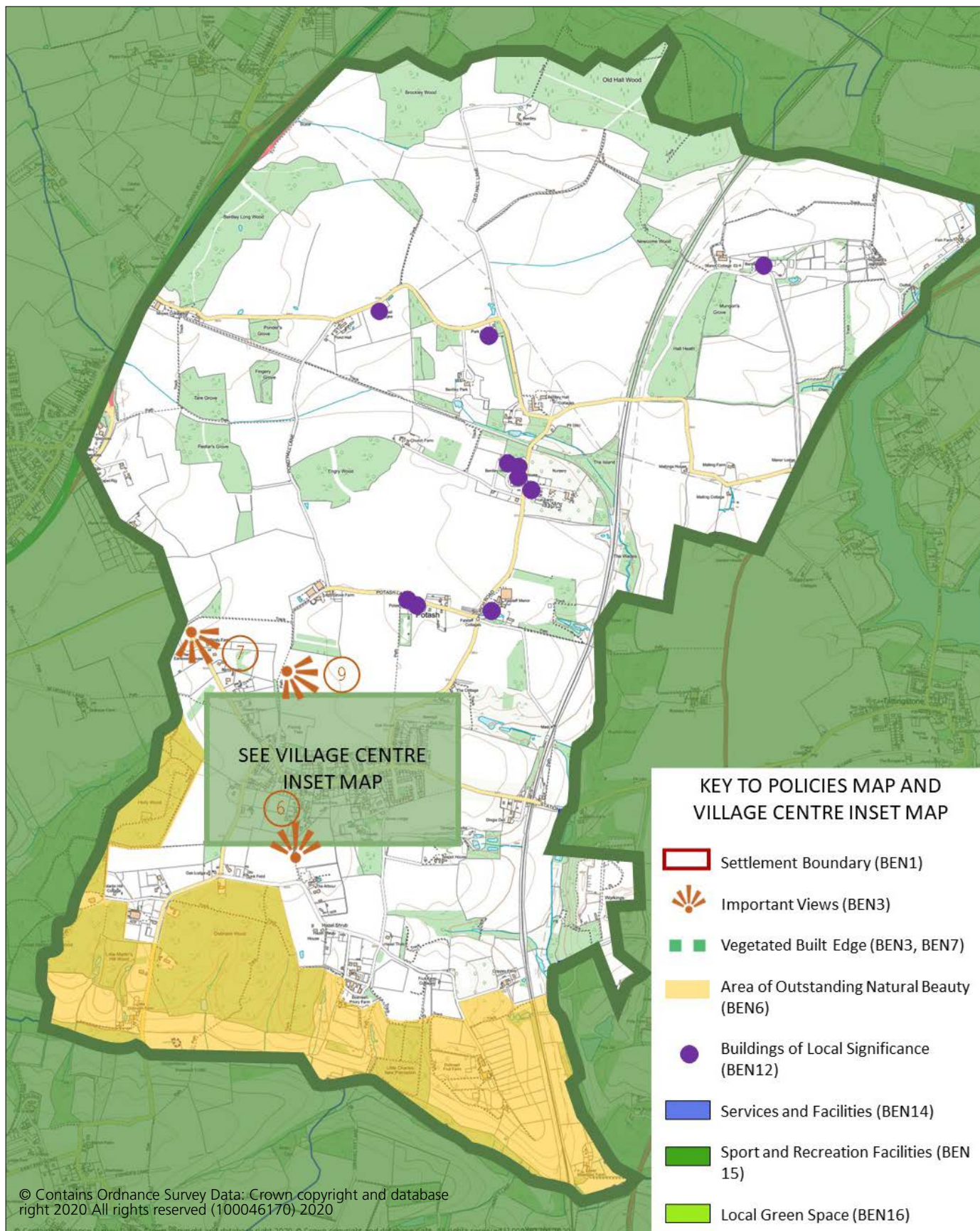
11.13 Policy CS21 of the adopted Core Strategy states that the District Council will work with service providers, developers, and other partners to secure the appropriate social, physical and green infrastructure needed.

Policy BEN 19 - Infrastructure Delivery

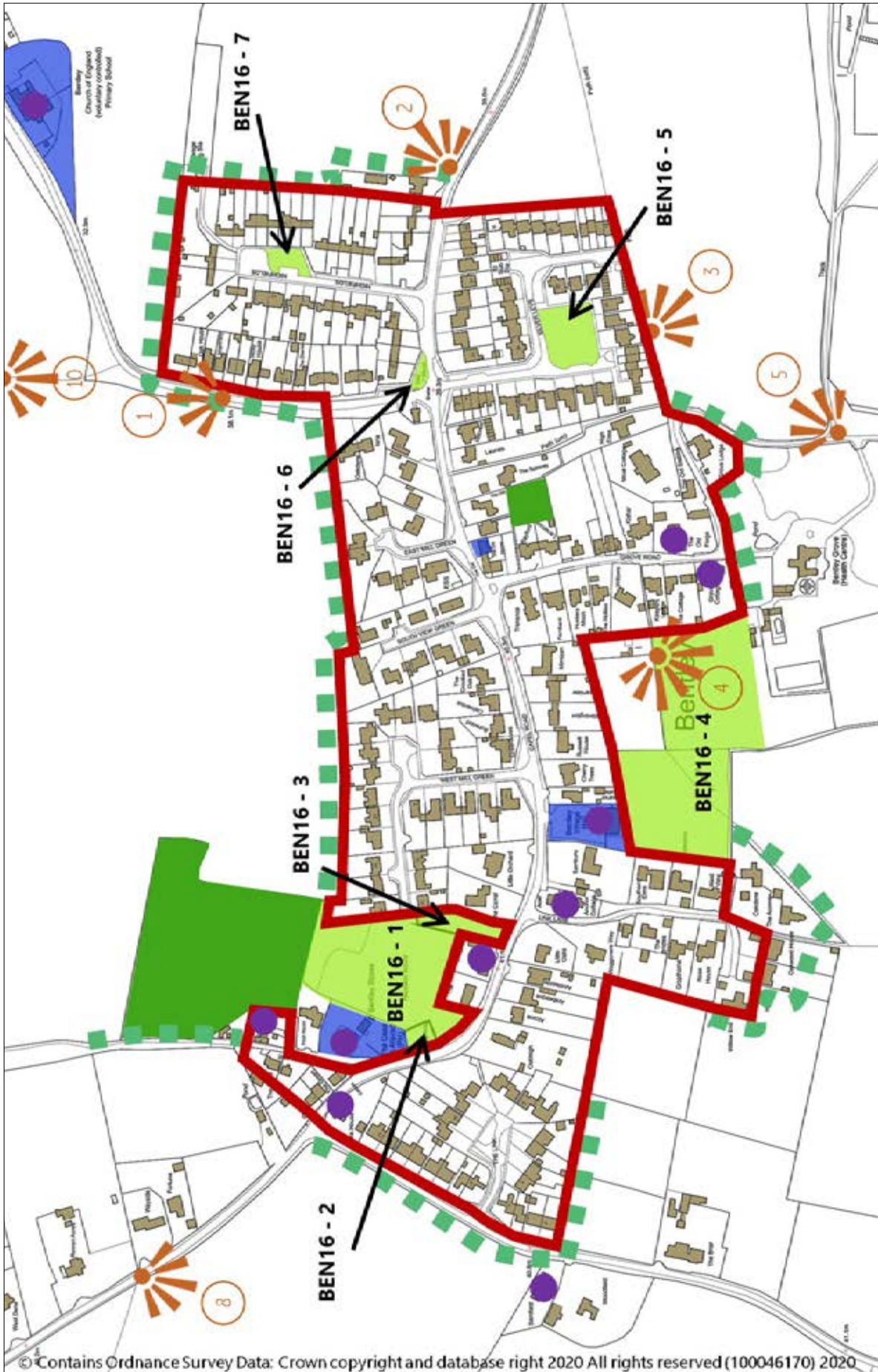
All development in Bentley will be expected to contribute to the infrastructure requirements for the village in accordance with Babergh District Council's most up to date CIL Expenditure Framework and the Bentley Infrastructure Investment Plan (Appendix D). The Infrastructure Investment Plan for the village will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Parish Council. Regard will also be given to the most up-to-date Babergh and Mid Suffolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Planning permission will only be granted where the infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms can be delivered.

11.14 The village Primary School on Church Road is separate from the main built-up area of the village and is on a small site. It has a capacity of 56 pupils and the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan (September 2020) noted that the expansion beyond 70 would be "challenging, expensive and is not forecast to be necessary for delivery of the Local Plan."

Policies Map



Village Centre Inset Map



Appendix A - Development Design Checklist

SOURCE - Bentley Design Guide - AECOM (November 2019)

Is there evidence that development proposals have considered and applied the following general design principles, so that the proposal:

- Harmonises with and enhances the existing settlement in terms of physical form, movement pattern and land use;
- Relates well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent long-distance views;
- Reinforces or enhances the established character of streets and other spaces;
- Integrates with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Provides adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Reflects, respects and reinforces local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retains and incorporates important existing landscape and built form features into the development;
- Respects surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopts contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Incorporates necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensures all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; to provide a safe, attractive and cohesive environment;
- Makes enough provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Sensitively integrates energy efficient technologies within the scheme at the start of the design process.

All developments must be shown to address the following detailed questions, where they are relevant to the application:

Landscape structure or settlement pattern

- Are the essential characteristics of the existing settlement and street pattern reflected in the proposal?
- Does the proposal respect local landscape features including topography and hydrology?
- What are the important landscape or historic features within and surrounding the site? Have these features including existing trees been considered in the proposal?
- How does the proposal relate to its setting? Are there any important links both physical and visual that currently exists on and adjacent to the site?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the new points of access and street layout take regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirement?

Green spaces, public realm and street scape

- Does the new proposal respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features including trees on or adjacent to the site?
- How does the proposal affect the character of a rural or edge of settlement location?
- In rural and edge of settlement locations does the development impact the tranquillity of the area and has this been fully considered?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been considered?
- Does the proposal positively contribute to the quality of the public realm and streetscape?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Have all aspects of security been fully considered and integrated into the design of the buildings and open spaces?

Pattern and layout of buildings

- What is the pattern and layout of existing buildings and have these been respected in the proposal?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of existing building layouts and their relationship with the main roads through the settlement?
- If the design is within or adjacent to a heritage asset, have the elements which contribute to their significance been considered in the proposal? (Heritage assets include listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered landscapes and registered battlefields.)
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting and significance of a heritage asset?
- Views and landmarks

Views and landmarks

- What are the existing key views and visual landmarks in the area and have these been retained and enhanced in the proposal?
- Where long distance views exist, how are these respected in the design?
- Are new views and visual connections with the existing settlement and surrounding area incorporated into the proposal?
- Are new landmarks to be formed within the proposals?

Building line and boundary treatment

- Does the proposal respect the existing building line and harmonise with the adjacent properties?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline

- Does the proposed development compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens?
- Has careful attention been paid to height, form, massing and scale of new buildings?
Is it appropriate to reflect the adjacent scale or could a taller development be considered?
- If a proposal is an extension, is it subsidiary to the existing property so it does not compromise its character?

Parking and utilities

- Has adequate provision been made for car and cycle parking both private and public?
- Do the proposed private car and cycle parking locations complement the existing provision or introduce new approaches? If new, do these new approaches change the character of the street?
- Has adequate provision been made for bin storage including facilities for waste separation and recycling?
- Is the location of the bin storage facilities appropriate in relation to the travel distance from the collection vehicle?
- Has the impact of the design of bin storage facilities been considered, including quality of materials and location on the whole development? Could additional measures be incorporated to help integrate facilities into the development?
- Has the location of utilities including appropriate maintenance access been integrated into the proposal?
- Is the use of energy saving/efficient technologies encouraged and maximised?
Are these technologies integrated into the proposal and not 'bolt on'?
- Has the lighting scheme been designed to avoid light pollution?

Code 3 Pattern and layout of buildings

This plan brings together many of the elements of the Bentley code where they relate to the pattern and layout of buildings.



Example of suitable development

Appendix B - Designated Sites, Habitats and Species and Protected Sites

The following protected habitats and species have been recorded in the parish of Bentley, Suffolk.

Data sourced from:

Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), Schedule 5, Sections 9 (1) and 9 (5); The Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service; The United Kingdom and Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan, 'Priority Species'; Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000); Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010); Bat Conservation Trust Survey (2006); Suffolk

Hedgerow Survey (1998-2012). Guy Ackers. (Suffolk Coastal District Council, Greenprint Forum).

Summaries can be found at:

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/uk-wildlife-law>

<http://www.gov.uk/topic/planning-development/protected-sites-species>

Additional information sourced from Natural England and Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

(More commonly known as JNCC).

Protected Habitats

County Wildlife Sites

Ancient Woodland

Ancient/Species-rich Hedgerows

Wet Woodland

Protected Species (numbers)

Amphibians: Toad, Smooth Newt (2)

Reptiles: Adder, Grass Snake, Slowworm, Common Lizard (4)

Birds: (95)

Mammals: Bat species (7), Badger, Otter, Hare, Hedgehog, Dormouse, Harvest Mouse Water Shrew (total 14)

Dragonflies and Damselflies: Variable Damselfly, Scarce Emerald Damselfly (2)

Butterflies: White Admiral, White letter Hairstreak (2)

Moths: (24)

Bees: Large Gorse Mining Bee, Ridge-saddled Carpenter Bee (2)

Beetles: European Stag Beetle + 21 others (22)

Plants (other than trees)

Bluebell, Bee Orchid, Early-purple Orchid, Heath Speedwell, Eyebright, Field Scabious, Heather, Wild Strawberry, Common Valerian, Tormentil, Wood Sorrel, Stinking Chamomile, Corn Mint, Corn Spurrey, Yellow-glandular Hawkweed, Wood Spurge, Pillwort, Butchers Broom, Common Cudweed, Mousetail. (20).

Trees: Native Black Poplar (1).

Protected Species: (Notes)

All Bird and Bat species, Badger, Dormouse, Adder, Grass Snake, Slow-worm, and Common Lizard species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

United Kingdom and Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan 'Priority Species' are not protected by Government legislation but Local Authorities and other public bodies are required to 'protect and enhance' them.

Relatively few invertebrates are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act but many are endangered, threatened or near threatened as noted in the Red Data Books, an example being the near threatened European Stag Beetle. Many are also classed as Priority Biodiversity Action Plan Species (PBAP) which should be taken into account in planning applications (see invertebrates listed above).

Appendix C - Buildings of Local Significance

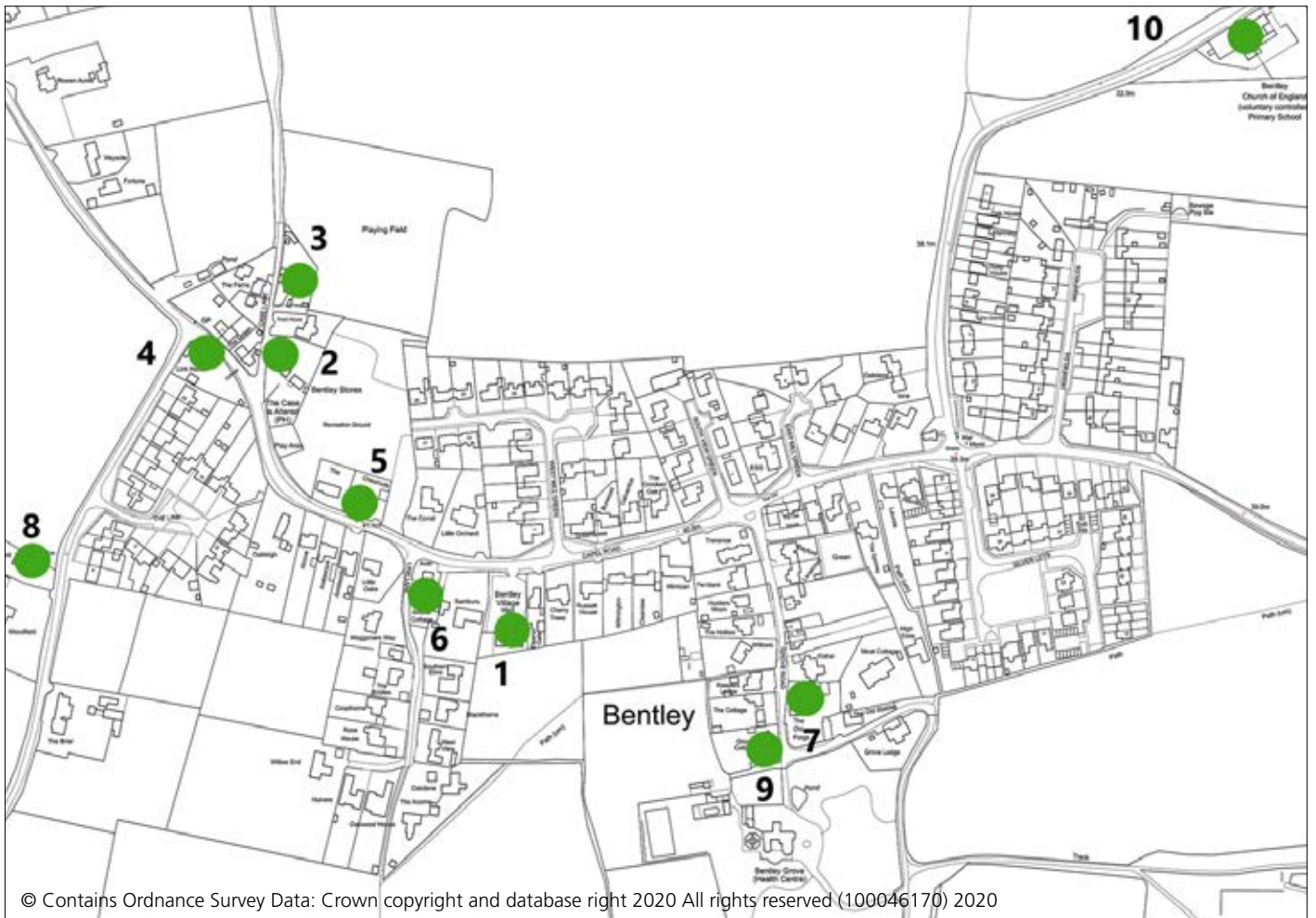
There are several non-listed buildings that are of local significance within the built-up area;

- **the Village Hall (marked 1 on Bentley Centre map below)** - this was built this century by a combination of National Lottery funding and fundraising within the village, and is a well-used village facility. Although of no particular heritage interest, it is held in significant community value.
- **the Case Is Altered pub (2)** is the last pub in the village and was bought by the village in 2014. It is run almost entirely on volunteer labour, as is the Bentley Community Stores, which is a separate entity built in the pub car park in 2016. We have the original parchment deeds etc. for the pub and know that the land was bought in 1720 on land where a “casa” had been burnt down – presumably where the name comes from! Case Lane still provides a convenient footpath to Capel St Mary, and the wider path network links to Ipswich to the north and to the Stour River to the south, whilst the current road network goes east to west. It is probably safe to assume that the pub serviced travellers at a nexus of roads. Case Lane itself was probably a drover’s road connecting Ipswich to Cattawade and Colchester.
- **Anchor Cottage (6)** is the oldest property on Link Lane, and still has its original well in the front garden. It is almost within sight of the pub, and is therefore one of the cluster of 17th or earlier buildings that surround the pub, forming an early nexus for the village.
- **Chestnuts (5), and Witchstep Cottage (3)** are both unique, quirky, and at least partially very old, buildings; for example, Witchstep Cottage sits in a series of possibly 17thC terraced cottages behind the pub, and actually does have a stepped roof specifically to allow a witch returning from a trip a place to rest before she transforms back to her human form... Chestnuts is placed between the pub and Anchor Cottage, and may well be of a similar vintage, with the separation possibly reflecting subsistence-farming plot size.
- **Link House (4)** is 16thC at core, and is part of the cluster of houses that surrounded the pub.
- **Bentley Forge (7)** is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and although it has been much altered over the centuries, has a palpable aura of age.
- **Grove Cottage (9)**, across the narrowest part of Grove Road from the Forge, could well have been an outbuilding; it is long and narrow and heavily timbered inside. The brick frontage and crinkle-crinkle wall look like a Georgian addition to a much older core.
- In contrast, **Barnfield (8)** is a new build, but has been very carefully designed to fit into the landscape; it is visible across open fields as soon as you approach the built-up area along the Capel Road and has the feel of a wooden barn, which increases if you drive past it and you realise it’s only around 18’ wide - its rural vibe fits perfectly into the woodlands which are part of the 2020 extension to the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB.

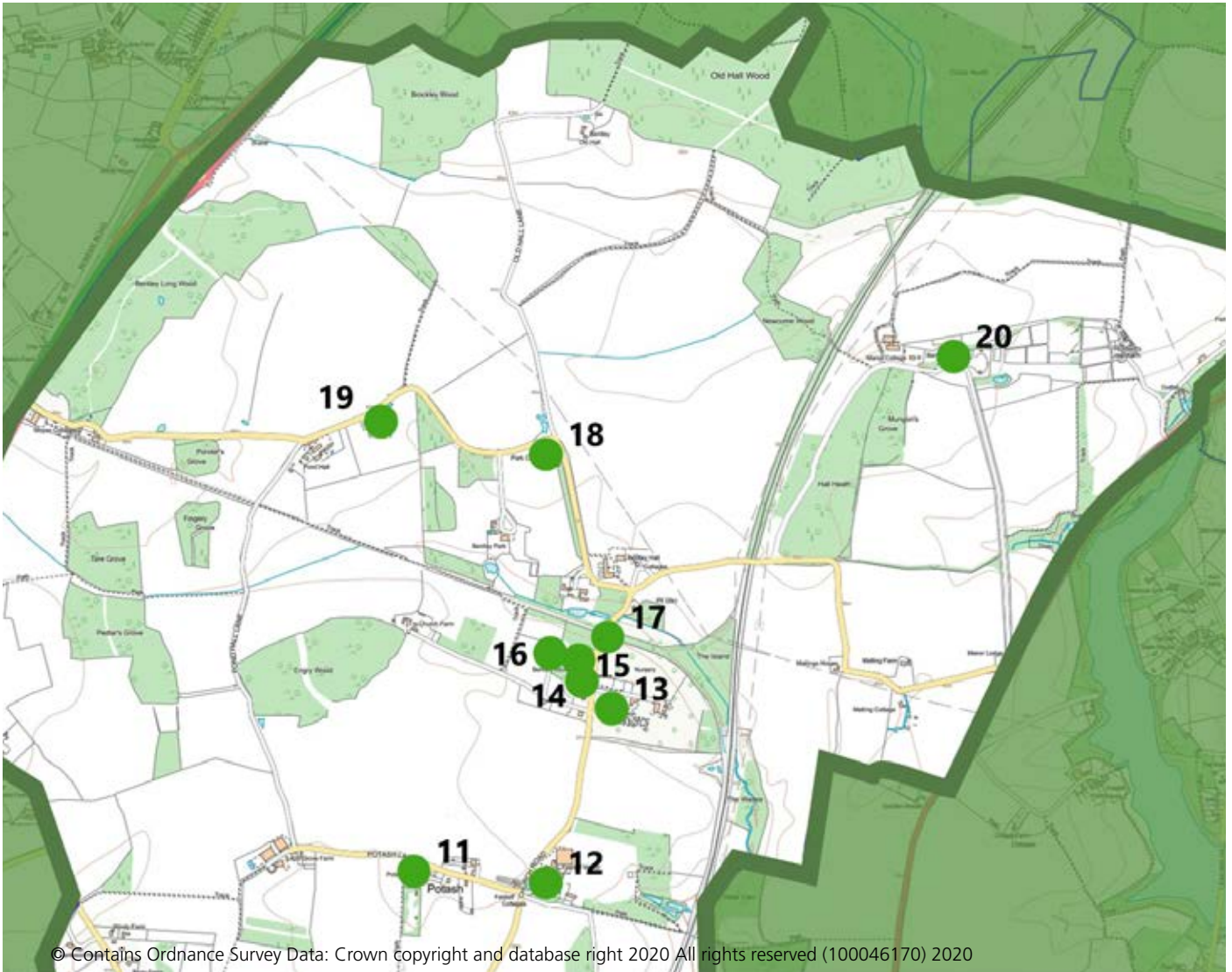
Outside the village centre on the Bentley North map below,

- **Park Cottage (18)** is a pleasant half-timber and brick cottage sitting on the edge of the Bentley Park estate, and is likely to be an estate worker’s cottage. The Domesday Book mentions half a park for Bentley!
- **Pond Hall Cottages (19)**, just down the road from Park Cottage, are redbrick cottages of a similar date, presumably once tied cottages to Pond Hall Farm.
- On the other side of the park, **Glebe Cottage (16), Bentley House (15) & Little House (14)** are a cluster of dwellings focussed on the church, probably later in date than the Park/Pond Hall cluster, although the Georgian frontage of Bentley House and Little House might be a later addition.
- **Bentley Manor (20)** appears to have acquired its name in 1668, when Sir Lionel Tallemache sold the manorial rights to a John Cudworth. The building possibly dates from that time; it is a fine, large, red-brick building in a Palladian style but is clearly not as old as other ex-Tollemache buildings in close proximity.
- **Falstaff Manor (12)** is one of the original manors in Bentley, mentioned in the Domesday Book as being owned by the King; after the Conquest, it was gifted to Count Alan. The house and its setting is clearly mediaeval.
- **Red Cottages and Potash Cottages (11)** are a run of charming red-brick houses at right-angles to each other on Potash Lane, possibly attached to Falstaff Manor. Red Cottages were named for the startling colour of their new bricks, and the centre cottage has a brick dated 1818 in the fireplace. Potash Cottages are potentially earlier, 17thC, but have been much altered over the years.
- **Crossing Cottage (17)** is a charming remnant of the pre-Beeching time when Bentley had its own station, and an attendant was required to oversee traffic crossing the railway line near the top of Church Road. It is tiny, and octagonal!

- The Primary School (10 on the Bentley Centre map) is Victorian at its core, of lovely warm red brick. It has had numerous extensions in the past, making its architecture rather eclectic; but it's loved all the same. A great addition was the tile spiral on the eastern wall, marking the millennium, with each child then at the school drawing an image from history.
- in contrast **Uplands (13)** has won awards for its Contemporary modernist architecture. Its Pevsner entry reads: Traditional materials (red brick ground floor, first floor clad in oak and tile), less traditional form (bedrooms as separate elements under their own mono pitch roofs; full-height glazing, partially screened). Pergola link to Japanese tea house on east side.



Significant Buildings Bentley Centre



Significant Buildings Bentley North

Appendix D - Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan

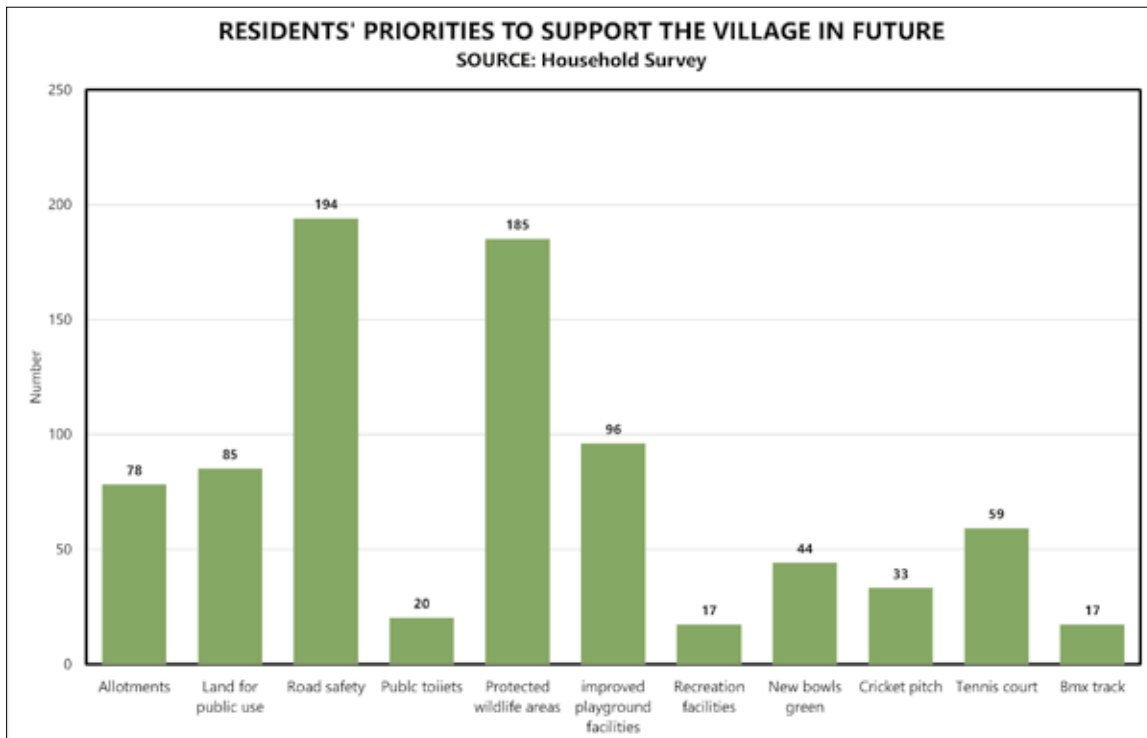
As part of the Village Questionnaire, people were asked to pick, and comment on, areas that they would like to see improved. These areas have informed the planning Policies in the document where appropriate, and have also guided the Parish's Infrastructure Investment Plan, below. This document has been submitted to Babergh District Council to identify areas in order of priority that the Parish wishes to fund out of either the parish precept or CIL moneys as Community Actions.

The first of these items, a slide for the children's play area, is in hand.

We are also discussing the siting of poles for a speed radar device with Highways, and have budgeted for the purchase of the device.

The Parish Tree Warden has instituted several changes to the Village Playing Field, the only land which the Parish Council directly controls, with a closely managed mowing schedule, bird and bat boxes, bug hotels, and the planting of several trees.

Requests such as a footpath along the main road extending out of the village to both Capel St Mary and Tattingsstone are entirely outside our control or even our influence. Others are possibly within our influence, and we're working on them. Some parishioner requests, such as the provision of a swimming pool, are unlikely to be realised, however!



Bentley Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan for 2021

Parish name(s)	Bentley
Area covered (if combined area)	Bentley Parish
Date of PIIP	04/03/2021
Date of next review	March 2022
Community Infrastructure needs and/ or aspirations. This should be based upon the gaps and/or deficits identified in the preceding two rows. Once completed, please order ordering these needs according to your priorities.	<p>1 Road Safety Particularly on narrow single track roads as serving the School and Church. There is a 30 mph speed limit in the village envelope, which is frequently ignored, particularly by commuter traffic cutting through the village, most particularly when there are (frequent) traffic problems on the A12 or A14.</p> <p>This would be best served by traffic calming, eg Speed Indicator device (s), a village treatment to village entrances on C426, and extended pedestrian footpaths on the Highway.</p> <p>Additionally the maintenance of roads, road signs, attention to road flooding and debris on the roads.</p> <p>2 Protected green spaces To maintain Village characteristics, including wildlife areas, footpaths and recreation space.</p> <p>3 Allotments There is an identified need for allotments in the village</p> <p>4 Development of play and recreation areas Provision of additional facilities on Playing Field and in Children’s Play Area.</p> <p>*The provision of a slide on the children’s play area would be the first and easily obtainable priority for current funds*</p> <p>There is also a perceived issue with sewerage services</p>
Community engagement - please confirm how you have sought the views of your community and how they have helped to inform your current and future needs.	<p>A comprehensive survey of all residents, was distributed to all households in 2018/19, in the context of the development of a Neighbourhood Plan. This included specific questions on perceived needs of infrastructure development and improvement. This had a 38% response rate, and identified the needs as listed above.</p> <p>1 Road Safety: 194 votes 2 Protected wildlife: areas 96 votes 3 Improved playground facilities: 96 votes 4 Purchase of land for public use: 84 votes 5 Allotments: 78 votes</p> <p>There were many other suggestions, including designated car parking, electric car charging points inter alia.</p>
Your investment priorities - please prepare a list of infrastructure projects to be funded, in order of their priority	<p>1 Drainage on the Village Playing Field 2 Gym equipment purchase and installation on the VPF 3 Provision of radar controlled illuminated Speed Indicator Device x2 or ANPR devices 4 ‘Village treatment’ of village entrances. 5 Purchase/lease land for allotments and supporting infrastructure 6 Extension of footpath on Capel road 7 Consideration of further purchase/lease of amenity land</p>

Glossary

Affordable housing: Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market including affordable rented and starter homes. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3 a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Biodiversity: Describes the range and variety of living organisms within an ecosystem. It can include all living organisms, plants, animals, fungi and bacteria and is often used to indicate the richness or number of species in an area. Such an area can be defined at different levels across the globe or be limited to a local area such as a parish.

Building of Local Significance: Locally important building valued for its contribution to the local scene or for local historical situations but not meriting listed status.

Conservation (for Heritage Policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Community Infrastructure Levy: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

Development Plan: This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans as defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Habitat: The natural home of an animal or plant often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.

Heritage asset: A term that includes designated heritage assets (e.g. listed buildings, world heritage sites, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered parks and gardens and battlefields) and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority. Non-designated heritage assets include sites of archaeological interest, buildings, structures or features of local heritage interest listed by, or fulfilling criteria for listing by, the local planning authority.

Hinterland Village: Defined in the Babergh Core Strategy (2014) as villages that tend to be small, with very limited facilities and so are dependent on nearby larger villages or urban areas for many of their everyday needs.

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Infrastructure: The basic physical and organisational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads and power supplies) necessary for development to take place.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area which in this case is Babergh District Council.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the district, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Neighbourhood Area: The Neighbourhood Area is that which the Neighbourhood Plan covers. It normally covers a whole parish and is formally designated by the local planning authority upon request of the Parish Council.

Neighbourhood Plan: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular Neighbourhood Area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites for affordable housing: Sites for affordable housing development in rural locations where market housing would not normally be acceptable because of planning policy constraints. Homes can be brought forward on these sites only if there is a proven unmet local need for affordable housing and a legal planning agreement is in place to ensure that the homes will always remain affordable, will be for people in housing need and prioritised for those with a strong local connection to the Parish.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 as amended) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Use Classes: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

Wildlife corridor: A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joints two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat, Corridors are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations of plants and animals.



BENTLEY

Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2037