An aerial photograph of a village nestled in a valley, surrounded by rolling hills. The trees are in autumn, with many leaves turned yellow and orange. The village features a mix of residential buildings and a prominent church tower. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

ABBEYDORE, BACTON  
EWYAS HAROLD, DULAS,  
LLANCILLO,  
ROWLESTONE AND  
KENTCHURCH  
PARISHES

NEIGHBOURHOOD  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN

2017-2031

REFERENDUM VERSION

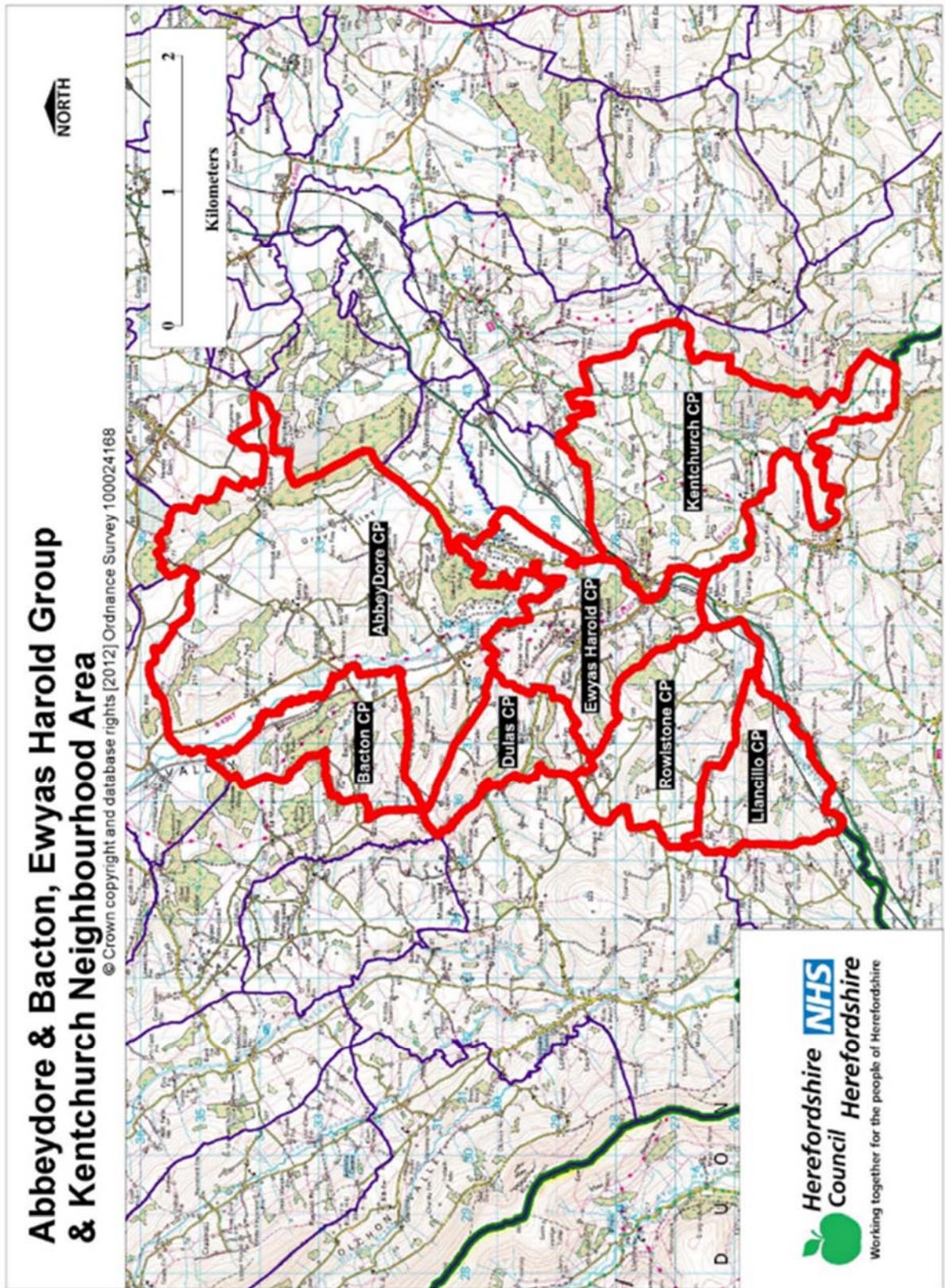
February 2018

View over Ewyas Harold from Ewyas Harold Common (Liz Overstall)

# Contents

Introduction .....	4
Why are we preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Abbeydore, Bacton, Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo, Rowlestone and Kentchurch? .....	19
Preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan? .....	20
Plan wide policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Development Plan .....	22
Abbeydore and Bacton policies and proposals.....	40
Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone policies and proposals .....	45
Kentchurch policies and proposals .....	62
Community Infrastructure Levy .....	67

**Figure 1 – The Abbeydore and Bacton, Ewyas Harold Group and Kentchurch Neighbourhood Development Plan Area** (Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council Licence Number 100055482)



# 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 In late 2012 the parishes of Abbeydore and Bacton Group, Ewyas Harold Group (which includes Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone) and Kentchurch came together to work on a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the seven parishes. Taking advantage of the new power available to parish councils granted through the Localism Act 2011, the parishes, as qualifying bodies, applied for the area of the seven parishes to be designated as a Neighbourhood Development Planning Area (see Figure 1). Neighbourhood Development Planning status was approved by Herefordshire Council in November 2012.



Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation, July 2014

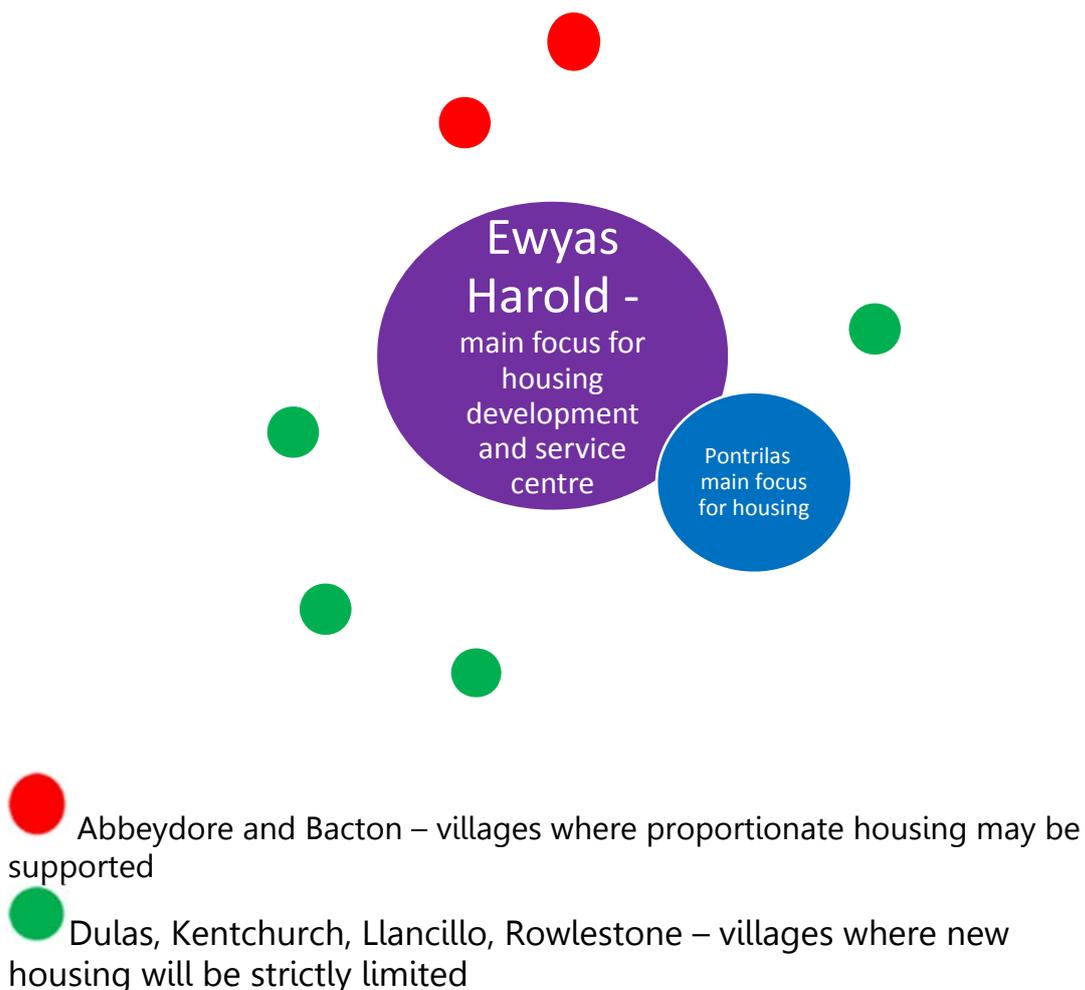
- 1.2 Ewyas Harold is the largest village in south west Herefordshire (see Figure 2). This busy community of 460<sup>1</sup> dwellings is situated on the Dulas Brook, one mile from the A465. Five rural roads meet here, and

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<sup>1</sup> Rural Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper, Herefordshire Council 2010

the village provides services for a large part of south west Herefordshire. Here you will find a primary school, doctors' surgery, two pubs and a post office/grocery shop. There are two business parks supporting local entrepreneurs, as well as a petrol station, veterinary surgery, agricultural merchant, hardware store, hairdresser and beautician. There are more than thirty clubs in this active village and four public halls. The parishes of Rowlestone, Llancillo and Dulas are extremely rural, mostly scattered farmhouses, many of which are Grade II listed buildings. St Peter's Church at Rowlestone has important twelfth century carvings of the Kilpeck School. The surrounding settlements consist of hamlets and scattered farms. The landscape follows ancient field patterns, with thick hedges, pasture fields, copses and woodland. All four parishes enjoy fine views. The area is celebrated for its natural beauty, and its biodiversity, but it is a fragile and highly valued landscape under much pressure. There are several ancient woodland sites, and two nature reserves of importance.

**Figure 2 – Strategic relationship of the villages**



- 1.3 To the north the adjacent rural parishes of Abbeydore and Bacton lie in the heart of Herefordshire's beautiful Golden Valley. The landscape of Abbeydore and Bacton is traditional mixed farmland punctuated with numerous woodlands, some designated as ancient woodland. This combines highly productive agriculture with exemplary countryside. The main industry is mixed agriculture and the settlements small and dispersed. Everyone who lives here has a close connection to the land, whether it is their business, hobby or pleasure. The community is a harmonious mix of long established residents and relative newcomers united by a commitment to the countryside. The land is green rolling hills, mainly fields, but with a healthy scattering of native woodland. The focal points for the local community are the magnificent Dore Abbey, Bacton Church and the two village halls.



View along the Dore Valley (Peter Rostron)

- 1.4 Kentchurch Parish contains two settlements: Pontrilas village and the smaller hamlet of Kentchurch. Pontrilas was a railway junction until 1941, the line to Cardiff still runs through the village. Pontrilas is identified as a "main village" in the Ross on Wye housing market area in Herefordshire's Core Strategy and has 66 homes in total. The village is adjacent to Ewyas Harold, separated only by the A465 road. Kentchurch is a much smaller settlement, that is dominated in terms of land ownership by the Kentchurch Estate. This is a traditional mixed-use estate including let farms, woodland, let shooting and fishing, residential properties and some commercial property interests. Kentchurch Court is the principal house of the Estate and is Grade 1 Listed, erected in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. The house remains a private family residence.

- 1.5 The other substantial historic buildings in the parish are Pontrilas Court (a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Gable House) and the Parish Church (rebuilt in 1859).



Kentchurch Court

- 1.6 As one of the most important historic houses in England, Kentchurch Court is set in a 5,000 acre wider Estate owned by the Lucas-Scudamore family. The deer park partly surrounding Kentchurch Court includes historic woodland features such as the Jack of Kent oak tree, and is home to a pedigree 200 plus head herd of deer. The park also boasts an original lime kiln, deer larder and ha ha. The park is managed through a Higher-Level Stewardship scheme in conjunction with Natural England. There is a considerable area of ancient woodland within the Park together with ongoing forestry of modern plantations.
- 1.7 The stone built Gatehouse at the head of the drive way to Kentchurch Court is also listed, and compliments the main house in both its style and structure. The property is located adjacent to the bridge over the River Monnow which forms the border into Wales. The nearby Bridge Inn is also owned by the Estate and has been operating as a public house for 400 years. Kentchurch is important for wildlife. Otter and kingfisher breed on the River Monnow, and the unique mixture of park and agricultural land supports many species of protected plant and animal life.
- 1.8 The Herefordshire Trail (long distance footpath) passes through Pontrilas, Kentchurch, Abbeydore and Ewyas Harold.

1.9 The area covered by this Neighbourhood Development Plan is not only beautiful but of great biological and landscape interest (see Figures 3, 4 and 5). These include:

- Small woodlands are a definitive and unifying feature of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area; many are Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), together with hedgerow trees and single landmark trees, they are the remnant of an ancient small-leaved lime forest that covered this landscape more than 1,000 years ago. Individual small leaved lime trees can still be found; survivors from another time. Largely unchanged for generations, the landscape of fields, hedgerows and woods is rich in biodiversity.
- Heritage assets such as lime kilns, and charcoal platforms can be found in the woods. Callow Hill Wood was the site of one of the first battles in the English Civil War (1642).
- Rare species listed on the IUCN Red List of Endangered Animals can be found in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area. They include European Otter, Hazel Dormouse and Greater Horseshoe Bat. Otters need streams but they also need the old woodlands, where they hunt for frogs. Dormice can be found on Ewyas Harold Common as well as the woodland in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area. The wealth and variety of natural habitats have resulted in the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and the Butterfly Conservation Society purchasing reserves in the area.
- *Grimmia ovalis* - is a very rare oval dry rock moss, or bryophyte, which only occurs on old stone-tiled roofs. This part of Herefordshire is one of its last strongholds in Britain, because stone roofs still exist in this area. Unfortunately, they are being replaced by modern roofing materials. *Grimmia ovalis* could be saved if property owners (particularly Listed property owners) were encouraged to use new and recycled stone tiles. The bryophyte spores survive on the stone, even when it is moved from one site to another. Mossy, stone-tiled roofs are an important habitat for many insects and birds, as well as supporting the character of the area.



Ewyas Harold Common (Liz Overstall)

- 1.10 The Neighbourhood Development Plan area has many heritage assets. Whilst some, like Ewyas Harold Castle Mound, Abbey Dore Church, and Kentchurch Court enjoy protection, other assets need recognition so that protection can be extended to them. Our landscape and our heritage assets are important indicators of local character. This is of financial as well as aesthetic importance to the local tourist business.
- 1.11 This plan is based on extensive consultation, this is set out in the accompanying Consultation Statement. So far, the parish councils have held the following consultations:

Abbeydore and Bacton Group

- **Public Meeting to gather information from the local community, Abbeydore Village Hall 25th April 2013.** A drop-in event that ran from mid-afternoon until 8:00pm, with light refreshments. This was an information gathering exercise to establish the initial thoughts and concerns of the community on its future development. It was attended by over 60 people representing more than a third of the residences in the two parishes. A large map of the parishes of Abbeydore and Bacton was presented in the room, along with a variety of ways for people to note areas of particular interest and or concern. There were also liberal supplies of pens and papers and a suggestion box and participants were encouraged to leave their comments either anonymously or with their name attached. People were also encouraged to leave their name and contact details as a record of the participants. The principle outcome was the identification of the interests and concerns of the local community. These were collated

from the post-it notes left on the map, the comments left in the suggestion box and the discussions as noted by the members of Abbeydore and Bacton Parish Council who attended. These comments formed the basis of the questionnaire described in the following paragraph.

- **Questionnaire to every resident of Abbeydore and Bacton October 2013.** There was a response rate of over 50%, the results have informed the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### Ewyas Harold Group (EHGPC)

In Ewyas Harold there is a longstanding history of community engagement on issues facing the parish, relevant to the Neighbourhood Development Plan and this goes back to work on the Parish Plan.

- **16th September 2010 - Public Meeting at The Pavilion, Ewyas Harold:** Parish Plan explained and Steering Group was appointed. 40 people attended: age range 28 – 70 years. The Steering Group worked for the next three years to prepare Parish Plans for Ewyas Harold, Dulas, and Rowlestone with Llancillo.
- **Christmas Fair 2010 at the Memorial Hall, Ewyas Harold:** 600 people attended coming from all the rural parishes as well as Ewyas Harold. Age range 3 – 84 years. Members of the Steering Group engaged residents in conversation and comments were sought on a range of issues, such as: housing needs, planning and development, education and recreation, transport, police and public safety, highways and road safety, economic development and the environment.  
**Results:** Many residents were anxious about unwanted large housing development, others were concerned about: parking issues, school traffic chaos, drainage and flooding, recycling and the poor bus service.



Memorial Hall consultation (Liz Overstall)

- **15th December 2010 – Dulas Parish Consultation at the Barn, Dulas**, to consider local issues for Parish Plan. Refreshments were provided. Maps and boards were displayed, and a short questionnaire was distributed to stimulate discussion. Subjects included housing needs, planning and development, education and recreation, transport, police and public safety, highways and road safety, economic development and environmental issues. **Results:** Local issues identified for inclusion into the Questionnaire included the dangerous state of the Dulas Road.
- **16th December 2010 - Rowlestone and Llancillo Parishes Consultation** at Rowlestone Village Hall: to consider local issues for Parish Plan. Refreshments were provided. Maps and boards were displayed, and a short questionnaire was distributed to stimulate discussion. Subjects included housing needs, planning and development, education and recreation, transport, police and public safety, highways and road safety, economic development and environmental issues. **Results:** Local issues identified for inclusion into the Questionnaire included poorly maintained roads with few passing places.
- **Primary School Mapping Exercise** June 2011 Conducted at Ewyas Harold Primary School and led by Herefordshire Council Youth Team with assistance of teachers. A sense of belonging and love of the village was obvious from the children's conversation. A substantial amount of art work was produced for an end-of-term Public Exhibition.



School Consultation 2014 (Liz Overstal)

- **Youth Electronic Survey Consultation June 2011** led by Herefordshire Council Youth Team working with Youth Club. Thirty young people took part: 14 males and 16 females, Age range: 11 to 20 years. (53.3% aged 11-13: 36.7% aged 14-16 years and 10% over 17 years). Issues raised demonstrated the isolation of young people in rural areas. Lack of local amenity provision for their age-group means they must travel 16 miles to Hereford to enjoy normal sports and social activities. Unfortunately, the bus service is slow, infrequent, and expensive. Youngsters agreed they would like to see Pontrilas Station re-opened to give them swift access to city facilities. Again, addressing isolation issues, the young people wanted better internet connection and better mobile phone service. (*This service has seriously deteriorated since 2011*). There was a wide range of "wish list" items, with suggestions such as Cycle Paths, Archery, and Zip Wires. Despite the rural isolation issues uncovered, the youngsters said they liked living in Ewyas Harold, but said that - most of all - they wanted a place to "hang out" and meet with each other.
- **Questionnaire to every resident July 2011:** A Questionnaire was distributed and collected by reply-paid mail. There was a response rate of 31%. A report based on the data acquired from the questionnaire was then prepared by Herefordshire Council Research Team, and a Draft Parish Plan was written based on this information. See HC report at: [http://issuu.com/swhcfrs/docs/ewyas\\_harold\\_questionnaire\\_report-issue\\_2?e=4503655/6436738](http://issuu.com/swhcfrs/docs/ewyas_harold_questionnaire_report-issue_2?e=4503655/6436738)
- **Public Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 at 10am at the Memorial Hall, Ewyas Harold to discuss the Ewyas Harold Draft Parish Plan**, which was made available for study, mounted on boards around the hall with facilities for comment. 46 residents attended. Refreshments served. Comments from this meeting are available online at <http://ewyasharoldparishplan.wordpress.com/method/meetings/about/> Comments were used to make final adjustments to the plan. The Ewyas Harold Parish Plan was subsequently published and adopted and can be seen at: <http://ewyasharoldparishplan.wordpress.com/the-parish-plan/draft-pp/>
- **Public Meeting 15th March 2012 7.00pm, at The Barn, Dulas**, to discuss Dulas Draft Parish Plan. 11 people attended out of a population of 40 residents. Many residents live at Dulas Court Residential Care Home and are unable to participate in public life, so this was a reasonable turn-out. (The age range at the meeting was 50 to 70+). Refreshments were provided. The Dulas Parish Plan was discussed and approved by those present. It was agreed that little or no housing development was wanted. **Results:** The Dulas Parish Plan was subsequently published and adopted and can be seen at: <http://ewyasharoldparishplan.wordpress.com/the-parish-plan/dulas-parish-plan/>

A Group Parishes Questionnaire provoked general discussion.

- **Public Meeting on 16th March 2012 at Rowlestone Village Hall** to discuss Rowlestone and Llancillo Draft Parish Plan. 15 people attended from a population of 80 residents (The age range was 40-70+). Refreshments were provided. A Group Parishes Questionnaire provoked general discussion. **Results:** The overwhelming majority said that they wished the rural nature of the parish to be maintained and said that there had been too much “windfall” development through change-of-use of barns to residential dwellings. This had increased traffic on the single-track road leading to the village causing problems and the need for more passing places. Whilst appreciating the need for housing provision for local people, they agreed that affordable and market housing would be better sited in Ewyas Harold. The Rowlestone and Llancillo Parish Plan was subsequently published and adopted and can be seen at:<http://ewyasharoldparishplan.wordpress.com/the-parish-plan/rowlestone-llancillo-parish-plan/>
- **School Event 13<sup>th</sup> July 2014:** Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Committee members attended to distribute and explain a Public Consultation Questionnaire (presented in a newsletter). The forthcoming Public Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014 was given publicity. Four questions were asked:

  - Should the Settlement Boundary be maintained?
  - What green spaces should never be built on, and need protection?
  - What local views of special interest or beauty need protection from development blight?
  - What buildings, historic or otherwise, need protection because they are important to the community or of special interest.

**Results:** 61 adults and children attended. The Questionnaire provoked discussion and offers of help for EHGPC. Additional suggestions were made regarding traffic flow, which were forwarded to EHGPC. Many people from this event also attended the next event.
- **Public Meeting Memorial Hall 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014 Steering** Group members from all the parishes involved in the Neighbourhood Development Plan set up individual stalls, Maps of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area were displayed and visitors were invited to make general comments as well as answer the specific questions outlined in the Consultation Questionnaire/Newsletter (See above). 82 people attended. (Age range: 6 to 85 years). **Results:** The Ewyas Harold Steering Group members were able to advise EHGPC on the Settlement Boundary issue. A list of green spaces, views and special

buildings that might require protection was made. Further information and opinion on a wide range of issues related to all the parishes involved in the Neighbourhood Development Plan was acquired.

### Kentchurch

- Public Meeting to gather information from the local community in Kentchurch, 3 July 2013
- Questionnaire to every resident of Kentchurch October/November 2013

### Informal Consultation across the Neighbourhood Area

- 1.12 During November and December 2014 a wide ranging informal consultation exercise was undertaken on the initial draft of the plan. A number of responses were received and have been taken in to account in the preparation of this draft of the plan. At the same time, Herefordshire Council carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the initial draft plan. The SEA largely found the plan was compatible with national and strategic planning policy. Policy EH4 and K1 were identified as needing further amendment and these were incorporated into the Regulation 14 Draft of the plan. The HRA concluded, at this stage, there would be no requirement for a full HRA of this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### Regulation 14 Consultation

- 1.13 The plan was then revised and published for the formal Regulation 14 consultation 16<sup>th</sup> February to 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2015. Several representations were received during this period. The Consultation Statement that accompanies this Submission version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out how each of the representations has been considered and where any changes have been made to the plan. Also, submitted alongside the plan are a Basic Condition Statement and an updated Environment Report.
- 1.15 Working together as a group of parishes is harder than preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for one area, some of the planning issues that we are seeking to tackle are common ones across the whole group. Others are more specific issues affecting one of the parishes within the Neighbourhood Development Plan group. Therefore, this document is structured in the following way:
- Chapters 2 and 3 explain why we are preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Abbeydore and Bacton

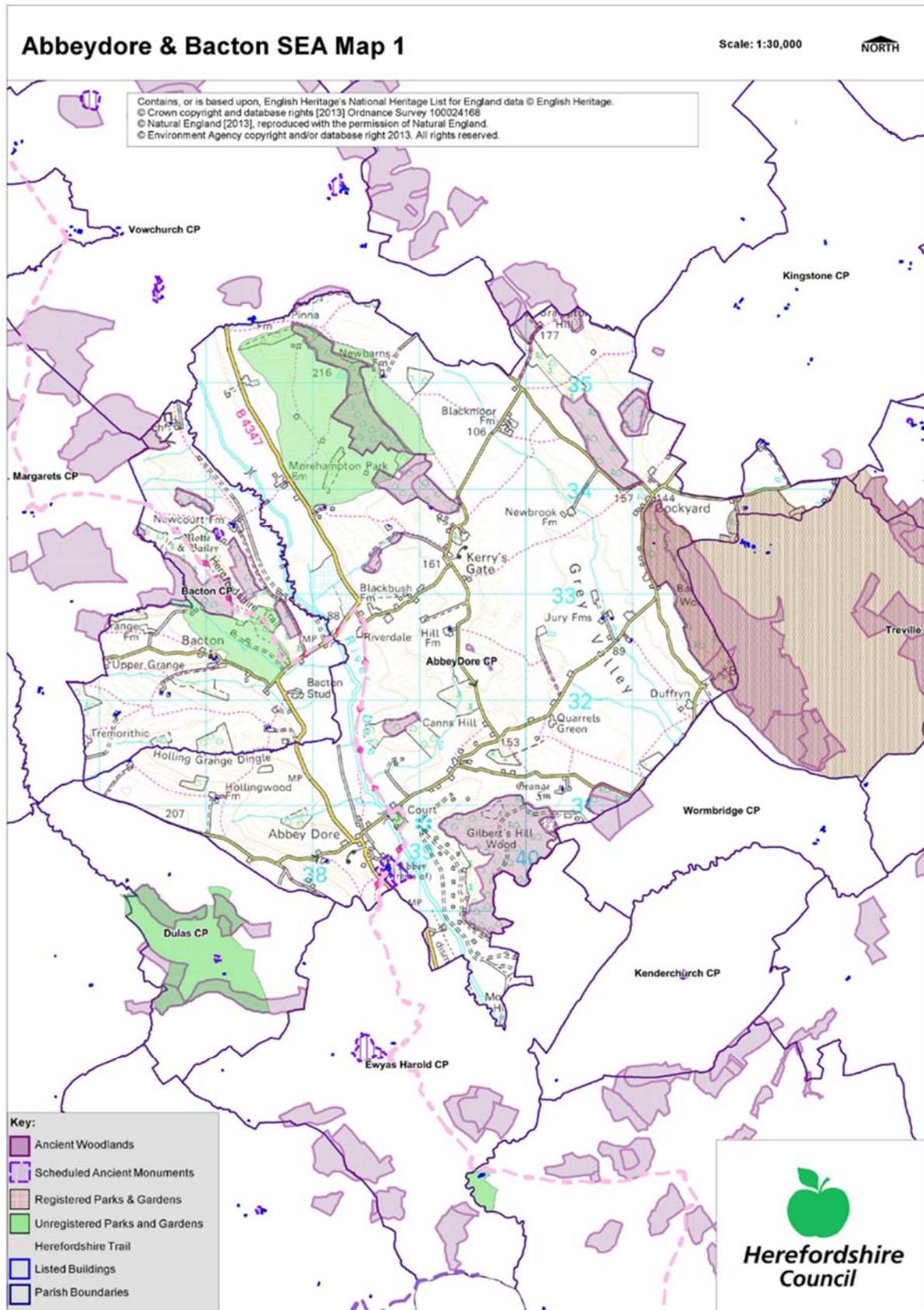
Group, Ewyas Harold Group and Kentchurch, and how long we expect this to take.

- Chapter 4 sets out the policies and proposals affecting the whole Group.
- Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 then sets out planning policies and proposals, individually for each of the parishes in the Group



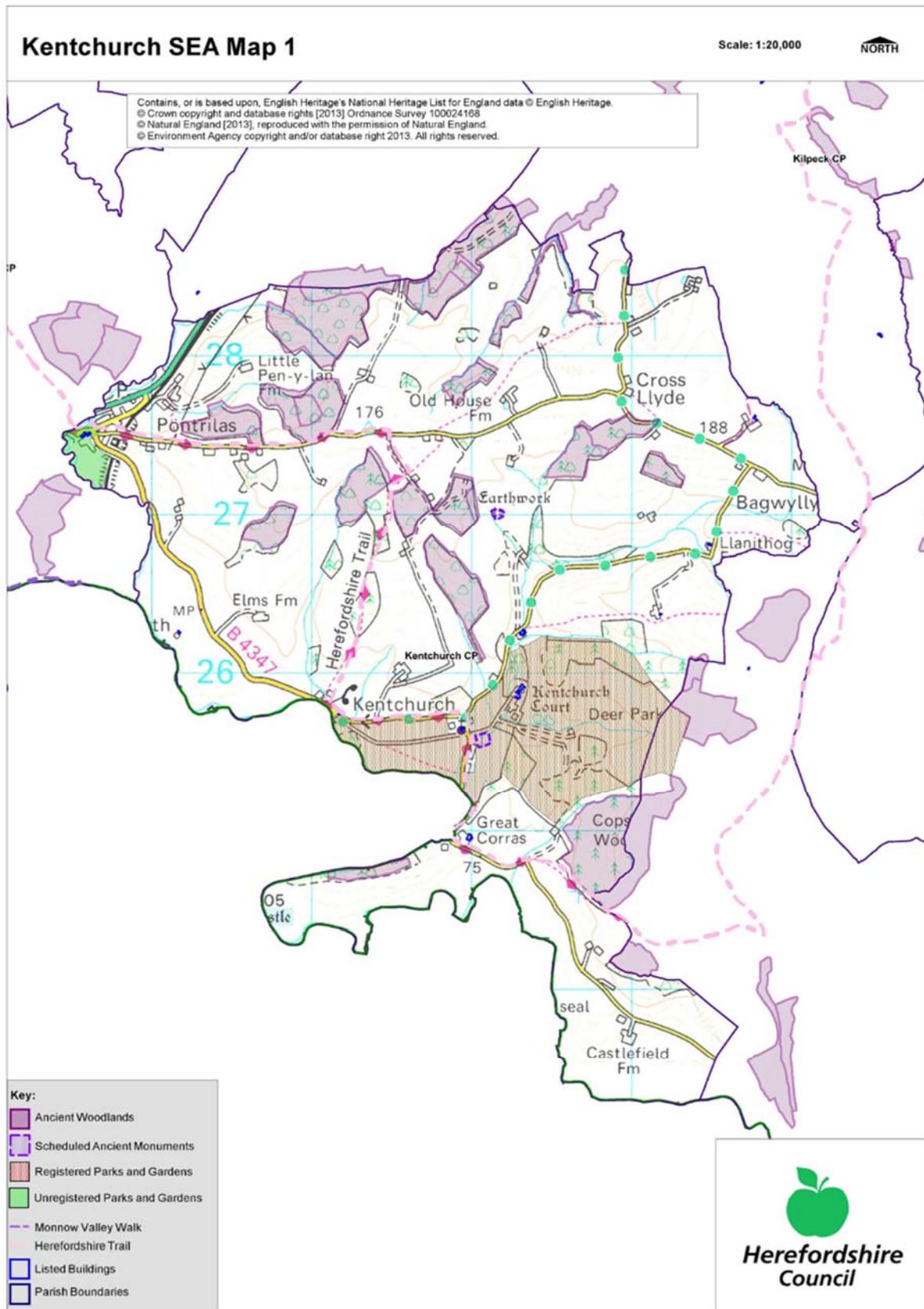
Norman carving on archway in Dulas. An example of a heritage asset requiring protection.

**Figure 3 – Strategic Environmental Assessment for Abbeystre and Bacton** (Ewys Harold Group Parish Council Licence Number 100055482)





**Figure 5 – Strategic Environmental Assessment for Kentchurch (Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council Licence Number 100055482)**



# 2

## **Why are we preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Abbeydore, Bacton, Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo, Rowlestone and Kentchurch?**

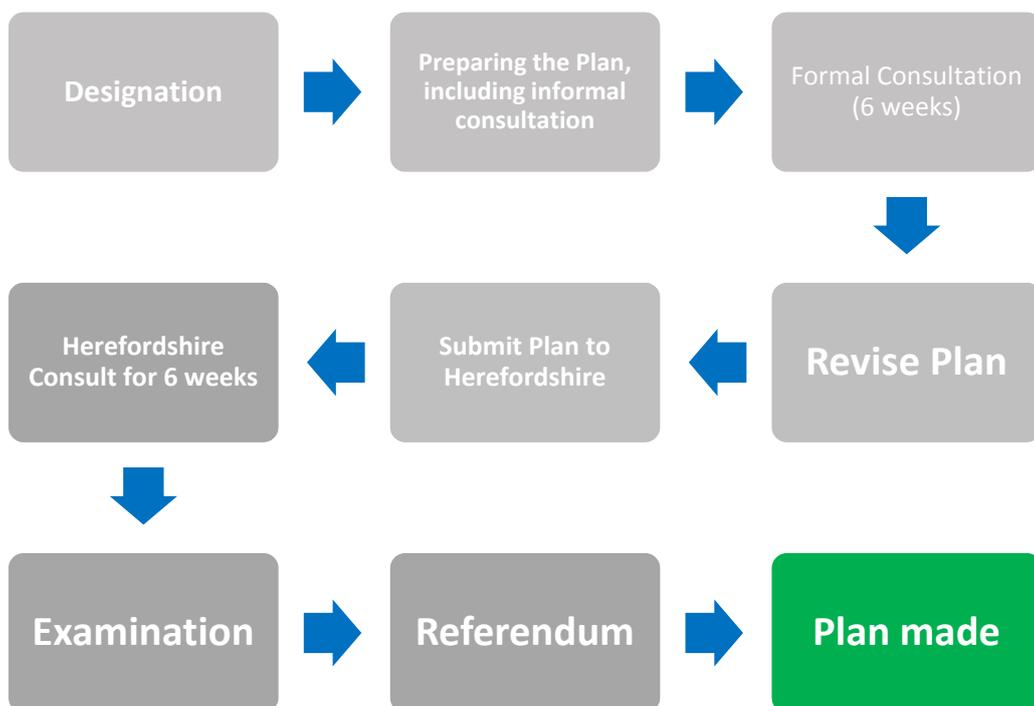
- 2.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans are a new part of the statutory development planning system. Just as local authorities, such as Herefordshire Council, can produce development plans to promote, guide and control development of houses, businesses, open spaces and other uses of land, so, too, can parish councils by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans form part of the statutory development plan for an area. They will be used to promote and guide development and will be used to help determine planning applications.
- 2.3 The Parish Councils of Abbeydore, Bacton, Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo, Rowlestone and Kentchurch felt it was important to exercise their rights to influence local development and in October 2012 the Parish Councils came together and applied for the area covered by the group of parishes to be designated a Neighbourhood Development Planning Area, for a map see Figure 1. Herefordshire Council approved this application in November 2012. Since designation the Parish Councils' Steering Group have been preparing this Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. Successfully completed, this Plan will enable local residents to help shape future development in their parishes.

# 3

## Preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans have to be prepared following a procedure set by government (see Figure 6). The procedure was followed in preparing the NDP. Details of the various consultations can be viewed at [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory\\_record/3021/abbeydore\\_and\\_bacton\\_ewyas\\_harold\\_group\\_and\\_kentchurch\\_neighbourhood\\_development\\_plan](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory_record/3021/abbeydore_and_bacton_ewyas_harold_group_and_kentchurch_neighbourhood_development_plan)

**Figure 6 – The Neighbourhood Development Planning Process**



- 3.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans must undergo a screening for the purposes of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations. This screening was undertaken by Herefordshire Council and can be found in the Environment Report accompanying this NDP. The Environment Report can be found on the Herefordshire Council Neighbourhood Development Planning web page (<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-areas-and-plans>)

# 4

## Plan wide policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 4.1 There are a number of planning issues that affect all of the parishes. This section of the plan sets out the plan-wide policies and proposals to deal with these issues. Our overall vision for the area in 2031 is:

**The vibrant village centres act as a focus for this rural Neighbourhood Development Plan area, supporting local services and encouraging appropriate industry. The rural character of both village and countryside is conserved until 2031. New development is integrated into its setting, whether at the heart of the villages, or in the more rural areas. All development has minimal impact on the area's distinctive character and environment. All development is essential to support the needs and functioning of the local community.**

- 4.2 The Plan-wide issues we have identified are:
- The need for suitable market and affordable housing to allow local people to continue to live locally.

The Herefordshire Core Strategy sets strategic planning policy for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area. In planning for new housing the Neighbourhood Development Plan has to have regard to policies RA1 "Rural Housing Distribution" and RA2 "Housing in Settlements Outside Hereford and the Market Towns". Policy RA1 identifies an indicative housing growth target for the Golden Valley Housing Market Area of 12% for the period 2011 to 2031. This will mean approximately 304 new homes will be built over this 20-year period. To meet this target a group of settlements have been identified as "settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development", this group of settlements includes Ewyas Harold. Below these larger settlements, a group "other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate" are identified". This group includes Abbeydore, Bacton and Rowlestone. In terms of the Core Strategy, Pontrilas is within the Ross-on-Wye Housing Market Area (HMA), this HMA has an indicative growth target of 14%, 2011-2031. Pontrilas, in a similar way to Ewyas Harold, is identified as a settlement "which will be the main focus of proportionate housing growth".

One of the main things that the Core Strategy seeks from Neighbourhood Development Plans is that they demonstrate how they will meet the indicative housing targets.

**Table 1: Indicative Housing Growth Targets and Commitments (November 2016)**

Parish	Number of Households in the Parish 2011	Indicative growth target	Indicative target number of dwellings	Commitments Planning permissions+ completions
Abbeydore and Bacton	169	12%	20	3+1
Ewyas Harold Group	486	12%	58	51+2
Kentchurch	137	14%	19	11
<b>Total for Neighbourhood Development Plan area</b>	623		97	68

*Source: Herefordshire Council*

In Table 1 the number of dwellings is the number of dwellings identified in each parish in the 2011 Census; the indicative growth target is the percentage change each village should grow by over the period 2011-2031 as set out in the Core Strategy; and the indicative target number of dwellings indicates how many new

homes this would be. The final column - "commitments" shows how close, or far away we are to meeting this "indicative target". This includes dwellings under construction and planning permissions. Our plan sets out a set of policies for how each of the five villages will meet this set of targets. As can be seen, over 70% of this target for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area can be met only five years' in to the plan period.

- The need to provide opportunities for small-scale local businesses, including tourism, to establish and thrive.
- The need to ensure that all development proceeds in such a way as to conserve the character of the parishes.
- The need to conserve buildings, sites and assets of heritage importance.



Traffic congestion problems in School Lane, Ewyas Harold

- The need to protect the sustainability of services, shops, businesses and transport network, and foster viability through the appropriate development of social and economic infrastructure.
- The need to protect the environment of the region by ensuring the viability of the current flood protection scheme, and sewage provision.
- The need to support sports and outdoor activities for all age groups and to foster arts and educational activities.
- The need to improve the transport network together with the long-term objective of re-opening Pontrilas Railway Station.
- The need to ensure all development is of high quality, sustainable and in sympathy with the environment.
- The need to protect important local green spaces.

4.3 This chapter of the plan includes a set of general policies to deal with these issues.



View to the Black Mountains from Abbeydore parish (Peter Rostron)

## **POLICY G1 – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE LANDSCAPE OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY**

**To protect and enhance the valued landscape of the Golden Valley development proposals will have to demonstrate that:**

- a. The character of the Golden Valley landscape has influenced the design, scale, form and siting of the development proposed;**
- b. They protect and enhance the differing settings of the various settlements in the Golden Valley;**
- c. They protect and enhance any designated areas such as wildlife sites, listed buildings, and ancient monuments commensurate with their designation, status and significance;**
- d. They retain and enhance where possible non-designated assets such as stone walls, ancient and veteran trees, wildlife sites and commons;**
- e. They protect and enhance the natural environment, heritage and scenic beauty of the Golden Valley;**
- f. They incorporate appropriate landscaping schemes and future on-going management of such schemes to ensure the proposal integrates in to the surrounding landscape;**

- g. They maintain and where possible extend native tree species, hedgerows, and other important vegetation;**
- h. They will not have an adverse impact on the environmental quality of the area's priority habitats and ancient woodlands; and**
- i. Proposals should conserve watercourses and riverside habitats. Where necessary, this should include management and mitigation measures for the improvement and enhancement of water quality and habitat.**

## **Background/Justification**

4.4 Our local landscape is one of our strongest assets. The value attached to the Golden Valley landscape is widely accepted and the area has been put forward as a potential Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This policy identifies those aspects that make the landscape so important. In developing this policy regard has been had to Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) Profiles. The north of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area being situated within NCA99 "Black Mountains and Golden Valley" and the area covered by Kentchurch parish being within NCA104 "South Herefordshire and Over Severn".



Local stone used to construct a new building in a rural setting (Liz Overstall)

## **POLICY G2 – DESIGN**

**All new development in the area will be expected to be of high quality design. Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:**

- a. Contribution to improving and enhancing the built heritage and natural environment of the site and its surroundings;**
- b. The overall design of the proposal in terms of siting, scale, height, proportions, massing, orientation, mix of uses, detailing, and materials;**
- c. The development does not adversely impact on existing natural horizons, and has appropriate regard to existing roof lines;**
- d. The impact on the residential amenity of existing and future residents;**
- e. Sustainable construction and design that minimises the use of resources and emissions and uses recycled materials, renewable energy and the natural treatment of waste water and the re-use of greywater, wherever possible;**
- f. The use of locally-sourced or recycled natural stone tiles for roofing and walling is encouraged;**
- g. Use of suitable native species in any planting and inclusion of bird nest boxes and roosting opportunities for bats; and**
- h. Access and highway safety, including the provision of new and improved pedestrian footpaths and footways, permissive pedestrian rights of way and cyclepaths, and provision of safe pedestrian road and rail crossings where required.**

### **Background/Justification**

4.5 Our Neighbourhood Development Plan seeks to encourage all new development to be of high quality design.

Para. 58 of the national planning framework states:

*“Neighbourhood Development Plans should develop robust and comprehensive*

*policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.”*

4.6 Policy G2 has been developed to set out the quality of development we expect and is based on a thorough understanding and evaluation of the area’s defining characteristics. This policy will be used in the assessment of all planning proposals and will help secure high quality development in the future. This approach is in line with the aims of national planning policy to promote good design, Core Strategy policy, and, in the case of Ewyas Harold builds into the development plan guidance previously in the Village Design Statement.

## **POLICY G3 – FLOODING**

**All new development is required to include adequate surface water drainage measures (including Sustainable Drainage Systems) to protect existing and new development from flooding.**

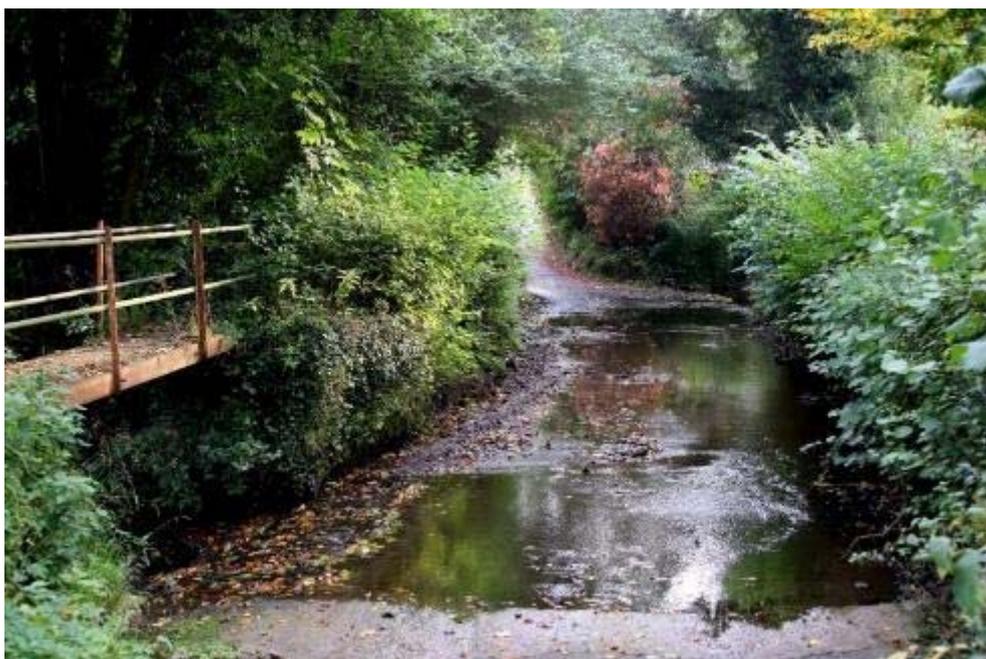
**Development should be designed to reduce the consequences of flooding and to facilitate recovery from the effects of flooding.**

**All development of existing properties (including alterations) must demonstrate that surface water is diverted into suitable and adequate drainage systems and not sewers.**

### **Background/Justification**

4.7 In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding will be avoided by directing development away from the areas at highest risk. Where development is unavoidable, measures should be included to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.8 The parishes of Ewyas Harold and Abbeydore are susceptible to flooding on the River Dore and the Dulas Brook. Only a few dwellings are directly affected as settlements have traditionally been constructed above flood-prone areas, however, serious disruption of the road system occurs on a regular basis. This limits access to schools and businesses, and isolates many other rural communities, affecting hundreds of people.



Ford on Mill Lane, Dulas. Cars can use the ford when the Dulas Brook is low (Liz Overstall)



Ford on Mill Lane, Dulas. Cars cannot use the ford when the Dulas Brook is in flood (Liz Overstall)

4.9 In rural Abbeydore, the flood meadows on either side of the River Dore retain water after heavy rain, which sometimes overflows onto the A4347 road at Dore Bridge and Moorhampton Bridge. The water is often too deep to permit traffic, and can persist for some time. Regular dredging of the River Dore, on both sides of these bridges, is considered essential. For up to date information on flood risk use this link <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>.

- 4.10 In Ewyas Harold parish, the A4347 and the C1213 are frequently flooded at several points in the village after heavy rain. The causes of this flooding are complex. In the past, flooding was most severe in the areas of the bridges but dredging has improved this. Recent flooding seems to be related to the inadequacy of the drainage system. One of the most serious concerns residents report, is that floodwater enters the sewage system on Elm Green Road and spreads faecal matter on to the roads. Flooding issues in Ewyas Harold urgently need further investigation and structural improvement, as well as regular monitoring and maintenance. Of particular concern is a drainage pipe that runs the length of the Pontrilas Road (Ewyas Harold,) following the line of the old Village Ditch. It is theoretically maintained by more than 20 landowners. But this arrangement is unsatisfactory. Responsibility for the upgrading, repair and maintenance of this crucial drainage pipe should be transferred to Herefordshire Council, so that it can be replaced by a functional single pipe of standard width, throughout its length.

## **POLICY G4 – TOURISM**

**Proposals for new tourism development or to improve and enhance existing tourist facilities will be supported when:**

- a. They are appropriate within the local landscape setting;**
- b. They do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, tranquility or views within the wider Golden Valley;**
- c. They do not lead to road safety, traffic congestion or car parking problems; and**
- d. They do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 4.11 Tourism makes a small but important contribution to the local economy. Policy G4 seeks to manage future tourism development in a way that does not compromise the area's significant environmental assets or lead to significant adverse impacts on residents, visitors or businesses.
- 4.12 The intent is to promote development that will provide facilities for the use of local inhabitants as well as attracting more visitors to the area. A visitor's centre based at Dore Abbey focussing on the Abbey and the

southern portion of the Golden Valley would be welcomed and the keepers of the Abbey have already indicated that they would consider this proposal favourably. This would require further car parking either along the road in Abbeydore or at a suitable nearby location.



The Parks, Dulas, is one of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's largest nature reserves (Liz Overstall)

## **POLICY G5 – GOLDEN VALLEY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Development proposals should protect, enhance and introduce new Green Infrastructure (open spaces, tracks, woodlands, streams, rivers and other water features) by:**

- a. Retaining existing open spaces, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, water courses, parks and gardens;**
- b. Providing on site new Green Infrastructure, including new habitats where possible; and**
- c. By making links and connections to the surrounding network of Green Infrastructure and contributing, wherever possible, to the overall network of Green Infrastructure in the Golden Valley.**

## Background/Justification

- 4.13 The area's multi-functional Green Infrastructure network is the open spaces, tracks, lanes, woodlands, rivers and streams. Our plan seeks to protect this network as a key asset in the Golden Valley for its recreational, tourism, landscape and wildlife value.



Most of the roads in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area are single track and present passing problems. (Liz Overstall)

## POLICY G6 – HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

**All new development proposals should include appropriate measures to minimise their impact on the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area by providing:**

- a. Safe and suitable access;**
- b. Any necessary and appropriate traffic management measures;**
- c. Off-road car parking that avoids the use of large areas of hardstandings, particularly using materials more appropriate to urban locations. All car parking should be appropriately sited and screened within the landscape; and**
- d. Access to public transport including the creation of permissive footpaths to bus stops, where appropriate.**

## **Background/Justification**

- 4.14 One of the issues raised consistently during our consultations on the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been the problems associated with car traffic. Through this policy, the NDP will seek to ensure such problems do not get any worse, and, where possible, are reduced.

## **POLICY G7 – RURAL ENVIRONMENT AND TRANQUILITY**

**To protect the integrity of the rural environment and the tranquility of the Golden Valley development proposals will only be supported when they do not give rise to significant adverse impacts on these resources. The following criteria will be used to assess proposals to help determine their appropriateness:**

- a. The use, nature, scale, type of activity and opening hours (where appropriate) of any proposal.**
- b. For business and tourism proposals a Noise Impact Assessment may be required with any planning application, and may be required, in certain circumstances, for other forms of development; and**
- c. The inclusion of mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or remedy any adverse impacts arising from the proposed development. Such measures will be conditioned where necessary.**

## **Background/Justification**

- 4.15 Key characteristics of the area are the rural environment and its tranquility. Policy G7 seeks to protect these characteristics by seeking to ensure that development is appropriate in terms of its use, scale and type of activity suitable to a tranquil, rural environment.



Grey Valley (Peter Rostron)

## **POLICY G8 – DARK SKIES**

**To minimise light pollution in the Golden Valley and to improve the views of our night time skies, planning proposals that include external lighting and significant openings that would allow internal lighting to be seen externally, will have to demonstrate the following:**

- a) They have undertaken an appropriate assessment and can demonstrate the need for the lighting proposed;**
- b) That care has been taken to provide appropriate lighting, using systems designed to prevent obtrusive lighting nuisance, minimise light pollution and reduce energy consumption.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 4.16 Obtrusive lighting installations can have a devastating impact in a community, causing nuisance to neighbours, and obscuring views of the night sky, as well as wasting energy. Well-designed lighting installations reduce the risk of crime, and improve public safety.
- 4.17 The neighbourhood area's rural environment means it benefits from "dark skies", this means when skies are clear people can see the stars

constellations in all their glory. To ensure that this will be the same in the future, this policy will be used to assess the light generated from development proposals. Light pollution from the ground is one of the reasons many areas do not enjoy the type of “dark skies” found in this area. In limiting or reducing light pollution there may also be benefits to the owners and users of development through reduced energy bills as a result of lower energy consumption. Reducing light pollution also reduces the impact on species affected by inappropriate lighting such as bats.



During consultation on the Parish Plan many residents requested that Island Field (in the middle of Ewyas Harold village) should be a protected green space. (Liz Overstall)

## **POLICY G9 – RURAL BUSINESSES AND HOMEWORKING**

**Proposals for new rural businesses and homeworking will be encouraged when they meet the following criteria:**

- a. They do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity;**
- b. They do not have an adverse impact on the landscape, tranquility or Green Infrastructure network of the Golden Valley; and**
- c. They include suitable access and car parking.**

## Background/Justification

- 4.18 To ensure that the communities on the neighbourhood area continue to thrive suitable new rural business and homeworking will be encouraged. Such proposals will be looked on favourably when they do not have an any significant adverse impact on residential amenity; landscape, tranquility, green infrastructure and where they do not lead to access or car parking problems.

## POLICY G10 – LOCAL GREEN SPACES

**The Local Green Spaces designated below and shown on the Ewyas Harold Policies Map, Figure 9, will be protected. Development for uses considered inappropriate in the NPPF for such Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances, that is when the harm to the local green space and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.**

**G10/1 – Recreation Ground, Ewyas Harold**

**G10/2 – Horsecroft, Ewyas Harold**

**G10/3 – Island Field, Ewyas Harold**

**G10/4 – Oakbrook Close, Ewyas Harold,**

**G10/5 - Elmdale, Ewyas Harold**

## Background/Justification

- 4.19 National planning policy allows local communities to identify and designate Local Green Spaces. Such spaces are given special protection because of the particular importance local communities place on them. Identifying a Local Green Space rules out the development of such spaces other than in “very special circumstances”.
- 4.20 To be designated a Local Green Space must meet a set of criteria:
- It must be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
  - It must be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, e.g. because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquility or wildlife value; and
  - It must be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.
- 4.21 We have assessed a number of green and open spaces in the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area against these criteria and

those meeting all of the criteria have been identified in Policy G10 as protected Local Green Spaces. For a summary of this assessment for the designated Local Green Spaces see Table 2. In line with the NPPF these areas will remain permanently open. Appropriate development that maintains the openness of these areas will be supported. Development that is inappropriate or would lead to the loss of such spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.

**Table 2. Designated Local Green Spaces**

Local Green Space	Proximity to local community	Demonstrably special	Local in character, not an extensive tract of open land
G10/1 – Recreation Ground, Ewyas Harold	Recreation Ground site, very close to village centre and local amenities	One of main areas for recreation in the area. Originally a large meadow it was gifted to the parish in the 1920s and, now, is used for formal recreation. The site was identified as important in the Parish Plan and is registered with Fields in Trust. The site is owned by Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council	The site is local in character being set out as formal open space (Recreation Ground) with defined boundaries. The site is not an extensive tract of open land.
G10/2 – Horsecroft, Ewyas Harold	A small green space, in the centre of Ewyas Harold, on the Horsecroft housing estate for older people.	This small open space, at the entrance to Horsecroft, is a valuable amenity for residents. It helps preserve peace and tranquility.	The site is local in character being set out as a small open space with defined boundaries. The site is not an extensive tract of open land.
G10/3 – Island Field, Ewyas Harold	Highly valued small meadow close to the centre of Ewyas Harold village and amenities.	A small meadow, formerly part of Bridge Farm. Lying at the heart of Ewyas Harold, it has the appearance of a	The site is local in character with defined boundaries on all sides of either walls, hedges or fences. The

Local Green Space	Proximity to local community	Demonstrably special	Local in character, not an extensive tract of open land
		village green, and lends an air of rural tranquility to the settlement. Until recently the meadow was the traditional site for the Ewyas Harold May Fair, a travelling fair, connected to St Ethelbert's Fair in Hereford. Parish Council records show that the Fair was a famous attraction during the nineteenth century (people came by rail) but its origins probably date back to medieval times when Ewyas Harold was a substantial Norman borough.	western boundary of the site adjoins the Dulas Brook. The site is not an extensive tract of open land.
G10/4 – Oakbrook Close, Ewyas Harold,	A small local green space on a recently developed housing estate. The space provides a safe play area for children, close to their homes, in a location some distance from the Recreation Ground.	A small local green space providing valuable amenity and play space for local residents.	The site is local in character being set out as a small open space with defined boundaries. The site is not an extensive tract of open land.
G10/5 - Elmdale, Ewyas Harold	A small area of grassed open space on an existing housing	A small local green space providing valuable amenity	The site is local in character being set out as a small open space with

Local Green Space	Proximity to local community	Demonstrably special	Local in character, not an extensive tract of open land
	estate. This provides an informal play area, close to their homes, for children who live in a location some distance from the Recreation Ground.	and play space for local residents.	defined boundaries. The site is not an extensive tract of open land.

# 5

## Abbeydore and Bacton

- 5.1 This section of our Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out the Vision, Key Issues, Objectives and Policies and Proposals for Abbeydore and Bacton.

### Vision

- 5.2 The rural character of Abbeydore and Bacton is conserved until 2031 and beyond. New development is integrated into the rural setting of the area and has minimal impact on the area's setting and fragile environment. All development that takes place will have been supported by being essential to support the needs and functioning of the local community.

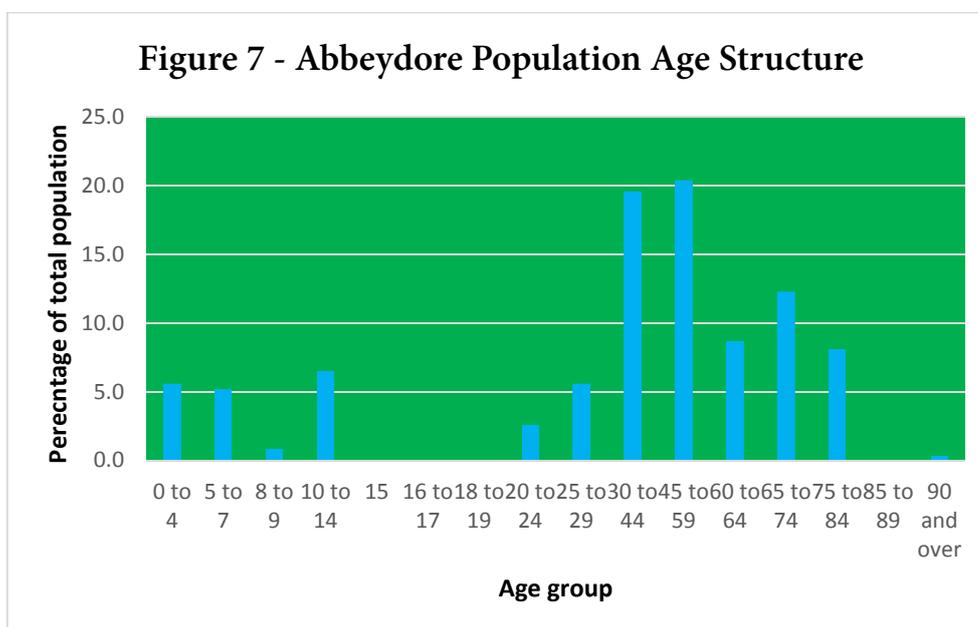


Dore Abbey (Geoffrey Hollom)

### Key Issues

- 5.2 The following key issues have been identified for Abbeydore and Bacton:

- The need for suitable market and affordable housing to allow local people to continue to live locally.
- The need to provide opportunities for small scale local businesses, including tourism, to establish and thrive.
- The need to ensure that all development proceeds in such a way as to preserve the rural character of the parishes, and the integrity of the natural environment with particular regard to protected and endangered wild species.
- The need to preserve buildings and sites of heritage importance, including those on the National Heritage List for England, and Herefordshire Council's Monuments Record such as Dore Abbey, Bacton Church, both Abbeydore and Bacton Village Halls; and buildings associated with the Golden Valley Railway line.



- 5.3 Any development in the Abbeydore area should include a requirement to contribute to traffic calming on the B4347 through the village.
- 5.4 A majority of the local community are concerned that there are insufficient facilities for young people in the immediate locality. Any plans to develop such facilities would be welcome but it should also be noted that demand is likely to be relatively small due to the small population and demographic of the parishes.
- 5.5 There is strong local support for a cycle path through the parishes. Two suggestions for routes are either along the old Golden Valley railway line or along the Herefordshire Way.
- 5.6 Response to the Abbeydore and Bacton neighbourhood plan questionnaire has shown overwhelming support for the retention of the Parish's quiet, rural character. There is considerable support for the

area's inclusion in any future Black Mountains/Golden Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

- 5.7 Abbeydore and Bacton is blessed with a beautiful landscape, enhanced by views to the majestic Black Mountains, Orcop Hill, the Skirrid, and the iconic view northward up the Golden Valley to the spire of Peterchurch. From Bacton, the view over Paradise Wood to Holling Grange and beyond is incomparable, and from the Cockyard, the Grey Valley's tranquillity is very special. This landscape is integral to the character of the Parish and must not be impaired.

## Objectives

- 5.9 To attain our Vision and address these key issues we have identified these objectives for Abbeydore and Bacton:

**OBJECTIVE 1** - To ensure that the housing and employment needs of the local community are met in such a way that minimises the impact of development on the rural nature of the parishes.

**OBJECTIVE 2** – To control and guide how new development is designed and integrated in to the existing fragile rural setting of Abbeydore and Bacton.

## Policies and Proposals for Abbeydore and Bacton

### Housing

- 5.10 The Herefordshire Core Strategy identifies the villages of Abbeydore and Bacton as being "other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate". Whilst the neighbourhood plan consultations indicated there are a small, but significant number of people who have identified a need for more housing for family and workers over the next 25 years and it is important that the NDP is in line with the Core Strategy and that any new development is appropriate to the size, role and function of Abbeydore and Bacton.
- 5.11 The majority view is that any new housing in the two villages should focus on small to medium sized family houses. The intent being to provide housing for those who wish to live and work in the community and which blends in with the current housing stock.

- 5.12 The overwhelming view is that any development should be in keeping with the local environment. This includes, but is not restricted to, using red brick or Herefordshire stone for the primary building material; no disproportionately large properties; suitable screening be used where possible, to ensure the character of the landscape is maintained. There is also a majority in the community in favour of domestic solar panels being fitted to properties.

## **POLICY AB1 – NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN ABBEYDORE AND BACTON VILLAGES**

**New housing that reflects local demand or meets local needs will be supported within the villages of Abbeydore and Bacton when it is appropriate and proportionate to the size, role and function of the existing villages. To ensure this is managed appropriately proposals must satisfy the following criteria:**

- a. Be within or immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area of the villages;**
- b. Be a small-scale development, usually defined as 1 or 2 homes;**
- c. Cumulatively such development does not lead to the erosion of the villages existing character and setting;**
- d. Re-use previously developed land, where possible;**
- e. They enhance the character of the area;**
- f. Do not lead to isolated homes, detached from the main village in the open countryside;**
- g. They are of good, sustainable design appropriate to its local context; and**
- h. They protect and enhance the surrounding environment and rural landscape.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 5.13 The Neighbourhood Development Plan brings together a number of parishes under Policy RA2 of the Core Strategy. The closely linked settlements of Ewyas Harold and Pontrilas with the Neighbourhood Area's main facilities and services will be the main focus of proportionate housing development.
- 5.14 Abbeydore and Bacton are identified in the Core Strategy under Policy RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns as*

settlements where proportionate new housing development is considered to be appropriate.

- 5.15 To support this strategic policy aim, the Neighbourhood Development Plan focusses development in Ewyas Harold and Pontrilas and seeks a lower level of growth in the smaller, dispersed settlements with very limited facilities and services.
- 5.16 This approach is in line with the guidance contained in para. 4.8.21 of the Core Strategy, where, in parishes with more than one settlement, the Neighbourhood Development Plan should have the flexibility to apportion the indicative housing target between the various settlements concerned.
- 5.17 The criteria based Policy AB1 will, therefore, be used to manage planning applications for future housing growth in the villages of Abbeydore and Bacton.
- 5.18 This approach is considered to be the most appropriate given the requirements of strategic planning policy to focus development in the larger settlements; the very limited nature of existing development and the dispersed nature of built development in Abbeydore and Bacton. This combination of strategic planning policy and physical form has also resulted in other options for management for future growth in Abbeydore and Bacton being rejected. Primarily, these are definition of settlement boundaries or site allocations. Settlement boundaries for Abbeydore and Bacton would be difficult to define and being so crude and inflexible could result in over-development that potentially reduces the character of the two villages and the area's landscape quality.
- 5.19 In terms of site allocations, no data is available from the Herefordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012 and the Site Allocations Herefordshire Housing Land Assessments 2015.
- 5.20 The "do nothing" option is not considered appropriate given national planning and strategic planning policy support for housing growth.
- 5.21 The criteria based approach in Policy AB1 is, therefore, the best option for achieving sustainable development in Abbeydore and Bacton whilst supporting the overall indicative housing target for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area (Table 1).

# 6

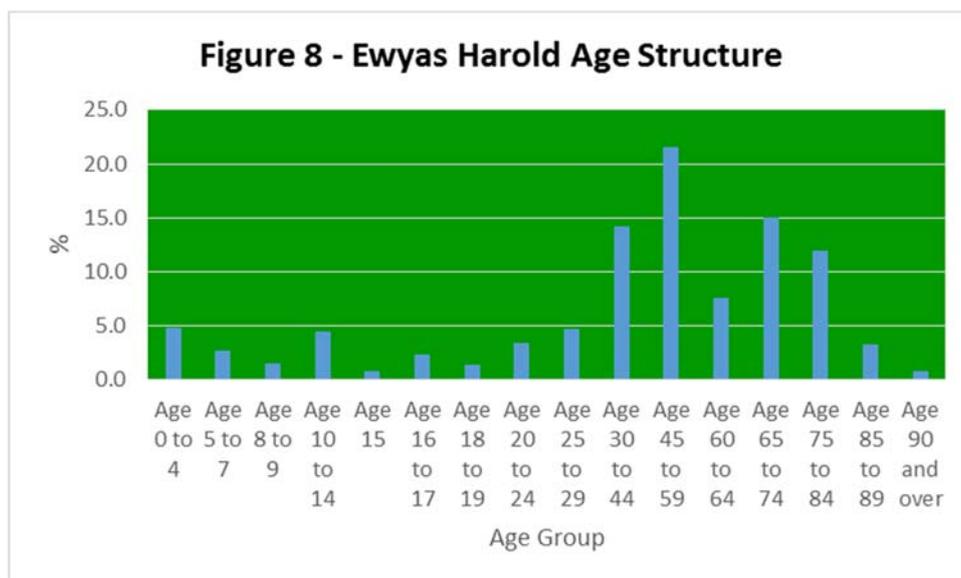
## Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone

6.1 This section of the Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out the Vision, Key Issues, Objectives and Policies and Proposals for Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone.

### Aims

6.2 The following aims have been identified:

- To work with neighbouring parishes towards a joint vision of a sustainable future for our rural communities.
- To move the school to a larger, and more accessible site as requested by residents and the Governors of Ewyas Harold Primary School.



- To protect the sustainability of services, shops, businesses and transport network, in and around, Ewyas Harold, and to foster the main village's viability through the appropriate development of a vibrant social and economic infrastructure.
- To ensure housing provision meets local needs, and to support housing development based on an agreed figure that takes into account current planning commitments and windfall.
- To enhance the rural village character of Ewyas Harold, and promote the recommendations of the Ewyas Harold Design Statement.
- To protect the quiet rural character of areas outside the settlement boundary of Ewyas Harold, and the rural parishes of Rowlestone, Llancillo and Dulas.
- To improve all aspects of road safety and maintenance, including pedestrian crossing and pavement provision, to create a safe roadscape.
- To reduce traffic congestion in Ewyas Harold village centre, School Lane and Dark Lane.
- To protect the environment of Ewyas Harold village by ensuring the viability of drains, the current flood protection, and sewerage provision.
- To support sports and outdoor activities for all age groups.
- To foster arts and educational activities.
- To improve the local transport network.



Ewyas Harold Shop and Post Office (Liz Overstall)

## Key Issues

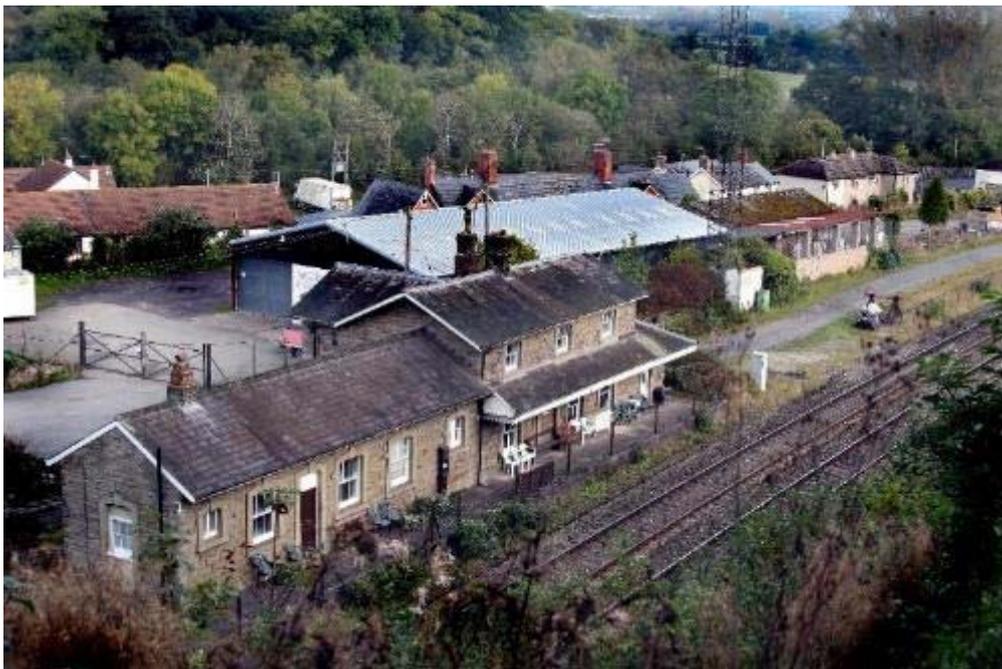
6.3 These aims have been identified in response to the following key issues:

- **Size of individual housing developments:** To protect the rural nature of the Ewyas Harold village, residents have stated that new residential development should be limited in size. In the Ewyas Harold Parish Plan (2012); 29% of residents preferred single housing developments of 1-5 homes; 30% preferred developments of 6 – 10 homes; and 21% preferred developments of 11-20 homes.
- **Encouraging a community of mixed age groups:** In the Ewyas Harold Parish Plan (2005), residents said they did not wish to live in a retirement village. In the Ewyas Harold Parish Plan (2012) they asked developers to provide a range of different sized housing, to encourage a community of mixed age groups.
- **Design and build quality:** Development should take account of the objectives of the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement, and display high standards of construction, design and sustainability.
- **Rural parish character:** The quiet rural nature of the parishes of Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone is felt to be under threat and residents have asked in their Parish Plan, that it should be respected and protected.
- **Rural Parish Housing needs:** To support development to meet local needs where it does not compromise the quiet rural nature of the parish, and where it complies with Policy RA3 of the Core Strategy.
- **Rural Village character:** Development should seek to enhance the rural village character of Ewyas Harold, taking account of the recommendations of the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement. Protection should be given to assets listed on the National Heritage List for England and Herefordshire Council's Monument Record as well as valued green spaces, views and semi-natural wild areas in the parishes.



Ewyas Harold Primary School (Liz Overstall)

- **Overcrowded school:** Residents are afraid that extra housing development will place intolerable burdens on Ewyas Harold Primary School which is already over-crowded. The problem cannot be solved by further building on site, as the school site is too small for the number of children attending at present.
- **School-related road traffic problems:** The large number of parents dropping off and picking up their children by car creates road safety and access problems, immediately around the school, and, in nearby roads. Residents fear that emergency services would be unable to reach them at busy times of the day because of congestion. The school has tried to relieve the congestion: by encouraging children to walk to school; and setting up pedestrian School Crocodiles. This has had limited success as the main problem is the absence of pavements and the extremely narrow nature of Dark Lane. A one-way system has been considered, but this met with opposition by residents. **A larger, and more accessible site should be found for the school, as a matter of urgency.**
- **Flooding, drainage and sewerage:** Residents point to regular flooding due - it is considered - to inadequate drainage and flood prevention measures. Sewerage has been forced on to the road by floodwater in Elm Green Road. Checks with service providers show that these outages have not been recorded.
- **Buses:** Residents complain of poor bus service provision. The bus timetable is limited and does not serve all age groups.
- **Rail link:** The long-term objective of re-opening the Pontrilas Railway Station should be promoted, with the aim of reducing road use and for the wider economic benefit of south west Herefordshire.



Pontrilas Rail Halt (Liz Overstall)

- **Sport and Recreation:** The Recreation Ground in Ewyas Harold is highly valued and much used. There are requests for more sporting provision, but no land to accommodate this. Dog walkers are often in conflict with sports activities on the Recreation Ground. More land for recreation should be sought, as a long-term objective.
- **Further education, recreation, art and culture:** to support the various halls that provide facilities for meetings, and to encourage the provision of cultural and educational events.

## Objectives

- 6.4 To attain our Vision and address these key issues the following objectives have been identified for Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone:

**OBJECTIVE 1** - To ensure local housing needs are met in Ewyas Harold, and to permit housing development in line with the Core Strategy taking into account current planning commitments and windfall.

**OBJECTIVE 2** – To permit housing development in Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone that meets purely local needs; does not compromise the quiet rural nature of the parish; and complies with Core Strategy Policy RA3.

**OBJECTIVE 3** – To promote the Ewyas Harold Design Statement objectives, and to encourage all development to be appropriate, and of high quality design; achieving the best sustainable development standards available at the time.

**OBJECTIVE 4** – To improve service provision, and develop Ewyas Harold as the main service centre in south west Herefordshire. This will include (but is not limited to) developing health and well-being services; bus and transport services; encouraging shops and commercial businesses; assisting B&B and other tourist related development.

**OBJECTIVE 5** – To redevelop the former Catholic Church of St John Kemble for use as a Community Health and Wellbeing Centre

**OBJECTIVE 6** – To use development agreements/funding to finance the improvement of Trappe House corner on the Abbeydore Road. This will provide a safe pedestrian crossing, with adequate pavements on all sides, and appropriate traffic calming measures.

**OBJECTIVE 7** – To improve pedestrian access across the A465 between Ewyas Harold and Pontrilas villages.

**OBJECTIVE 8** – To work with Herefordshire Council to improve the vehicular turning on/off the A465, at the junction with the Rowlestone Road.

**OBJECTIVE 9** – To improve road, cycleway and pavement facilities to a standard that enables children to walk and cycle safely to school, thus safeguarding the system for the use of the whole community.

**OBJECTIVE 10** – To improve facilities for families with young people and children in Ewyas Harold to encourage young families to live in the village.

## Policies and Proposals for Ewyas Harold, Dulas, Llancillo and Rowlestone

### Housing

- 6.5 The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy identified Ewyas Harold as a “main focus” for proportionate housing development. Rowlestone, along with Abbeydore and Bacton, is identified as a settlement where proportionate housing may be appropriate. All the other settlements in the parish are considered to be countryside where new housing development will be strictly controlled.



The redundant parish church at Dulas (Liz Overstall)

### **POLICY EH1 – HOUSING IN THE VILLAGE OF EWYAS HAROLD**

**Within the defined settlement boundary for Ewyas Harold village, see the Ewyas Policies Map (Figure 9), new housing development proposals will be supported when they:**

- a. Re-use previously developed land, where possible;**
- b. Are appropriate to the size, role and function of the village;**

- c. Provide a range and mix of house sizes, types and tenures;**
- d. Enhance the character of the area, by being in accordance with the design policy in this plan, and taking account of guidance in the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement;**
- e. Do not increase traffic congestion, encourage on-street parking, or jeopardize road safety.**
- f. Do not lead to the loss, damage or detriment of existing community facilities, Local Green Space or assets on the National Heritage List for England and Herefordshire Council's Monuments Record;**
- g. Do not lead to the loss of local employment opportunities, including tourism;**
- h. Are not at significant risk of flooding and they can demonstrate they will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and**
- i. Where applicable, they provide appropriate affordable housing when assessed against Core Strategy Policy H1.**

**Proposals for development beyond the settlement boundary will only be supported when:**

- j. They adjoin the settlement boundary;**
- k. They can easily be integrated into the wider village and rural environment; and**
- l. They also meet criteria b to i above.**

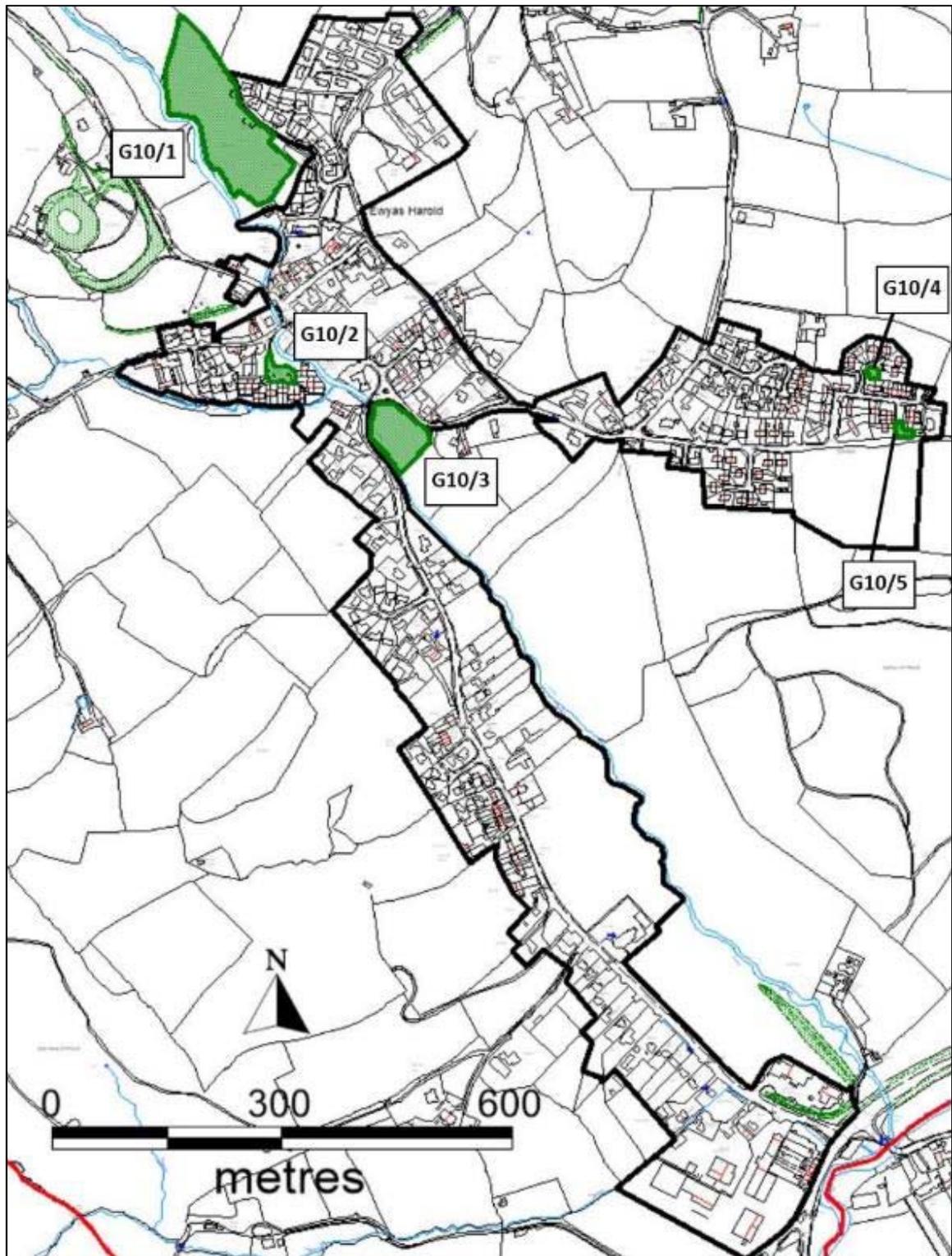
## **Background/Justification**

- 6.6 Ewyas Harold is identified in the Herefordshire Core Strategy as a village that will be the main focus for proportionate housing development.
- 6.7 This policy will be used to assess new housing development proposals in Ewyas Harold village. Various options were considered and consulted upon during the development of this Neighbourhood Development Plan. It has been decided that the most appropriate course of action for the future is to retain the settlement boundary approach originally used in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This will allow future development to be controlled in an appropriate manner so that it does not lead to disproportionate growth beyond the existing settlement boundary, whilst allowing landowners and developers to

bring forward suitable, proportionate development when it is in line with the criteria defined in Policy EH1.

- 6.8 The revised settlement boundary is shown in Figure 9 - Ewyas Harold Policies Map. This boundary has been drawn using advice contained in Herefordshire Council's Neighbourhood Development Planning Guidance Note 20: *Guide to Settlement Boundaries*. The defined settlement boundary includes existing, large planning permissions.
- 6.9 Given the high level of commitments that already exist within the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area, more than 70% of the target being met (Table 1), the approach set out in Policy EH1 will provide sufficient flexibility to meet the Core Strategy's indicative growth target. The 70% level of commitments, over 75% of which are in Ewyas Harold, have been achieved with the UDP settlement boundary in place and through windfalls. With 14 years of the plan period remaining, Policy EH1 will be used to manage future housing proposals as they come forward and provides a suitable framework to support housing growth to meet the indicative housing growth target for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.
- 6.10 In terms of site allocations, data from the *Herefordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012* and the *Site Allocations Herefordshire Housing Land Assessments 2015* show that most assessed sites adjoining the settlement boundary have no potential for housing development up to 2031.
- 6.11 The "do nothing" option is not considered appropriate given national planning and strategic planning policy support for housing growth.

**Figure 9. Ewyas Harold Policies Map** (Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council Licence Number 100055482)



- Key**
- Settlement boundary 
  - Local Green Space 
  - Parish Boundary 

## **POLICY EH2 – NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN ROWLESTONE VILLAGE**

**New housing development that reflects local demand or meets local needs will be supported within the village of Rowlestone when it is appropriate and proportionate to the size, role and function of the existing village. To ensure this is managed appropriately proposals must satisfy the following criteria:**

- a. Be within or immediately adjacent to the existing main built-up area of the village;**
- b. Be a small-scale development, usually defined as 1 or 2 homes;**
- c. Cumulatively such development does not lead to the erosion of the villages existing character and setting;**
- d. Re-use previously developed land, where possible;**
- e. It enhances the character of the area;**
- f. It will not lead to isolated homes, detached from the main village in the open countryside;**
- g. The proposed homes are of high quality sustainable design appropriate to their surrounding context; and**
- h. They protect and enhance the surrounding environment and rural landscape.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 6.12 Rowlestone is identified in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy as a village where proportionate new housing development will be considered.
- 6.13 The Neighbourhood Development Plan brings together a number of parishes, under Policy RA2 of the Core Strategy the closely linked settlements of Ewyas Harold and Pontrilas with the Neighbourhood Area's main facilities and services will be the main focus of proportionate housing development.
- 6.14 Rowlestone is identified in the Core Strategy under Policy RA2 "*Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns*" as a settlement where proportionate new housing development is considered to be appropriate.

- 6.15 To support this strategic policy aim, the Neighbourhood Development Plan focusses development in Ewyas Harold and Pontrilas and seeks a lower level of growth in the smaller, dispersed settlements, such as Rowlestone that have very limited facilities and services.
- 6.16 This approach is in line with the guidance contained in para. 4.8.21 of the Core Strategy, where, in parishes with more than one settlement, the Neighbourhood Development Plan should have the flexibility to apportion the indicative housing target between the various settlements concerned.
- 6.17 The criteria based Policy EH2 will, therefore, be used to manage planning applications for future housing growth in the village of Rowlestone.
- 6.18 This approach is considered to be the most appropriate given the requirements of strategic planning policy to focus development in the larger settlements; the very limited nature of existing development and the dispersed nature of built development in Rowlestone. This combination of strategic planning policy and physical form has also resulted in other options for management for future growth in Rowlestone being rejected. Primarily, these are definition of settlement boundaries or site allocations. Settlement boundaries for Rowlestone would be difficult to define and being so crude and inflexible could result in over-development that potentially reduces the character of the two villages and the area's landscape quality.
- 6.19 In terms of site allocations, no data is available from the Herefordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012 and the Site allocations Herefordshire Housing Land Assessments 2015.
- 6.20 The "do nothing" option is not considered appropriate given national planning and strategic planning policy support for housing growth.
- 6.21 The criteria based approach in Policy EH2 is, therefore, the best option for achieving sustainable development in Rowlestone whilst supporting the overall indicative housing target for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area (Table 1).

## **Housing Design and Sustainability**

### **POLICY EH3 - HOUSING DESIGN IN EWYAS HAROLD AND ROWLESTONE**

**Where housing development meets the key development principles in Policies EH1 and EH2 it will be supported when:**

- a) It maintains the integrity and sustainability of the rural environment by safeguarding natural horizons, views and open spaces;
- b) Hard standing is kept to a minimum;
- c) Designs make use of local materials whenever possible and available, respecting the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement recommendation to offer modern innovation that respects local character;
- d) Designs take account of existing roof lines, and respect existing buildings, and the historical development of the village;
- e) Designs use recycled old stone tiles whenever possible and available as roofing material, to provide habitat for rare bryophyte, *Grimmia ovalis*, and other wildlife.
- f) Density and plot ratios respond to the different character areas of the village – spacious at the village edges; more densely developed in the village centre;
- g) Housing development is on the village edge it should be suitably landscaped with native tree species and hedges;
- h) Developers can demonstrate that care has been taken to provide adequate lighting, using systems designed to prevent obtrusive lighting nuisance, control light pollution and reduce lighting energy consumption; and
- i) The proposal uses existing site features in a sympathetic manner, including trees, stone walls, watercourses and open spaces.

### **Background/Justification**

6.22 Policy EH3 seeks to promote quality design in Ewyas Harold and Rowlestone villages. It has been developed after assessing the key characteristics of what makes the village distinctive and develops from work undertaken previously on the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement.

## **POLICY EH4 – DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING HIGHWAYS AND STREETSCAPES**

**To improve and enhance the highways and streetscapes in Ewyas Harold development proposals will be required, where appropriate, to:**

- a) Maintain and improve views and vistas within the village;**
- b) Maintain, improve and create high quality public spaces, semi-natural wild spaces and wildlife habitats;**
- c) Include footways and footpaths and by providing safe pedestrian road crossings where required;**
- d) Includes links to existing footways and footpaths;**
- e) Make provision for off-street car parking;**
- f) Improve safety for all highway users;**
- g) Use appropriate local materials and planting to maintain village character;**
- h) Include suitable lighting; and**
- i) Where signage and street furniture is used, this should avoid unnecessary duplication, be of high quality and not lead to clutter.**

### **Background/Justification**

6.23 Policy EH4 has been developed from earlier work in the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement. This policy will allow new development proposals to be assessed for both their impact on traffic and highway safety but also for the contribution they will make to the quality of the built environment, and, in particular, for the way they include measures that seek to avoid the further urbanisation of that environment. Taken together, this approach will allow the plan to support the maintenance of an overwhelmingly rural environment in the Ewyas Harold village.

## **POLICY EH5 - EWYAS HAROLD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Proposals for a new primary school in Ewyas Harold parish will be supported. To ensure such development is sustainable it should meet the following criteria, it is:**

- a) Of high quality and sustainable design;**
- b) Within or on the edge of the settlement boundary;**
- c) In close proximity to existing houses;**
- d) Located so as to prevent vehicle congestion in the centre of the village and to permit safe movement of school traffic at all times;**

- e) Designed to incorporate facilities for children, parents, staff and other users to walk and cycle to the site;**
- f) Has safe, off-road (where possible) pick-up/drop-off space for cars;**
- g) Of suitable access and turning facilities for buses and coaches;**
- h) Well related to public transport services and facilities and the A465;**
- i) Designed to include suitable car parking for staff and visitors;**
- j) Suitable for wider community use;**
- k) Not at risk of flooding and, where necessary, incorporates suitable mitigation measures; and**
- l) Where relevant, any planning application includes an assessment of the impact on the Dulas Brook Special Wildlife Site, and, where necessary, includes suitable mitigation measures.**

## **Background/Justification**

6.24 The Governors of Ewyas Harold Primary School have discussed moving the school to a larger, more appropriate site in meetings since 2013. A preferred site to the north of the Memorial Hall was identified. In a letter to the NDP Steering Group the Governors say:

"In identifying a preferred site for a new school building, the Governors considered several options and came to the conclusion that the field on the north side of the Memorial Hall (on the left when facing the front of the hall), was the best. It was decided that the site chosen offered outstanding advantages that could not be met by the others, specifically by reducing traffic congestion up through the village and alleviate the parking difficulties in and around the current site."

6.25 The owner of the site in a response on the Neighbourhood Development Plan has indicated that such a use may be possible on this site, possibly with some associated housing development.

6.26 The Regulation 14 consultation version of the NDP sought to help deliver this aspiration by including the preferred site as a site allocation. However, the impact of potential flooding on the site raised by the Environment Agency necessitated a further study of this issue. After considering the conclusions of this study it has been decided that

the NDP will not allocate a specific school site but will use Policy EH5 and the criteria that it identifies to assess any planning application for a future school. In this way, the school will remain an integral part of local life.

- 6.27 The new school site should be sustainable, large enough to permit outdoor activities and to allow for growth in numbers of children. The school should cater for Nursery to Year 6 pupils and community use. Two form entry throughout the school to allow for growth will be needed.
- 6.28 The school site should be located so as to enable parents and children to walk and cycle safely to school. It should also be located with good access to transport links such as the A465 and local bus routes.
- 6.29 The site should permit generous temporary access/parking for parents to drop-off and pick-up children in safety, taking account of possible future growth factors. This should include access and turning for buses and coaches.
- 6.30 The new school site should be located so as to prevent vehicle congestion in the centre of the village, and to permit the safe movement of school traffic at all times.
- 6.31 The school site should provide ample parking for staff, and visitors taking growth factors into account.
- 6.32 Herefordshire Council is currently undertaking a *School Estates Review*. The approach outlined in this Neighbourhood Development Plan will be put forward as a key input into this Review and will be a key factor in the selection of any final site.

## **POLICY EH6 – EWYAS HAROLD LOCAL CENTRE**

**Ewyas Harold’s role as a local centre will be enhanced by protecting valuable services and facilities. When considering proposals, the following criteria will be applied:**

- a. The change of use of shop, pub, post office or other community facilities to residential uses will not be supported unless equivalent or better provision for the facility to be lost is made elsewhere within the settlement boundary or it can be satisfactorily**

**demonstrated that the facility is no longer required or is no longer viable;**

**b. Development proposals for new, expanded or improved retail, commercial and community facilities will be supported when:**

- i. They do not have an adverse impact on residential amenity;**
- ii. They enhance the character of the immediate surrounding area and wider village; and**
- iii. They provide safe and suitable access to the site for all people. Development proposals must ensure that any transport impacts of the scheme are identified and acceptable. Any measures needed to deal with the anticipated impacts must be implemented.**

### **Background/Justification**

Ewyas Harold is a key local centre providing valuable local services to wide area.

To ensure that this important function is maintained and enhanced, where possible, existing facilities will be protected from inappropriate development; and proposals for new, expanded or enhanced facilities will be encouraged.

# 7

## Kentchurch

- 7.1 This section of the Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out the Vision, Key Issues, Objectives and Policies and Proposals for Kentchurch and Pontrilas.

### Vision

- 7.2 The vision for 2031 is to preserve the rural nature of the parish of Kentchurch. To that end all development should proceed in a way that minimises impact on the environment and adjoining parishes. Development will be encouraged that supports the local community, including suitable provision of housing, small scale local business and the development of appropriate infrastructure to support these enterprises.



Pontrilas (Liz Overstall)

## Key Issues

- 7.3 The following key issues have been identified for Kentchurch:
- The need for suitable housing to allow local people to live locally.
  - The need to provide opportunities for small scale local businesses, including tourism, to establish and thrive.
  - The need to ensure that all development takes place in such a way as to preserve the rural character of the parish.
  - The need to conserve buildings and sites of heritage importance, including but not restricted to Kentchurch Church, Kentchurch Court, Pontrilas Court and all open spaces and countryside.



Kentchurch Court Garden (Liz Overstall)

## Objectives

- 7.4 To attain this Vision and address these key issues we have identified these objectives for Kentchurch:

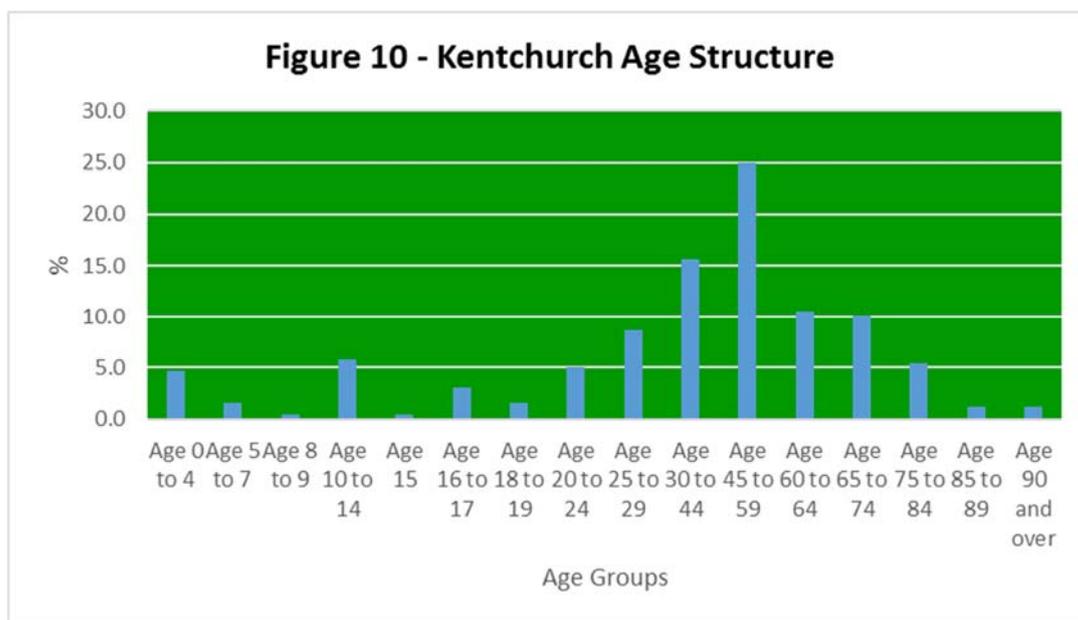
**OBJECTIVE 1** - To ensure that the housing and employment needs of the local community are met in such a way that minimises the impact of development on the rural nature of the parish.

**OBJECTIVE 2** – To control and guide how new development is designed and integrated in accordance with the wishes of the local community and clearly highlight all areas where special consideration needs to be given.

## Policies and Proposals for Kentchurch

### Housing

- 7.5 Pontrilas is identified in the Core Strategy as a “main focus of proportionate housing development”. Unlike the other villages in the Neighbourhood Area, Pontrilas is classed in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy as being in the Ross-on-Wye Housing Market Area. This HMA has a 14% growth target 2011-2031.



- 7.8 The following policy will be used to manage this future development.

### **POLICY K1 – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE OF PONTRILAS**

**Within the main built up area of Pontrilas new housing development proposals will be supported when they:**

- a. Re-use previously developed land, where possible;**
- b. Are appropriate to the size, role and function of the village;**

- c. Provide a range and mix of house sizes, types and tenures;**
- d. Enhance the character of the area, and are in line with the Policy G2 of this plan;**
- e. Do not increase traffic congestion, do not lead to additional on-car street parking, or jeopardise road safety.**
- f. Do not lead to the loss, damage or detriment of existing community facilities, green space or assets listed on the National Heritage List for England and Herefordshire Council's Monuments Record;**
- g. Do not lead to the loss of local employment opportunities, including tourism;**
- h. Are not at significant risk of flooding and they can demonstrate they will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and**
- i. They provide appropriate affordable housing when assessed against Core Strategy Policy H1.**

**Proposals for development adjacent to the main built up area of the village will only be supported when:**

- j. They can easily be integrated in to the wider village and rural environment; and**
- k. They meet criteria b to i above.**

## **Background/Justification**

Pontrilas is identified in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy as falling within the Ross on Wye Housing Market Area and is a settlement that will be considered a main focus suitable for proportionate housing development.

Policy K1 will be used to assess new housing development proposals in Pontrilas village. Various options were considered and consulted upon during the development of this Neighbourhood Development Plan: site allocations; settlement boundary; criteria based approach; and do nothing or leave matters to the Site Allocations Plan.

Given the nature of constraints in the village: the rail line to the south east; Pontrilas Court to the west; and much of the northern boundary of the village lying in Flood Zone 3. Both site allocations, and settlement boundary options were considered to be inappropriate for Pontrilas. Both could result in land

being considered in principle suitable for development when more detailed work, more appropriate at planning application stage, should be undertaken before the principle of development is established.

Given the high level of commitments that already exist within the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area, more than 70% of the target met (Table 1), the approach set out in Policy K1 will provide sufficient flexibility to meet the Core Strategy's indicative growth target. With 14 years of the plan period remaining, 11 windfalls have already come forward in Pontrilas. Policy K1 will be used to manage future housing proposals as they come forward and provides a suitable framework to support housing growth to meet the indicative housing growth target for the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

In terms of site allocations, data from the Herefordshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012 and the Site Allocations Herefordshire Housing Land Assessments 2015 show that most assessed sites adjoining the settlement boundary have no potential for housing development up to 2031.

The "do nothing" option is not considered appropriate given national planning and strategic planning policy support for housing growth.

# 8

## Community Infrastructure Levy

- 8.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that Herefordshire Council can charge on new developments in the County. The money raised can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want.
- 8.2 At the moment, Herefordshire have developed a preliminary draft charging schedule which introduces charge variations by geographical zone within its area, by land use, or both. Some of the levy will be paid directly to parish councils to pay for projects identified by local communities. In neighbourhoods with a neighbourhood development plan this will be 25% of the total CIL raised by Herefordshire Council in that particular parish.
- 8.3 The amount of CIL raised will be dependent on the level of development liable to pay the levy in each parish. To ensure that local people are involved in identifying suitable projects and establishing priorities the Parish Councils will use their existing decision-making structures. For example, in Ewyas Harold, this will be through reviews of the Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council Action Plan.
- 8.4 In all cases, priorities will be reviewed annually. Where proposed projects cross parish boundaries, the relevant parishes will consult local people jointly. Our commitment is set out in the following Parish Action. **Note: this is not a neighbourhood development plan policy.**

### **PARISH ACTION: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY**

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) made available to the Parish Councils will be used by the Parish Councils in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations.**

**The Parish Councils will use their existing decision-making structures to ensure that local people are involved in identifying projects and establishing priorities. In Ewyas Harold, this will be the Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council Action Plan.**

**In all cases, priorities will be reviewed annually. Where proposed projects cross parish boundaries, the relevant parishes will consult local people jointly.**

