

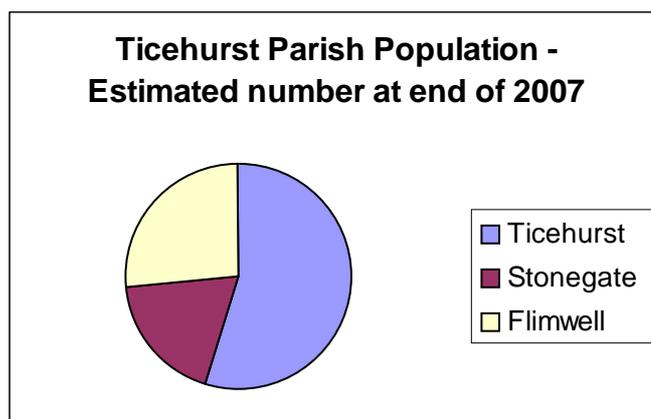
TICEHURST – A PARISH AT THE HEART OF THE HIGH WEALD AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

ACTION PLAN UPDATE

1. **Background** In late 2003, a 32 page booklet was made available, free, on request to all households in the three villages covered by the Civil Parish of Ticehurst in the Rother District of the county of East Sussex. Hereinafter, these three local government area Councils are referred to as TPC for the Ticehurst Parish Council, RDC for the District Council and ESCC for the County Council.

The 2003 Village Action Plan gave a full assessment of the three villages at that time with a look forward over the ensuing 10 years. Eighteen general areas were listed for action to bring about hoped-for improvements. This action plan can still be viewed on the Ticehurst website www.ticehurst.info.

2. **The Present Situation** In the four years since the above mentioned Plan was written, various changes have occurred in the three electoral wards that constitute the TPC area. For a start, both the number of households and the estimated population have grown by about 5% - almost entirely in Ticehurst. As at the end of 2007, the total population of the Ticehurst Ward (which includes Wallcrouch and Three Leg Cross) will be about 1970, Flimwell about 960 and Stonegate about 670 i.e. a total of about 3600. This is 15.5% above the 1991 census figure and 6.5% above the 2001 census figure.



Other notable changes are the completion of the new Ticehurst and Flimwell Primary School, a doubling of Newington Court, providing better facilities for twice as many elderly residents and a new easily accessible surgery for the Parish. The refusal of a plan to build a new state-of-the-art psychiatric hospital in the grounds of Ticehurst House has set a marker that should prevent the establishment of any fresh building 'footprint' on this part of the High Weald. Against this, new 'mini estates' have been built on the old school site (Eden Court), the Council Depot (Lower St. Mary's) and the last part of the Farthing Hill development. This leaves only the Corner Farm site at Flimwell, the possibility of an extension of Old Wardsdown in Flimwell and the Warrens site on the High Street in Ticehurst where significant building land is available for more than one or two houses within the Parish 'Development Envelopes'. Other changes include the completion of a multi-weather court on the Ticehurst Recreation Ground, and the establishment of a regular Farmers Market at Stonegate helping to restore some retail facilities in that Ward.

3. **Validation** To establish priority 'Action Points' to validate these as the wishes of parishioners, consultations were carried out at the Annual Assemblies of 2006 and 2007. The percentages used below are from the questionnaires widely circulated at the 2007 Assembly. Eighty-four completed forms were returned giving a fair sample of the total electorate (about 8% of eligible voters). The top five subjects raised were

- **Traffic Calming/parking problems**
 - **Concerns on over-development**
 - **Recycling and waste collections**
- **Support for local activity groups and youth facilities**
- **Concerns over Ticehurst Village Square and the future of the Bell Hotel.**

Based on these soundings, the following policy lines are drawn up for the Action Plan Aims of the Parish Council.

Policies to be followed:

Transport and Roads

We will work with the County Council and Highways Authority to improve the safety aspects of the roads that run through the Parish. In the case of the A21, we will work with the Highways Agency, our peer local Parishes and the County Council to ensure that any works benefit not only the through traffic, but also the local residents. We will support proposals that unify the two parts of the divided village of Flimwell and work to minimise the imposition of major traffic generated civil engineering works on the villages or near residences.

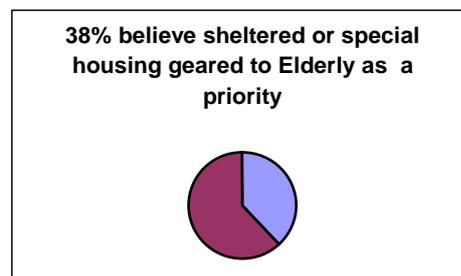
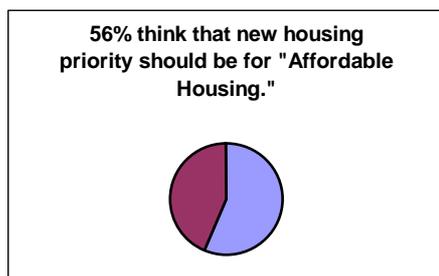
On the B Road system, we will lobby for mini-roundabouts or similar calming measures at the critical junction of the B2087 and the B2099 near the Ticehurst Village Institute and at the four-way junction in central Stonegate. We shall continue to draw the County's attention to lower speed limits and better road markings, through several hamlets.

On the minor road systems, we will seek better kerbing and ditching in areas where the road edges are prone to disintegration. We have serious concerns that Rosemary Lane, Birchetts Green Lane and other lanes that serve as part of the "Round Bewl" routes are not adequately marked or restricted to give pedestrians, cyclists, horses or farm machinery priority and will lobby for changes.

We aim to retain and expand the local bus services of the Travel Club.

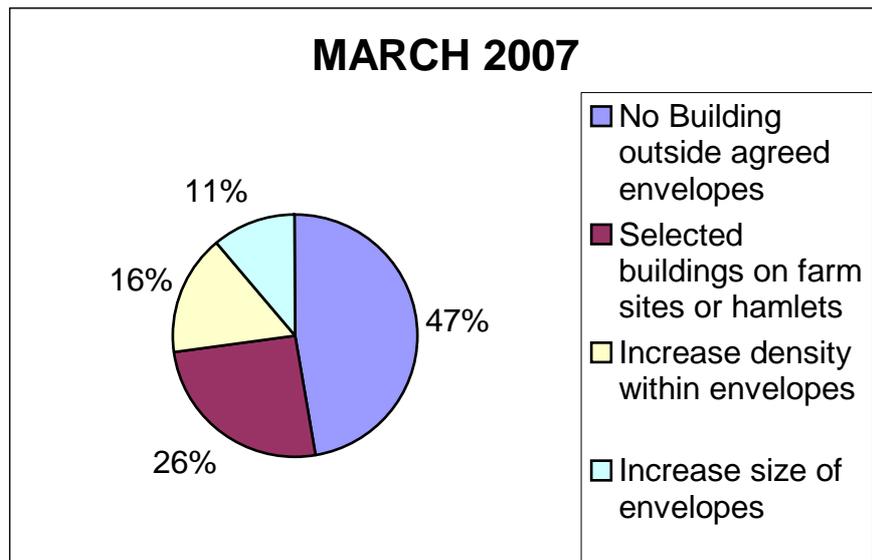
Housing Development and Planning

We will work with the District Council (and other relevant authorities) to ensure a smooth evolution of our villages' environment reflecting the need to provide affordable housing to retain first-time owners and the young within our village communities, along with sufficient upgrading and selected new housing to keep a vibrant life across the Parish. This may include "special need" housing for the less abled and shared cost accommodation.



We will oppose 'estate type' developments, particularly of 'executive style' homes. We are opposed to the wholesale conversion of business/commercial sites to residential usage and will actively encourage the creation of new business activities on existing designated areas.

No need is seen, within the next ten years, to expand the agreed village envelopes with the exception of the Corner Farm site at Flimwell, already incorporated in the latest Rother Local Plan. Being realistic, the Council are willing to commence discussion to designate which areas should eventually be allocated to provide enlarged village envelopes in each ward for any additional housing needed in subsequent Parish Plans. This should take into account the wishes expressed in the latest questionnaire available at the time and be revalidated before adoption in each ward.



Community Centres

We aim to get further funding to continue refurbishing the Ticehurst Village Institute and provide changing room facilities on the Recreation Ground. We will support efforts to establish a Village Hall in Flimwell. At Stonegate, we would support proposals to provide extra space to compliment the existing Hall. Our Village halls, schools, playing fields and public ponds are highly valued assets. The main users of these facilities are always looking for additional volunteers to guide and lead our parishioners in the enjoyment of the sporting and creative, recreational and meeting opportunities they offer. Beside encouraging volunteers, we will also lobby for additional funding to provide suitably qualified supervisory staff for all organised group activities.

Ticehurst Village Centre

We are overtly aware of increasing pressure on the Village Square and neighbouring roads, by parked vehicles and will examine carefully, all proposals whereby this conservation area can be expanded for use by all those who wish to use the local businesses located around the village centre. This may involve expanding the RDC car park providing off road parking for houses in the area and possibly reorganising bus stops, pathways and road crossings.

Minor Projects

To assist in the viability of the local economy, the Parish Council will support all efforts to establish extra business facilities within the parish. We aim to get improved local Tourist Information displayed and will seek to get both RDC and ESCC services based in part within the Parish. We will encourage local retail outlets at Stonegate and Flimwell. We aim to support all leisure or interest groups based in the villages that provide open access to all interested parishioners. .

ON GOING ACTIONS

- a) The Parish Council is seeking to become a 'Quality Council' able to seek and control additional funds.
- b) The Council is supporting plans to ensure that the ownership of the Bell football Field is returned to Community Trust status.
- c) Plans already agreed for safer and more attractive Christmas Lighting are supported.
- d) A top priority is to co-operate fully with the Community Support Officers and Sussex Police to keep our villages safe and vandal-free.
- e) Recycling and waste collection to the maximum extent possible is seen as an important goal that needs full co-operation with RDC both ways to work better than at present so that Ticehurst Parish becomes a leader amongst its peer parishes.
- f) The 2003 Action Plan encouraged the creation of the Ticehurst Chamber of Commerce. It remains an important consideration to support the local business community and service providers including the Stonegate Farmers Market and other "farm-gate" traders.
- g) We are seeking to establish a design criteria to ensure that all planning and construction proposals within the parish meet or exceed agreed specifications regarding materials, parking requirements and compatibility for the neighbourhood affected.
- h) Increase and improve the allotments available within the Parish according to demand.
- i) We are arranging to update and expand the Ticehurst Website.
- j) "News and Views" regularly carries up to date information on activities within our villages and provides a cost effective platform for local advertisers and group activities. We encourage all parishioners to read and support the publication.
- k) To oppose applications for inappropriately sited mobile-phone masts.

AND FINALLY....What next??

Changes always happen and events may influence even the most comprehensive plans. Flimwell, Stonegate and Ticehurst are OUR villages and the input of ideas opinions and the actions of ALL Parishioners is important. The Action Plan Committee would like to see your opinions on the policies set out in this paper or on any other policy matters that you think may affect our "Corner of Sussex." Your comments by E-mail to frankienowne@btconnect.com or on paper to The Clerk, Ticehurst Village Institute, Lower High Street, Ticehurst, TN5 7BB will be much appreciated.

TICEHURST PARISH –A great place to live!

