



# A Vision for Capel

A Preparatory Document for the Capel Neighbourhood Plan



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*The Capel parishioners' analysis and vision for the long-term development of their parish*

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# 1 Executive Summary: Our Vision

The Capel Neighbourhood Plan Working Party was established in the summer of 2020 by Capel Parish Council. One of its first actions was to draft a questionnaire which was hand delivered to all local households during August.

This **Vision for Capel** is based on the responses and is the first stage in formulating an NPD to ensure local input into planning decisions affecting Capel Parish. It is also a method of communicating to local elected authorities, the police, the Environment Agency, and other groups, the views of local residents. This Vision has been informed by and is representative of the local community based as it is on widespread community consultation. *[please see the Appendices – section 6 (appendix 4 in section 6.4)].*

The responses to the questionnaire identified three key issues that the parishioners of Capel would like TWBC to consider during the development of the Local Plan. These were:

## 1. **Green Belt Protection and Sustainable Development**

There was clear opposition to the 'Strategic Sites' within the parish put forward in the draft version of the Local Plan consulted on by TWBC in 2019. However, most parishioners were not opposed to all housing development within the parish.

**Conclusion: Find alternatives to changing the Metropolitan Green Belt boundary and ensure the most sustainable options are chosen for housing development.**

## 2. **Flooding Issues**

Given the repeated flood incidences within the parish over the last 20 years, most recently in February 2020 this was not surprising. This report seeks a way in which the responsible authorities can work together to mitigate future flood risk.

**Conclusion: Further improve flood measures and defences to mitigate flood risk.**



## 3. **Traffic Issues**

Traffic volume and speed have long been a source of complaint in this parish which is situated along two arterial/distributor routes the A228 and the B2017 both of which have long needed upgrade. This report seeks to suggest a way forward in tackling these issues alongside some smaller scale traffic issues within the parish.

**Conclusion: Find ways of reducing traffic speeds and volume through the parish while improving non-vehicular routes between Capel Parish and its neighbours.**

In addition, there were other issues the questionnaire identified which the full Neighbourhood Plan will need to deal with. These include local needs housing, green spaces, and community facilities. Because of the limitation of time and resources these are dealt with in less detail, but developing the outline sketched here will be part of the future work schedule of the Working Group.

## 2 Context & History - Setting the scene

### 2.1 Our Community:

The previous Capel parish plan published in 2006 started by detailing the geographical historical and cultural context in which local residents lived. It referred to the three roads that dominate the parish, the A 21, the A 228, and the B 2017, and that for many it was a



place to pass through on a journey to somewhere else. That it was historically something of a backwater as a parish in between Tonbridge, Paddock Wood and Tunbridge Wells, linked by road to all of them but not closely identifying with any of them. But that it was also an active and vibrant community with its own distinct rural character. Fourteen years later this Vision for Capel seeks to promote the views and aspirations of this community and maintain its rural character.

#### 2.1.1 Our History

The following article is adapted from Capel Parish Council website: [www.capel-pc.org.uk](http://www.capel-pc.org.uk)

*Most of Capel Parish lies in the low Weald to the south of the River Medway. It reaches the edge of Tonbridge in the west, and the limits of the built development of Paddock Wood in the east. The more densely wooded south of the parish is within a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It adjoins Southborough, Sherwood, and Pembury.*

*The present civil parish came into being as a result of the 1894 Local Government Act which set up Parish Councils in rural areas. It covers Tudeley, Five Oak Green, Capel, Whetsted, Colts Hill, Castle Hill, and Crockhurst Street. Until 1974 it came under the control of Tonbridge Rural District Council - now it is part of the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.*

*In the medieval period this was a sparsely populated, low lying, forested and heavily waterlogged area. Its principal building was the church at Tudeley, originally built in the 7th century.*

*The Domesday Book of 1086 tells us that the manor of Tudeley was once owned by Edith, Edward the Confessor's Queen. After the Conquest King William granted it to the Clare family who held Tonbridge Castle and lands stretching as far east as Yalding. At this time there was also a settlement at what is now Badsell Manor in the east of the parish. The moated farmhouse (within the proposed CA 3 site) of historical and architectural importance can be traced back to the 13th century.*

*Capel Church originated as a chapel of ease (The Latin for chapel being capella) and gave its name to the hamlet around it. Part of the pilgrimage route from Chichester to Canterbury, it was dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket, the Archbishop murdered in 1170. The remains of rare 13th century wall paintings can be seen on the north wall. Now vested in the Churches Conservation Trust and cared for by local volunteers, the church is used for occasional worship and funerals.*

*The medieval All Saints, Tudeley, was extensively rebuilt in the 18th century. It seemed destined to be an obscure country church until stained glass windows designed by Marc Chagall were installed between 1967 and 1985. This makes it the only church in the world to have all its windows by the famous artist and is one of the prime tourist attractions in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells. The East Window is a memorial to Sarah d'Avigdor-Goldsmid who died in a boating accident in 1963. Her parents owned the grand house Somerhill. Since 1991 it has housed The Schools at Somerhill amid the surrounding extensive estate. The church abuts the CA 1 site, while Somerhill overlooks CA 2.*

*The Tonbridge to Ashford railway line cuts the parish in two. Its arrival in 1842 helped the development of the hop-growing industry which dominated the economy of the parish until the mid-twentieth century. Its presence is a barrier to access from the south to the north of the CA 1 and CA 2 sites. The railway embankment has undoubtedly contributed to flooding in Five Oak Green and elsewhere in the parish in recent years. It impedes the free flow of water along its length including from the Alders Stream to the Medway. Its role as a dam impeding the free flow of water can be seen in the Environment Agency's flood risk mapping. Flooding in 1968, 1999, 2001 and 2013 has been the result. The actions of the authorities have mitigated some of the risks, but certainly not eliminated them.*

*East Enders came down to harvest hops each September. You can still see the remains of their huts around the parish. The typical conical oast houses were once used for drying hops. Many have now been converted for residential occupation. They make a large contribution to the unique landscape of the parish. There is now only one working hop garden in the parish, at Reed's Farm in Alders Road. One reminder of this once dominant crop is 'Hoppers', formerly the Hoppers' Hospital, in Five Oak Green. Originally a farmhouse and later the 'Rose and Crown' pub. In 1910 a church mission based in Stepney, East London, opened it to tend to the needs of the hop-pickers and their families. It is still run by the Red House Trust to provide "a haven for those seeking time away from the strains and stresses of 21st century living". Like many others the parish suffered losses in the two World Wars. This is recorded on the plaque in front of the Memorial Cottages at Brampton Bank, opened in 1921 in memory of the fallen. It is owned and managed by the Parish Council on behalf of the community. A wreath laying ceremony takes place there every Remembrance Sunday.*

*Most of the population growth since the Second World War has been in Five Oak Green. The centre of the village lies at the junction of the roads to Paddock Wood and Whetsted, the latter joining the A228 to Maidstone. The late 1940s saw the building of Falmouth Place and Sychem Place at the far east and*

*west of the village. Centrally situated, and much larger, the Norton's Way estate was built in the 1960s. Tolhurst Close and Pemble Close followed shortly after. Both were named after long-established farming families. There has been only limited development since then as the parish is almost wholly covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt. There has been no new building in Tudeley since the passing of the 1948 Town and Country Planning Act.*

### **2.1.2 Rural Environment**

Shaped in the most recent past by the hopping industry remnants of which can be seen around the parish, it is still a rural community, even if there is only one working hop garden left, as there was at the time of the last plan. Fourteen years later not much has changed on the surface. This is still an agricultural area with a long history of food production. On the positive side there is a powerful sense of community recently displayed during the months of lockdown. There is also a pleasure and pride in Capel's rural environment from the floodplains south of the Medway which flows just to the north of the parish boundary, to the wooded picturesque Low Weald AONB in the south, sparsely populated but valued by walkers and birdwatchers alike. It would be regrettable to see this rural heritage jeopardised by urban intrusion.

### **2.1.3 Community Links**

Residents in our questionnaire spoke of their pleasure in the strength of community links and organisations like Capel Primary School, the fete that unlike 2006 now lasts for two days, the Cricket Club that did not exist in 2006, the village shop and the churches. All these bear witness to a comparatively small (2 467 in the most recent census) but vibrant community, confident of its own identity and proud of where it lives. Residents loved the rural aspect of the parish and relished the walks available to them. This was particularly important in the months of lockdown but has been important to the local community for years. As long ago as 1997 the parish council published '10 walks around Capel Parish', a publication that is still used and adapted by locals and visitors alike. They also relish the views across the Medway valley from Colts Hill or Capel Church or All Saints in Tudeley, and the wildlife that can be found there. This is a key reason why the Local Plan proposals have proven so locally unpopular as the nature of the community and the heritage and assets it values are under real and considerable threat.

## **2.2 Lack of support from outside authorities:**

### **2.2.1 Roads**

Residents also had complaints which were remarkably similar to those in 2006. The biggest one was about traffic speed and volume through Five Oak Green and the other settlements on the B2017 but also on the other routes in the parish including the A228 at Colts Hill, and along rural lanes such as Alders Road and Whetsted Road. They see the proposed developments as worsening this situation, with a larger population driving more cars along these routes linking the hugely expanded Paddock Wood with Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. There is little faith



in improved infrastructure being provided in good time. The alternative to an even busier Badsell Road, Five Oak Green Road, Crockhurst Street and Tudeley Road - the B2017- is a link road that in all likelihood will split the parish in two before decanting it to Tonbridge and the A21.

### **2.2.2 Flooding**

Residents also complained about flooding most recently in the aftermath of Storm Ciara on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020 which flooded homes in the hamlet of Capel, in Nortons Way, Sychem Place and Badsell Road in Five Oak Green as well putting large parts of Tudeley under water including the site for the planned 'Garden Village'. Sherenden Road was also impassable. Although the Covid crisis is some form of mitigation, it took the relevant authorities KCC, TWBC, SE Water, the Environment Agency, and Southern Water (although the latter failed to turn up!) until 24<sup>th</sup> September to respond with an analysis of the causes and possible ways forward. It was hardly a widespread crisis – Capel was (according to the information provided on 24/9) the only parish in Kent that flooded that night – yet its concerns about the issue were side lined for months by the authorities as 'a remote and uninteresting place', while at the same time TWBC pressed on with its preparations for the local plan; a striking juxtaposition. (Though there were several episodes of flooding at the turn of the century the issue surprisingly did not play a big role in the Local Plan of 2006. Given subsequent events particularly at Christmas 2013 and in 2020 this was an oversight.)

### **2.2.3 Public Infrastructure:**

There were other concerns about the limited nature of rural public transport, the absence of cycle ways and public footways particularly to Paddock Wood. There were some comments about crime and the lack of policing, and of a poor mobile phone signal.

### **2.2.4 Housing Development:**

Residents wanted housing of a type and quantity appropriate to the needs of the parish and local people. Most residents were prepared to see some house building in the parish particularly for residents who find it difficult to afford somewhere in the parish where they grew up. The majority was for small or medium size houses that would be available on the private or rented market. What they did not want to see was this parish of 915 homes being irrevocably changed by up to 4 300 new houses in two sites at opposite ends of this parish which would change the community forever.

## 3 Green Belt: Strategic Sites

In their responses to the questionnaire a large sample of Capel's parishioners have made clear their thoughts on the future development of the parish – with clear reasons why the draft LDP is unacceptable and should be re-thought.

### 3.1 Outline of the proposal for Capel Parish

#### 3.1.1 Tudeley (CA1)

The Strategic Sites allocation in the Tunbridge Wells Draft Local Plan allocated up to 2,800 houses to site CA1 'Tudeley Garden Village'. The master planning process for this site is to be carried out by Hadlow Estates, the landowners, and their professional advisors. It has been suggested that 2,300 would be built within the plan period to 2036.

#### 3.1.2 Somerhill/Postern (CA2)

The Plan also allocated a secondary school to site CA2 opposite the entrance to the Grade 1 listed Somerhill estate close to the roundabout at the end of Tudeley Lane. However, we understand that this section of the plan is due to be revised with a proposal for it to be located between Tudeley and Five Oak Green. Residents were unable to comment on this in the questionnaire as the revised plans were not in the public domain at the time of writing.

#### 3.1.3 East Capel (west of Paddock Wood) (CA3)

There was also a further allocation of land for housing CA3 west of Paddock Wood where it is suggested a further 1,500 houses could be built. This was seen as part of the wider expansion of Paddock Wood, which has already begun with planning consents in three sites within the town.

### 3.2 Tudeley Garden Village

#### 3.2.1 Question:

Question 5 a) asked respondents whether they knew of the plans and if so, did they think they were positive or negative for the parish. The question was deliberately worded in a neutral manner.

#### 3.2.2 Response:

There were 212 responses to this question, which amounts to 24% of the households in the parish. A very large representative sample.

Only 2 respondents had not heard of it. Of the remaining 210, 200 were negative and only 10 were positive. Thus 95% of parish respondents are opposed to the development in Tudeley.

#### 3.2.3 Reasoning given by residents:

Loss of Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) resulting in development all the way from the north of Tonbridge to Paddock Wood (leading to a town eight miles long), was the most common fear expressed. The lack of infrastructure to accommodate current, let alone new development, and the fear it could / would not be provided was also common alongside the negative impact this would have on the existing infrastructure, both in terms of traffic and facilities [GP's and schools were particularly mentioned]. The proposed development was considered too large and many feared the houses would not be available to local people. The way of life in this

village community would be completely changed and that there would be continuous development all the way from Tonbridge to Paddock Wood. Flooding, and excess drainage run-off to the flood plain, was also cited as a reason to oppose the development. For example, Sherenden Road was made impassable in February 2020 due to run-off waters to the flood plain.

### 3.2.4 Conclusion:

#### **Key objection: Lack of sustainability and infrastructure**

The strongest argument against this proposal is the lack of sustainability when compared to other options, allied with the impact of the proposal on neighbouring Tonbridge which lacks the infrastructure to cope with the additional traffic or the capacity to develop it. The most recent presentation by Hadlow Estates and the workshop held by DLA on East Capel and Paddock Wood also showed little consideration has been given to the huge traffic problems that would be created on the B2017 for its users and the communities that lie along it.

## 3.3 East Capel

### 3.3.1 Question:

Question 5 b) asked respondents whether they knew of the plans for East Capel and if so, did they think they were positive or negative for the parish. The question was deliberately worded in a neutral manner.

### 3.3.2 Response:

There were 209 responses to this question, which amounts to over 23% of the households in the parish. A very large representative sample.

Only 6 respondents had not heard of it. Of the remaining 203, 194 were negative and only 9 were positive. Thus 96% of parish residents responding are opposed to the development in East Capel.

### 3.3.3 Reasoning:

The responses focused on loss of MGB and the spread of Paddock Wood to engulf Five Oak Green with the loss of Capel as a distinct village and rural community. There was a feeling that Paddock Wood had become too big already, and that the required infrastructure already under strain would not be provided. Traffic issues were emphasised by many and its knock-on effect on Five Oak Green worsening an already bad situation. People fear the houses will not be affordable, nor for local needs, and be of no benefit to the existing community. In addition, as site CA3 lies within the high risk flood area from the Tudeley Brook, the flood risk to residents would be worsened. At present few people live in this part of the parish, but as the events of Storm Ciara in February 2020 proved this land is prone to flooding.

### 3.3.4 Conclusion:

***Key objection: The detrimental effect on the Metropolitan Green Belt – there are clear alternative options for development around Paddock Wood that would not encroach on the MGB.***

The strongest argument against this site is the detrimental effect on the Green Belt (MGB). The parish boundary between Capel and Paddock Wood is also both the Limit to Built Development (LBD) of Paddock Wood, and the MGB boundary. This is the most important part of the MGB in Capel parish as it prevents the convergence of Paddock Wood and Five Oak Green,

maintaining a sense of openness and separateness between the two different communities, the very reason why the MGB was established by Government in the first place. The stretch of the road further west between Five Oak Green and the A228 does not fulfil this function as well, being ribbon development. CA3 is where the boundary between the two parishes is at its clearest; this proposal to move the MGB back to the A228 would destroy this clear distinction between rural and urban which is the main function of the MGB, and between two distinct communities. It also seems perverse to local residents to build on such a flood prone area when there are clearly other sites within the borough that do not suffer from this issue.

### **3.4 Overall impact on Capel Parish**

#### **3.4.1 Urbanisation of a rural community and the loss of its historic heritage**

The combined impact of the two sites on Capel Parish (913 households) seems disproportionate. There is no question that a combined total of up to 4,300 properties would destroy the way of life in this parish in perpetuity. It would mean a ribbon development from Tonbridge to Paddock Wood – rather than a series of rural hamlets around a Kentish village with an identifiable agricultural tradition. The expansion westwards of Paddock Wood would also ignore the historical identity of Capel as a distinct community.

#### **3.4.2 Access to Open Space**

The argument that the remaining MGB can be made more accessible to residents, as a result of planning gains brought through this development holds little water in an area with an existing excellent footpath network. Some of these paths would be surrounded by development making them less attractive to ramblers and walkers.

#### **3.4.3 Increase in Traffic Congestion**

The impact on the local road network is undoubtedly going to be very negative. There has been little attempt to mitigate the present plans in Paddock Wood and the additional traffic generated by these two developments, despite the assurances of more footpaths and active travel, is bound to be felt particularly in the roads around Tonbridge, along the B2017 through Five Oak Green, and at the roundabout at Dampiers Corner. There is as yet no agreement on improvements to the A228 and residents fear the additional damage to the countryside, and air quality, that would result from link roads built to accommodate these developments..

#### **3.4.4 Negative impact on the Countryside**

The effect on the countryside, wildlife and the loss of good agricultural land has not been quantified by the TWBC and at Reg 18 stage little convincing research had been done on this to justify the loss of land. No sustainability Assessments have been made for CA1 (Tudeley).

#### **3.4.5 Sustainable Development**

The majority of respondents were prepared to see some housing built in the parish for strategic and local needs but not on these two very vulnerable sites. The parish and its residents may be prepared to some development on more sustainable sites, but not at the cost of the destruction of the way of life in the parish.

## 4 Flooding

### 4.1 General introduction

#### 4.1.1 Recent Flooding

Following the near flooding in Five Oak Green days before Christmas 2019 and the flooding on Sunday 9th February 2020 in the early evening during the weekend of Storm Ciara that flooded some 40 properties in the Dovecote Inn area on Alders Road and Five Oak Green, local flooding in Capel Parish is in the top three of most important topics in the responses to the questionnaire



#### 4.1.2 Agencies and others together with their responsibilities

***Kent County Council*** are the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) as defined in the Flood and Water Management Act. They work closely with other risk management authorities and take the lead in managing local flood risks from surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses

***The Environment Agency*** has responsibility for the Alders Stream

***The South East River Trust*** works as part of the wider Medway Flood Partnership which seeks to tackle flooding at every level. Their Partners include the Environment Agency, local authorities, landowners, and community groups

***Southern Water*** has responsibility for wastewater collection both foul and rainwater and the pumps at Larkfield that pump waste out of the Parish

***Kent Highways*** have the responsibility for road drainage including road gullies

***Tunbridge Wells Borough Council*** is the emergency planning authority for the area and amongst other items provides the sandbags

***The Flood Wardens*** are volunteers trained by the Kent Resilience Forum and the Environment Agency to help the Community before, during and after a flood. In the early days, the role was confined to observing and reporting. However, due to the volunteers' enthusiasm the role has been expanded. The wardens attend regular training sessions to ensure they are up to date on the latest developments regarding flooding

## 4.2 Vision

The 2006 Parish Plan included a small mention of flooding in response to the initial survey in 2004. In hindsight this is amazing considering the survey was only 3-4 years after the floods in December 1999 and autumn of 2000 that affected greater number of properties than the 2020 event. However, reviewing incidents from 1960 onwards, this short-term view seems to have always been the way.

Climate change is recognised and is here to stay, it will bring more unpredictable and heavier rainfall at unexpected times of the year so we must plan for the future to protect our homes and possessions

These two thoughts lead to the first part of our vision.

The second part of our vision comes from the reality that when storms and adverse weather events happen their effect is far wider than just our Parish and in consequence the outside agencies are stretched and thus we cannot rely on them but look to ourselves

*Our flood vision is for flood mitigation and prevention to be pro-active and not reactive. That the community must work with the various agencies and as necessary step in to supplement and complement the agencies' support.*

## 4.3 Our strategy to achieve this vision is:

- **Flood Mitigation** and Prevention be kept under constant review and that any planning that may impinge or add to flood risk such as new housing, major farming practices or roads should be fully assessed before implementation
- **Work with the various agencies**, understand their constraints and how it effects our community and see how local intervention can assist
- **Ensure that the community understand** the role of the flood wardens and the power of volunteering

The suggested solutions have been categorised as, short (up to 2 years), medium (3 to 5 years) and longer term (5 years and more) considering the nature of the solution, its potential benefits and cost. It is proposed that the suggested solutions are put to residents in a follow up questionnaire. Whatever the final





o.	Questionnaire Issues	Questionnaire Quotations	Major Issues	Proposed solutions
			<p>due to power cuts or sheer volume of water</p> <p>Road drainage not disposing of the water due to blocked gulleys or being overwhelmed</p>	
3	<p><b>Flood Mitigation and Prevention</b></p>	<p>“...we would like to see a comprehensive strategy in wastewater management in the area, so the likelihood of this occurring again is minimized”</p> <p>Improve maintenance on Alders stream</p>	<p>3.a. Alders Stream – Fluvial Flooding</p> <p>3.a. Alders Stream – Fluvial Flooding</p> <p>3.b. Runoff from the uplands – Pluvial Flooding</p> <p>3.c. Failure of the Southern Water pumps at Larkfield</p> <p>3.d. Southern Water pipes and attenuation tanks</p>	<p>3.a. <b>[Short /Medium term]</b> Support and assist South East River Trust in their Natural Flood Management project of holding back and controlling water to prevent surges</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Environment Agency, South East River Trust and Flood Wardens</p> <p>3.a. <b>[Medium term]</b> Support and assist South East River Trust and Environment Agency to identify different flood mitigation measures</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Environment Agency, South East River Trust and Flood Wardens</p> <p>3.b. <b>[Short term]</b> Inspect and identify blocked ditches</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Flood Wardens to identify and notify riparian owners – enforcement by KCC and/or Upper Medway Drainage Board</p> <p>3.b. <b>[Short /Medium term]</b> Support and assist South East River Trust in finding solutions to this type of flooding in high risk areas</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Environment Agency, South East River Trust and Flood Wardens</p> <p>3.c. <b>[Short term]</b> To have access to an emergency number to ensure tankers are aware of the situation and give Five Oak Green priority rather than a centralised control centre number</p> <p>ACTION LOG: All elected bodies</p> <p>3.c. <b>[Short /Medium term]</b> Get an emergency generator installed Larkfield pumps</p> <p>ACTION LOG: All elected bodies</p> <p>3.d. <b>[Short term]</b> Obtain maintenance schedules and monitor them</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Capel Parish Council and Flood Wardens</p>



o.	Questionnaire Issues	Questionnaire Quotations	Major Issues	Proposed solutions
			3.e. Kent Highways road drainage system	<p>3.e. [Short term] Obtain maintenance schedules and monitor them</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Capel Parish Council and Flood Wardens</p>
4	<b>Co-operation and Anticipation</b>	Better cooperation between agencies. "There was a stand-off between the Environment Agency and Southern Water as to who had responsibility"	4.a. Unsure as to the circumstances that gave rise to this comment	<p>4.a. [Short term] Agencies to be invited to give public presentations about their responsibilities and work</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Capel Parish Council</p> <p>4.a. [Short /Medium term] To encourage and to continue to work hand in glove with the various Agencies and other affected bodies on a regular basis and not only after an event</p> <p>ACTION LOG: All Agencies, Capel Parish Council and Flood Wardens</p> <p>4.a. [Short /Medium term] Flood Wardens and potential recruits to attend Kent Resilience Forum's refresh and training sessions</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Kent Resilience Forum and Flood Wardens</p> <p>4.a. [Short /Medium term] Flood Wardens to understand warning signs of approaching local bad weather and to act accordingly</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Agencies and Flood Wardens</p> <p>4.a. [Short /Medium term] Flood Wardens to have a dedicated person to monitor, record and investigate situations during bad weather conditions</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Flood Wardens</p>

## 5 Traffic: Highways and Transport

### 5.1 General introduction

Traffic and transport issues are consistently the major day to day concern of residents, ranging from the volume and speed of traffic through the parish, safety issues (for example, lack of suitable road crossings) to lack of adequate public transport services and safe footpaths.



These concerns are identical to those raised in the last survey 16 years ago. 16 years later traffic and transport issues are the most frequently, non-prompted, cited concern of residents.

The 2006 Parish Plan included a number of recommendations based on the 2005 surveys. However, in the intervening period virtually no action has been taken to act on these recommendations and address residents' concerns. The only notable improvement has been to reduce the speed limit past Capel Primary School, initially to 40mph and subsequently to 30mph, and the introduction of a Speed Watch group backed by the Parish Council.

### 5.2 Vision

Whilst the concerns and views expressed in the questionnaire cover a disparate range of traffic and transport related issues, these can be distilled into an overriding vision which should inform all decisions on transport related matters.

*Our transport vision is for residents to be able to go about their daily lives and work both within the parish and outside of it without the need to use a car and for our roads to be quieter and safer for all users.*

Our strategy to achieve this vision is:

- **Prioritise walkers and cyclists** over vehicular transport
- **Enhance the connectivity** of Five Oak Green village to Paddock Wood and Tonbridge, which in turn can act as transport hubs for residents travelling to other parts of the county or country
- **Significantly reduce** traffic volumes and speeds through all the roads in the parish

This section summarises the key traffic and transport issues raised and puts forward specific measures to address these issues. It is split into three sections, grouping together the concerns of residents under the broad headings of:

- **Traffic** – volume, noise, speed, and pollution
- **Transport links**, access, and connections
- **Parking** problems and road surfaces

The suggested solutions have been categorised as, short (up to 2 years), medium (3 to 5 years) and longer term (5 years and more), based on the nature of the solution, its potential benefits and cost. It is proposed that the suggested solutions are put to residents in a follow up questionnaire. Whatever the final recommendations, it is essential that there is a procedure in place to monitor the performance of KCC (which has primary responsibility as regards these issues) and TWBC (where appropriate) in taking forward the suggestions made. It is suggested that CPC and the Vfc working party review progress on a quarterly basis and report back to residents via the Parish Newsletter and website.



No.	Questionnaire Issues	Questionnaire Quotations	Major Issues Listed	Proposed solutions
1	<p><b>Traffic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Volume &amp; Noise</li> <li>- Speed</li> <li>- Pollution</li> </ul>	<p>Out of the top 5 responses to Qu 4 <i>What people dislike about life in the Parish 4</i> are related to transport. Traffic related issues also scored highly in the weighting of issues (5 of the top 7 weighted issues were transport related).</p> <p>Quotes and suggestions include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A25 at Sundridge has traffic calming so no excuse not to on a B road</li> <li>- Pedestrian crossings needed - near shop and school</li> <li>- Speed restriction / 20mph through village/parish</li> <li>- Speed cameras and ANPR in Five Oak Green and Crockhurst Street</li> <li>- HGV signs ineffective</li> </ul>	<p>1.a. Traffic speed along the B2017 through FOG</p> <p>1.b. Traffic Speed along Badsell Road</p> <p>1.c. Traffic speed along Crockhurst Street</p>	<p>1.a&amp;b. <b>[Short term]</b> Traffic calming along B2017 – early implementation of Socium proposals (2018 report to CPC), which include a chicane and zebra crossings. These have been previously costed. The wider implications of declassification need to be understood, before recommending this as a solution.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Parish Council to lobby KCC/Highways/ Joint Transportation Board (JTB) to pursue and provide timetables and updates for work to be implemented. Parish Council to continue to support and possibly extend the current successful Speed watch scheme.</p> <p>1. c. <b>[Medium]</b> Dependent on the success of the chicane in the village, in reducing volumes and speeds, a chicane could be considered for Crockhurst Street near the Turmeric Gold.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Analysis of success of chicanes to be produced after 6 months (?) of the chicanes having been in place. Output to be compared to Socium report and reviewed by</p>

		<p>- Alders Road and Whetsted road could be one way</p> <p>- Tackle the rat runs - Hartlake Road, Whetsted Road, Alders Road</p> <p>- Problem with B2017 at Somerhill - backlog of traffic at certain times of day</p> <p>- Lorries mounting pavement on Colts Hill</p>	<p>1.d. Traffic speed along A228 (Whetsted) The A228 is used regularly by drivers at excessive speed with the resulting and regular accidents - especially motorbikes. The road appears on various chatrooms at regular intervals recommending it as good fast road (except during rush hours when it is often at a standstill!). The police have advised publicly that speed limits are unenforceable.</p> <p>1.e. Traffic volume and speed on Alders Road</p> <p>1.f. Traffic speed and volume on Whetsted Road</p> <p>1.g. Traffic speed and volume on Colts Hill</p>	<p>Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan group, with findings presented to parishioners. Parish Council to continue to support and possibly extend the successful Speed Watch scheme.</p> <p>1.d. <b>[Medium]</b> See also response to 2.a. A light controlled crossing for cyclists and pedestrians with appropriate warning signage and road marking would help reduce traffic speeds. Its location would necessitate the speed reduction proposal in the next paragraph.</p> <p>Average speed cameras should be installed from the Hop Farm to the railway bridge to enforce the speed. This will ultimately aid the proposal in 2a.</p> <p>ACTION LOG Parish Council to lobby KCC Highways/JTB to consider both the crossing and speed cameras.</p> <p>Parish Council to lobby Kent Police Commissioner /KCC to encourage police to enforce speed limits on this road and to also implement traffic cameras</p> <p>1.e. <b>[Medium]</b> Make Alders Road less attractive as a 'rat run' between the A228 and B2017. Allowing a left turn only at the A228/Alders Road junction and no right turn from A228 into either Alders Road or Crittenden Road would reduce the attraction of Alders Road as a cut through. Similarly, no right turn would be allowed out of Crittenden Road. These measures should also ease the traffic flow on the A228. They could be implemented with a combination of signage, and alteration of the Alders/Crittenden Road junction to discourage any right turns. Traffic islands in the A228 are unlikely to be feasible due to width restrictions. This effectively pushes traffic between Matfield area and Tonbridge to use the A21.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: KCC Highways/JTB to provide analysis and validity of such a scheme</p> <p>1.f. <b>[Short]</b> Traffic Calming on Whetsted Road – one way traffic or blocking off the road at the Bridge for cycles/pedestrians only. This should be a relatively quick and cost-effective solution to implement if it has sufficient support from local residents and businesses.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Parish Council/Neighbourhood Plan Group to pursue the acceptability and ability of such closure and then to lobby to KCC/Highways /JTB to arrange a period of testing of closure</p> <p>1.g. <i>The volume of traffic cannot be reduced for those travelling between Maidstone</i></p>
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			<p>1.h. Excessive numbers of HGVs</p> <p>1.i. Accidents/Collisions - Data for 2018-2020 is available and corroborates the issues above. 8 fatal or serious collisions were recorded in 2018 and 2019. It appears as though the number of slight/no injury collisions along A228 and Colts Hill are not always reported judging by residents reports of such accidents. The 2020 data has not been updated and will have been influenced by coronavirus restrictions on transport.</p>	<p><i>direction and Tunbridge Wells as this is the only direct route. The crossing of the east/west traffic at Alders Road/Crittenden Lane junction is in 1e, would provide for a steadier flow rather than the stop/start issue during rush hour(s). Dampiers roundabout for Paddock Wood to Tonbridge traffic may be partially relieved by the traffic calming proposed for the B2017 with vehicles avoiding the route. Better flow will ease pollution and noise, but the speed of traffic must be checked to reduce accidents and potential accidents. This can only be done by enforcement cameras.</i></p> <p>ACTION LOG: As with 1d, Parish Council to lobby Kent Police Commissioner to require police to enforce on this road and to also implement traffics cameras</p> <p>1.h. The Socium report indicated that HGV volume was less (~2%) than GB average (5%) of traffic volume which is comparing all roads against the B2017 so is an indication and not a true comparison. The implementation of a chicane (1.a) and general slowing of traffic is likely to lead to a natural reduction in HGV traffic. We suggest a survey of HGV traffic is carried out before any traffic calming measures are undertaken and then repeated once they have been in place for six months. If HGV traffic is not seen to reduce then further measures should be considered.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Satnav companies should be contacted by Borough Council to ensure that the maps show the B2017 as not acceptable for HGV's. Large vehicle drivers do not follow road signs but use these maps for their perceived most efficient journey so this is a primary solution after the calming proposals are implemented and should be started by the BC immediately for it to start having an effect</p> <p>1.i. <b>Short</b> As part of the suggested quarterly monitoring, CPC and VfC working party should have access to and monitor collisions. Residents can be invited to notify the CPC of any incidents to establish a more comprehensive database.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Parish Council to set up a simple monitoring forum for residents to report all accidents (noting this is just for data analysis and not for emergency purposes)</p>
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			<p>1.j. Impact on all of the above from housing development in CA1, CA2, CA3 and East of Paddock Wood. Five Oak Green Village, and the Parish as a whole sit in the middle of these developments and vehicular access routes into and out of the proposed developments. Simple analysis will suggest an almost immediate increase of traffic on all the roads in the parish based upon car ownership being on average 1.5 cars per household multiplied by the volume of new houses proposed.</p> <p>1.k. Congestion in the mornings at the Woodgate roundabout at the end of B2017</p>	<p>1.j. The suggested solutions have increased urgency as a result of the new housing developments in Paddock Wood, which will increase traffic through the parish, as will the potential development to the East of parish.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: To be monitored, noting that any increase in traffic due to house building in the parish not only affects the parish but causes knock on effects to the surrounding towns notably Tonbridge, Paddock Wood and Tunbridge Wells.</p> <p>1.k. Somerhill School drop offs substantially contribute to this congestion in the mornings, it is accentuated by the knock-on effect of congestion at the Vauxhall Roundabout.</p> <p><b>Short</b> There is the potential for a one way system at Somerhill School, with cars exiting at the Vauxhall roundabout, rather than onto the B2017. The school could be approached to implement this on a trial basis to assess the effect on congestion.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: Informal discussion with school as to the past experience of such a scheme (there was a temporary need for such scheme) and ability to implement it. Findings to be reported back to Parish Council</p> <p><b>Medium</b> Additionally, congestion could be eased by widening the junction approaching the Vauxhall roundabout and more clearly marking a left turn lane only. Similar markings could be done at the Woodgate Way/B2017 roundabout. In addition, right turns could be stopped from Woodgate Way into the Jaguar/Land Rover dealership.</p> <p>ACTION LOG: To be reviewed and considered by Parish Council for such schemes</p>
2	<b>Transport links / access / connections</b>	<p>Also featured strongly in the responses to Qu 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You cannot live here without a car</li> <li>- More cycle routes needed</li> </ul>	<p>2.a. Lack of pavement and/or cycle route along B2017 to Paddock Wood</p>	<p>2.a <b>Medium</b> A cycle route/footpath exists to Paddock Wood via Whetsted Road, emerging at Baxall Construction onto the B2160, Maidstone Road. This is mainly a public footpath (but is also a farm trackway) which ideally would be upgraded, noting that it is a working farm. More publicity should be given to this route, as it is a safer route than walking alongside the Badsell Road. The major issue is the crossing of the A228.</p>



			2.d. Inadequate and unsafe footpaths within the parish	<p>ACTION LOG:</p> <p>Bus services are driven by economics, in turn driven by usage. Usage is driven by convenience, timetabling, reliability, and cost. Results of the Sevenoaks trial (and others) should be considered and reviewed using the same 4 drivers to ascertain whether a revised bus service/small "bus on demand" can be made to work.</p> <p>2.d. <b>Short</b> The narrow stretch of footpath on northside of the B2017 leading to the green needs to be widen.</p> <p>A review to be carried out of the viability of extending the footpath along the B2017 past the primary school, ideally, to link up with Brampton Bank cottages and later Tudeley.</p>
	<b>Parking problems and road surfaces</b>	<p>All highlighted in the questionnaire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parking issues in centre of Five Oak Green near shop</li> <li>- Difficult to see round parked cars and bend in road - danger to pedestrians</li> <li>- Dangerously parked cars in Nortons Way area</li> <li>- Lack of parking for Falmouth Place residents</li> <li>- Pavement Parking in village</li> <li>- Lack of parking outside school, Church Lane is blocked twice a day</li> <li>- Lack of parking outside the Poacher Pub especially with events</li> <li>- Lack of parking in Sherenden area</li> <li>- Poor maintenance and potholes; Nortons Way area, Sychem Lane area, B2017</li> </ul>	<p>3.a. Poor parking facilities at Capel School area</p> <p>3.b. Lack of parking facilities in Village Centre leading to pavement parking, poor parking and imminent danger for pedestrians and other road users. a 21st century problem with car ownership being what it is.</p> <p>3c. lack of parking around Falmouth Place</p> <p>3.d. State of B2017, Nortons Way and Sychem Lane road surfaces and pavements.</p>	<p>3.a. <b>Medium</b> Consider approaching local landowners and KCC to investigate potential for school car park and/or off road in/out drop off and pick up area.</p> <p>ACTION LOG To enquire with Capel School management team to ascertain history of this approach with a view to proceeding. It is understood that the School would be supportive.</p> <p>3.b. <i>Tough one</i> - immediate residents want somewhere to park (both private vehicles and company vehicles park on pavement), other residents want unimpeded access on the B2017.</p> <p>On one hand parked vehicles slow traffic versus faster traffic through that section with the consequences thereafter.</p> <p>ACTION LOG:</p> <p>3c. as above</p> <p>3.d. Improved Highway maintenance</p> <p>ACTION LOG Parish Council to review the need for repairs an ensure KCC/Highways/JTB fulfil their responsibilities.</p>



## 6 Appendices

### 6.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire Responses

Total Feedback Reasons	1492
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of which

MGB - Environment	832	56%
Traffic	156	10%
Flooding	84	6%

#### 6.1.1 Outline of VfC (Census Methodology)

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Party issued a questionnaire to each household in the parish of Capel from early August 2020. The return deadline was 31<sup>st</sup> August although the working party will accept late submissions.

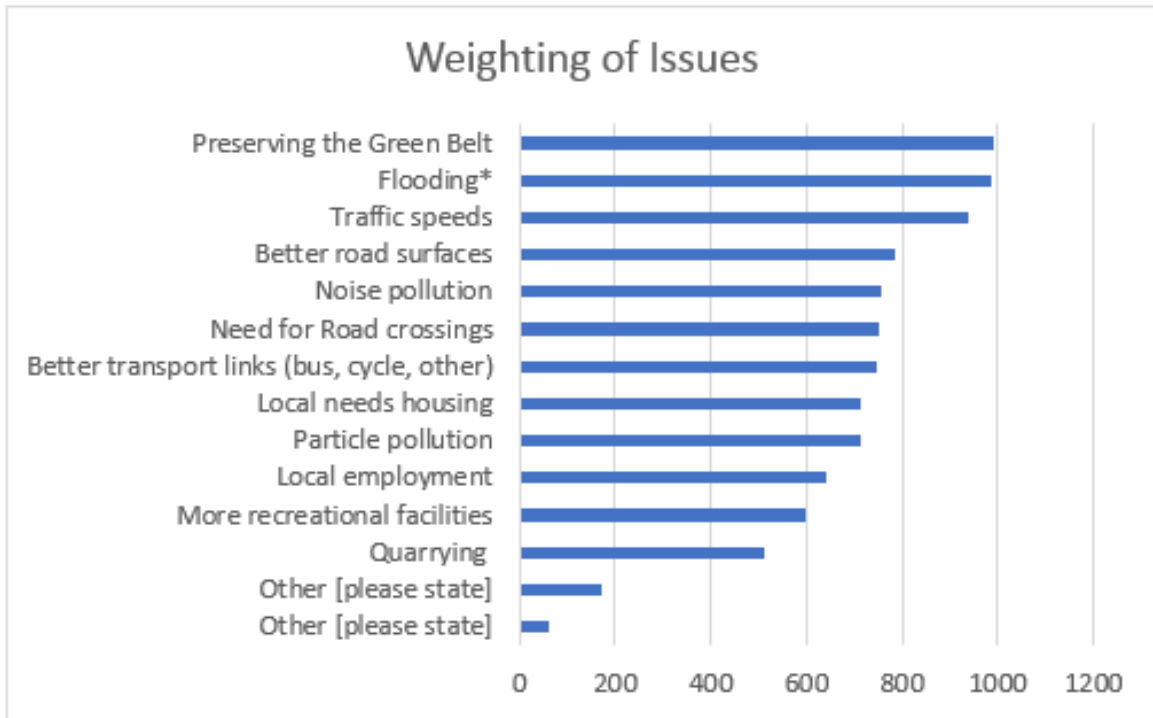
#### RESPONSES

Households in Capel	913	
Voters on Electoral Register	1750	
Respondants	426	24%
Questionnaires Received	215	24%
as Individual	81	38%
as Households	135	63%
as Business Owning Residents	5	
Businesses in Capel	4	
Community Groups	7	

As of 6<sup>th</sup> September 215 replies had been received. Of these 81 (38%) were individual and 135 (63%) were on behalf of a household. This represents 426 individuals in total from 215 households. This is 24 % of the 913 households in Capel Parish. Although the vast majority were responses by residents, we also had 4 representing businesses (though 5 residents also owned a business) and 7 residents ran community groups.

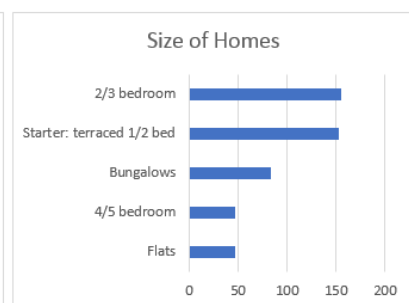
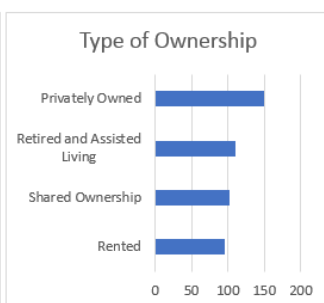
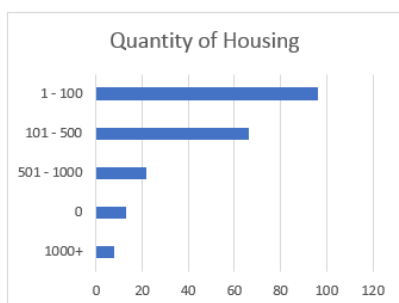
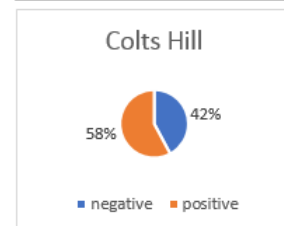
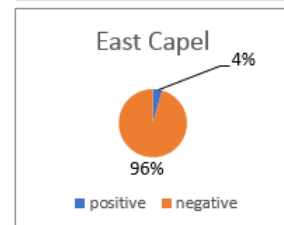
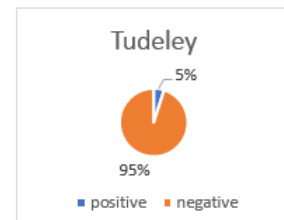
The majority of responses were posted through the letterbox of the deliverer, some were left at the post office and a sizeable number emailed to the parish clerk having been downloaded from the website. We are confident that this represents a cross section of views from across the parish [45 replies came from Sychem Place and west end of Five Oak Green plus FOG Road; 20 from Whetsted Road/Falmouth Place; 48 from Nortons Way/Willow Cres, Ellis, Larkfield, Oak; 14 Alders; 15 Colts Hill/Badsell; 23 from Tudeley and Brampton Bank; 19 were delivered to the Post Office and 31 came via the Internet].

6.1.2 Summary of Findings:



**REASONS**

for liking Capel	77%	MGB - environment
for disliking Capel	63%	Traffic - Link Issues
against TGV	42%	MGB - environment
	23%	Traffic Issues
	11%	Flooding Issues
against East Capel	31%	Lack of Infrastructure
	21%	Traffic Issues
	18%	Flooding Issues
against Colts Hill ByPass	43%	MGB - environment
	31%	Traffic Issues
	3%	Flooding Issues
for Colts Hill Bypass	76%	Traffic Issues



### 6.1.3 Specific Question Responses

#### Q.3 What people like about living in Capel?

##### Key messages:

**People in Capel love the community**

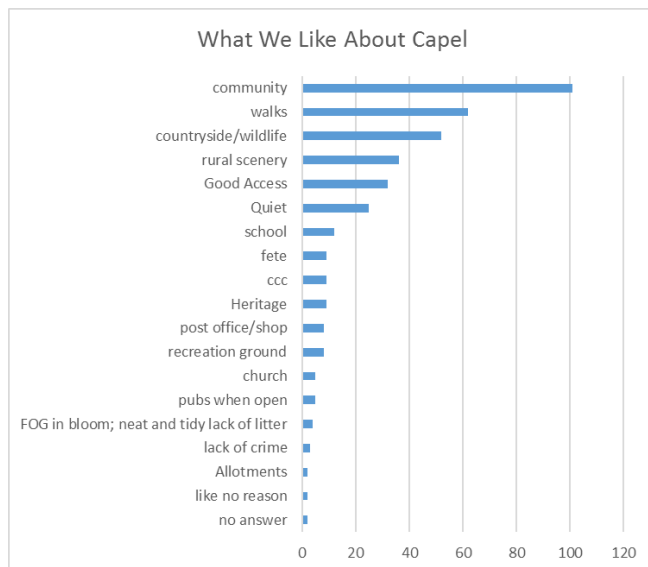
**People in Capel love the quiet rural countryside**

**People love walking in the countryside**

Nearly every response had something positive to say. The largest group of positive comments about the local community and the community feel of village life. (This may in part have been influenced by the community support networks that grew in the coronavirus lockdown). 107 comments mentioned community with other

references to the school, cricket club, fete, churches (158 in all). The second largest group of comments referred to peaceful/rural/countryside nature of the parish (116). Additionally, there were 65 references to the enjoyment of local walks accessible to parishioners.

Other references commented on good access to Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells (presumably by car!) and the relative lack of crime and the recreation ground.



#### Q. 4 What people disliked about life in the parish/ how it could be improved

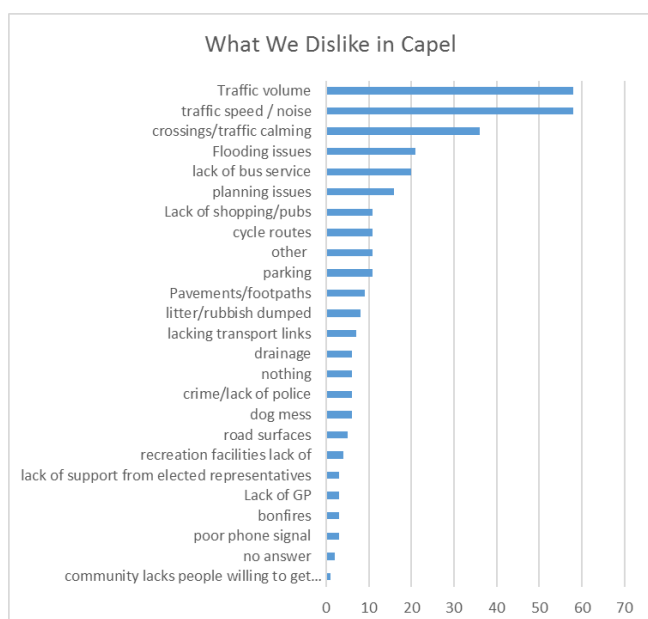
**Residents complain about the speed and volume of traffic**

**Residents want traffic calming and a road crossing**

**Residents want better bus services, transport links and cycle paths**

**Residents in some areas are worried about flooding**

The overwhelming number of negative responses referred to highways and traffic issues. Speed and volume of traffic along



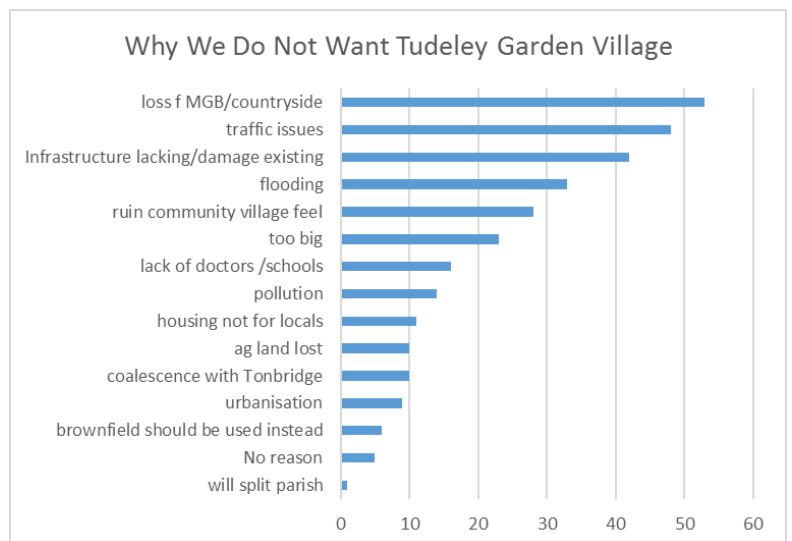
the B2017 being the most common complaint (61 comments for both). This echoes the same points that were made in the 2006 local plan. Lack of a crossing and the need for traffic calming were also frequently mentioned (38). Upkeep of pavements (particularly in Nortons Way) and parking issues in the centre of Five Oak Green were raised by a minority. Several answers raised the lack of cycle paths and footpaths to Paddock Wood.

Lack of shopping facilities and a pub in the village along with no GP; the worries about living in a flood prone community and worries over the threat of development was also raised.

*Q.5 a) Tudeley*

**95% of residents are opposed to the development. All but 2 knew about it and nearly everyone had a negative view. 200 responses were negative and only 10 were positive.**

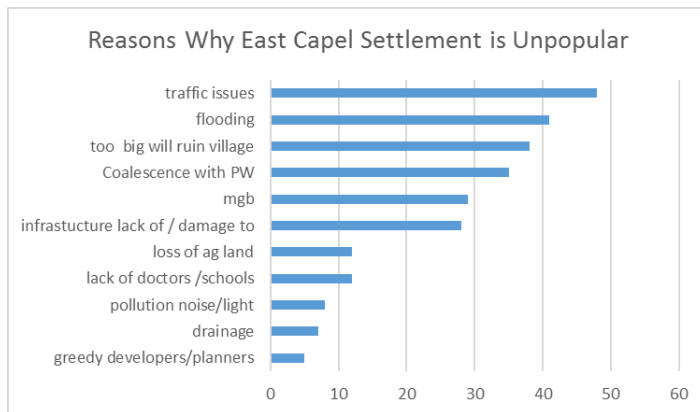
Loss of Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) leading to urbanisation of the countryside was the most common fear. The lack of infrastructure to accommodate the new development and the fear it could / would not be provided was also common alongside the negative impact this would have on the existing infrastructure, both in terms of traffic and facilities [GP's and schools]. The proposed development was considered too large and many feared the houses would not be available to local people. The way of life in this village community would be completely changed and that there would be continuous development all the way from Tonbridge to Paddock Wood. Flooding was also cited as a reason to oppose the development.



*Q.5b) East Capel*

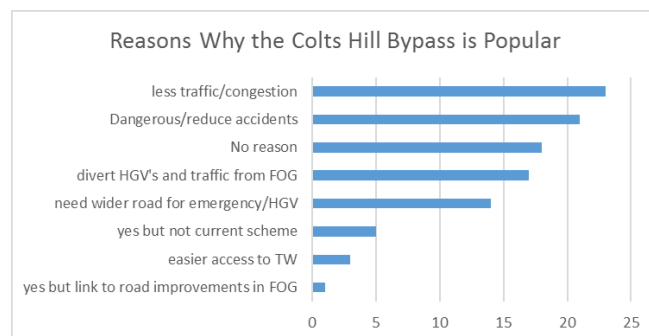
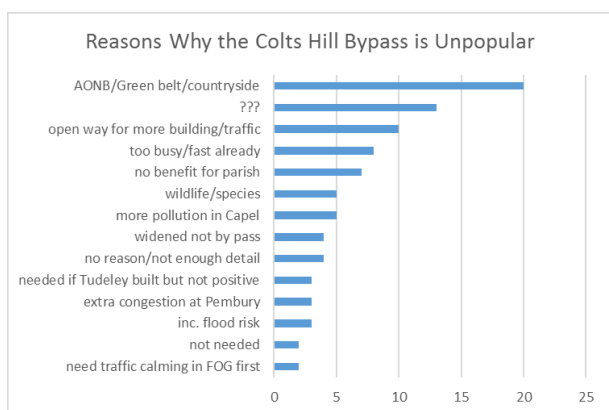
**96% of residents are opposed to the development. All but 6 knew about it and nearly everyone had a negative view. 193 responses were negative and only 9 were positive.**

The responses were similar to the above focusing on loss of MGB and the spread of Paddock Wood to engulf Five Oak Green – the loss of Capel as a distinct village and rural community. Flooding risk would be worsened, and there was a feeling that Paddock Wood had become too big already, that the required infrastructure already under strain



would not be provided. Traffic issues were emphasised by many and the knock-on effect on Five Oak Green: worsening an already bad situation. People fear the houses will not be affordable and not be for local needs and of no benefit to the existing community.

*Q.5c) Colts Hill*



Opinion in the parish was more divided on this issue. 108 were in favour 80 against and the rest neutral or made no comment (25)

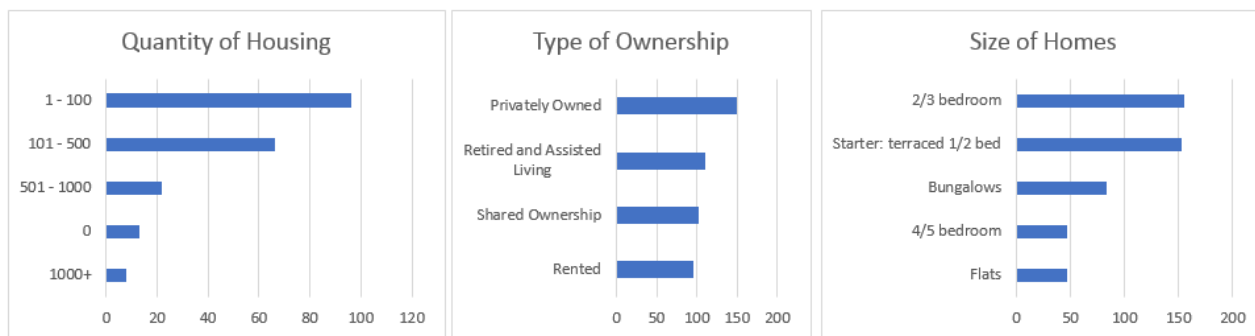
It was also less well known as some opinions were offered without comment and some made no comment at all. There were strong opinions from some parts of the parish on both sides of the argument.

**Positive comments:** Dangerous road; would be fewer accidents; current route too narrow; would take some of the village traffic including HGV's; better communications; larger capacity will better manage existing traffic; less congestion.

Many **negative comments** were focused on the off-line bypass proposal suggesting there may be a consensus about improving the road but not about a bypass.

Damage to trees and wildlife; impact on MGB; more, faster and noisier traffic busy already; would be needed if TGV built – but not a positive; unlikely to benefit majority of parishioners; other options to present proposals need to be explored (outdated); flyover from Alders not beneficial traffic; would come to stop at Pembury.

## HOUSING:



### *Q.6. Quantity of Houses:*

**97 responses were willing to see 1-100 houses built, 66 101-500.**

Far fewer 8 wanted to see over 1000 houses and only 13 none at all. Revealing that the inhabitants of Capel are not nimbies but suggests they would be prepared to take some houses provided it did not destroy the rural community that so many residents value.

### *Q.7. Local housing*

#### **Type:**

There was roughly even support for all types of local needs housing though privately owned (150) was the most popular.

This compared to 97 rented 103 shared ownership and 111 retired and assisted living.

#### **Size:**

There was a clear preference for smaller houses 2/3 bedroom (156) and starter homes (154); these were much more popular than flats (48) and 4/5 bedroom houses (47).

### *Q.8. All Issues:*

Of the issues suggested protection of the Green Belt, flooding and traffic speeds in that order were the most important. There was significant support for all the other issues put forward as outlined above.

## 6.2 Appendix 3: Further Issues

Issues to be explored further in the Neighbourhood plan:

### 6.2.1 A Sustainable Vision for Capel

The parishioners of Capel want sustainable development for local needs. They do not want to develop a commuter town for London which 4/5 bedroom market detached housing would create.

#### 6.2.1.1 *Our Vision for HOUSING:*

Conclusion of the questionnaire:

Based on local needs most parishioners who stated a view wanted medium 2 to 3 bedroom, and small 1 to 2 bedroom homes developed for local use. There was much less enthusiasm for flats and 4/5 bedroom houses.

A few respondents were prepared to see 1,000 houses built by the end of the plan period. More were prepared to see up to 500, though still a minority. Most were prepared to see some development, and only a handful none.

#### 6.2.1.2 *Housing Response Data*

97 responses were willing to see 1-100 houses built, 66 101-500.

Number and type of ownership: Far fewer (8) wanted to see over 1000 houses and only 13 none at all. Revealing that the inhabitants of Capel are not nimbies but suggests they would be prepared to take some houses provided it did not destroy the rural community that so many residents value. There was roughly even support for all types of local needs housing though privately owned (150) was the most popular.

This compared to 97 rented 103 shared ownership and 111 retired and assisted living.

Size: There was a clear preference for smaller houses 2/3 bedroom (156) and starter homes (154); these were much more popular than flats (48) and 4/5 bedroom houses (47).

#### 6.2.1.3 *Location*

These houses to be built on small scale sites put forward around Five Oak Green or available brown field sites in the parish within the plan period.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to consider possible sites and whether to commission a housing needs survey.

#### 6.2.1.4 *Design*

The Neighbourhood Plan committee will consider design guidance – based on Kentish Design principles, these may include:

1. Kentish Brickwork
2. Oast Housing
3. Gables
4. Roofs

### *6.2.1.5 Development*

The next stage of the Neighbourhood Plan to be developed in 2021, will seek to align Capel Parishioners' housing requirements with the those of the Borough local Plan.

## **6.2.2 Recreational facilities, green spaces, and other services (30 + comments)**

### **6.2.2.1 Recreational facilities:**

Facilities have been improved in the village since the last Local Plan in 2006. There is an active cricket club that runs youth coaching on Sunday mornings in the summer and a programme of fixtures for its men's, women's soft ball and youth teams. The pavilion leased from the Parish Council has a bar open to social members on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons from May to September.

Since 2006 the Parish council has improved the facilities on the Recreation Ground with the provision of a multi- use games area (2019) and zipwire (2020). The charity the Friends of Five Oak Green Recreation Ground have raised funds for a new play area (2020) which is maintained by the Parish Council. The charity is working on further facilities for teenagers, for example a cycle track.

There was a demand for some respondents for further improvements for example adult gym equipment and more facilities for children and young people, such as a pump track and a picnic area. An upgrade to the Village Hall was suggested to accommodate more activities.

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group might like to consider what other recreational facilities might be needed, and whether more use could be made of the green spaces. The Village in Bloom Group is very successful at enhancing the centre of Five Oak Green in the Spring and Summer

### **6.2.2.2 Other facilities**

The poor mobile phone signal in many parts of the parish was raised by several respondents, as well as the issue of bus shelters particularly for secondary school students travelling out of the village in the mornings.

## **6.2.3 Pubs and shops**

There is a village post office and shop, but no other retail facilities apart from a veterinary practice set up in 2020. There have been a variety of 'pop-up' takeaway facilities over the last few years including a Thai takeaway van Friday evenings and a fish and chip van during lockdown. None of these have been permanent and the parish lacks a reliable and permanent prepared food outlet.

In 2006 there were six pubs in the parish. However, the Poacher and Partridge in Tudeley is the only operating pub at the time of writing. The Turmeric Gold in Crockhurst Street has become a successful Indian restaurant. It does have a bar, though its relative physical isolation means this can only realistically be used by the residents of Crockhurst Street and



those walking on the nearby footpaths. The Kings Head has closed and been partly demolished, while the three other pubs were closed at the time of writing. The state of the semi-demolished Kings Head, derelict for over 3 years, was raised by some respondents, as was the future of the Queens Head.

There was a strong demand for residents for café and pub facilities in the village and it is hoped that the three closed pubs will also re-open in the near future.

#### **6.2.4 Medical facilities**

Some respondents mentioned the absence of medical and dental facilities in the parish. While the provision of these are unlikely at present Working Party could investigate ways to make accessing medical services in Paddock Wood and Tonbridge easier for those without transport.


#### **6.2.5 policing and security (16-20 comments...)**

The biggest concern was vandalism by teenagers in Five Oak Green in the Recreation ground and more widely. There was a spate of thefts from the allotments in the winter of 2019/20 and this was raised as a security concern. Drug dealing in the centre of Five Oak Green, and the lack of a police presence to deal with these issues was mentioned in a number of responses.


### 6.3 Appendix 3: Other Issues Raised in Questionnaire Responses

There were other issues raised in the questionnaire that will be for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party to follow up. As well as the focus on housing, highways, transport, and flooding these related to village facilities and businesses, non-car and public transport issues, policing, some individual planning situations, and maintenance and noise issues within the public realm.

## 6.4 Appendix 4 The Questionnaire



### Vision for Capel Brief Questionnaire



**Capel Parish Council** have set up a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) working group to establish our community's needs. The first stage of its work is to draft a **Vision for Capel** (VfC) which will tell the Borough Council planners what the residents and businesses within Capel wish to see for the future development of our parish. For this we need a few minutes of your time to tell us what you think. Two major issues, which the Parish Council have been asked to address over the past 12 months, are flooding and the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan - so we have singled these out for specific comment. You may wish to refer to other issues including, but not restricted to, housing, employment, and transport. Our aim is to make the Vision for Capel an early draft of the NP, representative of **all** who live and work here.

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**Q1** I'm answering for:      Myself       Me and my Family       My business   
of members

**Q2** I:      Am a resident of      Own a business in the      Run a community or  
the parish       parish       sports group in the   
parish

**Q3** What do you like about living or working in the parish of Capel?  
Example: What is your experience of living in the area? Do you like the sense of community? You might mention your favourite walk/house/place in the area.

**Q4** What do you dislike about living or working in the parish?  
What improvements would you like to see?  
Example: What annoys you about living here? How could it be changed? What types of new businesses or transport links would the parish benefit from?

**Q5** **These questions relate to major local planning issues within the parish:** [click link to access plan https://beta.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/draft-local-plan](https://beta.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/draft-local-plan)

**a** A The planned 'Garden Village' in Tudeley of up to 2800 houses [this is in the draft Tunbridge Wells Local Plan]  
i) Of this proposal:      I know of it       I do not know of it   
ii) If you know about it: overall for the parish - will it be      **Positive**       **Negative**       Please say why  
Click here – or write

**b** The planned settlement in East Capel of up to 1,500 houses which will adjoin Paddock Wood. [in draft TW Local Plan]  
i) Of this proposal:      I know of it       I do not know of it   
ii) If you know about it: overall for the parish - will it be      **Positive**       **Negative**       Please say why  
Click here – or write

**c** The planned Colts Hill bypass. This may be linked to the draft Tunbridge Wells Local Plan  
i) Of this proposal:      I know of it       I do not know of it   
ii) If you know about it: overall for the parish - will it be      **Positive**       **Negative**       Please say why  
Click here – or write

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Vision for Capel Questionnaire v.7.1 (hardcopy and online version)  
[Capel Parish Council](#)
Page 1 of 2 pages

## Vision for Capel Brief Questionnaire



**Q6** There are currently 913 households in Capel Parish. Over the next 15 years TWBC plan 4,300 new homes (approx.48% their 9,000-housing shortfall) to be built in the Parish. How many do you think would be appropriate?

Overall Quantity of Housing	0	1-100	101-500	501-1000	1001- 4800
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q7** Refers to Local Housing Needs (for people who live in or have a close connection to the parish). What type and size of homes for local people do you feel is required in the Parish?

Type of ownership	Rented affordable or market	Retired and assisted living	shared ownership	Privately owned	
Please tick ->	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Size of Homes	Flats	Bungalows	Starter; terraced 1/2 bed	2/3 bedroom	4/5 bedroom
Please tick ->	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q8** Please comment on any of the following issues in the parish - or other issues you would like to raise.

On a scale of 1-5 please rate how important each of these issues is to you? (Where 1 is not at all important; 3 is neutral and 5 is very important) Please include any comments on a separate sheet should you wish.

Issue	Score	Issue	Score
Flooding*		Preserving the Green Belt	
Traffic speeds		Local needs housing	
Need for Road crossings		More recreational facilities	
Better transport links (bus, cycle, other)		Local employment	
Noise pollution		Quarrying	
Particle pollution		Better road surfaces	
Other [please state]		Other [please state]	

\* If you were affected by the flooding in Feb 2020 and would like to tell us please include details on a separate sheet.

**Q9** Personal Details: Name.....  
 email..... telephone no.....

**Q10** If you would like to help with the Vision for Capel / Neighbourhood Plan, please tick:

Returning this questionnaire:

Either .....

Please feel free to add any other points to a separate sheet and attach it  
 You can download additional copies of this questionnaire from: [www.capel-pc.org.uk](http://www.capel-pc.org.uk)

Online: [clerk@capel-pc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@capel-pc.co.uk) - please attach the questionnaire to your reply.  
 Subject of email: Parish Questionnaire

Leave on your doorstep and our helpers will collect it between ..... and .....

Post: Please drop in or post to the CPC letter box at  
 Capel Village Hall, Falmouth Place, Five Oak Green, TN12 6RD

### Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire

If you return this survey the Capel Neighbourhood Plan working party may use the information provided to further our objectives and contact you in future using the contact details provided Please indicate your permission for us to do so by ticking here

All data provided will be held securely and confidentially - to the Governments Regulations on Data Privacy (GDPR - Regulations 25/5/2018 )