

SEDLESCOMBE PARISH PLAN

2002



**The overall aim of this Plan is:
“To make Sedlescombe a vibrant place that values
its past but looks to the future and where people
are proud to live and work and be part of a
caring community”**

lead organisation:

SEDLESCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

Woodland Cottage, Chapel Hill, Sedlescombe, BATTLE, East Sussex TN33 0QX
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The Pumphouse

Front cover: Community event on Sedlescombe Village Green

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Who lives in Sedlescombe?	7
Aim No.1 To achieve an Informed and Participating Sedlescombe Community	9
Aim No.2 To achieve a Safe and Healthy Sedlescombe Community	17
Aim No.3 To help provide Amenities and Services in Sedlescombe	35
Aim No.4 To support Business & Rural Employment in Sedlescombe	49
Aim No.5 To protect and enhance Sedlescombe's Built and Natural Environment	59
Summary	73
Maps	



Aerial view of the centre of Sedlescombe taken in the early 1990s

Sedlescombe is a pleasant place to live. Despite losing so many shops, arguably residents have never been so well provided. The shop/post office/off-licence supplies most day-to-day needs. It sells and delivers newspapers, sells confectionery, cigarettes, groceries, greetings cards, bread and hot pies, stationery, household goods, videos, reading glasses, chemist sundries and lottery tickets. Dry cleaning, laundry, shoe repairs and photo developing can be left at the shop. Photocopying and send/receive fax facilities are available. Banking facilities are available and a cashpoint is expected to be available during shop hours soon. Milk is delivered throughout the village. There is a daily post collection including Sundays and post deliveries on Monday to Saturday.

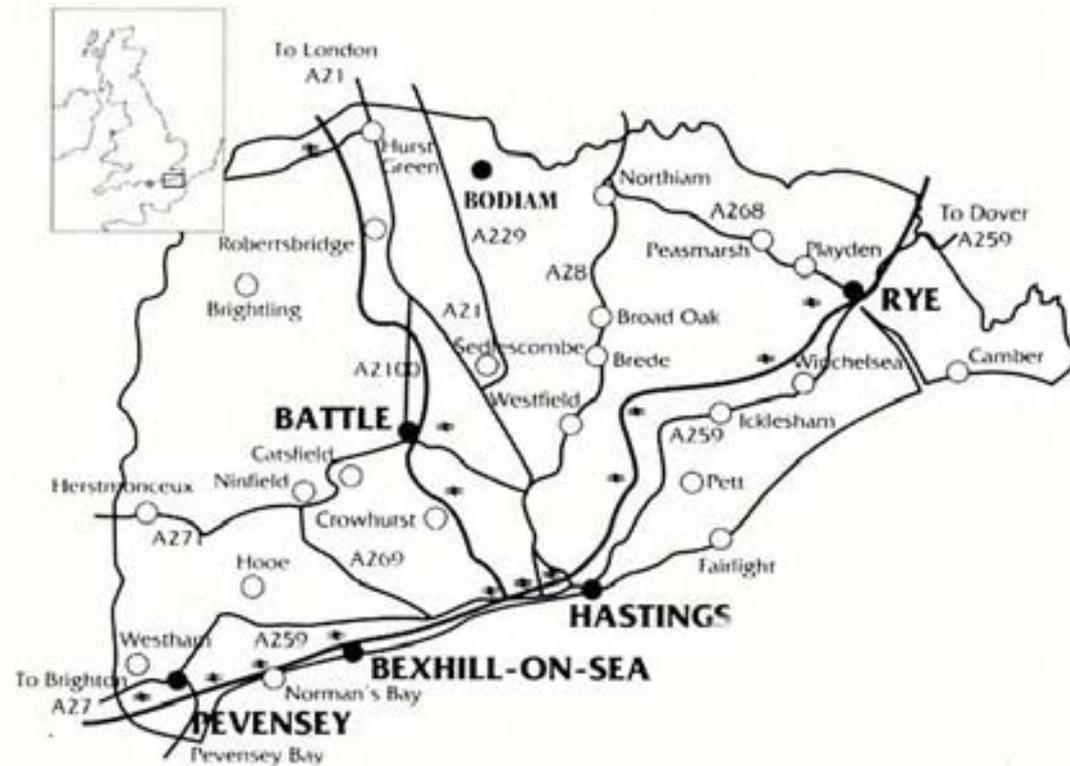
The Garden Centre stocks a very wide variety of goods, even outdoor clothes and boots. Oak furniture and wine can be bought in the parish. There is a choice of places to eat out or have a drink or cup of coffee. Sedlescombe is one of the few local parishes to have a dispensing doctors' practice in the village and a monthly child welfare clinic is held in the Hall. There is a modern school with dedicated staff and a brand new village hall with every facility. A library opens in the Hall one afternoon a week and a mobile library calls every other week. There is a large sportsfield situated beside the river in a charming position and lovely countryside all around with lots of footpaths. Sedlescombe is also a caring community with groups and Village charities ready and willing to help the aged, disabled, the young and others in need. The two Churches take an active part in the community. Sedlescombe residents are always ready to enjoy themselves with plenty of one-off and regular events to attend or clubs and societies to join.

Within 3 or so miles, are the top two superstores, a large DIY store and the District General Hospital. In the other direction, the same distance away, is the mainline railway station with a reasonable train service to London. There are free buses to one of the superstores and to another supermarket in the neighbouring village of Peasmarsh. There is an hourly bus service to Hastings & Tunbridge Wells. On top of all this, Sedlescombe is just 7 miles from the south coast and within easy range of wonderful tourist attractions. What more could anyone want?

Most residents appear to be very satisfied with their lives here in Sedlescombe. However, there will always be things we can and should improve and those that we want to protect. The purpose of the Parish Plan is to consult with the community to establish what should be done and what should be left alone for us to continue to enjoy. Although not all of the proposed "Actions" will be achievable because of restraints outside our control, the Parish Council will make every attempt to work towards them.

Location and Function. Situated in the centre of the Rother District Council area, Sedlescombe is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the B2244 Hastings to Maidstone road and just off the A21 Hastings to London road. Hastings is 7 miles to the south and Battle 3 miles to the west. Nowadays, it is mainly residential and attracts visitors throughout the year.

INTRODUCTION



Physical and Environmental Setting. The main part of the village is on a south facing slope overlooking the Brede Valley where once the river was about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide. A landscape assessment of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was carried out in 1994 and the whole AONB divided into nine character areas. Sedlescombe parish has been placed within "The Brede Valley" character zone. The valley is surrounded by a gently undulating countryside with grazing fields, woodland, thickets and irregular unplanted hedges, remnants of the ancient woodland that once covered much of the Weald. Houses are often hidden behind trees and hedges giving an overall wooded feel to the parish apart from the uncomplicated vista along the open floodplain of the valley floor. Surrounding Pestalozzi Village on the north-facing valley side, parkland remains with a few specimen trees that were planted in the 19th century. Here too, is the only example in the parish of a ghyll wood.

The Pestalozzi Trust occupies many acres of the parish and has done so for over fifty years. More recently, the way it meets its charitable purposes has changed. For many years it flourished with children being brought from countries such as India, Nepal and Thailand, to live with house parents in national houses for about ten years at a time. They attended local schools, going on to college and university before returning to their own countries to help their own people. The use has now changed with only older teenagers coming to do the two-year International Baccalaureate course at Hastings College.

INTRODUCTION

History. Sedlescombe grew up around the village green close to the river that had brought the earliest pre-Roman settlers here in search of the iron ore. The iron industry was expanded by the Romans who also built the road through the village still known as “The Street”. Many centuries later, at the end of the 15th century, the introduction of the blast furnace allowed cast iron items, including cannons and cannon balls, to be made in local forges and furnaces. By the 18th century, Sedlescombe was making gunpowder and was said to have produced “the best gunpowder in Europe”. Both iron and gunpowder production relied on good charcoal which was made locally in Petley Wood until the end of the 20th century. The only signs of the iron industry nowadays are waste slag that can be found in the fields, small ponds oozing soft black mud and the listing of a few archaeological sites on a map.

Whether Sedlescombe deserves the description given to it in the past of “The Prettiest Village in Sussex” is open to conjecture; other villages probably merit such an accolade. However, it does have a certain charm. Walk past the village green early on a Sunday before The Street is aired and you will not fail to be captivated. What is indisputable is that the title of “Best Kept” has been awarded several times including that of “The Best Kept Village in All Sussex” and in 2002 Sedlescombe won the Village of the Year Competition for East Sussex.

The Sedlescombe Parish Plan. When the Countryside Agency Parish Plan grants scheme was announced, Sedlescombe Parish Council had already carried out some recent community consultation on **Youth** and **Tourism** issues. In addition, there were some current local **crime and safety** issues, particularly involving the lack of community policing on which Sedlescombe had previously consulted the public.

With the Parish Council acting as lead organisation, the decision was made to carry out further consultation and to draw up the first Sedlescombe Parish Plan by 31 December 2002. Several other consultations, relevant to and involving Sedlescombe, took place concurrently, eg Battle Partnership’s healthcheck in connection with the Countryside Agency’s Market Towns Initiative and the Safer Villages survey in connection with Sedlescombe’s involvement in the Safer Villages Pilot Project Scheme. This complicated the consultation procedure in that it was felt necessary to avoid asking the same question twice.

Following is a list of meetings and surveys that have provided information for this Plan. In addition, the Parish Council has added its extensive knowledge of the parish

Consultation Meetings and Surveys (the abbreviations are used throughout this document)

- VA Village Appraisal 1989
- YM Youth Meeting arranged by Sedlescombe Parish Council, 17/05/2000 – over 50 attended followed by a small youth survey.
- TW Tourism Workshop in Sedlescombe, 27/11/2000, as part of the Rural Tourism Initiative Pilot Project – over 50 attended.
- HNS Housing Needs Survey by Rother District Council, April 2001 (Sedlescombe results) 34% response rate.
- C&SM Crime & Safety Meeting in Sedlescombe, 04/09/2001 – about 70 attended.

INTRODUCTION

- BHM Battle Healthcheck Meeting (Market Towns Initiative in Sedlescombe, 18/02/2002 – about 20 attended.
- BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey (Market Towns Initiative), January-February 2002 (Sedlescombe results), about 37% response rate (over Battle Partnership area).
- SVS Safer Villages Scheme Questionnaire for Sedlescombe, March 2002, as part of the Safer Villages Initiative Pilot Project – 32% response rate. (Every Sedlescombe household invited to comment.)
- SVP Safer Villages Plan produced by the Sedlescombe Safer Villages Steering Group in May 2002.
- PP Parish Plan survey carried out by Sedlescombe Parish Council, April 2002 – 36% response rate. (Every household in Sedlescombe parish invited to comment.)
- VS Visitor survey by Sedlescombe Parish Council, April to September 2002, Brickwall Hotel, Crazy Lane Camping & Caravan Park, Lower Marley Farm bed and breakfast
- BS Business survey by Sedlescombe Parish Council, June 2002. (All Sedlescombe businesses invited to comment.)
- PPS Parish Plan Summary – survey carried out by Sedlescombe Parish Council, Aug-Sept 2002 45% response rate. (Survey limited to Sedlescombe societies, clubs, etc. and businesses.)

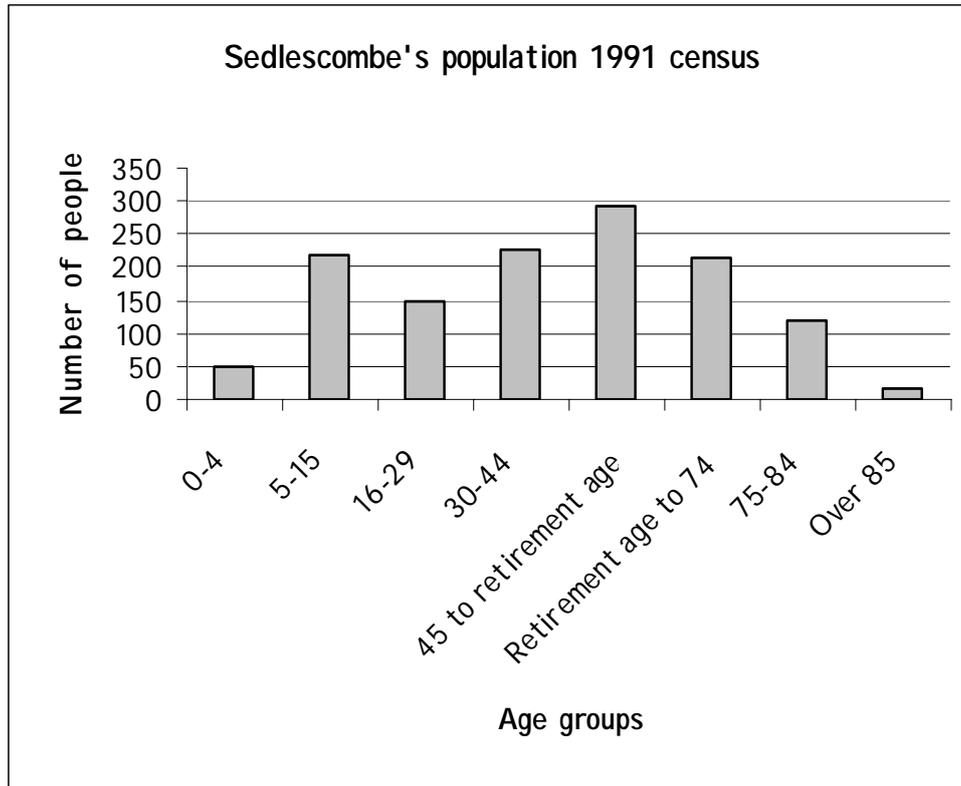
Sedlescombe Schoolchildren's list of activities for the new Hall, July 2001.

Parish Plan display at Sedlescombe Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting – 110 attended.

Recycling, Traffic, Health reports, July 2002.

Draft Sedlescombe Sports Development Plan

Population



It is unfortunate, that the 2001 parish census figures will not be available until mid-2003. Until they are, the 1991 census figures will have to suffice. In 2001, there was a total electorate in Sedlescombe (people over 18) of 1072 and the total population for that year is expected to be between 1400 and 1500 living in 647 households.

The figures that have so far been released from the 2001 census, show two very interesting statistics ie that Rother District has the second highest number of people of retirement age (32%) and the second highest number of people aged 85 and over (4.6%) in the whole country.

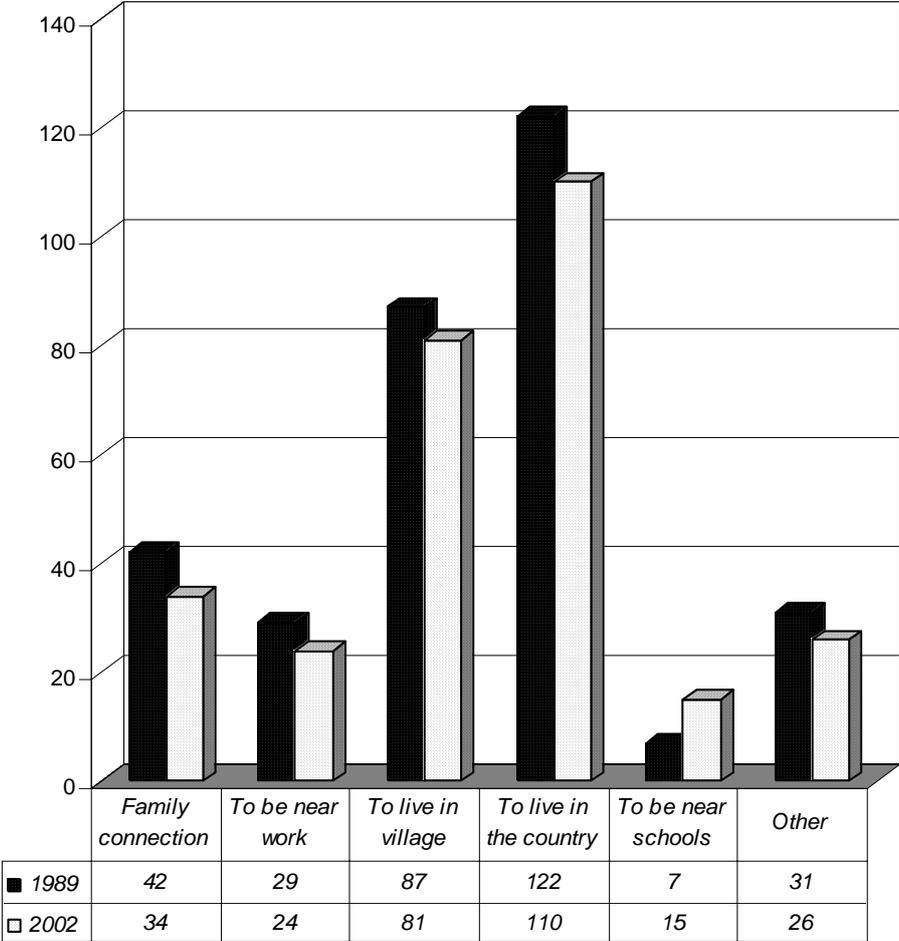
Those answering the 2002 Parish Plan questionnaire were roughly divided into similar age groups as the 1991 census for Sedlescombe Parish with a slightly heavier weighting at the retired end of the scale. In line with the 2001 Rother statistics, it does appear that the number of very elderly people living here has grown. In 1991, there were only 16 people over the age of 85 recorded in the census report whereas there must have been at least 50 over 85s in 2001 because that is the number of that age who answered the Housing Needs Survey. In 2002, there were 36 youngsters living at the Pestalozzi Village in Sedlescombe.

Of those answering the Parish Plan questionnaire, nearly half live in two-person households and a about a quarter live alone.

VA *Village Appraisal 1989*
 PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*

A large majority (80%) of respondents either chose Sedlescombe in order to live in the country or to live in a village (PP). These were also the two most common reasons when a similar question was asked in 1989 (VA). There has been a slight change in that fewer people chose "family connections" or "to be near work" and more chose "to be near schools" in 2002 than in 1989.

Comparison 1989 & 2002
 Reasons for living in Sedlescombe

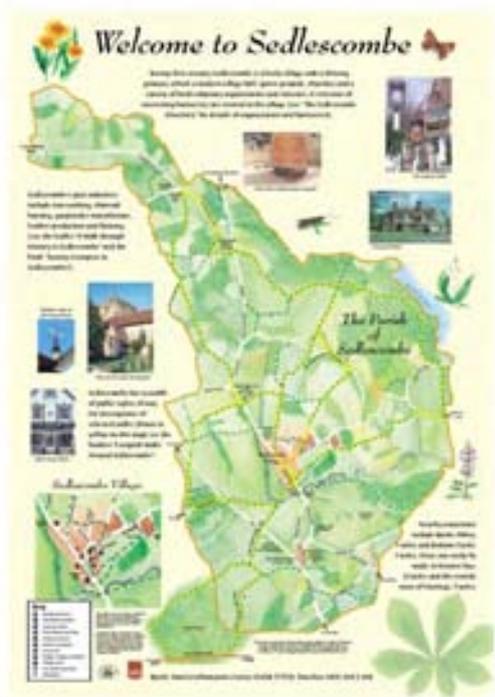


How long in Sedlescombe?

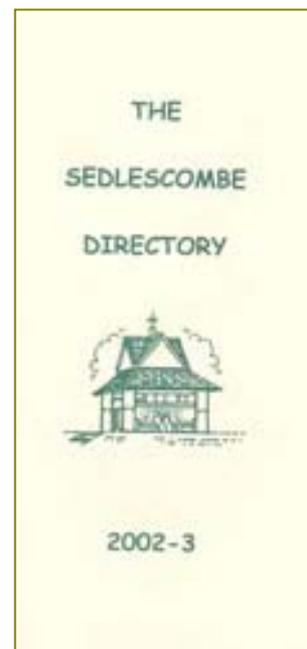
From our survey (PP), about half of the respondents have lived in the parish ten years or less and 28% of our population has lived here more than twenty years.

0-5 years	72 households	30.9%
6-10 years	42 households	18%
11-20 years	42 households	18%
Over 20 years	67 households	28%
All your life	10 households	4.3%

Not included in the above are Pestalozzi students who usually stay for about two years.



AIM NO.1
To achieve an
informed and
participating
Sedlescombe
community



Illustrations over

Top left	Farewell party for old village hall August 2001 Photograph by John F Cook
Top right	Ken Stubberfield opening new village hall with Valerie Wright, Chairman of the Parish Council, at party in October 2001 Photograph by John F Cook
Centre	Tourist information board in car park
Bottom left	Jean Woodman, Joan Rowe, Shirley Bonney, Sue Whitehead, Chris Elmes, Connie Blades – some of the ladies involved in producing the tapestry at the unveiling in the village hall April 2002 Photograph by Colin Raymond
Bottom right	The Sedlescombe Directory – a list of village organisations and businesses

**1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY"
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
1.1 Open Parish Council	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To conduct Parish Council business in an open manner with decisions made in public, to encourage understanding of the Parish Council and its work. ○ To allow time (Open Forum) prior to Parish council meetings for the public to address and question the Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All parish council meetings have been open to public observers. ○ The public have raised matters at the Open Forum. This has been particularly important for the Youth Projects Forum.
1.2 Keeping residents informed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To keep residents informed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies of the Agenda, Minutes of Meetings of the Parish Council and Annual Accounts made available to the public. ○ Quarterly Bulletin produced and distributed by Parish Council. ○ Annual Parish Assembly Agenda and supporting papers delivered to each household and business in the parish. ○ Lists of Sedlescombe organisations and businesses included in the first and second editions of The Sedlescombe Directory. Copies delivered to every household in the parish by the Parish Council. ○ Notices displayed for local organisations and societies on Parish Council noticeboard. ○ New "Welcome to Sedlescombe" pack produced by Parish Council for newcomers to the Village. ○ Weekly Parish News produced by Church. ○ Weekly Sedlescombe Village Voice column in local newspaper. ○ Club newsletters.
1.3 Parish Council link with other bodies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To receive regular reports at Parish Council meetings from its representatives on village and other appropriate committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parish Councillors reported on meetings of the Village Hall Management Committee, Sports Association Committee, Tennis Club Committee, Rother District Association of Town & Parish Councils, Board of Sedlescombe School Governors, the Jubilee Fayre Committee and the Sedlescombe Youth Projects Forum.

**1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY"
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
<p align="center">1.4 Encouraging participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage participation by all residents in making a vibrant community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Residents co-opted to Parish Council Best Value and Community Projects Committee. Committee involved in putting into practice a series of low-key projects in connection with the Rural Tourism Initiative Pilot Project. Three new leaflets – "A Walk through History in Sedlescombe", "Footpath Walks around Sedlescombe", and "The Sedlescombe Directory" produced by Committee and a tourist information board for the public car park. ○ Residents formed Safer Villages Working Group under the leadership of a parish councillor in connection with the Safer Villages Pilot Project (see "A Safe and Healthy Sedlescombe" for details). Business Plan produced. ○ Completion of the Millennium Tapestry and hanging in new village hall. Main panels worked by up to 18 women with many others producing the leaves for the border. Generous donation towards framing by local resident. Featured on TV and on Common Ground's website of Parish Maps. ○ Schoolchildren's poster competition organised by Parish Council following visit to Red Barn Field Nature Park. Bat book prizes presented. Posters exhibited on noticeboard. ○ Grand opening of new Sedlescombe Village Hall arranged by Village Hall Trustees. ○ Adult residents and teenagers formed "Sedlescombe Youth Projects Forum" and invited Parish Council, District Council, Local Police etc. to join them. The aims of the Forum are to identify the needs of youth, to organise the provision of facilities, and to organise activities. The first project is the provision of a Rollerblade/Skateboard facility.

**1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY"
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To consult as necessary for the benefit of the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Table displays at Annual Parish Assembly. 16 tables displayed by Village organisations and businesses at 2002 Assembly. ○ Jubilee Fayre and Barn Dance arranged by association of Village societies to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. ○ New monthly Lunch Club for Sedlescombe elderly formed. ○ Residents contributed towards new ICT suite at Sedlescombe Primary School that will, when provided, be available to the community as well as for school use. ○ Primary School made their learner swimming pool available for limited community use. ○ Sedlescombe Churches co-operated in running holiday clubs for youngsters at Easter and in the summer. ○ Young people's competition to find a design for a new shelter at the Kickabout Area. ○ Several surveys undertaken and consultation meetings held (see Introduction for list of meetings and surveys that have informed this document). ○ Co-operated with Battle Partnership re Market Town Initiative healthcheck.

1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" ACTION PLAN 2002-2007

Keeping residents informed. Parish councillors and other residents have, for many

TW	Tourism Workshop 2000
BHS	Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002
PP	Parish Plan Survey 2002
PPS	Parish Plan Summary 2002

years, been involved in delivering background papers to each of the 647 households prior to the annual Parish Assembly. This year papers were also sent to every identified Sedlescombe business. This has resulted in very good attendances each year. 110

people attended both the 2001 and 2002 Assemblies. During consultations, a third of Sedlescombe respondents said they attend the Sedlescombe Parish Meeting at least occasionally (BHS). This compares favourably with other parishes. Only 12% of Battle residents ever attend the Battle meeting (BHS). However, despite every household receiving an invitation, 10% of Sedlescombe respondents say they are not aware of the Parish Meeting (BHS). Although a significant 14% of Sedlescombe respondents said they are not interested in attending a parish meeting (BHS) and four households said they are not interested in what is going on in the Village (PP), it is still fair to say that there is substantial interest in the activities taking place in Sedlescombe.

The question "*How do you find out about activities in Sedlescombe?*" resulted in most use being made of noticeboards, followed by the weekly Parish News. This A4 double-sided sheet, that is produced by the Parish Church and edited each week by a local volunteer, really is "a must".

Friends, neighbours, and the Village Voice column in the local paper are also good sources of information (PP). We asked people where they meet other Sedlescombe residents and, not surprisingly, found that the village shop/post office is the hub of Village life. There are however, other important meeting places where information can be passed on, including the Church and Chapel, the doctors' surgery, the School, the village hall and out walking the dog. The quarterly Parish Council Bulletin is a reasonably good source of information but it is only delivered to those people who take newspapers from Sedlescombe Post Office.

Some Sedlescombe Clubs have their own newsletters for members. One that is particularly interesting and useful is the Sedlescombe & District Garden Society's magazine "The Trug".

Only one person admitted looking for Sedlescombe activities on the internet (PP). Sedlescombe does not currently have a website of its own although it has been suggested that it should (TW). The School has its own website, as do a few local organisations and societies. Sites such as "villagenet" provide pages for local communities. It is inevitable that the internet will increasingly be used as an efficient and cheap way of disseminating information. Both District and County Councils are already making use of this facility. The idea of Sedlescombe having its own website has been supported by 70% of respondents (PPS)

Encouraging participation. Sedlescombe welcomes participation from all quarters of the parish. There is always interest from residents in being co-opted to fill casual vacancies on the Parish Council, mostly from older people. The survey found that there is some support for the youth having more say in community decisions (BHS). 85% of respondents supported the idea of a Youth Council (PPS). The Sedlescombe Youth Projects Forum could provide the link between young people and other local bodies.

Although a lot of people get involved in community activities in Sedlescombe, there are at least 11 people who would like to be more involved (PPS) and ways to match them with the needs will be sought.

**1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY"
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Parish Council action to keep residents informed and participating	Continue to conduct business in open manner with Open Forum prior to Council meetings.		1.1	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Publish documents in accordance with model issued by Information Commissioner under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Continue to publish quarterly Bulletin.		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Extend availability of Parish Council Bulletin		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2003
	Continue to deliver papers relating to the Assembly to all Sedlescombe households and businesses		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Repeat successful format of 2002 Annual Assembly to include table displays by organisations and businesses		1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council/organisations and businesses	2003 onwards
	Update The Sedlescombe Directory		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council and funding from local businesses	2003 onwards
	Continue to display notices for local organisations on Parish Council noticeboard.		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	New noticeboard arrangement, to include Neighbourhood Watch board, outside Post Office following extension of shop		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council/Mr & Mrs J Mainwood, Sedlescombe Post Office	2003

**1. "AN INFORMED AND PARTICIPATING SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY"
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
	Continue to update and distribution of "Welcome to Sedlescombe packs"	TW	1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Construct new website with appropriate links		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2003
	Update Parish Plan in Bulletin		1.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Arrange a primary school citizenship event to inform children about parish councils		1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council & Sedlescombe School	2003
	Carry out parish surveys and produce first Parish Plan		1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2002
	Encourage Youth Forum		1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
	Enter Village of the Year Competition		1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2002
	Take action to match volunteers with needs	PPS	1.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2003

<i>TW</i>	<i>Tourism Workshop 2000</i>
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
<i>YM</i>	<i>Youth Meeting 2000</i>
<i>PPS</i>	<i>Parish Plan Summary</i>



AIM NO.2
To achieve a
safe and
healthy
Sedlescombe
community



Illustrations over

Top left	Dog bin, Sedlescombe sportsfield Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Centre left	New fence at Riverside Playground built by Parish Council with grant aid from the Rural Development Area Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Centre right	Sedlescombe Doctors' Surgery, Brede Lane Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Bottom	Shirley Mears (with Candy and Brecon) & Liz Yonge (with George) outside the Post Office, October 2002 Photograph by Pauline Raymond

**2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY”
AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
2.1 Crime & Safety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To participate in reducing crime and disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting with local Police Inspector to discuss problems with vandalism and other anti-social behaviour in the Village. This resulted in PC Kempster, Community Beat Officer, and Bob Russell, Orbit Tenancy Officer, working together to improve the situation. ○ Apology received from Chief Constable regarding non-attendance of the Police after a “999” call. ○ Supported Neighbourhood Watch and new e-mail arrangements. ○ Attended Police Consultative Committee Meetings. ○ Ongoing expressions of dissatisfaction with rural policing. ○ Crime and Safety Meeting held in Village Hall on 04/09/01. 70 people attended. As a direct result of the Crime and Safety Meeting, Sedlescombe was invited to join the pilot Safer Villages Project. A grant of £3,000 has allowed a Sedlescombe Safer Village Business Plan to be drawn up and for work to be started on implementation of plans through the Sedlescombe Safer Village Scheme Steering Group. Actions are detailed in this Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage road safety & traffic calming schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lobbied East Sussex County Council and obtained a new dropped kerb in The Street to help the elderly cross the road to and from the shop. ○ Lobbied East Sussex County Council and obtained extension of 30mph speed limit in Church Hill.

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY” AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

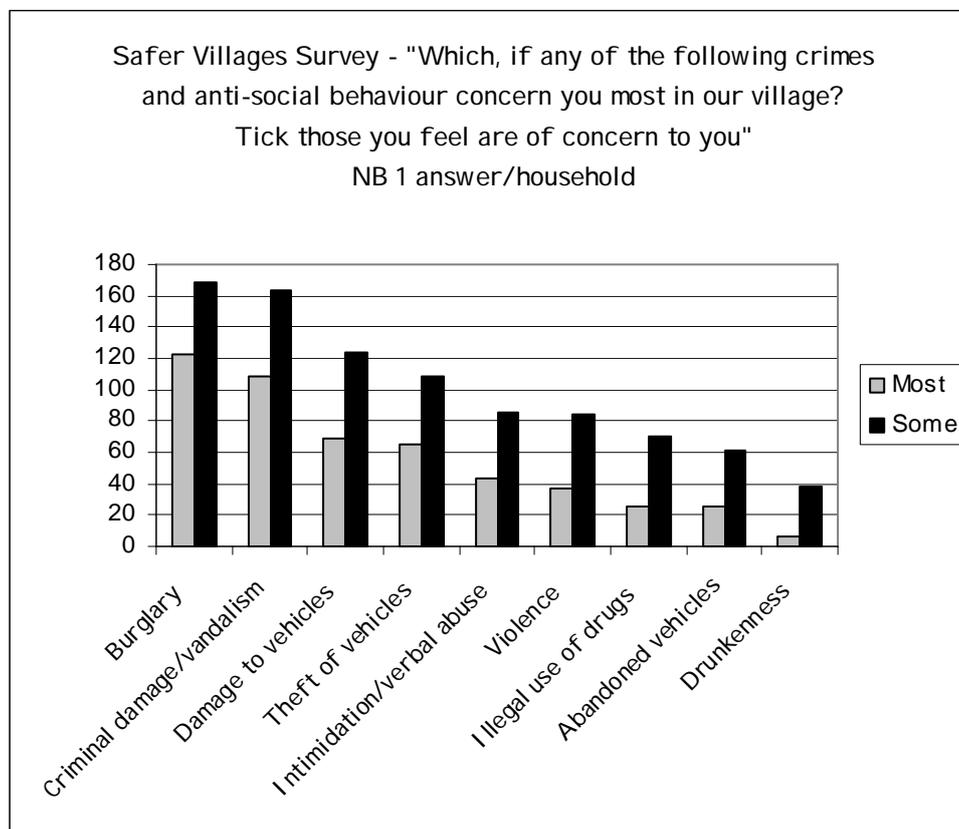
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To assist in informing residents of health and safety issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-operated with East Sussex County Council regarding foot and mouth disease precautions. ○ Arranged help for elderly residents when flooding threatened their properties.
<h3>2.2 Responsible dog ownership</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage responsible dog ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three dog waste bins maintained and emptied weekly. ○ Dog fouling “Clean-it-up” notices erected on public footpath at junction of Park Shaw and Orchard Way. ○ Pleas made to public for their co-operation in not allowing pets to foul pavements and grass verges.
<h3>2.3 Healthcare</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support easy access to healthcare for all residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Welfare Clinic held monthly in Village Hall. ○ Sedlescombe resident, Mary Budd, appointed as non-executive director of Bexhill & Rother Primary Care Trust.
<h3>2.4 Safety in playgrounds</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To maintain playgrounds in a safe condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regularly checked children’s playgrounds and arranged repairs as required. Annual inspection by The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. ○ Carried out Best Value Review of Sedlescombe’s children’s playgrounds and worked out a new inspection procedure adopted from 01/04/02. ○ Replaced playground fence bordering river.

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Crime and Safety

Sedlescombe is in the Battle Sector of the Senlac Division of the Sussex Police and shares Police cover from a community beat officer. However, being near to Hastings with its attendant problems, rural beat officers are regularly withdrawn from the rural areas to tackle issues in the town, leaving the Village with no Police presence. In addition, even "999" calls are not always attended to because of lack of staffed response vehicles and other greater need. The centralisation of call handling has made policing remote from the rural population.

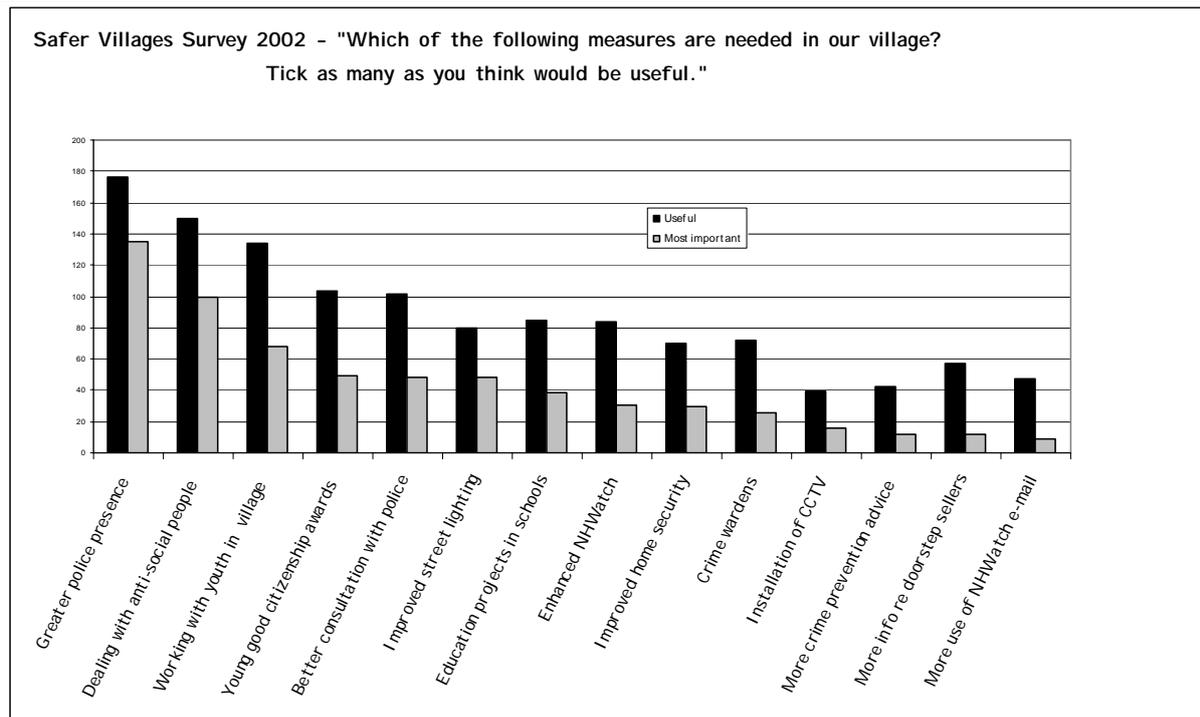
C&SM *Crime & Safety Meeting 2001*
BHS *Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002*
SVS *Safer Villages Survey 2002*

Rural crime is of great concern to Sedlescombe residents. Not only actual crime but also the fear of crime (C&SM). The main worries concern burglary, criminal damage/vandalism and car crime in that order but there is quite a lot of concern about intimidation/verbal abuse, violence and the use of drugs. Abandoned vehicles and drunkenness cause the least concern. (SVS)



By far the greatest majority of Sedlescombe respondents have not personally been victims of any crimes during the last two years. Of those that have, burglary, criminal damage/vandalism and car crime again head the list. Very few have experienced violence (5 people), racism (2 people) or illegal use of drugs (1 person). (BHS) However, this might reflect the type of person who answers questionnaires!

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Crime and Safety



C&SM Crime & Safety Meeting 2001
BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002
SVS Safer Villages Survey 2002
PP Parish Plan Survey 2002
NHWatch Neighbourhood Watch

Respondents would support a range of measures to deal with the identified problems but the most important in all of our surveys is "a greater police presence" (SVS, BHS, C&SM). The Sedlescombe Safer Village Working Group has taken notice of this and is lobbying hard for the introduction of

mobile police vans that have been successful in Norfolk and would go some way to addressing this need. Sedlescombe also would like to see anti-social people being dealt with effectively and more working with young people in the village. (SVS)

The non-attendance or slow attendance by Police at "999" calls and no target response times are major concerns (C&SM). A large proportion of those who had called out the police during the last year were dissatisfied with the response time (PP). People had also experienced poor feedback from the Police. Other concerns are the lack of response to burglar alarms, the non-investigation of crimes such as garage break-ins, the perceived lack of interest by Police in catching the perpetrators of crime and the withdrawal of the community beat officer to other duties (C&SM). When non-emergency calls are made to the Police, the attitude of the staff at the Call Handling Centre tends to discourage people from telephoning. Also they often do not appear to have good geographical knowledge of the rural areas despite technological aids. (C&SM)

There has been a growing emphasis on the community working with the Police to solve some of the problems by reducing the likelihood of criminal activities. In accordance with Section 17 of The Crime & Disorder Act 1998, before any decision is made by the Parish Council, it must consider the crime and disorder implications. This includes the possibility of proposed development encouraging further crime in the area. Sedlescombe's involvement with the Safer Villages project has given the opportunity to look at various ways of making people either safer or feel safer.

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Crime and Safety

The Chief Constable has recently made proposals for the dedicated rural policing system to change in Sussex and details of how the new scheme will work are awaited.

In comparison to problems with rural policing, only one household recorded experiencing any problem with the ambulance service in the past year (out of 21 calls) and all those who had called out the fire service (5) were satisfied. (PP) During the consultation, a possible problem was highlighted for emergency services accessing Roselands warden care flats when the warden is off duty (BHM).

PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*
BHM *Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002*

Not all residents can say that their house names or numbers are clearly visible to emergency services (15) (PP).

2. "A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Road Safety

A21. Sedlescombe is situated just off the A21 trunk road linking Hastings with the motorway system south of London. There are no motorways anywhere near the Village. If roads in built up areas and 40mph speed limit zones are excluded, the mostly single-carriageway A21 is known to be the most dangerous road in the southeast. The part between Hastings and Hurst Green has a

BHM *Battle Healtcheck Meeting 2002*
PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*

particularly black rating based on fatal and serious accidents and the part around the Sedlescombe junction has been highlighted as a "hot spot".

Improvements to the A21 have been included in the regeneration scheme submitted to Government and it is likely that over the next ten years some improvement work will take place. There is general support for improvement of the A21 (BHM) to stop the B2244 through the Village being used as a rat run, but the prospect of long-term roadworks on the A21 is daunting, as they will undoubtedly affect those living in Sedlescombe. However, with a string of fatalities in 2002, local MP Greg Barker has joined forces with Tunbridge Wells MP Archie Norman and is demanding a meeting with the Transport Secretary to discuss the future of the A21.

Speed and weight of traffic

The speed of vehicles within 30mph speed limits is of greatest concern to respondents, closely followed by the large number of heavy lorries on the B2244 (PP) travelling from the Medway Towns to Hastings. The large number of cars and vans on the road is of concern, but less so. Some people living in The Street complain of the noise caused by traffic passing over the uneven surface of the road and the drains in the early morning. (PP)

Highways problems in Sedlescombe as identified by those completing the Sedlescombe Parish Plan questionnaire	
Speed of vehicles within 30mph speed limits	148 households
Large number of heavy lorries on B2244	140 households
Speed of vehicles in country lanes	131 households
Large number of cars and vans on B2244	83 households
Footways beside roads	57 households
Unsatisfactory footpaths and bridleways	29 households
Lack of cycle routes	18 households

The straight downhill approach to the Village from the north encourages traffic to travel quickly and the need for speed restrictions has been stated often (PP & BHM). A short extension of the 30mph speed limit to include the new hall was successfully negotiated last year and attempts to have the speed limit extended as far as, or further than, Hurst Lane are widely supported by residents. However, investigations carried out by East Sussex County Council have shown that existing speeds are too high (averaging 50mph) and the level of development is too sparse and set back to warrant further extension. It is hoped that continuing pressure on the Police, East Sussex County Council, the County Engineer and Councillors will result in a successful outcome. There are central government proposals to introduce lower speed limits in villages and country

2. "A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Road Safety

lanes and details of the new criteria are awaited. The painting of "30" on the road as the speed limit is reached is a possibility but will not slow traffic further north, eg passing the Church.

TW *Tourism Workshop 2000*
BHS *Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002*
PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*
BHM *Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002*
PPS *Parish Plan Summary 2002*

The speed of vehicles in country lanes is also a major concern (PP). The majority of our roads are unsuitable for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders (PP). Under The Transport Act 2000, the government is encouraging the designation of "quiet lanes" where minor rural roads are "treated appropriately to enable shared use by cyclists, walkers, horse riders and motorised users". It may be that a few Sedlescombe lanes would be suitable for this treatment and investigations are included in the Action Plan. 64% of respondents said they think that the introduction of quiet lanes in Sedlescombe would be successful (PPS). Brede Lane, Hurst Lane, Cottage Lane and Poppinghole Lane are possibly suitable for designation. 76 people said we need more cycle paths, 2% more than think we want more pavements (BHS).

Sedlescombe is fortunate in having a strong community and an idyllic village setting.

However, it also has to struggle with very real 21st century problems which if unaddressed could threaten the viability of the village.

In particular, the village suffers from very poor transport links and is blighted by the A21. The A21 is one of the worst roads in Britain and the stretch from Hastings to Hurst Green has a particularly poor accident record. The road is not only a poor and inefficient transport link but is unacceptably dangerous. Urgent action is required to improve the safety of this road which Sedlescombe residents are obliged to use.

Speeding on small roads in and around the village also remains a real problem. Greater action is required to clamp down on dangerous driving on roads serving the A21 as well as on it.

Sedlescombe like other villages in the area also suffers from a very poor level of policing, with manpower stretched across a very wide area. Even that is frequently withdrawn to deal with "high priorities" in Hastings. This is unacceptable for rural residents who are equally entitled to as good a level of policing as their urban counterparts. A better balance in the County's police resources needs to be struck.

The Government needs to listen to the concerns of rural communities such as Sedlescombe and take on board their distinct problems. The Parish Council is the most important forum in which village issues are discussed and settled. Instead of making serving on Parish Councils more onerous and difficult, the Government should support those individuals who take the time and trouble to serve their community.

Greg Barker MP, October 2002

2. "A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Road Safety

Traffic calming, east side of The Green

To date, it has not been possible to identify acceptable traffic calming schemes for any part of the parish apart from the small "build-out" introduced at the bottom of the slip road many years ago. Some villagers would welcome the introduction of further traffic calming in The Green (TW). In 1998, residents of The Green lobbied the Parish Council to introduce some form of traffic calming because this is a narrow road without a footway used for parking by residents and shoppers. The following types of calming were considered although none proved to be acceptable:

- o "One way (up) - would probably increase speed of traffic and, because of inconsiderate parking, cause problems for lorries leaving the builder's yard.
- o "Access only" - designed for side streets and difficult to enforce.
- o Road humps that would need lighting and would cause problems of noise and vibration for the nearby properties.
- o Closure of one end of The Green and provision of a turning area (yellow lines would be needed to stop parking in the turning area) - the most obvious end would be the top and the land for the turning area would have to be taken from the Village Green.
- o 10mph speed limits - not possible.
- o Build-outs - must be lit and the number of parking spaces would be reduced.
- o Reduce the width of the road - access needed for lorries and delivery vehicles.
- o Voluntary staggered parking giving a chicane effect - the number of car parking spaces would be reduced and almost certainly other cars would park in between and obstruct the road.
- o Rumble surface - encourages some drivers to drive faster because it is more comfortable than driving slowly over the surface.

The Police agreed at the time to carry out speed checks on the slip road and to take action against any offenders either with a fixed penalty ticket or by taking them to court.

Street lighting

There was an occasional comment about the lack of street lighting (PP). A third of Sedlescombe respondents to the Battle Healthcheck think that Sedlescombe needs street lights (BHS). Some 11-17 years olds were also worried about lack of street lighting in Sedlescombe (BHS). However, another group of people when asked about street lighting, were almost unanimous in not wanting to urbanise Sedlescombe by installing street lights (BHM).

Footways

<i>BHM</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck survey 2002</i>

The speed of traffic does not encourage people to walk unless they have to, which makes adequate footways particularly necessary. The lack of footways, problems with their maintenance and their narrowness were identified as important issues (PP & BHM).

Comments on footways beside roads	
Footway needed Sandrock Hill and northwards to Hurst Lane	12 households
Footway needed Village to Blackbrooks	8 households
Footways too narrow	6 households
Not enough footways beside roads	6 households
Poor state of footway to hall and church	4 households

2. "A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Road Safety

Footway needed church to vineyards (Hawkhurst Road)	4 households
Footway needed Post Office and Queen's Head	3 households
Poor condition of footways	2 households
Problems with cars parking on footways	2 households
Footway needed Chapel Hill	2 households
Footway needed Chapel Hill/Crazy Lane	1 household
All lanes need footways	1 household
Brede Lane needs a footway between Gammons Way & Gorselands	1 household
Footway needed Cottage Lane and similar lanes	1 household
Footway needed at Harts Green	1 household
Footway needed Hurst Lane	1 household
Need street lighting	1 household
Footway needed opposite school	1 household
Footway needed on B2089	1 household
Footway needed on The Green	1 household
Footway needed on lane to Westfield	1 household
Uncut hedges force you into the road	1 household

The footway from the Village Green to the village hall is narrow and very close to the roadway. Sometimes uncut hedges make the path extra narrow (PP). The footway from the village hall to the Parish Church is also narrow, is outside the 30mph speed limit and is often overgrown (PP). Sometimes the uncut hedge is an additional problem. (PP)

If funding could be found, the installation of a new footway from just north of Stream Lane to Hurst Lane would be of great benefit (12 requests with another 4 households wanting the footway to continue to the Vineyards). (PP & BHM) The ability to walk in safety from the Village along the B2244 towards the A21 would be appreciated (8 requests) (PP).

Parking

Only a few car owners do not have off-street parking but some problems with parking on the B2244 were noted (PP). Also, a major parking problem in the parish appears to be around the School and surgery especially first thing in the morning (BHM). The introduction of double yellow lines outside the Doctors' Surgery in Brede Lane has been considered several times. However, at the time, their introduction would have to be a whole scheme for the area and would include yellow lines in other less-acceptable areas such as the Village Green and would have to include additional signs adding to roadside clutter. The cars have got to go somewhere unless more parents can be persuaded to walk to School or share cars. The introduction of a "Walking Bus" from East View Terrace to the School found some support (PP & PPS) and will be investigated. Parking problems in Gammons Way that could be exacerbated by increased use outside normal school hours was mentioned. Could parking be provided within the school grounds at these times? (PP)

Other spots where parking causes danger to other road users is outside the Clockhouse, opposite the junction of The Green (TW) and outside Blacklands in Brede Lane where visibility on the brow of the hill is restricted for vehicles travelling towards the Village.

Sedlescombe people reported parking problems at Mount Street, Battle Abbey and most of all at the railway station (60% of respondents) (BHS).

2. "A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Road Safety

Pedestrian crossing

Consideration has been given to applying for approval for a pedestrian crossing of the B2244 but the lights and road marking which must accompany crossings were not considered appropriate in the Village centre. An elderly persons sign has been positioned to warn traffic of the presence of Roselands warden care block.

Village Plans are a dynamic method for a village to think about its aims and needs and then take appropriate action in a planned way. By this means control is kept within the community.

East Sussex County Council is running a pilot project in this area involving the Area Highway Staff. A sum of money has been allocated to pay for two members of staff who will work to the priorities of the community and not just the wider County policies. This means that villages have a much greater say in which work, for example sign cleaning, footway clearance etc. gets done first. Sedlescombe is one of the villages in the pilot area which has been successful in getting some of this work done in the Village. This pilot initiative has been greatly appreciated by those villages which have taken part and I hope it will continue as it is an excellent and practical example of partnership working.

County Councillor Mrs Kathryn Field

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Responsible Dog Ownership

PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*
PPS *Parish Plan Summary 2002*

Dog walking is a popular pastime in the parish. Although most dog walkers are considerate and use the dog waste bins provided, in some areas there is still a considerable problem. In the survey, dog waste collection was one of the local services that was reported to cause most dissatisfaction (PP). Notices have been displayed and leaflets made available. There are "clean it up" byelaws in some areas, dog bans in playgrounds and a "dogs on leads" byelaw on the unfenced sportsfield that has a public footpath running through it. Sometimes the disposal of collected faeces by owners leaves something to be desired. Instead of putting the bags into a dog waste bin or even household rubbish, they throw them into farm gateways! Prosecution of offenders against the byelaws is supported by the majority (PPS). Other ideas suggested are "naming and shaming offenders" and leaving it to owners' consciences.

Some people would like to see more dog bins (PP) in Brede Lane, East View Terrace and Balcombe Green (PP) but, once provided, their emptying is a constant drain on the Council Taxpayer. There were some comments that the existing dog waste bins need emptying more often (PP) (currently emptied weekly). The problem of full bins can arise where litter is placed in the bins instead of in litter bins.

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Healthcare

BHM *Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002*
BHS *Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002*
PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*

A big majority of Sedlescombe respondents did not report any inadequacies in health matters (BHS). Problems, however, were identified as follows (BHS):

Patient transport	34 people	9% of respondents
Home help	28 people	7% of respondents
Help with mental health problems	22 people	6% of respondents
District Nurse	6 people	2% of respondents
Loans of medical equipment	6 people	2% of respondents

Another survey recorded 202 households satisfied with existing medical services and only 6 not satisfied (PP). The cause of dissatisfaction seemed to be the length of waiting time to see the doctor, the cost of getting to the Conquest without private transport and, for one household, the inability to register with the doctor over a year after moving here (PP). Considerable difficulties are also experienced finding parking places at the Conquest Hospital (BHM). Public transport is not a convenient alternative.

13% of Sedlescombe respondents made the comment that they have had difficulty in finding a National Health dentist (BHS).

Sedlescombe is part of the area covered by the Bexhill and Rother Primary Care Trust (PCT). It is well served by the practice of Drs Jardine-Brown, Stern and Hargreaves, and has its own dispensary. The opening of the new purpose-built doctors' surgery in Brede Lane in 1986 provided new opportunities for healthcare in a modern environment. For nearly 40 years, the surgery had been in a few rooms up steep stairs in the doctor's house.

Likewise, The Conquest, the new District Hospital built on The Ridge, just three miles outside the parish, has brought healthcare into the 21st century. Secondary and intermediate care services are provided mainly by the Conquest and Bexhill Hospitals. There are some concerns here about the length of waiting lists, and above all the difficulty of access for anyone without a car. The emphasis placed by the PCT on providing intermediate and rehabilitation care services to enable people to remain in their own homes for treatment will go some way to alleviating this.

However, it is recognised that improving the health of the population of Sedlescombe is not a matter only for the NHS, but for a number of agencies, including Rother District Council and Rother Homes, working together in co-operation. Good quality housing, facilities for recreation and education are all important in helping residents to stay healthy. Good support from Social Services and community-based health staff is also necessary to provide continuous coherent care. The current problems facing East Sussex Social Services are being addressed, and this is welcome. If this co-operative network of different agencies is in place, residents should need to go into hospital less frequently and be able to return home sooner.

Mary Budd, Non-executive Director of the Bexhill and Rother Primary Care Trust.

2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY" CONSULTATIONS - Safety in playgrounds

See the "Amenities in Sedlescombe" section for details of the playgrounds in the parish. The

PP Parish Plan Survey 2002

Parish Council takes its responsibilities regarding inspection and maintenance of the playgrounds very seriously and regularly reviews its methods to make sure that they are as safe as possible. Weekly inspection is carried out and maintenance is undertaken as soon as problems are identified. Annual ROSPA inspection also undertaken. A small minority of respondents think that the playgrounds need maintenance and tidying up and one said they are too dangerous to use! Bullying by older children and vandalism are also mentioned. (PP)

**2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY”
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
“999” calls	Improvement of response time and re-constitution of target times.	C&SM PP	2.1	Police	2003
Non-emergency calls	Improvement of response times.	PP	2.1	Police	2003
Police presence in rural areas	Greater Police presence in village. Influence Sussex Police to introduce mobile police vans.	C&SM SVS	2.1	Police Safer Villages Group	2003 2004
Burglar alarms	Improvement of response to burglar alarms	C&SM	2.1	Police	2003
Car patrols	Return of night-time car patrols	C&SM	2.1	Police	2003
Investigations	Police to investigate all crimes thoroughly including garage break-ins	C&SM	2.1	Police	ongoing
Call handling centre	Improve attitude and knowledge of area, including use of technology. Ensure proper supervision.	C&SM	2.1	Police	ongoing
Intimidation and bullying by and of youngsters	Police to investigate reports of intimidation and bullying	C&SM	2.1	Police/Schools	ongoing
Vandalism	Police to investigate reports of vandalism. Vandalised objects/property to be cleaned/repared as soon as possible	C&SM	2.1	Police Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing ongoing
Burglaries in outbuildings	Make residents aware of risks	C&SM	2.1	Neighbourhood Watch	ongoing
Burglaries at Pestalozzi		C&SM	2.1	Pestalozzi/Police	ongoing
Vulnerability of Pestalozzi students		C&SM	2.1	Pestalozzi/Police	ongoing
Neighbourhood Watch	Improvement of Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	C&SM	2.1	Safer Villages Group & Neighbourhood Watch	ongoing
Fire	Provision of smoke alarms for the deaf.	SVS	2.1	Safer Villages Group, Moat Care and Repair*	2002
	Fire Prevention displays at village events.	SVS	2.1	Safer Villages Group open mornings	2002 onwards
<p>*Moat Care and Repair is a Home Improvement Agency and works in partnership with Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council and the Safer Villages Scheme. C&SM Crime and Safety Meeting; PP Parish Plan; SVS Safer Villages Scheme</p>					

**2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY”
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Awards	Introduce Good Citizenship Awards	SVS	2.1	Sedlescombe Parish Council	2004
Roselands warden care	Ensure emergency services can easily access the Roselands flats	BHM	2.1	Rother Homes	2002
Property marking	Offer engraving service to residents and businesses	SVS	2.1	Safer Villages Group	2002.
Improved communication between residents and emergency services	Advise villagers to: Report all incidents; Inform Police if not satisfied; Install CCTV; Install burglar alarms; Clearly display house names & numbers.	C&SM	2.1	Safer Villages Group/Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Care of vulnerable people	Help the elderly and inform with advice. Help and Advice regarding doorstep sellers.	C&SM Local resident suggestion	2.1	Safer Villages Group	2002 onwards
	Promote Lifeline Services.		2.1	Safer Villages Group	2002 onwards
	Provide free risk assessments for over 65s.		2.1	Safer Villages Group and Moat Care & Repair	2004
Traffic calming	Traffic calming in front of post office - already fully investigated	TW	2.1	ESCC	no action
Double yellow lines	Double yellow lines by Clockhouse Bistro	TW	2.1	ESCC	further investigations
Heavy lorries	Discourage use of B2244	PP	2.1	ESCC/Police	further investigations
Quiet lanes	Introduce several quiet lanes in Sedlescombe (Transport Act 2000)	PP	2.1	ESCC	2004
Road surface through Village	Improve to limit noise	PP	2.1	ESCC	further investigations
A21	Improvements to road that enhance the environment for Sedlescombe residents	BHS	2.1	Highways Agency	further investigations

SVS Safer Villages Scheme; BHM Battle Healthcheck meeting; C&SM Crime and Safety Meeting; TW Tourism Workshop; PP Parish Plan

**2. A SAFE AND HEALTHY SEDLESCOMBE COMMUNITY”
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Parking	Improve early morning parking problems for School and surgery. Consider parking arrangements for out-of-hours school use. Encourage considerate parking that does not restrict other road users	PP	2.1	School/Police/Residents	ongoing
Footways	Improve existing footways. Provide new footways/cycleways. Stop cars parking on footways.	PP BHM, PP PP	2.1	ESCC ESCC/Battle Partnership Police	ongoing ongoing
Hedges	Request owners to cut back hedges from roads and footways	PP	2.1	ESCC & Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Street lighting	Although some support also opposition	BHS, SVS	2.1	ESCC & Sedlescombe Parish Council	further investigations
Walking Bus	Set up walking bus from East View Terrace	PP	2.1	Sedlescombe School/PTA/Battle Partnership	2003
School Transport Plan	Encourage School Transport Plan		2.1	Sedlescombe School/Parish Council	2003
Dog Waste	Further education of owners. Prosecute under byelaw. Ensure bins are emptied regularly. Provide new bins. Provide more signage at Sportsfield.	PP PP PP PP	2.2 2.2 2.2 2.2 2.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council. Rother DC, Parish Council. Parish Council Parish Council Parish Council	ongoing further investigations ongoing 2004 2003
Healthcare	Take opportunities to improve existing services	BHS	2.3		ongoing
Playgrounds	Continue weekly inspection and maintenance programme	PP	2.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing

PP Parish Plan; BHM Battle Healthcheck Meeting; SVS Safer Villages Scheme; Battle Healthcheck Survey



AIM NO.3
To help provide
amenities and
services in
Sedlescombe



Illustrations over

Top left	Sedlescombe Village Green, August 2002 Photograph by Colin Raymond
Top right	Sedlescombe Sportsfield, September 2002 Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Centre left	Sylvia Beaney and Ernie Burgess at the head of a Parish Council Sunday afternoon footpaths walk Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Bottom left	New village hall from Red Barn Field Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Bottom right	Youngsters in the youth shelter at the East View Terrace Kickabout Area Photograph by Pauline Raymond

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
<p style="text-align: center;">3.1 Public amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To maintain and improve Sedlescombe's public amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>East View Terrace Kickabout Area</u>. Following consultation with village youth, grant aid was obtained for improvement, providing football and basketball facilities and a shelter. ○ <u>Sportsfield</u>. Roadway at entrance to Sportsfield car park repaired and locked gate installed. New "David Woodman Memorial Seat" placed by river. New kissing gate installed at Sportsfield entrance (stolen few months later). ○ <u>Riverside Playing Field, Recreation Ground and tennis courts</u>. Refurbished courts well used by Club and public. Additional seat and picnic table provided (Parish Council/Tennis Club project). Safety inspections and maintenance carried out at playgrounds. New fence erected along river. ○ <u>Village Green</u>. Extensive refurbishment of Pumphouse and village sign undertaken. ○ <u>Red Barn Field Nature Park</u>. Maintained in accordance with adopted Management Plan. Monthly report produced. ○ <u>Sedlescombe Car Park and Public Conveniences</u> (Rother owned). Mowing undertaken by Parish Council. ○ <u>Mowing responsibilities</u> shared between the Parish Council, Rother Homes, Orbit Housing Association, the Sports Association and Village Hall Trustees. ○ <u>Friends of the Pestalozzi Estate</u> successfully applied for grant aid in connection with improvement of public access to the Estate. ○ <u>Street nameplates</u>. Parish Council carried out survey of street nameplates and drew up a schedule of repairs and replacements that are Rother's responsibility. Some nameplates replaced and new ones provided.

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
3.2 Support for local organisations, societies and other bodies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage local organisations, societies and other bodies that promote social, leisure, cultural and service activities in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Sedlescombe Village Hall</u>. Sedlescombe Village Hall Trustees raised £500,000 for the new village hall at Red Barn Field, opened in September 2001. Parish Council Co-operated by finding a site and contributing towards the hall's building and equipping. Arranged installation of new "village hall" direction signs and litter bin. ○ <u>Grants</u>. Parish Council made grants to the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Rural Rother Trust, the Scout Committee to help with replacement of windows at the Scout Hut, to the Churchyard Fund and Jubilee Fayre.
3.3 Public footpaths and bridleways	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To maintain, improve and promote footpaths and bridleways within Sedlescombe's boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Maintenance</u>. The Parish Council worked in partnership with East Sussex County Council and Rye Bay Countryside Office in maintenance of public footpaths; several bridges were replaced. ○ <u>Improvement</u>. Stone chipping was added to the public footpath between Gorselands and Balcombe Green to improve access to the new village hall. ○ <u>Footpath Walks</u>. Six Sunday afternoon footpath walks were led by the Parish Council. ○ <u>Footpath leaflets</u>. Parish Council co-operated with designers and East Sussex County Council in production of new footpath leaflets. Picture on front cover by local resident, John F Cook. ○ <u>Link with 1066 Country Walk</u>. Parish Council liaised with Rye Bay Countryside Office regarding a new Sedlescombe link path to 1066 Country Walk.
3.4 Activities and services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To promote activities and services for all residents ○ To support Sedlescombe School. ○ To support the mobile and village libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Tennis Fun Morning</u>. Parish Council arranged a Tennis Fun Morning in May 2001. ○ <u>Mobile libraries</u>. Parish Council participated in review of mobile libraries. ○ <u>Local history leaflet</u>. Parish Council produced local history leaflet. ○ <u>Public transport</u>. Advertised local bus services.

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS – Public amenities

VA	<i>Village Appraisal 1989</i>
TW	<i>Tourism Workshop 2000</i>
BHM	<i>Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002</i>
BHS	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
PP	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>

Playgrounds. Some improvement of maintenance and better equipment at playgrounds is sought (PP). More equipment wanted for pre-school children and 4-8 year olds at playgrounds (PP). The use of playgrounds has decreased from the survey carried out in 1989 (PP & VA).

In recent months, the Sedlescombe Youth Projects Forum has been formed with the intention of assessing and meeting the needs of the young. A first project is provision of a skateboard ramp in the Village.

Sportsfield. After years of using different fields for sports in the Village, the Sportsfield was purchased by the Parish Council from the Pestalozzi Trust in 1984. Football, stoolball, archery and cricket are played and the clubs come under a Sedlescombe Sports Association umbrella. One club, the Junior football club has been particularly successful with up to a hundred children training at the field each week. A Sports Development Plan is being drafted.

More than a third of Sedlescombe respondents say they take part in sporting activities (BHS). Of those that do not, the majority are not interested (BHS). A few find them too expensive, have children or other responsibilities or do not know what is available (BHS).

Tennis courts. The Parish Council is the sole trustee of the charitable land on which the two hard tennis courts have been operating since the mid-1950s. The local Tennis Club has a licence to use the courts and they are open to the public. 19 respondents said they welcomed the opportunity of tennis coaching for 9-15 years olds (PP). More respondents use the tennis courts than the sportsfield for playing sport (PP).

Both the sportsfield and the tennis courts lack proper changing facilities and adequate parking (BHM & PP).

The Pumphouse is probably the most easily recognised building in the parish and its maintenance to a good standard is considered important (TW). It received 100% support in the consultation on the Parish Plan Summary.

Red Barn Field Nature Park. 58 households said that members of their families use Red Barn Field Nature Park but a few said they do not know of its existence or where it is (PP).

Village Hall. The old village hall, built in the early 1920s, provided sterling service to the community. However, changing times and particularly the need for parking, together with the availability of lottery funding, allowed a new much larger hall to be provided in 2001 with a reasonable car parking area. An indoor sports club has been formed at the hall with badminton, table tennis, short mat bowls, tai chi, keep fit etc. New opportunities for using the hall, including those attractive to youngsters (PP), are actively being considered. 61% of respondents do not use the hall (BHS). Although none of the users (148 people) find the facilities “poor”, four think they are “just adequate”. The majority think they are “good”. (BHS) There were a few criticisms that, for example, it is an inappropriate size or in the wrong position. Another survey, found that 169 households use the hall (PP). Access to the Hall is a problem for some who would like to attend functions there but because of age and/or infirmity, have difficulty walking and do not have their own vehicle (PP). Some Sedlescombe respondents use Battle Memorial Hall and the majority think that facilities are “reasonable”.

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Public footpaths and bridleways

Scout Group. The Scout Hut at East View Terrace is a wooden building with a kitchen available for hire. The uniformed organisations of Brownies (average 13), Scouts (average 8), Cubs (average 6) and Beavers (average 6) meet weekly in the Scout Hut.

BHS *Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002*
PP *Parish Plan Survey 2002*
BHM *Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002*

Clubs. Sedlescombe supports a good range of village societies and organisations. These include two Women's Institutes, a Flower Club, a Drama Group, a long-established Old Tyme Dance Club and a large Garden Society, which is the most popular village club according to respondents (PP). 118 households said they use the village clubs (PP). The Pestalozzi Trust invites villagers to join overseas students in some of their clubs.

Churches

The Parish Church of St John the Baptist is at the top of Church Hill and the United Reformed Church is at the top of Chapel Hill. The Parish Church has a Sunday School with about 20 children. In the Easter holidays, a three-day school for about 18 children is held and in the summer holidays, a week-long summer school for more than 40 children is held. Both churches co-operate in this venture.

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE

CONSULTATIONS - Activities and services - public transport and taxis

Respondents appreciate village walks, listing their use above any other village facility (169) (PP). 143 people think local footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and 83 that they are not (50% and 29% respectively of respondents BHS). Sedlescombe came out much better than other parishes within the Battle Partnership area where the average was 33% (well maintained) and 42% (not well maintained) (BHS).

The future maintenance of public rights of way will depend on available manpower both from East Sussex County Council and from volunteers. The formation of a local volunteer group with its members receiving training from the County Council would greatly assist the local authorities to maintain and improve the public paths that are so important to residents and visitors.

As well as providing a link to Sedlescombe from the 1066 Country Walk, there was support for a new footpath along the River Brede to Rye (TW and PPS).

Comments were made concerning the danger of using any of our roads for cycling. The lack of cycle paths was also mentioned (BHS & PP).

Problems for horseriders wanting to access the Great Wood from opposite New England Lane were mentioned (PP), although with current road conditions, this would be a very dangerous place to cross.

<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>
<i>PPS</i>	<i>Parish Plan Summary 2002</i>

Bus cards for the elderly are available providing subsidised journeys. Buses are available as follows:

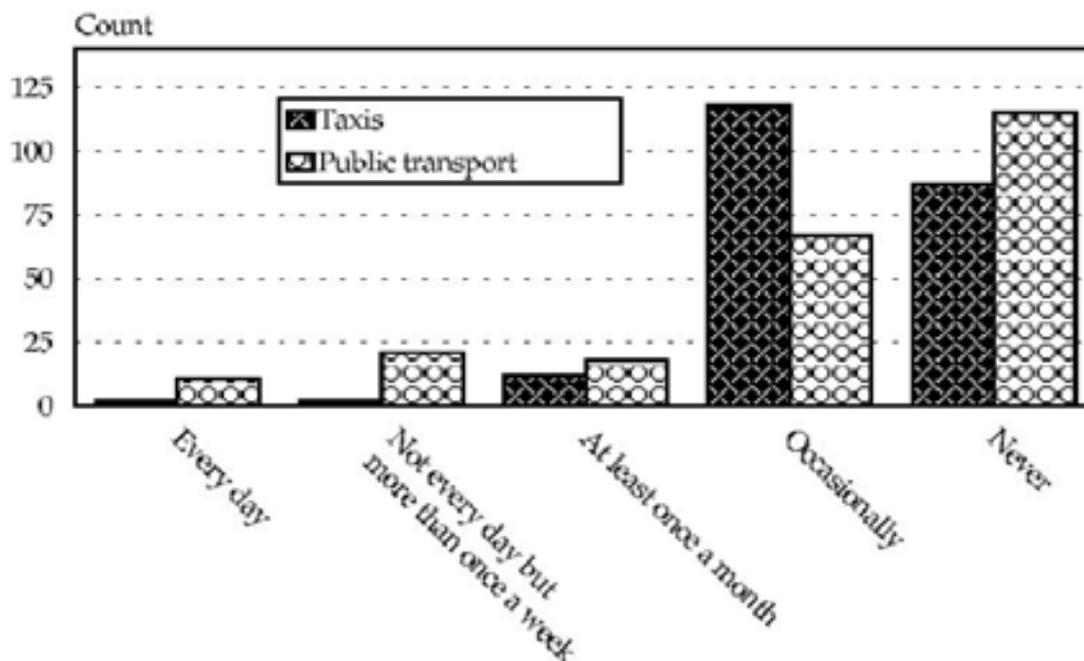
- o To Hastings and Tunbridge Wells during the daytime, Mondays to Saturdays. There is no Sunday bus service and no evening service.
- o To Conquest Hospital (need to change buses at Sainsbury's Superstore).
- o To Battle on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The Saturday service also allows travel to Bexhill.

Bus timetables are subject to frequent changes and can vary summer and winter.

The mainline station at Battle gives access to a reasonable train service to London. However, parking at the station is a problem (BHS) and there are no public transport links.

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Activities and services - public transport and taxis

How often do you use Taxis/Public transport*



At the time of surveys, no one who answered travelled to work by bus (PP). The only use made of public and community buses was for travel to school or college, shopping, banks and building societies and very limited use for accessing leisure or sports activities and the hospital (PP). A large majority of residents use public transport occasionally or never and a sizeable proportion of respondents said that nothing would encourage them to use the buses (PP). Good use of the existing bus service is made by Pestalozzi students; they would make greater use if there were earlier and later buses (PP). The survey took place prior to the improvement of the bus service and increased frequency was cited as the thing that was most likely to increase use of buses (PP).

BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002
PP Parish Plan Survey 2002

There was some support, especially from car users and Pestalozzi, for better links to trains (PP). Extended service times, lower fares, clearer timetables and improved reliability might also encourage more use (PP). Very few car users would be influenced in their use of the car by more expensive parking at their destinations (PP). Those who rely on buses do not find them easy to use (BHS).

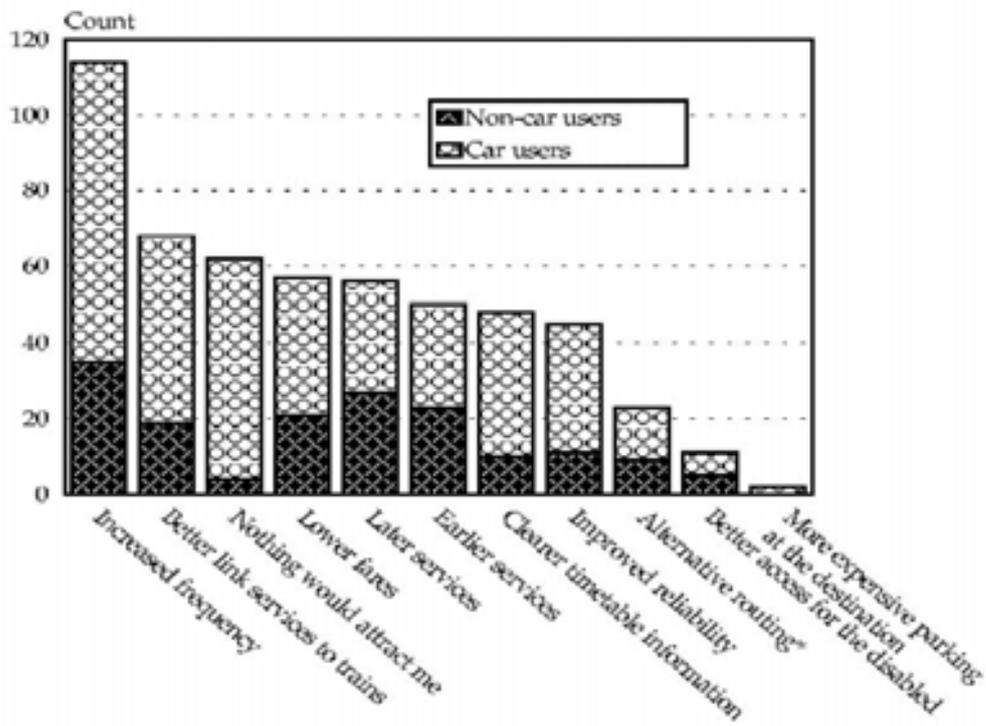
BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002
PP Parish Plan Survey 2002

Although few respondents completed this question, most children walked or went by private car to School or the school bus (PP). At times, there is considerable congestion around the car park, especially at about 9am when children are arriving at School and patients at the surgery. The head teacher has repeatedly asked parents not to bring children to School by car if possible (BHM). Eight households supported the idea of a "Walking Bus" from East View Terrace and one from Balcombe Green (PP).

Most people only use taxis occasionally with quite a few never using them (PP).

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Activities and services - public transport and taxis

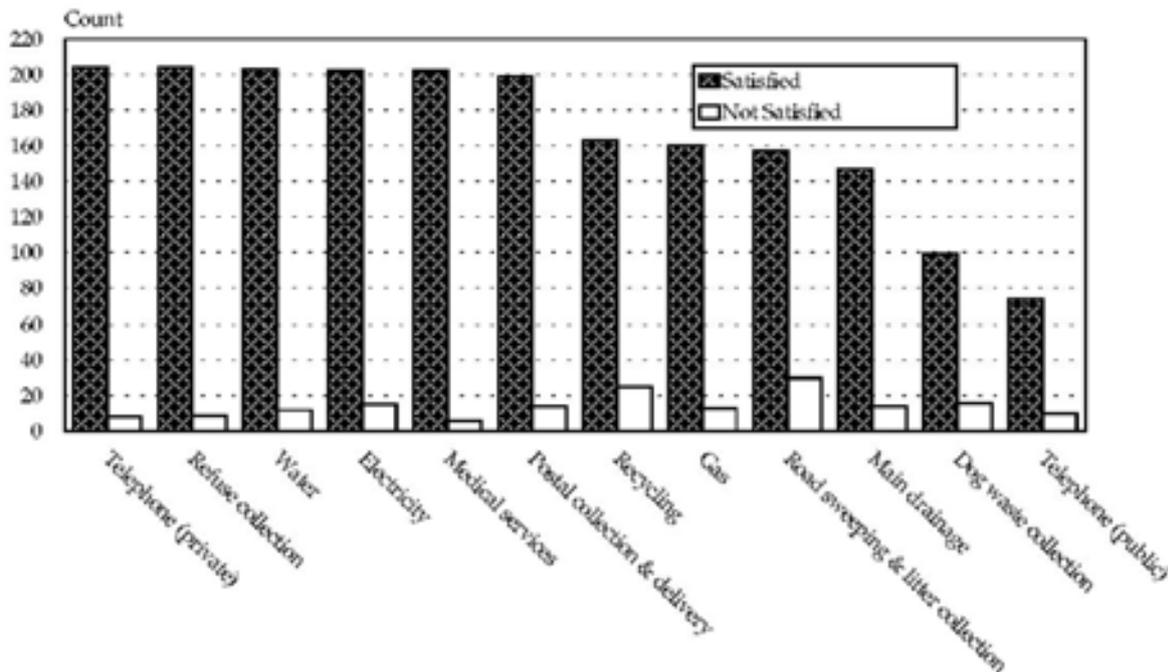
What would encourage members of your household to make greater use of public transport?



3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS – Local Services

When asked whether they were satisfied with various local services, most people said they were (PP).

Are you satisfied with the existing services?



The following minority comments were made:

- Electricity: power cuts are still being suffered. [Seeboard has answered this criticism by explaining that many of the causes of power cuts are outside their control. For example, as well as overhead lines being vulnerable to damage during gales, contact by birds and squirrels will automatically bring an interruption of supply. Sometimes builders or other contractors damage underground cables.]
- Gas supplies and main drainage are not available to everyone in the parish and some people would like their properties to be connected to the gas supply.
- Water: a few people notice bad-tasting or discoloured tapwater. Lower pressure, expensive metering and too many leaks were mentioned by a few.
- Improved mobile phone reception, broadband internet access and cable were supported. The cost of the standing charge was thought to be too high by a few.
- Not much use is made of the public telephone. Users complained of vandalism, non-working or full telephones. There was a comment that the telephone box should be outside the Post Office, another at the Hurst Lane junction and another that more public phones are needed.
- Earlier or regular postal deliveries supported and one business stressed the importance of a good postal service for the success of his work (BS).
- A few people commented that they did not like the change in refuse collection days following bank holidays but there is no way of knowing whether a large number of people support this method. Some people would like wheelie bins.

<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>
<i>BHM</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck meeting 2002</i>
<i>BS</i>	<i>Business Survey 2002</i>

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS – Local Services

Libraries. The weekly library in the hall is used by more respondents than the mobile library and is more popular than Hastings Library (PP). Some funding would be helpful for the village library (BHM). Battle Library is the most popular with Sedlescombe residents (PP).

Youth Leisure Services

Sedlescombe youth spend most of their leisure time watching TV or using a computer at home. The next most popular pastime is visiting friends or having them around. This is what the youngsters would like to do more of but some find it difficult to get to their friends or feel unsafe going out in the evening. It is interesting to find that some youngsters are concerned about groups of young people hanging around, being bullied, teased or pestered or of no street lighting. When asked what would improve the area and help to occupy young people, most answered that they wanted a wider choice of things to do but better public transport was also high on the wish list. (BHS) Local youngsters are currently working with adults in the Sedlescombe Youth Projects Forum; their first project is provision of a skateboard ramp.

The Pestalozzi Village organises activities for their students and is pleased to invite village youngsters to join them, although this offer is not usually taken up. (BHM)

The Indoor Sports Association in the village hall would welcome use by more young people. Pestalozzi students suggested volleyball, indoor basketball and a film club. (BHM)

The adult view was that there should be more professional input into youth activities to draw them out and provide them with challenging tasks/activities. (BHM)

Before the new Hall was opened, Sedlescombe Schoolchildren produced an imaginative selection of possible activities for the Hall such as tap dancing, gymnastics, remote control car racing and a cookery club. If leaders could be found for some of these activities, they could be popular with youngsters from a wide area and provide much-needed income for the Hall.

The introduction of a "one-stop shop" in the Hall has been suggested by the Hall's Manager.

School and Further Education

The opening of the new primary school in Brede Lane in 1980 was the culmination of years of campaigning by parents for replacement of the old one. The number of children attending the school has virtually doubled to about 160 in twenty years but many do not now live in the village. However, due to the hard work of the head teacher and teaching staff, the School has a good relationship with the community with the School taking every opportunity to involve local people in their activities. The school has After-school clubs for choir, country dancing, football, netball, rounders, cricket, cross country, swimming and chess.

<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
<i>BHM</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Meeting 2002</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>

Most Secondary School children attend either Claverham Community College in Battle or Robertsbridge College. There is locally some support for a sixth form facility at Claverham although more than a quarter of Sedlescombe residents have no stated preference (BHS). If a sixth form is allowed at Claverham, it is expected that there will be additional traffic problems around the School (BHM).

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Local Services

Plans to build an ICT suite at Sedlescombe School that will be accessible to the community for open access and computer training are in hand and fund-raising is continuing (PP). 149 people said they would be interested in taking a computer training course in Sedlescombe, most beginners (76) but also intermediates (58) and advanced (15) (PP). Courses were particularly supported during the week both daytime and evening (PP)

From this year, the School has allowed some term time weekday community use of their 1 metre deep heated outdoor swimming pool. About 45 adults said they were interested in using the facility (PP). A further 30 adults from Pestalozzi would be interested in using the pool at weekends. There would probably be more support generally if it was available at weekends and in the holidays and if it was covered. A very popular idea was the provision of an indoor public swimming facility in the Battle district (BHS).

There is some support for additional adult education classes in Sedlescombe. A wide range of subjects was suggested but information technology, foreign languages, arts and crafts are the most popular (PP). The Village Hall, the School or the Scout Hut could be used. Art classes already take place at the Scout Hut.

Further Education - Support from Sedlescombe Residents			
Aerobics	1	General	6
Antiques	1	History	2
Art	8	Keep Fit	2
Art appreciation	1	Languages	10
Ballroom dancing	2	Leisure	2
Barber Shop Quartets	1	Local history	3
Bridge	1	Nature Study	2
Business Studies	1	Photography	1
Car maintenance	1	Picture framing	1
Cookery	3	Recreational	1
Crafts	11	Sign language	1
Creative writing	1	Small bands	1
English A level/degree	1	Upholstery	1
Family history	2	Wood carving	1

<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan Survey 2002</i>

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE ACTION PLAN 2002-2007

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Sportsfield	New clubhouse and extension of sportsfield car park	BHM PP	3.1	Sports Association/SPC	2003
Village Green	Continued refurbishment of Pumphouse	TW	3.1	Parish Council	2002 onwards
Playground improvements and maintenance	General improvements	YM PP TW Orbit	3.1	Parish Council/ Battle Partnership/ Orbit Housing Association	Further investigations
Skateboard facilities	Provide facilities	YM	3.1	Parish Council & Sedlescombe Youth Projects	2003
Tennis courts	New club facilities, parking and marketing	TW PP	3.1	Parish Council, Tennis Club	further investigations
Parish Handyman	Project in co-operation with other villages		3.1	Parish Council	2005
Play areas	Improve to meet current needs		3.1	Parish Council/Housing Associations	2005
Mother & Toddler Group	Form group in Sedlescombe	BHM	3.2	Early Years Childcare Development Partnership	2002
Playgroup	Storage of Playgroup's equipment at new hall		3.2	Early Years Childcare Development/ Battle Partnership	2002
Horse riding	Enhance the bridleway network	PP/BHS	3.3	ESCC/Battle Partnership/ Leader+	ongoing
New public footpath along River Brede to Rye	Designate new path	TW	3.3	ESCC	2005
Footpaths	Improve signing and maintenance of paths	PP	3.3	ESCC	Ongoing
Volunteers	Create volunteer group to work on public rights of way and Red Barn Field Nature Park		3.3	ESCC/Parish Council	2003
Permissive path	1066 Country Walk to Lower Marley Farm		3.3	ESCC, Parish Council, owner	2003
Further education classes	Provide "taster" sessions for new further education classes in Sedlescombe	PP	3.4	Claverham	2002
Swimming pool	Cover for Sedlescombe School Pool	PP BHM	3.4	School	2007
<i>BHM Battle Healthcheck Meeting; PP Parish Plan; TW Tourism Workshop; YM Youth Meeting; BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey</i>					

3. AMENITIES AND SERVICES IN SEDLESCOMBE ACTION PLAN 2002-2007

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Information Technology	New ICT suite at Sedlescombe School	BHM PP	3.4	Sedlescombe School/Battle Partnership	2005
Bus Timetables	Improve bus timetable boards in bus shelter	TW	3.4	ESCC/Battle Partnership	2003
Youth Club	Restart youth club	YM	3.4	Volunteers	No specific date
Youth leader	Provide peripatetic leader	BHM	3.4	Youth service/ Battle Partnership	No specific date
Transport back from after-school activities	Use of School mini-bus	BHM	3.4	Battle Partnership	further investigations
Activities in the hall that might appeal to the young	Encourage use of sports facilities by young. Other.	BHM	3.4	Sedlescombe Village Hall Trustees and others	ongoing
Electricity	Improvement of electricity supply to reduce power cuts	PP	3.4		further investigations
Gas	Extension of gas supply throughout the parish	PP	3.4		further investigations
Mains drainage	Extension of mains drainage throughout the parish	PP	3.4		further investigations
Broadband	Provision broadband internet access	PP	3.4		further investigations
Village library	Financial support for library. Further advertising	BHM PP	3.4		2003
Film Club	Provide in village hall	BHM	3.4		2003
Tennis coaching	6 months tennis coaching project	PP	3.4	Tennis Club	2003
Transport	Transport to village hall for elderly or infirm	PP	3.4	Parish Council	2003
<i>BHM Battle Healthcheck Meeting; PP Parish Plan; TW Tourism Workshop; YM Youth Meeting</i>					

AIM NO.4
To support
business and
rural
employment in
Sedlescombe



Illustrations over

Top right	The Post Office, September 2002 Photograph by Colin Raymond
Centre left	Furniture by Country Ways, Swailes Green
Centre	People chatting outside Queen's Head Photograph by John F Cook
Centre right	Fruit juices by Sedlescombe Organic Vineyard
Bottom left	Brickwall Hotel, Sedlescombe Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Bottom right	The Clockhouse Bistro, Sedlescombe October 2002 Photograph by Pauline Raymond

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
4.1 Local Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support appropriate local business and suitable rural employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supported extension of the village shop. ○ Produced first and second editions of "The Sedlescombe Directory" including local businesses and delivered to every house in the parish. ○ Co-operated with designers and East Sussex County Council in production of a new tourist information board for the public car park with some information on businesses. ○ Co-operation with designers and East Sussex County Council in production of new footpaths leaflet to include some information on businesses. ○ Co-operation with designers and East Sussex County Council in production of a new local history leaflet. Available free. ○ Carried out a Sedlescombe business survey.
4.2 Employment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To publicise appropriate employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Publicised Rye Bay Countryside Office's Volunteer Trainee Ranger Scheme aimed at local people who have been unemployed for over 6 months and would like to gain experience and a qualification in Environment Conservation.
4.3 Training	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support and encourage training of local people 	
4.4 Tourism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage low-key tourism in support of local business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using grant aid from the Rural Tourism Initiative Project, continued to progress projects that are of benefit to visitors and residents (as listed above).
4.5 Postal service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To support retention of a quality postal service for the benefit of local businesses 	

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATIONS - Village businesses

Sedlescombe is part of the area of Rother that benefits from Enterprise Grant Area status which enables both new and existing businesses to receive financial help towards capital investment. In addition, grants are available for the restoration of redundant buildings in rural areas for employment uses. It is also within the East Sussex Rural Development Area, a designation that recognises the social and economic needs of the area. In the year 2000, The Indices of Deprivation (with rank 1 being the most deprived ward in England) gave the Sedlescombe & Whatlington ward the rank of 5259 out of 8414 English wards. (*National Neighbourhood Statistics*)

BS Business Survey 2002

In line with most other villages, the growth in large supermarkets and car ownership and the changes in lifestyle generally, have led to a decline in the number of shops and businesses that can be supported in a small parish. At the beginning of the twenty first century, Sedlescombe parish was left with one general shop/post office, public house and hotel by The Green, an antiques centre, a bistro, and a car sales lot in The Street, a large garden centre on the A21, the primary school and two churches. In fifty years, Sedlescombe lost three petrol stations, one public house, two grocery stores, a sawmills and woodyard, a hairdresser, a butcher and slaughterhouse, a bakery and baker's shop, an electrical shop, a shoe repairer, two restaurants and several antique shops and teashops. Two of the three petrol stations that have been lost are still in business use - a garden centre (Blackbrooks) and an antiques and collectables centre (Bridge Garage Antiques). The land on which the third garage stood has been developed into a small estate of houses (Eaton Walk).

More than fifty small businesses have been identified in the parish (a selection is listed in The Sedlescombe Directory). A recent survey associated with the Parish Plan has asked businesses a series of questions including how long the business has been established in the community, the number of employees and whether the business is hoping to expand. Twenty-three businesses replied. The types of businesses that replied were antiques and collectables centre, several builders, chartered accountant, chiropody and reflexology, cleaning services, designer/photographer, domestic and commercial security, farming, garage workshops and MOT test centre, landscape gardener, parcel carrier, plasterer/painter and decorator, recycled oak merchant, restaurant, the shop, signwriter, surveyor, tree surgeon, vehicle repair centre, a vineyard and wine importer. Although several employ just one or two people, the village shop has 16 staff (some part-time) and a property maintenance company, a parcel carrier and a tree surgeon employ 12 people each. The staff come from various areas including from within Sedlescombe. The businesses have been established in the Village for time varying from one year to 45 years.

The results show a broadly optimistic picture with virtually everyone happy with their location in the parish apart from one property maintenance company, established in the parish 15 years and employing 12 people, that would like to move more central to Hastings. The majority of businesses are not finding trading conditions difficult and would, or possibly would, like to expand. Their main problems seem to be with finding staff especially skilled tradesmen or those with sales or managerial skills. It appears that more training is needed. Other problems identified are

- not enough tourists
- access to forecourt frequently obstructed by visitors to another business
- health and safety burdens

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE

BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATIONS - Village businesses

- too many unqualified people working in the tree surgery business not using proper health and safety measures
- concern about the continuation of a good postal service
- need for more regular customers from the Village

Farming has always been an important part of Sedlescombe's working life and, in the 18th and 19th centuries, there were several tanneries in the parish, producing leather from local hides. The 20th century changes in farming practices have led to the division of farmland or its conversion to other uses. In some parts of the parish, hedges have been removed and fields enlarged, mostly to accommodate new machinery. The selling of farmhouses, usually to professional people, separate from their land, has led to pressure for new houses in the countryside. Some farm buildings including redundant oasthouses and barns have been converted into dwellings. Hops, fifty years ago a thriving part of Sedlescombe's agricultural scene, disappeared long ago and apple, pear, and soft fruit growing has reduced dramatically. These businesses once provided seasonal work for many in the village, especially the women.

Nowadays, the few farms that continue in the parish keep sheep or cattle and there is a need for a local abattoir to eliminate the long journey to the West Country together with facilities for the sale of local meat and produce as close to the farm gate as possible. A Local Produce Consortium in the High Weald is likely to obtain substantial funding from Leader+ in support of a "gate to plate" project

Our survey has noted disquiet amongst some local farmers about what will happen to agricultural land and they are asking the question "what do people want to happen to farmland in Sedlescombe in ten years time when there will be very few active farms here?" (BS).

There is good support for the introduction of a farmers' market in the village including from Pestalozzi (PP).

PP Parish Plan 2002

Diversification is already evident with land being used temporarily for boot sales and, just outside the parish towards Westfield, Moto-X events and small-scale recreational fishing. Farmland is often used for horse-connected activities and there are livery stables in the parish. Land in Poppinghole Lane is particularly horse-orientated. Help for the equestrian industry may be at hand with a group obtaining funding for improvement of bridleways throughout the High Weald.

There is a grass strip for taking off and landing small aircraft on farmland next to the A21 that has been established for several years. Following a public inquiry, users are required to avoid over-flying the Village and there is a restriction on the amount of use. Currently, no problems with the arrangements are evident.

Diverse uses of the Pestalozzi Estate are continually being considered and tried such as the speed hill climb held annually for several years and the relatively new venture of children's adventure holidays. A new spin-off for Sedlescombe is the use that the holiday company has started to make of the Village tennis courts bringing much-needed income. Some protection of the land is afforded by a new Countryside Stewardship Scheme and the formation of The Friends of the Pestalozzi Estate

Charcoal production was Sedlescombe's most enduring industry continuing for hundreds of years, historically on several different sites, but latterly in Petley Wood in Marley Lane. Petley Wood,

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATIONS - Village businesses

on the borders of the parish has seen much diversification in recent years with deer farming, paintball games, 4x4 off road driving and now a riding school is planned. Marley Lane has been identified as an area for a large business park development on land including the charcoal burning site. However, its position in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its remoteness from large-scale housing development and public transport mean that it is not altogether suitable. This business park, and another proposed opposite, are in the parish of Sedlescombe and there is a further one in Battle parish at Rutherfords Corner. At the Sedlescombe end of Marley Lane there is the big delivery company Amtrak and an earth moving and plant hire company as well as a business supplying and maintaining mowers and go-karts.

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Employment

Whilst the majority of residents do not want to see additional employment in the parish, a sizeable proportion would welcome new opportunities. Their preferences were roughly split equally between light industrial units and office/commercial work. Of those supporting additional employment, preferences were divided between work being located at Marley Lane industrial sites, in redundant farm buildings or other places such as livery stables, market gardens, in conservation etc. (PP)

<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan 2002</i>
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>

When asked whether there were any barriers preventing them taking up work or training/study opportunities, people answered as follows (BHS):

- | | |
|--|---|
| ○ Problems with child care (lack of or cost) | 5 |
| ○ Are disabled or have ill health | 4 |
| ○ No suitable jobs available | 4 |
| ○ Do not have the right type of experience or qualifications | 3 |
| ○ No suitable training or study opportunities available | 3 |
| ○ Lack of information/advice | 2 |
| ○ Other | 1 |

These figures are roughly in line with percentages experienced in other parts of the Battle Partnership Healthcheck area apart from "No suitable jobs available locally" when the average percentage was 8% against Sedlescombe's 4% (Catsfield 11%, Crowhurst 18%, Robertsbridge 9%) (BHS). Unemployment does not appear to be a big issue in Sedlescombe. This is probably because about 30% of residents are retired.

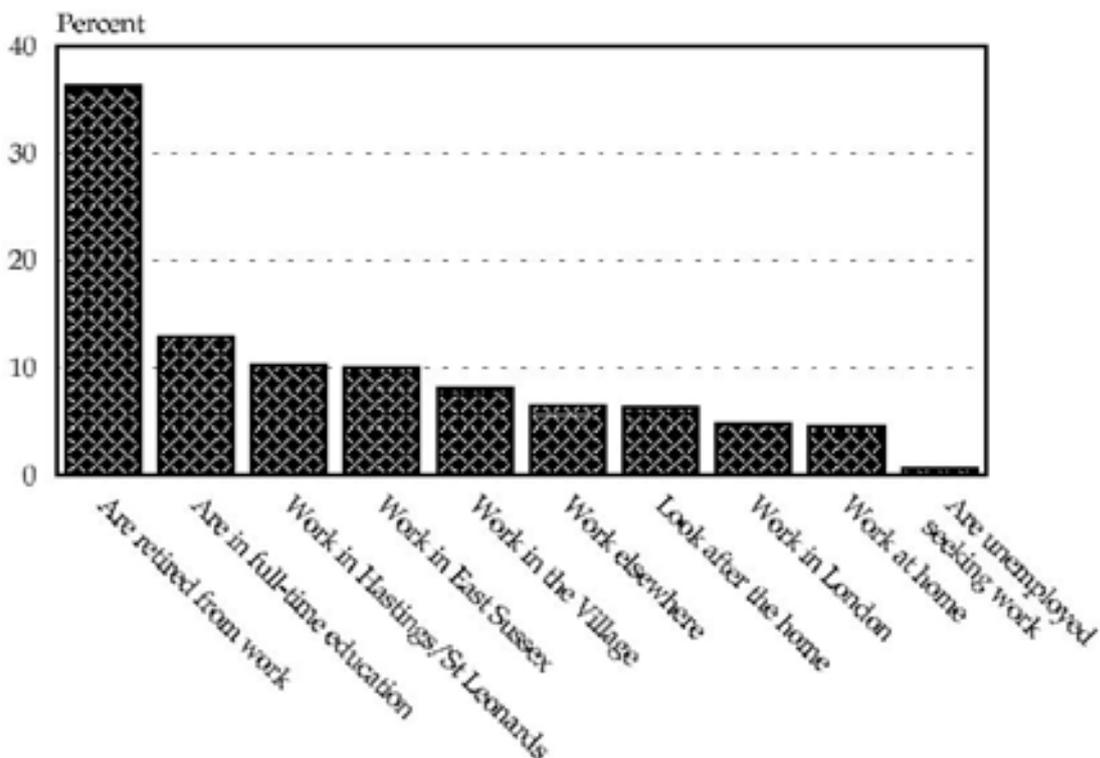


Chart showing work activities of respondents to the Parish Plan survey

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Shopping

The village shop/post office is well supported by local people with very few in the parish never going in (PP). However, some residents in the parish are several miles away from Sedlescombe Village centre and some are much closer to Robertsbridge (eg those living in Poppinghole Lane). About three quarters of respondents use the village post office with most of the remainder using Battle Post Office (BHS).

<i>PP</i>	<i>Parish Plan 2002</i>
<i>BHS</i>	<i>Battle Healthcheck Survey 2002</i>

Although the majority of residents do their food shopping in Hastings or its outskirts, there is still a sizeable minority of households that rely on the village shop for their food supplies (PP). Ordering groceries online, for example from Tesco's, has not yet taken off in Sedlescombe, although about 45% of respondents who live in Sedlescombe say they have access to e-mail/internet at home (BHS). A few say they would consider using the internet for shopping if it could be accessed in the Village (PP) and 27% would be interested in public internet facilities in Battle and district if they were available (BHS). Nearly everyone travels to food stores outside the Village by car and little use is made by respondents of the free buses (BHS).

Hastings, the closest major town, remains the main place used for general shopping and clothes but Battle and other towns, particularly Tunbridge Wells, are popular. Some people use the village shop for general shopping. Few Sedlescombe people buy their clothes in Battle. The main reason given for shopping in Battle by Sedlescombe residents is that they like to support local shops, they need last minute items, and it saves transport costs and time (BHS). A third of respondents think that local shops give good value (BHS).

Nearly two thirds of respondents use banks and building societies in Battle, followed by Hastings & St Leonards. Only 5 people out of 315 admitted to banking on the internet. Again most Sedlescombe residents go to Battle for the cash machine or alternatively to Hastings & St Leonards. (BHS)

4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE CONSULTATIONS - Tourism

Tourism has developed over the years into an important local industry. A partnership of Local Authorities, tourist and heritage organisations and business people has been formed to market the area designated as "1066 Country" of which Sedlescombe is part.

The Brickwall Hotel at the head of the Green has 26 bedrooms, conference facilities and a restaurant open to the public. Other accommodation is provided by a caravan and camping site in Crazy Lane and bed and breakfast accommodation on the A21. Food and drink are provided by the Queen's Head and the Clockhouse Bistro.

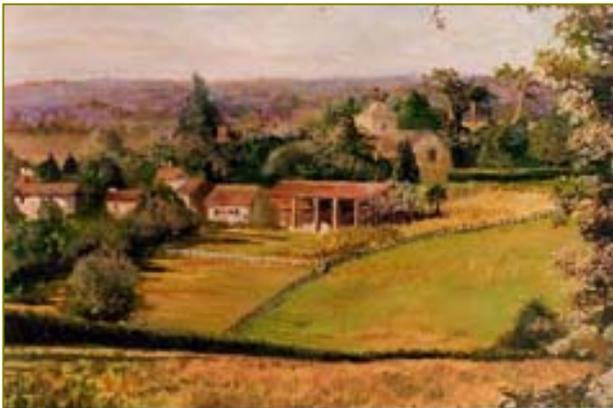
Since 2002, the long distance "1066 Country Walk" (Pevensey to Rye) has had a signposted link to Sedlescombe Village and there is maybe the opportunity to provide a further link from this footpath to local bed and breakfast accommodation at Lower Marley Farm and to include details in the 1066 Country Walk leaflet. The Camping and Caravan Park in Crazy Lane has already been waymarked from the link path. Two leaflets, one describing a short walk around the Sedlescombe Village centre and the other, several footpath walks, were updated in 2001/2 and are available locally. Local businesses are mentioned in the leaflets.

The improvement of amenities that will benefit low-key tourism, for example the provision of extra seats around the Village, is useful for residents as well.

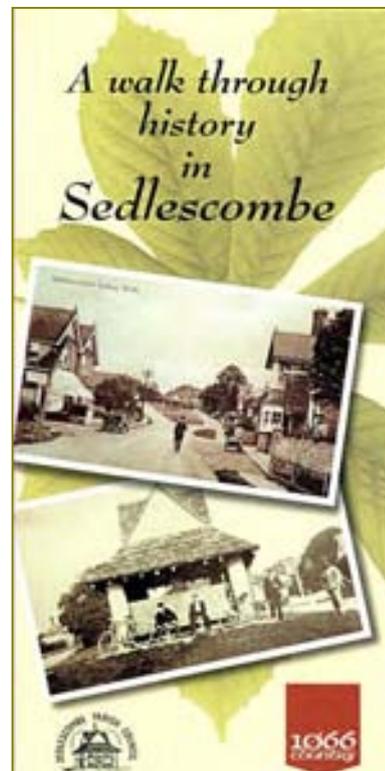
**4. BUSINESS & RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN SEDLESCOMBE
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	AIM No.	Lead organisations	Date
Local businesses	1) Support tax reductions for rural businesses and shops (88% say yes in PPS) 2) Support expansion of local businesses where appropriate. 3) Support appropriate diversification.	TW PP	4.1	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Village shop	Protect and support village shop	PP BHS BHM TW	4.1	Sedlescombe Parish Council/ Battle Partnership	ongoing
Village pub	Ensure that our last public house remains an essential centre of village life	PP	4.1		ongoing
Farmers market	Support the introduction of a Farmers market in Sedlescombe (or similar market)	PP	4.1		2002
Employment	Publicise appropriate employment	PP BHS	4.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Training	Support and encourage training of local people [Sedlescombe businesses say they find it difficult to employ the following: general builders, bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, welders, tree surgeons, salesman, managers]	BS	4.3	Rother District Council	ongoing
Tourism	Encourage opportunities for low key tourism to support local business and benefit residents	BS TW	4.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council/ Rother District Council etc.	ongoing
Postal service	Support retention of quality postal service	BS	4.5		ongoing
<i>TW Tourism Workshop; PP Parish Plan, BHS Battle Healthcheck Survey; BHM Battle Healthcheck Meeting; PPS Parish Plan Summary consultation</i>					

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
ACHIEVEMENTS



AIM NO.5
**To protect
and enhance
Sedlescombe's
built and
natural
environment**



5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Illustrations over	
Top left	A favourite view: buttercup meadow towards Church from Balcombe Green Photograph by John F Cook
Second left	Horse chestnuts at The Brooks Photograph by Frank Johnson
Third left	Favourite trees: horse chestnut and oak tree with Brickwall Hotel behind October 2002 Photograph by Pauline Raymond
Fourth left	Painting of view from Balcombe Green towards Church by John F Cook – used on front cover of leaflet “Footpath Walks around Sedlescombe” – available locally
Bottom right	Cover of “A walk through history in Sedlescombe” – free leaflet produced 2002, available locally

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
5.1 Sedlescombe's built environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To protect Sedlescombe's built environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commented on all planning applications within or near Sedlescombe's parish boundaries. ○ Attended Planning Inquiry re development at Blackman, Pavie & Ladden site in Marley Lane. ○ Included brief histories of some listed buildings in the new "Walk through History in Sedlescombe" leaflet in order to raise the public's awareness of their importance. ○ Liaised with Housing Associations responsible for properties at East View Terrace, Meadowside and Roselands. ○ Several contacts made with local car sales business regarding removal of bunting. ○ Supported maintenance of the Churchyard. ○ Commented on Rother District Council's Housing Needs Survey results and their interpretation.
5.2 Sedlescombe's natural environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To protect and enhance Sedlescombe's natural environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-operated with Designers, High Weald Unit and East Sussex County Council in production of new interpretative boards for Red Barn Field Nature Park. ○ Produced a Management Plan for Red Barn Field Nature Park for the benefit of wildlife and carried out work including installation of warning signs. ○ Carried out surveys to establish biodiversity of Red Barn Field Nature Park. ○ Arranged for Countryside Rangers to visit the Primary School to tell the children about Red Barn Field Nature Park's possible wildlife. ○ Arranged a school visit for the top class to Red Barn Field Nature Park on 19/02/02. Invited Roger Jones to speak about bats and Dr Patrick Roper to speak about and plant a wild service tree. ○ Parish Councillor Dellow appointed Council's first Environmental Officer. Has negotiated with a farmer regarding nesting skylarks in the parish and has sought assurances from Rother on disposal of fridges and tyres.

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AIMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Aims	Achievements 2001/2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Erected bird and bat boxes at Red Barn Field Nature Park. ○ Maintained and replaced trees. ○ Watched over the health of the River Brede and its environs. ○ New Countryside Stewardship area designated on Pestalozzi land next to the river. ○ Formation of "Friends of Pestalozzi Estate" with guided walks, talks and moth evenings to raise awareness of the natural environment. ○ Talks by Dr Patrick Roper in the Village to raise awareness of our local natural history. ○ New conservation walk on permissive path at Pestalozzi Estate.
<p>5.3 Waste management to protect the environment</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage efficient handling of waste ○ To encourage reduction of waste by reducing the use of materials, reusing materials and recycling more materials ○ To support litter control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joined the protest against the proposed waste incinerator at Mountfield because of its distance from the main areas of waste production and because Mountfield is in the High Weald Area of Natural Beauty. ○ Sedlescombe schoolchildren winners of a competition to find a design to paint onto recycling bins in Sedlescombe car park. ○ Carried out regular litter collections at playgrounds, Village Green, bus shelter.
<p>5.4 Traffic management to protect the environment</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To encourage traffic management to safeguard the environment 	

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BACKGROUND AND CONSULTATION - housing growth

Sedlescombe's population at 1500 has nearly doubled since the end of the Second World War. This is partly due to the redrawing of the parish boundary in 1959 to include land and properties

SEDLESCOMBE'S POPULATION	
Census Year	Population
1901	522
1911	568
1921	546
1931	614
1951	758
1961	991
1971	1175
1981	1300
1991	1293
2001	About 1500*

south of the River Brede that were previously included in the parish of Westfield. More importantly, however, is the amount of house building, particularly small estates built close to the village centre. There are now nearly 650 dwellings in the parish. With retirement bungalows, starter homes, social housing, warden care accommodation and large executive houses, it can be seen that Sedlescombe has developed a good mix of accommodation, to purchase or rent. Many houses have been improved and extended, especially in Churchlands Lane where holiday chalets have become substantial attractive bungalows.

The Growth of Sedlescombe's Housing Estates			
Year	Estate	Location	Type of property
1956 to 1990s	Gorselands	Off Brede Lane	A mix of 39 houses and bungalows
1964	Roselands	In The Street	Housing Association sheltered accommodation for the elderly - 23 flats (rents £85pw to £110 per week)
1967	Park Shaw	Off Brede Lane	31 bungalows
1968	East View Terrace, older part	Off Brede Lane	Some Housing Association, some purchased under "Right to Buy Scheme". A mix of houses and flats. Rother Homes Housing Association - 21 - 1 bed flats, 2 and 3 bed houses (rents £70pw to £85pw)
mid 1980s	Streetlands	Off Gammons Way	10 bungalows
mid 1980s	Gammons Way	Off Brede Lane	3 pairs of semi-detached houses
mid to late 1980s	Gregory Walk	Off The Street	12 bungalows
1991/2	East View Terrace, newer part	Off Brede Lane	Orbit Housing Association houses, flats and bungalows built on the site of older local authority houses. On rebuild, the number of houses doubled. 14x1 bed flats (rents £57pw) 2x1 bed houses (rents £51pw) 8x2 bed houses (rents £61pw) 22x3 bed houses (rents £65pw) 2x4 bed houses (rents £76pw) 10x2 bed bungalows (rents £59pw)
1999/2000	Orchard Way	Off Park Shaw	15 large executive houses
1999/2000	Eaton Walk	Off The Street	8 houses, semi-detached and detached

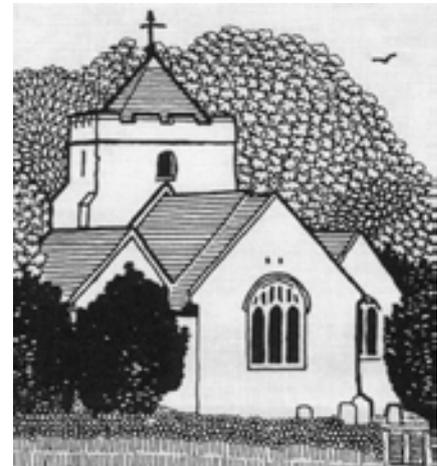
5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND AND COUNSULTATION - local distinctiveness

Sedlescombe has long enjoyed prosperity and a wealth of fine old houses still exists. The oldest date from the 15th and 16th centuries. The High Weald has its foundations on the Hastings Beds, which are made up of clays and sandstones of variable quality and ranging in colour from pale



grey through yellow to rich iron red. The locally available clays were made into bricks at several yards around the parish and timber from the dense forests was used in



the construction of many of the houses. Examples of Sussex local building materials are clear to see in the houses of the parish with red brick, grey headers, red tile hanging, white and black feather-edged boarding and exposed timber frames.

Some of the earlier features were covered up in the 19th century with weatherboarding or tile hanging to hide poor structural timbers or merely because it was the fashion. A high proportion of buildings in the centre of the Village have been listed either for their own value or for group value. Most are Grade II (buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them) but the Church is Grade II* (particularly important buildings) and Manor Cottages are Grade I (buildings of outstanding interest). It is proposed that the centre part of the Village will be designated a "Conservation Area".

The importance of the of buildings around the Village Green with the Pumphouse in the centre, how they combine and form groups, their density, height and mass, and spaces between cannot be stressed too much. They are the main contributors to Sedlescombe's local character and distinctiveness and are much valued.

There is no shortage of "big houses" around the parish. Some were farmhouses that today make attractive 21st century homes. One of the mansions, Great Sanders standing in its own grounds in the north of the parish, was converted into fifteen flats in the 1980s. Prior to its conversion, it had been used as a school and much earlier as a private house. Oaklands Manor is now back as a private house although, for a time, it was used as the offices of the Pestalozzi Children's Village, a charity occupying a large area of land in the southern part of the parish.

For many years, housing development has been restricted to within Sedlescombe's "housing settlement area" (see outline at Appendix) with new house building outside this area only being allowed for very specific purposes, such as agricultural need. This is basically expected to continue, although the large numbers of houses that Rother District is required to provide annually, together with the lack of alternative suitable land, will inevitably lead to pressure for development outside the settlement area. Apart from single houses, there are currently no areas of land identified for housing development in Sedlescombe, although an application for permission to build 8 properties on the Park View site at the rear of Kester House has been submitted.

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

The results of Rother District Council's 2001 Housing Needs Survey were released down to parish level in 2002.

The vast majority of respondents own their own homes (77%). Of the remaining households, 16% rent from a Housing Association, 5% of people rent privately and 1% lives in housing tied to their employment. (HNS)

HNS *Housing Needs Survey 2001*

Most occupy houses (59%) with some bungalows (32%) and a few flats (9%). The average size is three bedroom (34%) with 45 (23%) having 4 bedrooms or more and 83 (43%) having two bedrooms or less. (HNS)

46 households said they need different accommodation.

- o 1 because of overcrowding,
- o 3 want to form separate households,
- o 14 want to leave home,
- o 5 are in short-term accommodation,
- o 7 want to be nearer friends or relatives,
- o 2 are in unsuitable accommodation,
- o 6 want to be closer to work,
- o 2 have health/disability reasons,
- o 2 want to leave the area,
- o 1 each because of further education, insecurity, old age, retirement.

Of these 8 were on Rother District Council Housing Needs Register and most of the rest were not interested in Housing Association accommodation. 8 households said they were not aware of the existence of the Register and 11 asked for details on how to register with the housing needs department of Rother District Council. (HNS)

The greatest areas of need for accommodation in Sedlescombe are amongst couples without children (13 couples) and single adults (23). One couple with children and four groups of 3 or more adults living together also want accommodation. The majority of these people were in the 16-29 age group (22) with 21 in the 30-59 age group. (HNS)

Of the households wanting accommodation:

- o 12 want houses,
- o 14 flats,
- o 5 bungalows and
- o 7 sheltered accommodation (HNS).

Of course, this does not necessarily mean that new properties are required to meet these needs and people will move from the Village from time to time for many reasons they do not currently anticipate.

The problems of the ageing population were also mentioned by a few people, eg those who want to stay in their own homes or, because of age, need a smaller property without a garden. (HNS)

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

12 households specified that there was someone in their household with special needs. There were 5 who considered themselves frail elderly, with 3 having some physical disability and 1 with impaired sight or hearing. Improvements that could improve their living conditions were:

- wheelchair access
- single level accommodation
- a downstairs WC
- extra handrails
- lower level light switches
- raised power points
- lever taps
- low level kitchen units
- a shower unit
- lift/stairlift
- car parking space near front door
- improved heating system
- more support services such as home carer or meals on wheels

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSULTATION

The inclusion of the whole parish in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1983 has provided a measure of protection from unwelcome development and there is increasing interest in wildlife and environmental surveys to establish the biodiversity of the area.

The designation of Countryside Stewardship areas with the increased public access that this brings is growing in Sedlescombe. The newest area belongs to the Pestalozzi Trust where the land in the floodplain is managed, amongst other things, to provide grassland suitable for wintering birdlife. A new Conservation Path through Hoads Wood is a welcome addition to the existing footpath network and allows an attractive circular path from the Village without the need to walk along the road.

There are some designated "Areas of Conservation Importance" within the parish, not entirely open to the public, where the wildlife importance of the site is recognised by the planning authorities.

SEDLESCOMBE SITES OF LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE (SNCI)

Powdermill Reservoir, Brede High Woods & Hurst Wood complex

Large area of ancient woodland, which includes Hornbeam coppice and conifer plantation. The site is of exceptional importance for wetland and woodland invertebrates, including many Red Data Book/Notable species of Beetle, such as the Green Tiger Beetle, 33 species of butterfly, including Pearl-bordered Fritillary and the Broad-bordered Bee-hawk moth.

The Brede Valley (also parishes of Westfield, Brede, Udimore, Guestling, Icklesham and Rye)

Of outstanding importance for wildlife. Its extensive ditch system supports a great diversity of submerged, floating and emergent aquatic plants, including uncommon species such as Flowering-rush and Rootless Duckweed. The varied invertebrate community includes 9 Red Data Book and 8 Nationally Scarce species. The site is also valuable for birds, particularly passerines such as Reed Warbler and Sedge Warbler.

The ending of charcoal production on the edge of the Parish in Marley Lane in the 1990s was significant and eliminated the pollution that often covered the village with a thick pall of smoke.

The cleanliness of the water in the River Brede is regularly monitored by the Environment Agency and fish surveys are undertaken from time to time. Pollution has been noted, particularly caused by treated sewage effluent being legitimately allowed to enter the river upstream. A recent theft of diesel oil created an oil spillage into the River, which was found before too much damage was done. The growth of Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed on the riverbanks is a continuing problem that is dealt with as it occurs. Another recent development is the spread of Phytophthora that is causing the death of alder trees on the riverbanks.

Flooding of the land in the floodplain in Sedlescombe occurs at some time during most years. A few properties are threatened at the time of flooding and the Environment Agency is responsible for keeping property owners informed about the state of the River. The Environment Agency has published maps showing areas likely to suffer flooding and aquifer protection zones.

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSULTATION

Red Barn Field. In 2000, a small informal nature park behind the village hall was designated by the Parish Council and called Red Barn Field Nature Park; a management plan has been adopted. The following aims and objectives were adopted by the Parish Council in September 2000:

- o To conserve and improve the natural habitats in the Field
- o To maintain and encourage wildlife
- o To create an environmental park for quiet recreational use
- o To provide a new educational facility for children
- o To establish an alternative pedestrian access to the new village hall
- o To provide a picnic area suitable for disabled use

In addition, a programme of action was adopted as follows:

- o To draw up a report and five-year plan
- o To apply for grants
- o To carry out the work
- o To open the area to the public when the village hall is finished
- o To encourage wildlife surveys to establish diversity of species and to guide future management of land.

Trees

For many people, trees are an important feature of the landscape. The most favourite trees for people living in Sedlescombe are those on the Village Green. But there are other trees throughout the parish that are valued by respondents. (PP)

On the Green (50 votes)

Magnolia in front of hotel

Horse chestnuts in front of Queens Head

Walnut near pub car park

Chestnuts outside church

Castlemans rookery

Churchyard

Oaklands

Pestalozzi Ghyll Wood

Along entry drive to Pestalozzi

Dead horizontal giant between Oaklands Manor and Brassetts Wood near footpath

Large limes on footpath below Pestalozzi

Hurst Lane

Wood off Hurst Lane

Killingan wood

Bluebell Wood

Oak plantation off Hurst Lane and behind Great Sanders House

Old oak behind Hurst Cottage in Hurst Lane

Fir tree at end of Orchard Way

Flowering cherry

Group of horse chestnuts over Brooks

Lone oak in huge Southern Water Authority field along footpath from Sawmills to Gt Sanders

Pine Corner in Chapel Hill

Pine trees at Wendymill House in Chapel Hill

Rear of home behind Gorselands

Silver birch at car park

Wood off Brede Lane

Wooded area behind EVT

All trees are beautiful 11, I don't have a favourite tree but my dog does 3, My garden 5

PP Parish Plan 2002

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSULTATION

Tree preservation orders in Balcombe Green, Marley Lane, Orchard Way and Pestalozzi Village have been made by the District Council to safeguard the trees that could be threatened by development.

Views. More than half of respondents have a favourite view, the most popular being from and of the village green, mostly looking south. Views throughout the parish are valued by residents often from their own properties, but the view from the top of Chapel Hill and from Churchland Lane towards the Parish Church have several devotees. (PP)

Waste Management. The current debate on waste management is an important one. We produce huge quantities every year. Nationally, municipal waste is growing by around 3% each year and each household produces about one tonne of waste. In Rother, domestic waste is collected by a contractor and taken to the Household Waste Disposal Site at Pebsham where about 50% of it is diverted to The Waste Derived Fuel Plant. Here the combustible element is converted into fuel pellets that are burnt in specialised boilers elsewhere to produce energy. Aluminium/steel cans are also extracted from the waste stream and recycled.

The Government has set challenging recycling targets ie to recycle or compost at least 25% of household waste by 2005, rising to 33% by 2015. The targets for recovery of household waste require "Energy from Waste" plants to be built as planned for Mountfield, just a few miles west of Sedlescombe. In addition, composting sites are to be provided. In Rother, Parish Councils are being urged to take on arrangements for management of garden waste composting as well as collection of newspapers. Clearly, Rother District Council has to introduce new waste handling procedures if they are to meet targets and they plan to trial kerbside collection in Bexhill. Collection in rural areas would be more difficult to introduce, but is known to have been successful in some places, particularly abroad.

In Sedlescombe, there appears to be enthusiasm for increased recycling provision. There are 35 recycling "bring" sites across the District and in Sedlescombe there are facilities available at the Car Park for disposal of glass, plastic, books, clothes and tin foil for subsequent recycling. However, recycling is one service that causes most dissatisfaction amongst residents (PP). Some people would like to see collection from the house and separation of waste for recycling, recycling of cardboard, recycling of biodegradable waste and communal composting, recycling of batteries, recycling of large quantities of paper. The existing newspaper recycling facility in the car park is not always adequate, as it often appears to be full. (PP)

PP Parish Plan

Enhancing the environment. When asked what should be done to help protect and enhance the local environment of Battle and district, Sedlescombe respondents replied (BHS) in the following order (choices provided):

- improve public transport locally
- traffic calming measures
- improve roads in the area
- more recycling locally

Although it would be difficult to organise, a minibus linking with trains would reduce the number of cars travelling to Battle and Robertsbridge Stations from the Village (PP). Again, buses linking directly with the Conquest Hospital would reduce the number of vehicles travelling there and would ease the problem of parking.

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSULTATION

Road sweeping and litter collection. Thirty households (16%) are not satisfied with road sweeping and litter collection both within the Village and in the rural lanes (PP). More regular clearance and prosecution of litterers are suggested (PP).

Waste and Energy Plan. Sedlescombe's Environmental Officer is in discussion with Rother District Council Agenda 21 officers about a Parish Waste and Energy Plan that could be an example for other parishes in the district.

5. SEDLESCOMBE'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CONSULTATION

I have been asked to comment on recycling in Rother with regard to Sedlescombe in particular. The situation at present is that the "bring" recycling system in Rother accounts for about 9% of household waste, and in Sedlescombe about 70 tonnes. The total for Rother is just over 3,000 tonnes. On a per capita basis, Sedlescombe is about average for the district.

To meet the Government targets for recycling at 16% by 2003/4, clearly the "bring" system would need a tremendous promotional spend to achieve the 7% increase necessary. Therefore to expedite this, a proposed kerb-side collection of newspapers in Bexhill covering 10-11,000 households (about 25% of households in Rother) and composting of green waste and possibly cardboard in the rural areas is being progressed rapidly. It is envisaged that the composting scheme would be carried out along similar lines to the very successful business in Wye village called "Wycycle". The principle there is that the green waste is collected and composted by a local government funded private enterprise, on-farm, using existing equipment and the resultant compost sold as soil conditioner. As an organic grower, I have used significant quantities of green waste compost (in excess of 200 tonnes) and can vouch for its quality as a fertilizer. Waste cardboard, owing to its high fibre content, makes a very good supplement to the composting process.

This is obviously just the beginning of a much more broadly based programme for the introduction of kerb-side collection of separated waste.

I have also been asked to comment on the ways that residents could help to reduce the need for waste collection or recycling. The "Waste Hierarchy" is an international strategy for waste management to help minimise the environmental impact of waste. The four elements are

- Reduce
- Reuse
- Recycle
- Recover

IN THAT ORDER. In other words, waste minimisation and reuse are more important than recycling. This is obvious since recycling per se does not lead to waste reduction and could mean that the market for recyclates would diminish with the residual problem of disposal and expense to householders. If we want to ultimately cease filling holes in the ground and incinerating then quite clearly reduction and reuse are essential. Like the bring system for recycling, the voluntary reduction and reuse of materials, however laudable, would have a limited uptake whilst society has a "throwaway" mindset. However we have to start somewhere so that the message can spread. Such measures as making one's own compost, reusing plastic bags (if every bag is used twice, only half the number is required), using rechargeable batteries etc. are obvious and being carried out by many people already. If people are thinking this is fiddling while Rome burns, then clearly sterner measures are called for. It is all very well for government to set recycling targets, but to my mind that is ducking the issue which is the knotty problem of enforcing manufacturers to use less or less environmentally damaging packing, avoiding built in obsolescence etc., and above all educating people in the principles of a sustainable future.

What it boils down to is that those residents who are doing their level best to fulfil the requirements of the waste hierarchy could do a lot worse than use their collective effort to press for the necessary changes.

District Councillor Matthew Wilson, Rother Cabinet Member responsible for "Providing a Safe & Healthy District and Sustainability."

**5. SEDLESCOMBE'S BUILT & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
ACTION PLAN 2002-2007**

Action	Details	Source	Aim No.	Lead organisations	Date
Planning	Continue to comment on planning applications and Plans issued by other bodies		5.1	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Red Barn Field Nature Park	Advertise, carry out surveys to establish the biodiversity of the site, improve public access to village hall	PP & Management Plan	5.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council.	ongoing
Trees	Safeguard favourite trees	PP	5.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Views	Safeguard favourite views	PP	5.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Wider environment	Protect wider environment including water and river quality	PP	5.2	Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Waste management	Encourage reduction of waste. Continue to oppose the construction of a waste handling facility at Mountfield.	PP	5.3	Rother District Council/East Sussex County Council/Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Recycling	Improvement of waste handling eg doorstep collection, green waste and cardboard collection.	PP	5.3	Rother District Council/East Sussex County Council/Sedlescombe Parish Council	ongoing
Recycling	Regular emptying of recycling bins in car park	PP	5.3	Rother District Council	ongoing
Litter collection	General improvement of litter collection	PP	5.3	Sedlescombe Parish Council & Rother DC	ongoing
Station parking problems	Buses to link with trains to limit use of cars	PP	5.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council and others	further investigation
Hospital parking problems	Buses to link with hospital to limit use of cars	PP	5.4	Sedlescombe Parish Council and others	further investigation
<i>PP Parish Plan</i>					

SUMMARY

How Sedlescombe will develop in the next few years is not clear. Sites at the rear of Balcombe Green, on the bakery site and to the west of Street Farm that were earmarked for development in Rother District Council's published plans in 1980 have been built on and other house building has taken place when land has become available. Currently there are no plans to amend the Sedlescombe development boundary and many Sedlescombe residents would like it to stay that way. However, changes in the planning laws could make a difference, especially regarding business development. Pressure for industrial development on brownfield or greenfield sites in Marley Lane and other parts of the parish is bound to continue having, in part, already been successful. Hastings' boundary is just 3 miles away and there will inevitably be a wish to spill outwards. We do not know how the Pestalozzi Village will develop but the Parish Council intends to work closely with the charity to safeguard local amenities.

The future of the Primary School seems to be secure with rising numbers of children coming from Sedlescombe and surrounding areas but shortage of space is a problem. If, however, numbers on the school roll were to fall below a certain level, funding would be withdrawn possibly resulting in reduction of staff. Secondary school pupils still attend Claverham and, increasingly, Robertsbridge. The price of houses locally and the natural urge to move away from home usually means that older teenagers do not stay in the Village for long.

Sedlescombe's population is increasingly elderly and very elderly and the shortage of warden care or care homes is a concern.

The Parish Church is coming to terms with changes. The full-time Rector has been replaced by a non-stipendiary Curate-in-Charge who will continue teaching in Hastings as well as being available to the parishes of Sedlescombe and Whatlington for part of his time. The Rural Dean is to be the Priest-in-Charge.

Currently, it seems unlikely that many Sedlescombe residents will be persuaded to swap their car for a bus. The level of traffic through Sedlescombe will probably continue to increase. Even greater emphasis will, therefore, be needed on building footways and cycle paths so that more will be encouraged to walk or cycle.

The value of this Plan will be tested over the next few years as we strive for that

Vibrant Sedlescombe that people are proud to call home!

The following main issues have been identified
(in no particular order):

Traffic
Recycling
Dog fouling
Youth issues
Rural policing
Lack of footways
Training of employees
Playground improvements



Produced by Sedlescombe Parish Council supported by grant aid from The Countryside Agency

£5 Where sold