

Bridge Parish Plan



Aerial Photograph (The Franklin Fuller Partnership)

Bridge Parish Plan 2005

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Bridge Parish Plan Committee:

Chris Coshall: Pam Dobson: Joan Hill: Cllr. John Hill: Ian McNeill (Secretary): Bill Oakey (Chairman):
Amanda Sparkes: Ailsa Williamson-Powell: and David Powell (Treasurer).

The comments throughout this publication, highlighted in the grey boxes, are direct quotes taken from the completed questionnaires.

Foreword by the Chairman of the Parish Council

A committee was formed in 2004 by the Parish Council to prepare and publish a Parish Plan. The necessary information was obtained by asking the residents of Bridge to complete a questionnaire to find how they wish to see the future of the village. As you will see this has now been achieved in this very well produced document.

All members of the committee, whose names appear elsewhere, have spent a considerable amount of time in producing this and I would like to thank them most sincerely. I must particularly thank Bill Oakey, chairman of the committee, for his inspiration and leadership in getting the Plan moving and to Amanda Sparkes for correlating the questionnaire information.

With a population of some 1500 there are probably as many different opinions. However, the Parish Council will take note of the majority view, where possible, in deciding future policy.

I do commend this document to you; please read it and support the Parish Council in its endeavours to implement the Plan.



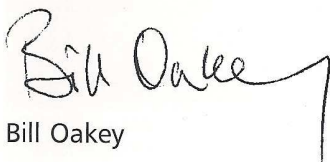
John Hill

& Foreword by the Chairman of the Parish Plan Group

It has been a pleasure to work with the Parish Plan Committee and the outcome of our endeavours is here for all to see. We started in February 2004 with little idea of how long or how hard the task would be. We have had extraordinary support from Amanda Sparkes of Canterbury City Council and from Cllr. Mark Esdale, and we are indebted to them. However, the Committee have themselves put in an inordinate amount of time and effort and without these there would be no Plan.

The main objective of the Parish Plan was to produce a plan of action that the residents of Bridge feel would enhance their community over the next decade and to use it to persuade our Parish, City and County Councils of these needs. This has been done by three stages of consultation. The first was an opportunity to tell the Committee what they thought was good and bad about Bridge at a stand held at the 2004 village fete. The stand depicted photographs taken by 30 different village groups and societies designed to show what was good and bad. Many of these photographs are in the Parish Plan. The second was the Questionnaire and we are pleased that we had over 200 completed forms returned. The results of the questionnaire are within this document and have formed the basis on what we are asking for the future of Bridge. In November 2004 we had another Open day in the Village hall where again we showed the photographs and comments and received more valuable feedback from those who came to see us.

A second and very important objective was to try and "paint a picture" of what Bridge is like in 2005. It will be interesting to see how much it changes over the next 10 years at which time there will probably be another Parish Plan! Local sponsors, the Parish Council and Canterbury City Council, have funded the Parish Plan and to these three groups I am most grateful, for without the funding, we could not have even entertained such a project. I hope that you will agree that this Parish Plan does reflect the majority views on what Bridge needs for the next decade, and that you will find the Plan both interesting and informative.



Bill Oakey

BRIDGE - A Short History

Bridge has been an important village since the Roman occupation of England. There was probably a Roman bridge across the river (Cf. Bruges which has a similar site and name). The village is situated on the old coaching route from Dover to London, known as Watling Street. In the Parish Records there are many marriages detailed between passing travellers and local villagers!

In 2005, following the study of aerial photographs, an archaeological dig unearthed a hexagon Anglo-Saxon temple in Star Hill. A cloth bag was found beneath the skeleton of a woman, containing silver coins dating back to Anglo-Saxon times and other artefacts included gold pendants, glass and amber beads, buckles, knives, spears, scissors, cowrie shells and decorated pottery.

Nearby on the Barham Downs, the armies used to assemble for campaigns abroad, such as 'The Field of the Cloth of Gold', the Seven Years War and also India in the mid 19th century.

There are several large manor houses near the village. To mention a few:

Bridge Place dates back to 1638. It was the home of the Braems family. Sir Arnold Braems was a merchant at the time of King Charles I, and was responsible for the building of Dover harbour. The fortune this brought was spent on building a grand house, originally known as the 'Old Manor of Bridge'. Only a fraction of this seventeenth century house remains as Bridge Place. It was at one time run as a nightclub.

Higham House, although officially in the parish of Bekesbourne with Patricxbourne, and now known as Higham Park, was one of the largest country houses in East Kent in the 17th century. It is where Count Zebrovsky lived, and where he built the original racing car, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, in the early 1920s. Later, it was used as a gynaecological hospital. Now under private ownership, much work has been done over the last few years to restore the house and grounds to its former grandeur.

Bridge Hill House was the former home of the grandson of the French philosopher Montesquieu.

A little further away is Bourne Park, where Mozart stayed once to attend the horse races on the Barham Downs!



Bridge Post Office - "The Heart of the Village"

The Post Office is a great centre of the village and was used by Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, then living at Broome Park - another large house in the vicinity - to send his first despatch in 1914.

One of the first workhouses in Kent was built in 1837 in Union Road and the Record Book gives the names of many inmates who, often forced by poverty, took up residence there. Today, the 'Close' is a desirable residential development of terraced houses.



'Excellently treated historic buildings' at The Close

There are not many villages that can boast such varied architecture from Tudor to Victorian. The centre of the village is a Conservation Area and constant vigilance is needed to see that a high standard is maintained.



Bridge is surrounded by beautiful landscaped parks and woodland that characterise the picturesque Nailbourne Valley. 'An idyllic setting'.

Parish profile

Bridge is situated some 3 miles to the south of Canterbury and was, until the by-pass was built in 1976, on the main London to Dover Road, the A2. The village traverses the river Nailbourne, a sometimes-dry chalk river, and is approached both from the North and South by steep declines from the hills of the North Downs. The situation is rural though Bridge boasts many facilities more associated with a small Market Town. Today it could be described as a "dormitory" of Canterbury as it houses many professional families who work in the private and public sector businesses of Canterbury. However, it happily retains its "village community" atmosphere and is still the home of what would be regarded as "rural activity". Farming and associated activities, service industries such as shops, restaurants, and garages, are still major employers as are local builders and developers.

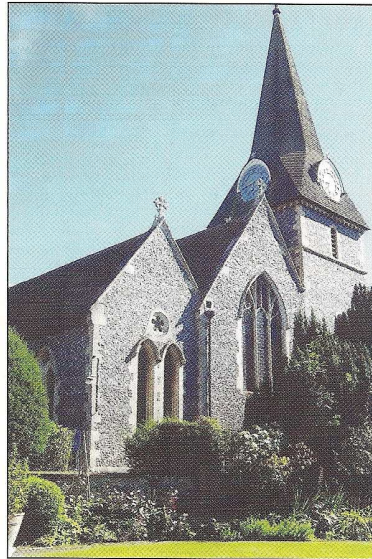
Bridge has an adult population of about 1500 with nearly 30% (500) being over the age of 60. It also has a shifting population with a high turnover of houses being bought and sold annually. Over 80% of its 600 plus houses are owner occupied with private landlords accounting for nearly 70% of rental properties that form the balance. Affordable housing is an issue, though there is a relatively small demand. The village has a mixture of both old and new properties with the oldest dating from the 12th century and most of the modern being built in the 1960's and 1970's. The village is enveloped by an AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), and this, together with the various conservation-designated areas within the village line, has put a brake on development.

Bridge enjoys the lowest level of unemployment in Kent, and, despite the fear of crime, one of the lowest crime rates. It does enjoy some bus services and the Park and Ride, situated within two miles, provides a relatively inexpensive means of travel to Canterbury. The nearest train station is at Bekesbourne, some 1.5 miles, with Canterbury East Station about 3.5 miles from Bridge. Many London commuters prefer to use the swift access to the A2 by-pass to travel from Faversham, some 12 miles away.

Many houses in Bridge, particularly those in High Street and Brewery Lane were built before the arrival of the motor car. The result is that there was no provision made for parking, let alone garages. The High Street is a huge problem for traffic as one side is permanently covered by

parked cars, though these do act as traffic calming to a certain degree. Various traffic calming and parking schemes have been considered over the years, though to date, the absence of good central village parking, is still considered one of the major concerns of the village.

Churches in Bridge



St Peter's Church

St. Peter's Church

St. Peter's Church lies at the southeast end of the High Street, which was the main road from Canterbury to Dover. The shingled spire with blue clockface is a feature across the village.

A chapel has stood on the site since Norman times, the remains of which can be seen principally in the West door. It consists of three aisles and a high chancel. On the north side of the chancel are curious Norman carvings. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, St Peter's was extensively restored and enlarged, principally through the generosity of Mrs Mary Gregory of Bridge Hill, who employed the well-known architect Giles Gilbert Scott to carry out the work. High on the north chancel wall is a portrait of Sir Arnold Braems, painted by Cornelius Jensen. Braems was the owner of the largest manor house in Bridge, named Bridge Place.

The present church is the largest building in the Benefice. Services are held every Sunday. There is a junior church and there are strong links with the school. Within the last six years members of the congregation have re-decorated the interior walls; there is a loop induction system and

speech enhancement facilities. With the help of grants, the roof has been substantially repaired.

At the time of writing, there are plans for re-designing the interior of the west end of the church, by introducing toilet and water facilities and for this we shall be looking for further grants. Recently, the Church Recorders from the Canterbury Decorative & Fine Arts Societies have made a record of all the internal fabrics, glass, textiles and memorials. This illustrated document was presented to the Vicar, the Reverend Paul Filmer at a Service of Dedication.



Bridge Methodist Church

Bridge Methodist Church

There has been a Methodist Church presence in Bridge for many years, exactly how long is not known. The present Chapel in Patrixbourne Road celebrated its Centenary in 1994. Its corrugated structure has stood the test of time and there are only one or two similarly built churches in the country. Prior to this we understand that there was a wooden building somewhere in the Union Road/Filmer Road area which, if we knew more about it, would tell us something of the Methodists in the village at that time.

Present-day Methodists hold a service each Sunday at 11 a.m. The Minister is the Rev. David Marshall, who is based at St. John's Methodist Church, Whitstable. He is also the Superintendent of the North East Kent Methodist Circuit.

School and Education

The School

Bridge and Patrixbourne Church of England School is a voluntary controlled school situated in Conyngham Lane. It replaces an older school that was situated in the Patrixbourne Road.

It serves the surrounding villages of Bridge, Patrixbourne, Lower Hardres, Bekesbourne and

Bishopsbourne. It opened on its present site in 1971 and an additional classroom block was opened in 2001 by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

This popular school is surrounded by its games fields and playground and meets the needs of boys and girls from 4½ to 11 years of age. There are 376 children on roll and there are 15 teaching staff as well as teaching assistants, office and cleaning staff. At the end of the summer term 2005 the school said 'farewell' to Head Teacher Mrs Anna Newton, who had led this successful school over the past 18 years. She is succeeded by Miss Renuka Chinnadurai.

The school teaches the National Curriculum, which is made up of core and foundation subjects. It is also an educationally inclusive school. This means that children, whatever their special and additional needs, are entitled to access all facilities available. The school is well resourced for I.C.T. and children throughout the age range, have high levels of skill in this area. From September 2002 the school was recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as a Beacon School. The school no longer cooks a midday meal. Lunch is brought into the school by outside caterers.



Bridge & Patrixbourne Church of England Primary school

There is a P.F.A. and there are strong links with the Community and Church. In the summer there is a joint Parish/School Summer Fete held within the school grounds.

Childcare at Bridge Childcare Centre

Woodpeckers Nursery is situated in a large mobile building in the extensive grounds of Bridge School. The Nursery has excellent, spacious facilities for pre-school children. Although the Nursery is in the school grounds, it is not funded by KCC or Bridge School and is self-supporting. It is administered by a committee of parents and friends collectively responsible for the Nursery.

Sessions are mornings Monday to Friday 8.45am to 11.45am and afternoons from 12 noon to 2.45pm.

Breakfast/After School Club & Playscheme

Bridge After School Club offers a safe, caring and fun environment for all children. BASC is registered by Ofsted and have a rating of 'Good' Childcare. Each staff member is Police Checked and half of all staff are first aid trained. BASC offers After School Club, Breakfast Club and a holiday play scheme all year round (except during Christmas holidays). The children love daily Crafts and Sports workshops and also enjoy the fantastic purpose built facility and the masses of equipment. Also during school holidays children are taken on trips to local attractions and we often have outside artists and sports people coming into the club to do specialist workshops. BASC is located at Bridge and Patribourne School in the green building!

Bridge Village Playgroup

Established in 1982, Bridge Village Playgroup is a happy, lively community playgroup. It is a registered charity and is based in Bridge Village Hall. It is open five mornings a week during term time. Children are accepted from the age of two and a half years, many of whom go on to attend Bridge Primary School. The Playgroup aims to give the children confidence to be independent from their parents/carers for a short period of time. The staff are all local, many have children who attended the playgroup at some time.

Clubs and Societies

Church Groups

Health & Healing

This group meets on the first Thursday every month at 7pm to pray for all those who are ill or in need of support. The meeting is open to all.

After Eights Bible Reading Group

First group meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday.
Second group meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday.

Caring and Sharing

This is a women's group based around Bridge Church, which meets weekly in houses around the village for discussions and coffee and chat evenings. They also have visits from guest speakers and occasional trips out. Members can

choose to come weekly or occasionally. The programme and venue is printed in 'On the Nail' magazine. Church going or not, a welcome is extended to anyone interested in this Christian women's group.

Church Youth Groups

MOBY

'Members of Bridge Youth' runs fortnightly, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays after school each month in term-time (alternate with Bridge Youth Club). It is for young people of secondary school age (11-14+). Many of the young people who attend have been part of the confirmation group at the church, but anyone is welcome who is interested in talking about Christian faith as well as having fun and games.

The Upper Room

This 'Sunday School' group meets in the function room at the Plough and Harrow at 9.15am on the first Sunday every month, where craft activities, Bible stories and games are enjoyed, before joining the adults in Church at 10.15am.

The Works

This happens at the Village Hall every 4th Sunday in term time, from 10.00am to 11.30am, where craft activities, games, stories from the Bible, puppet shows and songs are organised for the children.



A corner of St Peter's Church.

Other Village Groups

Women's Institute

W.I. meetings have been held in the Village since 1919. The East Kent W.I. celebrated their 85th Anniversary in the same year as Bridge W.I. This year, 2005, the Women's Institute, nationally, celebrates its 90th anniversary and Bridge members are taking part in a 90-mile walk (in stages) during the year. A Service was also held in the Albert Hall to mark the occasion. The W.I. is renowned as having a 'good voice' for women. The Institute meets every 3rd Tuesday evening in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. Every month they have a speaker and sometimes a demonstration. They have a lunch club and arrange occasional outings.

Fish Scheme

The Fish Scheme was founded in 1980. A 'Pop-In' coffee morning is run every 3rd Wednesday in the month in the Village Hall, from 10-11.30am. This is mainly for older members in the village to meet and chat, but the Fish Scheme also offers help to anyone in need of assistance, and provides transport to take them to the doctor, or for hospital and chiropody appointments. A paperback lending library is run during the morning, and library books are collected and delivered to anyone borrowing books from the mobile library. An annual fund-raising Bring & Buy morning is held as shown below.



History Society

The Society was formed in 1995 and will be celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. It is now the largest organisation in Bridge. The Society meets once a month, usually on a Thursday evening, at 7.30 pm. in the Village Hall. Each month there is a speaker on various topics, often accompanied by slides. During the year several visits are organised, either to a place of local interest or further afield, across the Channel.

Nailbourne Craft Club

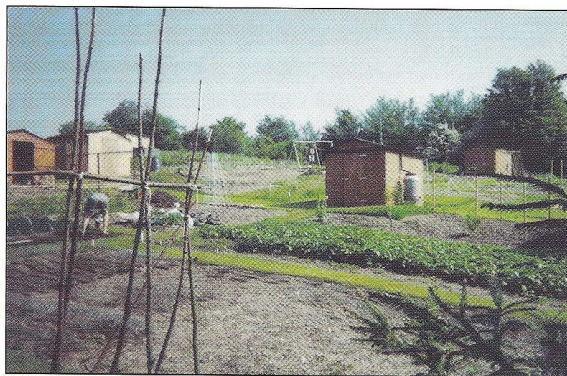
This group meets every Tuesday afternoon from 2-4pm in the Methodist Chapel. Members bring along items of all types of crafts and enjoy friendship and refreshments.

Bridge Allotment Association

The present Association was formed in June 2003 by the Parish Council, to breathe new life into what had become two very run-down sets of allotments. In conjunction with the landowners, the Conyngham Estate, and with their active, and financial, support, the lower of the two existing sites was cleared, 14 plots were marked out and, over the next year, water

was laid on and 7 sheds provided, each shed being subdivided, to provide storage facilities for each plot. Of the 14 plots, six are shared, which allows more people to enjoy the pleasures of allotment gardening.

The Parish Council, apart from its financial support, is also the landlord to the Association, and provides the contact with the landowners. Should demand require it, there is the possibility of increasing the area of land occupied by the allotments to provide additional plots.



Well-tended Bridge allotments.

Nailbourne Horticultural Society

The present Society was reformed in May 1976 and draws its members mainly from the parishes of Bridge, Bishopsbourne, Bekesbourne and Patricxbourne. There are currently some 50 members in the Society.

The main two events organised by the Society are firstly the Annual Spring Show, which is held in Bridge Village Hall on an evening at the end of March or beginning of April. Then the hall is brightened by the sight of tables filled with vases of daffodils of all varieties, as well as exhibits in a range of other classes. The Summer Show is held on a Saturday towards the end of July in Bridge School Hall with classes for vegetables, flowers, handicrafts, floral art and cookery.

The Chairman has recently introduced a 'Chairman's Challenge' class into both shows, when he has supplied members with either bulbs of a young plant to be grown and nurtured and then exhibited at the shows. This has proved most successful in encouraging more members to exhibit.

The remainder of the year's programme includes several evening talks (usually held in Bridge Village Hall) on subjects at least loosely related to gardening, a summer's evening outing to a local horticultural place of interest and a social evening in December, often with a quiz and refreshments.

Neighbourhood Watch

Bridge is an active member of the Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Association. The aim of Neighbourhood Watch (NHW), in active partnership with the Police via their NHW Liaison Officer, is to cut crime and opportunities for crime, to help and reassure those who live in fear of crime, and generally to encourage neighbourliness and a close community spirit. The first 'Watch' in the UK was established in 1982; there are now 150,000. NHW within Bridge is divided into five areas, each with a local volunteer Coordinator. These Coordinators keep their NHW members well informed by publishing newsletters or information sheets, displaying posters, distributing crime prevention leaflets, holding periodic meetings, and arranging visits from the 'Crimebuster Bus'. The Coordinators are assisted by the NHW Support Office, based at Herne Bay Police Station.

Pigeon Club

The Plough and Harrow Pigeon Racing Club is run by a small dedicated group of enthusiasts. Every week during the summer months they meet at the pub, usually on a Friday evening, when they assemble their birds for the weekend's race. Their birds are put, with thousands of others belonging to other fanciers in the region, onto vehicles which are then driven to a given point which may be hundreds of miles away. On Saturday morning (if the weather is fine), the birds are simultaneously released to return to their homes. The winner is the bird that travelled the fastest over the distance.



On the loft after a race.

Cribbage and Pot Boys Guild

At 9 pm every Friday night, a group of friends gather in the Plough and Harrow to play Cribbage. This has been going on for over 20 years, with games played in a light-hearted

manner. Any players who are not involved in a game fetch drinks for the players, hence the moniker 'Pot Boy'. New members are always welcome: a vague notion of Cribbage, a good sense of humour and £8 weekly to go in the pot for drinks are required. The Guild holds an annual dinner, provides volunteers for erecting Christmas trees in the village, and even has its own web site: www.cribbage.co.uk.



Art in Bridge Exhibition

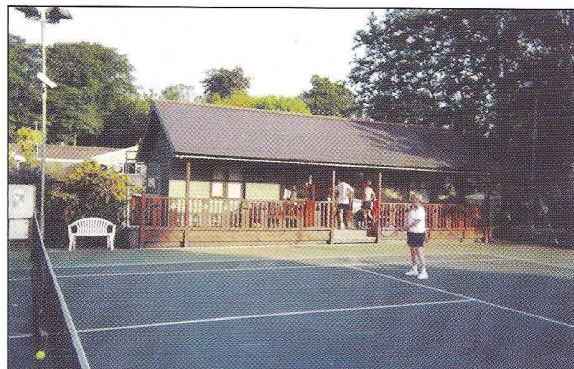
Art in Bridge

Art in Bridge was set up to promote the visual and other arts and culture in Bridge and district. It organises a large exhibition open to all in the district in the Autumn, as part of the Canterbury Festival. Profits from this exhibition have been used to sponsor other art activities including workshops and other exhibitions. For more information visit www.artinbridge.org.uk.

Bridge Tennis Club

The Club was formed in 1975 after funds were raised in the village by people with an interest in tennis. This included a number who were no longer likely to play, but wanted to help the new club 'on its way'. Real community spirit!

The Club now has three floodlit courts, used throughout the year, and in Millennium year the present magnificent pavilion was built, with the help of the National Lottery and Sport Britain.



Tennis Club Pavilion, which replaced a concrete hut

A Club coach arranges training courses for both Junior and Senior members during the year and arranges special sessions for Juniors in the school holidays.

There is a membership of around 130 Seniors and Juniors. Several teams are entered in local leagues and there are Club nights during the week for all levels of play. So, for a small village, the Club has a lot to offer.

Bridge Youth Group

Bridge Youth Group meets at the village hall on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month between 7pm-9pm. It is open to all young people aged 10-18 and can take up to 24 at each session. Currently the sessions are run by the city council in association with the Parish Council. Two youth workers attend the sessions alongside a volunteer from the parish. Each session has a theme and there are other activities on offer such as dodge ball, play station II, and dance mats.

Music for Toddlers

Meets in the Village Hall on a Monday morning from 10.15-11.45am, mainly during term time. This group is for very young children up to the age of 5 years, who are accompanied by their mothers. Music for Toddlers introduces them to music at a very young age, through singing, playing simple instruments such as drums and triangles. It is a structured course, where they learn social, listening and inter-relating skills. The second half of the morning is a coffee morning for the mothers and playtime for the toddlers. Occasionally a professional musician comes to play and talk to the group.

Bridge Rainbows

This group is the youngest section of the Guiding UK Movement for girls aged 5-7 years. They meet every Wednesday in term time from 5-6pm in the Village Hall.

Bridge Brownies

For age group 7-10 years. Meet every Friday in term time from 5.45-7.15pm in the Village Hall. The pack has 28 Brownies, and a waiting list.

Bridge Guides

For age group 10-14 years. Meet every Wednesday during term time from 6.30-8.15pm at the Mill Centre. They have a full membership.

Bridge Beaver Cubs

For age group 6-8 years. Numbers: 20



The Mill Centre

(maximum allowed). Meet every Monday during term time from 6.15-7.30pm at the Mill Centre.

Bridge Cub Scouts

For age group 8-10 years. Numbers 40 (maximum allowed). Meet every Monday during term time from 6-8pm at the Mill Centre.

Bridge Scouts

For age group 10-14 years. Numbers: 45 (no maximum). Meet every Thursday from 7.30-9.00pm at the Mill Centre.

Bridge Explorer Scouts

For age group 14-18 years. There are 25 invested Scouts in this age range at the moment. Meet every other Thursday from 7.30-9.00pm at the Mill Centre.

Other Organisations

Bridge Village Hall

(Management Committee)

The Village Hall was built in the mid 19th Century as a Reading Room. It is now owned by the Parish Council – thanks to a generous offer by the Conyngham Estate – and operated by a



Bridge Village Hall – centrally positioned in the High Street.

Management Committee, which is a registered charity. There are two rooms: the Main Hall, which can seat up to 90 and is marked out for badminton, and the Hunter Room, an upstairs meeting room which can seat about 20. Named in memory of Dr Hunter, a former Bridge doctor, who gave a generous donation to the fund for the provision of this Upper Room, which opened in 1983. There are toilet facilities, and a kitchen area for preparation of drinks and snacks on the ground floor. There is disabled access and a toilet for the disabled. The hall has an entertainment licence.

The hall is used every weekday by the playgroup, with many weekly, monthly and occasional events. The rooms are available for hire at reasonable rates for meetings or private parties, with a lower rate for public functions aimed at villagers.

Some of the users are: Playgroup, Brownies, Art Classes, Women's Institute, History Society, Southeast Kent Astronomical Society, the FISH scheme, Parish Council, Attic Auctions, as well as jumble sales, dances, quizzes, wine and wisdom evenings. There is a website for the hall: www.bridgehall.org.uk

Bridge Village Sports Trust

Set up by Bridge Parish Council to include all organised users of the Recreation Ground; manage the pavilion and grounds to the benefit



The Children's Play Area on the recreation ground



Sunday morning football on the rec

of the community, and to encourage team sports. Regular users of the recreation ground include Herne & Broomfield FC, Bridge Juniors FC, and the Exiles Cricket Club.

The Mill Centre

The Mill Centre in Mill Lane is run by the Mill Centre Committee on a lease from Canterbury City Council. At present the principle users of the centre are the Guides, Explorer Scouts, Scouts, Cub Scouts and Beaver Scouts. A Morris Dance group also uses the centre and until recently a youth group met there. Approximately 150 young people use the Mill Centre each week and 40-50% of those live in Bridge.

Housing & Development

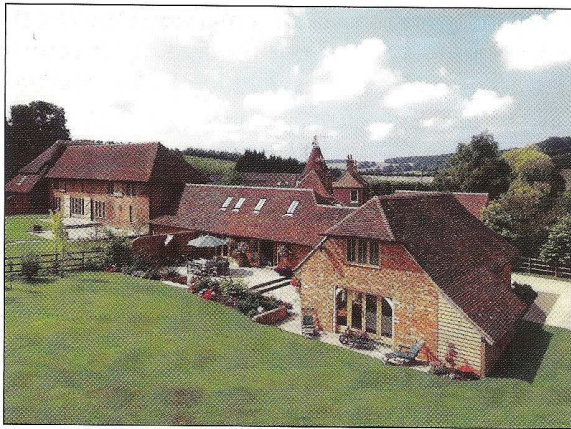
Over the last 20 years or so there has been little opportunity for housing development in Bridge as the entire village is enveloped by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) status. This, together with the fact that the village is in itself, a conservation area, has meant that, apart from some "infill" development within the village, the only opportunities left have been redundant farm yards now classified as "brownfield sites".

Changes in agricultural patterns have resulted in notable alterations to the countryside that surrounds Bridge. Over the last 30 years there has been a continuous and significant reduction in hop fields, apple, pear and plum orchards. Traditional crops have given way to soft fruits and hedgerows have been grubbed out to increase field sizes to suit mechanised methods of cultivation.

There have been two small, but significant, developments in the Bridge area and both have considerably enhanced the old and dilapidated farmyards. They have changed "Farmsteads to Homesteads"

Middle Pett Farm.

Situated on the south-west boundary of Bridge Parish, this comprised a Farmhouse, a dilapidated Oast, and several barns in various states of decay. Corrugated iron and asbestos roofs, makeshift doors, and patching to keep them standing, had left a scar on the valley. Worse still were some appalling additions made in Victorian times to the main Farmhouse that dates back to the 14th century. The previous owner did some work, but it was not until Graham Oates acquired the property in 2001,



Middle Pett Farm

that the real renovation started. Today one can see the transformation from dilapidated barns and oast into four very attractive barn conversion homes using local materials, including thatch, to one of the barns. The main farmhouse has been granted planning permission to extend the property to rectify the lop-sided dwelling created by the Victorian owners who simply added extra space without any thought to the ascetic quality of the property. Middle Pett Farm is now a thriving community, in its own right, and important to the economy of Bridge in providing both work for local people and custom for our shops and restaurants.

Renville Farm

Situated to the North of Bridge, and close to the A2 by pass, Renville Farm was, until the Mid-1980's a thriving centre of farming activity. The farm had a dairy herd of 250 cows and an infrastructure to support this industry of cow-sheds, milking parlour, calving sheds, and barns. The demise of dairy farming left the buildings redundant. The farmhouse and oast house (the latter had previously served a thriving hop farming enterprise) were converted and upgraded in the 1980's. The City Council recognised the importance of these buildings



Renville Farm

and created a conservation area to preserve these two historic buildings.

In the late 1990's Paul and John Roberts- a partnership comprising an Architectural and Design practice and a construction company acquired the farm. Planning permission to develop the farmyard was sought and gained by working closely with the City Council Planning and Conservation departments and work began in the first years of the 21st century to create homes from dilapidated agricultural buildings. Four large and exclusive dwellings now replace the milking parlour and barns and an additional two houses, built in similar style, complete this very attractive housing complex. The developers have used building materials sympathetic to the farm location and have planted additional shrubs and trees to create a rural ambience to the development. Such developments are necessary if our shops, and businesses are to survive in Bridge.

In-fill development.

The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) that envelops Bridge has prevented any building, other than for Educational or Health facilities, outside the existing village boundaries. This regulates any development, other than those already mentioned on disused farmyards, to those plots of land within the village that are large enough to accommodate "new build" dwellings. There are a number of examples where existing owners of properties with large gardens have been able to sell off plots for development. One such development has been built off the Patribourne Road in 2004. Local builder, G&T Associates of 8a Brewery Lane, Bridge has proved that, even in a very limited area, a new house can be built without disadvantaging neighbouring properties. The owners, Gary and Tracey Carver, have built a superb dwelling to a high standard that enhances the village.

The Parish Council is the first in the Planning and Development chain of process and, if they are satisfied with an application for a new build or extension, it is more likely that the City Council Planning and Development Control Committee and Officers will grant approval. Bridge Parish Council takes this role seriously and has a three person sub-committee to make recommendations to the Parish Council on all Planning matters.

'Bridge should never give in to urban sprawl'



Bridge Village Sign

The Parish Council decided in 1993 that the village needed a sign. A competition was held for a design and a local artist, Julian Kirk, won this. The design shows the church and an earlier bridge over the Nailbourne, authenticated from an old photograph. The sign was made by the then chairman of the Parish Council, John Hill.

'Bridge has got everything, or should I say more than most villages'

Healthcare & Community Services

Bridge is well served for the care of health having a brand new Health Centre off the Patricbourne Road, a dental practice in the High Street, and a residential home in Western Avenue.

Saxon Lodge Residential Home.

Founded in 1988 by Betty and Gordon Richards by converting two 3-bed houses Saxon Lodge originally provided residential care for 7 persons. Today Saxon Lodge, still a family run residential home, is providing accommodation for 24 residents in single rooms, many en suite.



Saxon Lodge residential home

Residents are cared for by a management team comprising Betty Richards (Managing Director) and Wendy Richards, a qualified RMA/NVQ/4 qualified Care Home Manager, together with NVQ trained friendly staff on a 24 hour basis. The owners' aim is to provide a high standard of care and support without encroaching on the individuals right to privacy and choice. All residents have individual care plans. Residents' own GPs are encouraged to visit, the local priest has a monthly communion at the home, and hairdressers, opticians and chiropodists are on call to provide their services in the home. There is an "open house" visiting facility and visitors are encouraged to visit at any reasonable time. Parking is free both on and off road. Saxon Lodge is specially designed to provide and care for the elderly. However, holiday, respite and day care facilities are also available.

Bridge Health Centre

Bridge has had, for many years, a Doctors' surgery. However, as the practice expanded, the premises were too small and in 2001 a new Health Centre off the Patricbourne Road was built and able to provide for the three General Practitioners, Drs Jones, Rafla and Sykes, a state of the art medical facility. Two more doctors have joined the practice that also operates in Nargate Street in Littlebourne. Patients come from an area of a five-mile radius of Bridge and the Health Centre is conveniently situated



Bridge Health Centre. 'An excellent facility'.

adjacent to the playing fields and children's play area. There is plentiful car parking and well-tended gardens surrounding the centre, making the facility both easy to access and a delight for patients. The Health Centre is open daily on weekdays from 08h45 to 10h30 and from 16h30 to 18h00 and offers a range of complementary Medical Clinics. The Practice is a "Training Practice" and is actively involved in the training and education of new GPs and has a resident Registrar working as part of the team.

Bridge Dental Practice

Established in premises in the High Street since 1986, the practice offers to both private and NHS patients a full range of dental procedures. These include general and specialist dental services including orthodontics, and cosmetic dentistry including crown and bridge work.

The practice principal, Mr George Hamill, and his colleagues are supported by four dental nurses/receptionists. There are two surgeries each with their own waiting rooms in the dental practice. The practice services, not only Bridge residents, but also many of the surrounding villages.

The New Close

Recently refurbished and enlarged to accommodate 63 residents, this KCHT (Kent Community Housing Trust) residential home is situated off Conyningham Lane, close to the school. The New Close provides long-term accommodation for older people with dementia by staff trained in dementia care.

Public Houses & Restaurants in Bridge

Bridge is well served by its three well-patronised pubs, two with restaurants, and a "stand alone" restaurants.

'Excellent pubs for eating'

The White Horse Inn

The White Horse Inn, in the centre of the village, is believed to have been operating by the year 1500. A line drawing of Bridge, in the Courtauld Institute Collection, dated 1661, depicts a thatched White Horse Inn on a very broad street. The building is believed to have mediaeval origins and was probably linked to Faggs Farm that existed opposite the White Horse until the 1960's.

Extended and re-roofed in the Regency period, its main function, like that of the Red Lion Inn, was a staging post on the busy London, via Canterbury, to Dover Road, known as Watling Street. It was an Inn offering both victuals and accommodation to travellers.

Today the White Horse Inn's summertime floral displays have achieved much recognition as part of the "Bridge in Bloom" annual competition. It can trace it's horticultural connections back

to the 1750's when "Auricular Feasts", or flower shows were held by a Mr & Mrs Gilbert at the sign of The White horse. It was serious business with a first prize of 1 Guinea!



The Red Lion Inn

Possibly the oldest pub in Bridge was built in the reign of Elizabeth 1 in 1593 and has traded since 1633 as an Inn bearing the name of "The Red Lion".

The original inn comprised a small dwelling house, stables and outbuildings together with a large tract of land. It has undergone many changes over the years with major extensions in Georgian and Victorian times. The inn drew its main business from travellers as Bridge is sited on the old Roman road that linked Dover to London. In the 16th Century and right up to the 19th Century Bridge was a very small village, overshadowed by Patricxbourne and Bekesbourne - the reverse of what we have today. Trade, therefore relied heavily on the occupants of the stagecoaches that, after the main road improvement in 1760, began to run frequently and used Bridge as an intermediate stage in the 65-mile journey.

Until 1886 the Inn was in private hands, and thereafter became a tenanted house. In the mid 1950's, one such tenant was the mother of Toni Gardiner, who, as Princess Muna, became one



of the wives of the late King Hussein of Jordan. Princess Muna is the Mother of King Abdulla of Jordan, that country's current ruler.

Today The Red Lion cannot offer stabling, livery, or a "pre-warmed bed", but does offer the atmosphere of a true English Pub serving a full range of wines, spirits and beers, together with a comprehensive menu of locally sourced food.



The Pub is the Hub – particularly this one

The Plough and Harrow Inn

A traditional English village pub that regularly features in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. A charity calendar was one of the many community-minded ventures that reflects the role that the Plough and Harrow plays at the heart of our local community.

The Plough and Harrow has also won numerous awards and prizes for just about everything - from the quality of the beers it serves - to the outstanding toilets!

Skippers of Bridge

Skippers brought fine dining to Bridge in 1986 when Gary and Tina Skipper purchased and converted Gold's Delicatessen into a Victorian style supper room. Built in regency times the property has had many uses, including being Price's grocery and general store. Today the restaurant can accommodate over 100 diners and, from the extensions carried out in 1998, can accommodate a couple of overnight diners.



Skippers restaurant

The current owners purchased the business in 2000 and have continued the fine traditions of the founders.

Skippers have established a tremendous reputation based on quality, innovation and service attracting diners from all over Kent and beyond. There is a set price for a full four-course meal with the extensive menu changed monthly. The Chef presents the main course alternatives to each table following the hors d'oeuvres and home made soup courses. The selection of desserts still includes Skippers' famous Belgian Chocolate Cabbage!

In addition to providing top quality food and wines, Skippers has Jazz, Swing, and Blues Groups Nights to provide live entertainment and have also Cameo Opera evenings with music from Operas and Musicals.

'Rural living with all the town facilities'

Businesses & Service Industry in Bridge

Bridge is well off in the service industry sector with its many shops and other businesses including an Estate Agency, an Architectural practice, an Accountancy firm, a Bed and Breakfast guest house, a hairdresser, two car repair garages and a specialist Portrait Studio.

Colebrook Sturrock & Co.

Colebrook Sturrock, a professional firm of estate agents specialising in selling and letting all types of residential property, opened its Canterbury Office here in High Street, Bridge in 2002. It has already extended its attractive premises and has brought to the village a business that otherwise would be with all the rest of Canterbury's Estate Agents, in the City. Free and unrestricted parking together with professionally developed staff, and working within the company's network of six East Kent Offices, allows buyers and sellers to conduct their business away from the crowds.

Colebrook Sturrock believes in selling property as an individual product by creating a bespoke marketing campaign that recognises both diversity and professionalism to ensure satisfaction for both the buyer and seller.

Renville Oast

At the time of the last Parish Plan there were a number of Bed and Breakfast guesthouses in Bridge. However, today there remains only one



Renville Oast

– Renville Oast. Established in 1990 by Joan and John Hill, Renville Oast offers quality bed and breakfast accommodation in three double bedrooms set in a traditional 19th Century Kentish Oast House that is part of the hamlet of Renville. The Oast dates back to 1879, built to dry hops grown in many acres surrounding the oast, for the brewery trade. The drying of hops continued until 1953, when the oast was used to store grain. The Oast was delightfully restored in 1984/5 and the guests, who come from all over the world, enjoy staying in this very rural part of Bridge.

Retailing in Bridge

Bridge has managed to retain many retail shops and has become a small regional centre despite its proximity to Canterbury. A thriving supermarket, **Bridgeway Stores** is in the centre and offers a full range of products that one associates with large supermarkets. It combines a newsagency and has an Automated Cash dispensing point located outside to give 24-hour service. Bridgeway Stores is also the village agency for the National Lottery.

The store, often known as “The Londis”, opens daily from 07h00 to 20h00 on weekdays and from 08h00 to 16h00 on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Facilities include an indoor bakery,



Bridgeway Stores

prepared “take-away” foods, an extensive range of groceries, fresh food and vegetables, non food groceries, confectionery, tobacco and cigarettes, flowers, cards and an off licence with a full range of beers, wines and spirits.

Bridgeway Stores has been owned and run by the Daliwall family since 1991 and has, over the years, employed many local people, and offered many school children their first paid job in life delivering newspapers!

Bridgeway Stores is at the heart of the village, not just geographically, but also in terms of it being the hub of our thriving community. Whilst it enjoys a high level of local trade it also brings in shoppers from many of the surrounding villages who are less fortunate in having few, or no, retail facilities.

Post Office and Pharmacy

The Post Office and Pharmacy are important facilities for all ages in the village, though in themselves, a lifeline for our senior citizens.



Laurie Wakeham Butchers

A renowned and well-respected butcher and purveyor of fine foods, Laurie Wakeham has won numerous awards for the quality of his meat and home made pies. As a member of the coveted Q Butchers Guild, with the Q standing for Quality, the shop in the high street attracts custom from all over East Kent.

The award winning pies and sausages are manufactured on the premises with many ingredients sourced locally. A full range of delicatessen products complements the traditional range of meat products, poultry and seasonal game. Bridge is one of a rare number of Kentish villages that still has a traditional butchers shop in its High Street. Laurie Wakeham Butchers is open from Tuesdays through to Saturdays from 08h00 to 18h00. Website www.family-butcher.co.uk



Laurie Wakeham Butchers

'Bridge is fairly self-sufficient - no need to always use Canterbury'

Nick James Hairdressers

Situated in Western Avenue, close to Bridgeway Stores, Nick James provides a complete ladies hairdressing service to both residents of Bridge and to many clients coming as far afield as Herne Bay.

Alfie & Trish Jarvis Portrait Gallery

A specialist photographer and portrait gallery in the Western Avenue row of shops.



Alfie & Trish Jarvis Portrait Gallery and Nick James Hairdressers

Burgate Bakery

A working bakery that daily produces bread, cakes, pastries selling from an olde worlde style shop in the High Street.



Burgate Bakery

'A village that has everything you need on the door step'

Rogers Garage

A long established busy garage in the centre of the village that provides car servicing and repairs, MOT testing and breakdown recovery in a village that has a high number of two car owning families.



Rogers Garage

Equestrian Elite

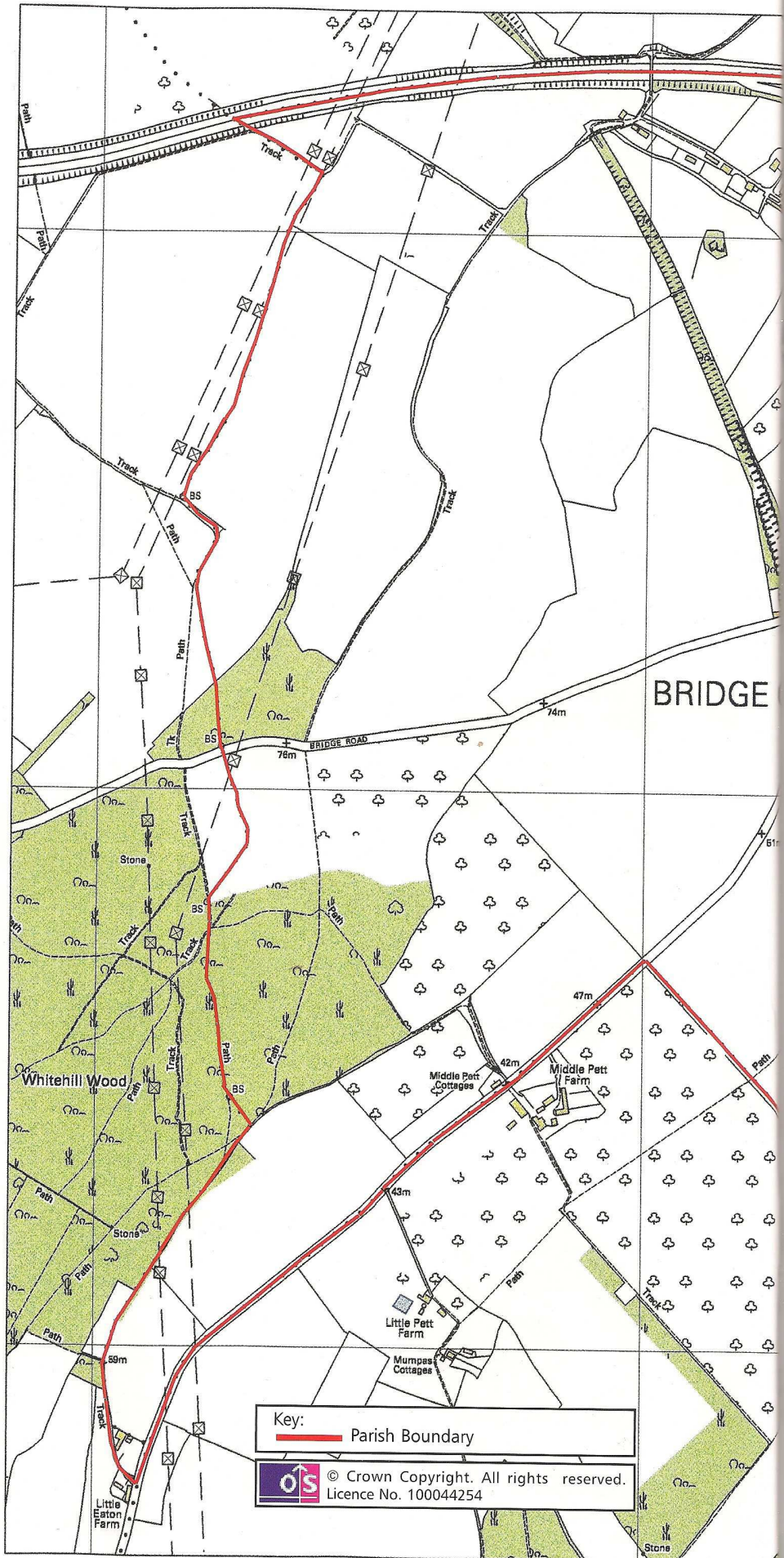
A specialist retailer supplying a full range of equestrian, and other country sports clothing, tackle and foodstuffs from a shop next to the Village hall.

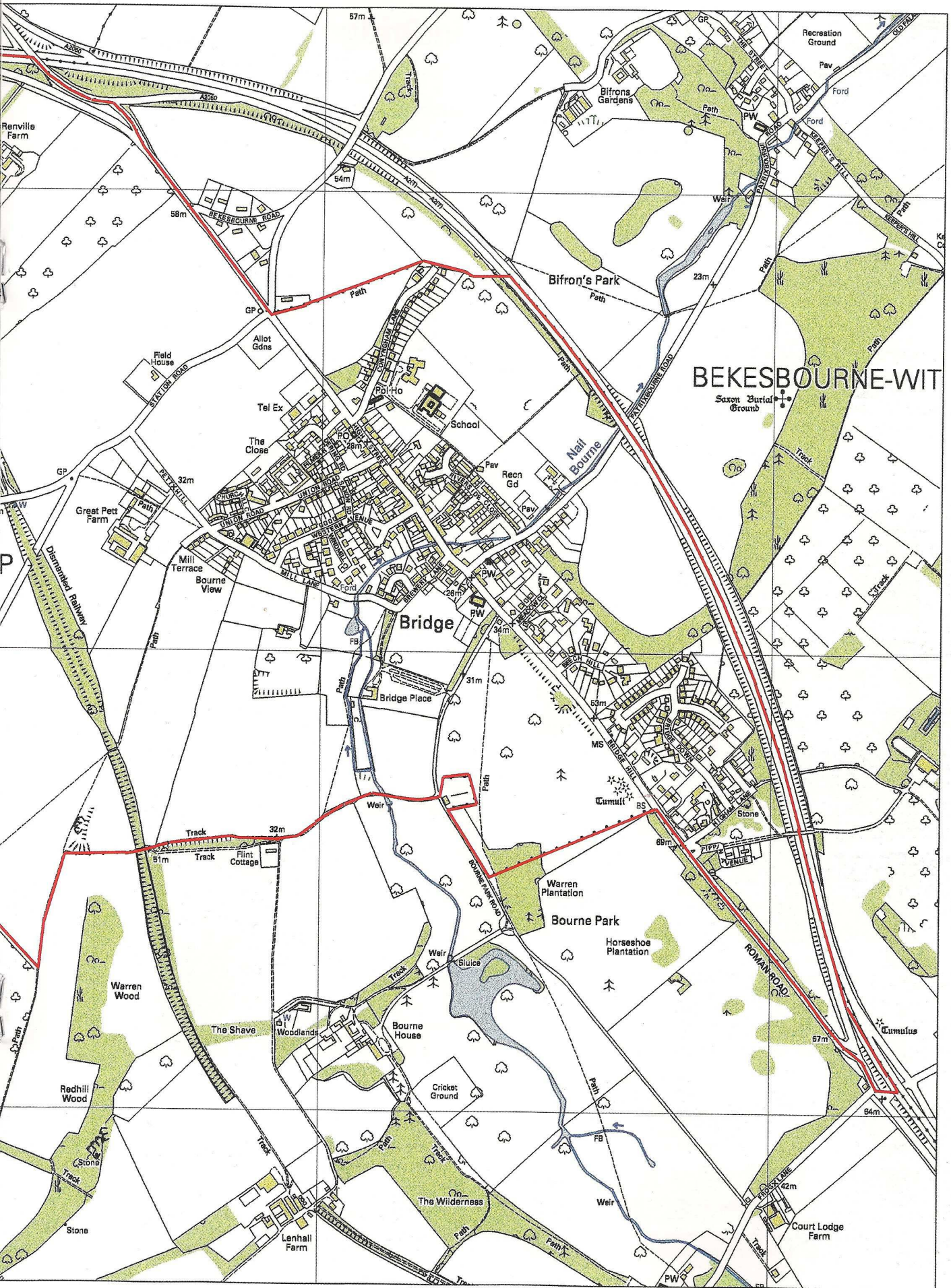


Equestrian Elite

"I do not need to worry about moving in old age as all I need is here."







Listed buildings in Bridge

ADDRESS	GRADE	DATE
Bourne Park Road (W) Bridge Place	II	I 17c
Brewery Lane (N)	~	e - m 19c
Dering Road (E) Dering House	~	19c
High Street (NE)		
Nos. 5 & 7	L	1879
Nos. 9 & 11	L	m 19c
No.13	II	m 19c
Nos. 15 - 19 (Albany))(odd)		
& no. 21 (Albany House)	II	e 19c
Nos. 27 - 31 (Odd)	L	m - I 19c
No.33 (Bartters) & former No.35	II	16c
No.37	II	18c
Nos. 39 & 41	II	18c
Nos. 43 45 & 45A	II	18c
No. 47 (Maudsley House)	L	18c
No. 49 (Lime Cottage)	II	18c
The White Horse Inn	II	e16c - 18c
No.61	II	18c
Nos. 63 (Ty-Gwyn) & 65	II	e 19c
River House	II	m - I 18c
No. 69 (Anne's House)	II	17c
No.73	II	18c
No.75 (Red Lion P.H.)	II	16c, 18c
Nos.79 & 81 (Lynton Cottage)	L	18c
No. 83 (Lynton House)	II	m - I 18c
Flats 1 - 3 (consec) East Bridge House & Netherbury	II	e19c
High Street (SW)		
No.2 (Sunnyside)	II	18c
No. 8 (Formerly 1 Portland Terrace)	II	e 19c
Nos. 10 & 12 (Formerly 2 & 3 Portland Terrace)	II	e 19c
No. 14 (Beresford Lodge)	II	m 19c
Nos. 16 & 16A	II	I 18c - e 19c
No. 18 (Wayside)	II	e 19c
Nos. 22 7 24 (Rosedale Villas)	II	e 19c
No.26	L	e 19c
No. 30 (Gordon House)	II	18c
Nos. 32 & 34	II	18c
Alexandra house	II	c.1830
Nos. 40 & 42 (Formerly 1 - 4 Primrose Way)	II	I 15c
No. 48 (Dover Lodge)	II	c.1830
No. 50 (Dover Cottage)	L	18c
No. 52 (Watling House)	II	e 19c
No. 82 (Riverdale House)	II	18c
No.84 (Kent House)	II	18c
The Plough & Harrow	II	18c
Nos. 88 to 96 (Even)	II	18c
Church Cottage	II	18c
Church of St. Peter	C	12c, 1861
Wall of Churchyard to St. Peter's	II	m 19c
Monuments in Churchyard	~	18c
Higham Lane (NW) Bridge Hill House	II	I 18c, e19c
Mill Lane (N) Bridgeford House	II	e 19c
Mill Lane (S) Little Bridge Place	II	17c
Pett Bottom Rd Former Elham Valley Railway overbridge	~	1887
Pett Hill (W)		
Great Pett farmhouse	II	I 17c
Barn to S of Great Pett FarmHouse	L	18c
Oast & Cottages to N of Great Pett Farmhouse	~	19c
Portland Terrace Nos 1 - 3 (consec)	See High Street (SW) Nos. 8 to 12 (even)	
Renville Oast	II	1879
Station Road Former Railway Station	~	1887
Union Road (N)		
The Close (Former Workhouse)	II	1835
Former Station	~	19c

Key
 II = Grade 2, defined as being of special interest
 L = Locally listed, buildings valued for their contribution to the local scene
 C = Church
 e = early
 m = middle
 I = late
 c = century



Further buildings of interest:

Conyngam Lane

Copse End - The building was once a Patricbourne School for the Conyngam Estate.

Laundry Cottage, next door was the schoolmaster's house with a bell to call the pupils. Prior to that Copse End was a laundry to the Bifron's Estate, during WW2 it was used to by the military for firearms training.

Beechmount (formerly Hillside). Deeds show a larger property on the south side of the house. Part of the present building was stables to Oliver's Court.

The Consultation Exercise

In May 2004 the Parish Plan committee gave out disposable cameras to all of the community groups in Bridge – from the Playgroup to Fish scheme, from Horticultural Society to the Pigeon Club. Their task was to simply take shots of what they thought was 'good' or 'bad' about Bridge and make a comment.



We would like to thank all of the groups who helped us in their task, as their views formed the base for two exhibitions – a small 'taster' in June 2004 at the School and Church joint fete and the full exhibition held in the village hall in November 2004. Over 150 people visited our stand at the fete and over 200 people visited the exhibition in the hall.



Residents studying the photographs at the parish Plan exhibition held in November 2004.

An overwhelming 70% of the photographs taken were aspects of the village that people thought were good, and that was certainly the agreement at both exhibitions – that Bridge is a lovely place to live. There may be aspects that could be improved – but it seems that most people like it here.

'I think Bridge is just about perfect as it is'



'Fantastic village with a great sense of community and lovely people'



'I don't dislike anything about Bridge'



Young people and residents taking in the exhibition

'Lets not make too many changes to Bridge, it is so beautiful as it is. I moved back to the village so my children could have the wonderful childhood I had, the sense of freedom, the fields to run in and the trees to climb & friendly village folk to talk to'

'I would hope things would have changed in 5 years, things shouldn't stay the same'

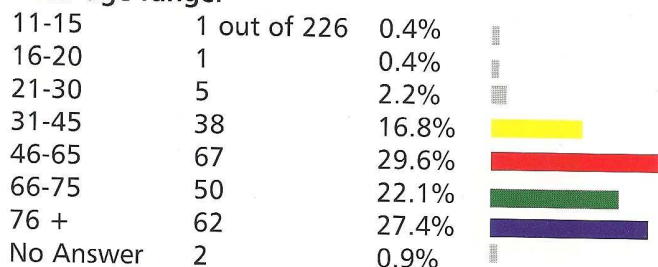
'Don't change, improve what we have'

Bridge Parish Plan – The Questionnaire Analysis

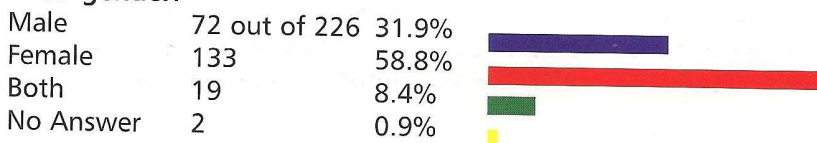
Who responded to our questionnaire?

- We received 226 responses from the 600 households of Bridge

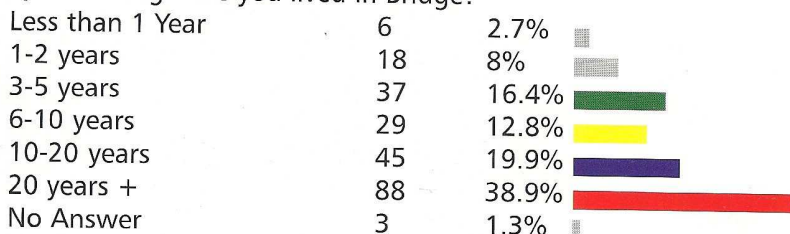
Their age range:



Their gender:



Q. How long have you lived in Bridge?



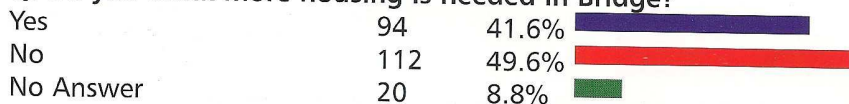
'I have lived in Bridge for 72 years so I actually like it very much'

'I moved here 3.5 years ago and have never regretted it. It is a thriving village that has welcomed 'new comers and I love living here'

The majority (88%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 9% were living in rented accommodation.

Almost all (93%) of respondents said that their home meets their Housing needs.

Q. Do you think more housing is needed in Bridge?



Amenities

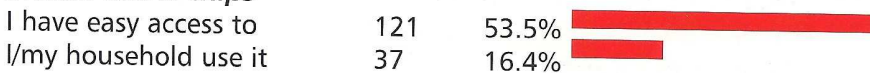
Shops



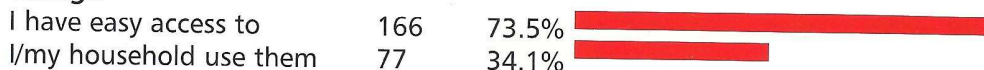
Mobile Library



Mobile fish & chips



Garage



Pubs

I have easy access to	209	92.5%	
I/my household use them	176	77.9%	





Restaurants

I have easy access to	205	90.7%	
I/my household use them	143	63.3%	

B&B

I have easy access to	165	73%	
I/my household use it	41	18.1%	

Q. Are you happy with the level of commercial services provided?

Yes	118	52.2%	
No	75	33.2%	
Don't Know	3	1.3%	
No Answer	30	13.3%	







Q. How important do you believe the following services and facilities to the Parish and Village of Bridge? Rated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is very important and 1 Not important at all.

Village Post Office/Chemist	5
Village Shops	4.9
Health Centre	4.8
Public Transport	4.8
Bridge Primary School	4.7
Recreation Ground	4.7
Public Footpaths & Bridleways	4.6
Village Hall	4.5
Football/Cricket pitch & Tennis Courts	4.4
Dental Surgery	4.3
Public Houses	4.3
Fish Scheme	4.3
The Mill Centre (Youth clubs)	4.2
St Peter's Church	4.1
Methodist Chapel	3.3








Football on the Recreation Ground

Q. How often do you use the bus service in or out of the village?

Daily	10	4.4%	
Weekly	32	14.2%	
Monthly	7	3.1%	
Occasionally	87	38.5%	
Never	87	38.5%	
No Answer	3	1.3%	




Q. How often do you use the Park & Ride facility?

Daily	0	0%	
Weekly	46	20.4%	
Monthly	27	11.9%	
Occasionally	68	30.1%	
Never	81	35.8%	
No Answer	4	1.8%	

Q. Is speeding through the village still a cause for concern?

Yes	153	67.7%	
No	62	27.4%	
No Answer	11	4.9%	

Q. Are there enough activities and sport/leisure facilities in the village?

Yes	125	55.3%	
No	75	33.2%	
No Answer	26	11.5%	

Q. What other activities or facilities would you like in the village?

Responses here could be grouped under four themes:




- **More for Children and Young people** (42 responses). Suggestions: Skateboard park, Basketball Court/hoop, Tennis court, Snooker/table tennis, Adventure playground, Youth Club, Improve the play equipment/area, More in the recreation ground, 5-a-side football, Teenshelter, Roller skating.
- **More for all ages** (26 responses). Suggestions: Dance/exercise classes, Swimming pool, Yoga, Tennis courts (public/free), Badminton, Cricket, Any sports/leisure facilities, Gym, Squash, Bat and Trap, Aromatherapy, Drama club, Quiz nights.
- **More for Older people** (18 responses). Suggestions: Keepfit/gentle exercise class, Dance class, Walking group, Bowls/petanque, FISH scheme run more often, Afternoon over 60's club.
- **Community Centre** (13 responses). Suggestions: Make more use of village halls and Pavilion or ideally a larger village hall/community centre, Village get-togethers once or twice a year, More publicity of existing facilities/organisations, Use the school facilities more.

'A good village hall / community centre with up to date facilities would increase the number of village activities'

'More notice board publicity would help to know what goes on'

Crime/Fear of crime

Q. Are the Police sufficiently active in the Parish?

Yes	38	16.8%	
No	156	69%	
No Answer	32	14.2%	

Q. Would you support the introduction of Rural Special Constables?

Yes	195	86.3%	
No	14	6.2%	
No Answer	17	7.5%	

Q. What could be done to make your community feel safer?

Responses when grouped under 'themes' gave the following picture:

Policing:	More visible police presence	48
	Permanent village policeman/local Bobby	16
	Policeman patrolling on foot	13
	Police patrolling at evenings and night	7
	Rural special constables (on beat)	4
	Community warden	3
	Reopen a village police station/Police Surgery (weekly)	4
	It is safe already	Feel safe/it is safe – this should be promoted
Street Lighting	More street lighting	8
Parental control	More parental control/responsibility/education	7
Parking/Traffic	Enforcement of parking on yellow lines and pavements	7
	Traffic calming/speed camera	4
	More off road parking	2
Neighbourhood Watch	More active Neighbourhood Watch/consideration for each other	8

Street Lighting

Q. Apart from that in the High Street are you satisfied with the level of village street lighting?

Yes	152	67.3%	
No	64	28.3%	
No Answer	10	4.4%	

Although two-thirds of respondents were happy with the level of street lighting provided, requests were received to improve street lighting in the Bridge Down, Union and Dering Road, Brewery Lane, Conyngnam Lane/New Close areas and side streets in general.

Things liked about Bridge:

Out of the 226 responses the following themes emerged:

Common theme liked:	No:	Common theme liked:	No:
Local shops, services and amenities	140	Health Centre	9
Friendly people	67	Clubs and activities	8
Location – rural life but close to City	63	Fields/natural environment	6
Community spirit/village atmosphere	59	Everything	5
Transport links/access	46	Cleanliness	4
Access to surrounding countryside/walks locally	45	Restaurants	4
Good public transport	26	Safe for children to play	3
Character buildings/beautiful picturesque village	25	Safe environment	3
Pubs	21	General pride in the place	3
School	16	Good mix of people/ages	3
Peace and quiet	14	Recreation ground/recreation facilities	2
Post office/Chemist	14	Pleasant housing	2
Compact/right size	9	Tennis Courts	2

Q. We asked what should be preserved about the local environment, and what would you like to be the same in 5 years time?

Desire to preserve:

- Everything/Retain all as is now (22 duplicated responses)

Amenities

- No loss of/same level of shops and businesses (36)
- The PO and chemist to remain (12)
- Maintain Bridge school at the same capacity and standards (8)
- All facilities, clubs etc. (8)
- The pubs (6)
- Bus services (4)

Natural Environment

- Open spaces/surrounding countryside (33)
- Trees (26)
- Fields and walk/footpaths (16)
- Hedgerows (15)
- Wildlife and habitats (14)
- Woodland (14)
- More flowers/shrubs/trees (5)
- Clean the river and river banks/regular maintenance (5)
- More trees and flowers/Xmas trees and flowerpots in High Street (3)
- The recreation ground (3)



Built environment

- Preservation/upkeep of historic buildings in the village/maintain to a high standard (18)

Rural setting/protect boundaries

- Remain a village - protect open countryside around the village/retain green belt between Bridge and Canterbury (32)
- No area increase in development/retain boundary limits/keep it a village (14)
- Size/population -retention of the village's identity - avoid any further housing development (13)
- No new building/housing development (7)
- No more building on Greenfield sites (5)

Village life




- Village atmosphere (9)
- Retain character/appearance of village (9)
- Village community/Community spirit (7)
- Quiet friendly village (6)
- The residents/friendly people (4)

Things disliked about Bridge:

Theme:	Item disliked:	No of responses
Parking	Inconsiderate, illegal parking/on pavements & yellow lines	55
	Not enough parking	29
	Too many parked cars on High street	21
	School run/parking at school	13
Traffic	Speeding Traffic	31
	Amount of traffic	22
	Heavy lorries through High Street/the village	13
	Motorway/A2 noise	8
	The lack of use of highway code/inconsiderate drivers	5
	Through traffic	3
Traffic calming and road signs	Traffic calming/speed islands (dangerous)	16
	Encourage safer, slower driving by enhancing traffic calming	3
	Character being destroyed by too many road signs, especially High St	3
	Need for warning lights on approach to 30 mph limit	2
Roads and pavements	Non availability of grit for icy conditions	3
Public transport	Narrow pavements or none at all, and some in need of repair	3
	Poor Bus Service - especially for school children at 8:10	2
	Bus service: not comprehensive/poor service/cost, reliability & timetable	7
Environment	All the obvious empty/poorly maintained properties (especially if listed)	7
	Dog Fouling	11
	Litter	13
	Too few litter bins	2
	Unkempt garages / public areas	5
Built environment	No Public conveniences	5
	Expensive/limited housing	3
	Lack of cycle lanes to Canterbury/Kingston	3
	The gradual urbanisation of the village	3
Community	General apathy in village / Little sense of community	2
	Some of the people /complainers	5
Crime and disorder	Crime/Vandalism/Graffiti/Lack of police presence	10
	Anti social behaviour of children / youths	3
Shops and facilities	Inadequate village hall	6
Happy as is	Don't dislike anything	12

"The so called traffic calming - traffic races to get there first"

Q. We asked if there are there any changes you would like to see to improve the Village?

None	78	34.5%	
Yes	118	52.2%	
No Answer	30	13.3%	

Theme	Suggestion for change:	No of responses
Parking	More parking facilities	35
	Enforcement of cars parked illegally on yellow lines/zigzags and footpaths (especially High Street)	33
	Public car park	22
	Address parking & congestion problems at the school at school runs/car park for school	13
	Double yellows on High street/ Less parking in the High Street	8
	Off street parking/more parking for High Street	6
	Ban lorries (except for deliveries/unloading)	4
	Yellow lines on first corner of Western Avenue	3
Traffic	Lower speed limit/speed cameras	9
	Stricter regulations regarding size of lorries/Ban lorries	6
	Reduce traffic	6
	20 mph speed limit on approaches and through the village	5
	Get rid of one pedestrian crossing/surely one would be enough	4
Traffic calming and road signs	Tidy up/reduce the street signage which appears excessive	7
	Review traffic calming/ Warning lights on approach to 30 mph limit	7
	More traffic calming in centre (especially near crossing at PO)	6
	Make bottom of Union Road one way	5
	Remove all traffic calming	4
	More traffic calming at each end of the village	3
	Speed Cameras	3
	Remove traffic chicanes at upper end of High Street	2
Remove speed barriers, Flashing sign instead	2	
Roads and pavements	Cycle lanes to Canterbury	7
	Repair broken and uneven pavements	5
	Wider pavement at church	2
	All pavements repaired and made suitable for wheelchairs / buggies	1
Footpaths and bridleways	Better provision for cyclists/Cycle lanes where possible	3
	Repair the gates to bridleways/stiles	3
Public transport	Cheaper and more regular <i>evening</i> transport into Canterbury	5
	More bus services (times unspecified)	7
Environment	More trees in the High Street	16
	More litter bins - emptied regularly	10
	Regular/more frequent street cleaning	10
	More flower tubs/flower beds	10
	More trees	10
	Replace/reinstate/enhance bridge over the Nailbourne to give a view of the river on both sides of the High Street	3
	Revamp Green Court/Western Avenue	3
	More dog bins/Dog wardens to enforce dog messing violations	5
	More dog bins/Dog wardens to enforce dog messing violations	3
	Lopping of overhanging trees	2
Cleaning of river and riverbanks	2	
Built environment	Housing for Local people/young people	2
	Affordable Housing within village (age unspecified)	2
	Relocate oil facility in Union Road to an appropriate industrial estate	2
	Discreet floodlighting on St Peters Church to highlight architecture	2
	More benches/seats	3
	Tidy up Green Court other open spaces in that part of the village	3

Community	New, bigger village hall with parking for leisure and to hire out	18
	Improve the play area	3
	Walking bus to the school	2
	Greater use of school facilities for the community	2
	Welcome pack/local directory for new people to the area	3
Crime and disorder	More/improved street lighting in poorly lit areas	8
	More Police & Community wardens	4
Shops, facilities and services	Public conveniences provided	9
	More retail / commercial premises e.g. greengrocer/takeaway shop	7
	More clubs/societies	4
	Farmers Market	3
Happy as is	None/Very happy as it is	9

Responses to Suggestions for Change suggested by us within the questionnaire - results:

Key: H = High Importance, M = Medium Importance, L = Low Importance

	H	M	L	Score (H = 7, M = 3, L = 1)	
No more building outside	156	33	22	1213	
More evident Policing	152	39	18	1199	
Parking Enforcement	149	36	24	1175	
Additional parking	123	50	34	1045	
Footpaths and pavements	99	98	13	1000	
Tidy up Green Court	94	84	30	940	
An improved cycle-way	97	68	38	921	
Hourly bus service	85	95	21	901	
Improved road maintenance	77	99	28	864	
More play equipment	68	89	47	790	
More tree planting	64	96	43	779	
More dog bins	66	91	44	779	
Further use of the pavilion	58	100	44	750	
More low-cost housing	69	56	80	731	
More flowers	49	112	41	720	
More adult education	50	100	53	703	
A welcome system	40	91	68	621	
Affordable Housing	42	78	81	609	
Choice of burials	39	80	84	597	
Change nothing	22	54	80	396	




'I would like to be able to drive through the village on the LEFT side of the road!'
 'The traffic barriers on the upper end of the High Street
 a) Dangerous B) Unsightly c) Ugly'
 'There are excellent footpaths with good direction signs. Not long ago stiles were well maintained but of late a number have become derelict.'
 'The mobile library is no use to anyone who works, perhaps it could stay until 6 pm?'
 'With the litter cleared from the High street and some dwellings better maintained, the road to the health centre better lit and pavement before the bridge levelled to eliminate the 2 inch deep lake that forms after heavy rain, Bridge would be as the near the perfect village you could expect.'

Q. How often do you use the public footpaths and bridleways of Bridge Parish?

Daily	60	26.5%	
Weekly	59	26.1%	
Monthly	21	9.3%	
Occasionally	59	26.1%	
Never	17	7.5%	
No Answer	10	4.4%	

"Always somewhere to walk for pleasure"

Q. Are there enough recycling facilities?

Yes	178	78.8%	
No	32	14.2%	
No Answer	16	7.1%	

'A supply of plastic recycling bags stored in the village somewhere so we don't have to go to Canterbury would be helpful'

Q. We asked how could the Parish Council help you and your family improve your lives? Many suggestions for change or improvement were re-iterated from earlier questions within the questionnaire, together with several miscellaneous requests. The duplicated themes will be written into actions in the Action Plan within this Parish Plan, and ways of taking these forward and subsequently implemented looked at.

Better communication links, between the Parish Council and residents, as a need, was highlighted most strongly in this section.

Repeat suggestions included:

- Keep residents well informed and up to date with all that's happening, events, meetings, and so on.
- Maintain the flow of relevant information from government (national / local) to enable reaction to impending change
- More open meetings, say twice a year, in village hall.
- A weekly/monthly/bi-monthly newsletter
- Notice board kept up to date.
- PC surgery

'Regular sending of questionnaires like this one would help the flow of information / villagers views'

'Great that you're doing this - well done! Hope the energy of the council continues - but they don't change things for the sake of change'



60th Anniversary Party 2005 - 60 years

The Action Plan

What is this Action Plan?

The priorities, ideas and concerns that the local people raised through questionnaires and focus groups have been written into the Action Plan at the end of this document. It aims to:

- Highlight issues
- Offer ideas for solutions
- Inspire action in the area

The plan will lead to action in different ways. There may be:

- Actions taken on by Bridge Parish Council to improve services or develop initiatives.
- Actions that are led by local people or community groups
- Actions that Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council or other statutory bodies take
- Actions that partnerships take forward either with or on behalf of local people.

Why do we need this Action Plan?

The Action Plan sets out local people's issues and suggests actions that can be taken to address them. For each action there is detail about who should be involved, what resources are needed, and what needs to happen next.

Some actions may take longer to develop, and some may not be possible – but this document provides a focused way for the parish council, residents and groups or organisations from all sectors, to work together to improve the ward, and the quality of life for those living and working in them.

The Action Plan is important because it will:

- Be a tool and guide to develop projects and seek funding.
- Show what the community wants for the area and what is being done to meet identified needs.
- Be used to influence priorities and attract funding
- Help facilitate partnership working between agencies, leading to more efficient service delivery.
- Influence agencies' decisions in respect of service levels and budgeting.
- Make a real difference in addressing local priorities and needs.

Themes

The Action Plan has been split into sub-sections based on themes that emerged from the analysis:

- **More for Children and young people**
- **More for all ages; More for older people**
- **Community buildings**
- **Crime/Fear of crime**
- **Amenities**
- **Bus services**
- **Natural environment**
- **Built environment**
- **Rural setting/protection of parish boundaries**
- **Parking**
- **Traffic**
- **Roads and Pavements**
- **Better communication links between the Parish Council and residents**



Bridge Parish Plan - Action Plan

Bridge Parish Plan Recommendation	Ideas for action/How it will be done	When	Who	Funding possibilities
<p>1. More for young people</p> <p>That consideration be given to the desire for skateboarding and skating provision within the parish</p> <p>To support the desire for a basketball hoop to be erected</p> <p>To give support to residents' and young people's requests to improve the play equipment/ improve the play area</p> <p>To provide a local Youth Club for young people in the parish</p>	<p>Parish Council to investigate possibility, feasibility and possible locations for skate provision</p> <p>Parish Council has investigated this idea, looking at possible locations within the recreation ground</p> <p>Parish Council have picked up on this, and have recently sent a survey about the recreation ground to every household, looking at the needs of the whole play area</p> <p>ACHIEVED: There are two youth clubs now running in the village hall – Rural streetrunner and Church Youth group - see the notice-board for details</p>	<p>In hand</p> <p>2006</p> <p>In Hand</p> <p>Done</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council</p> <p>-</p>	<p></p> <p>Already funded by PC</p> <p>Already funded by PC</p> <p>-</p>
<p>2. More for all ages</p> <p>Requests for all kinds of activities arose, such as, Dance/exercise classes, Yoga, Sports, Drama and Art classes. Lots of activities requested do already exist, but there is an obvious need for groups to publicise their activities and programme better</p>	<p>If any resident within the parish is interested in setting up a new class, activity or group please contact the Parish Council.</p> <p>Parish Council to co-ordinate groups publicity by: -Making space available on the village hall notice-board -Making space available on parish website -Including a directory list of groups/activities operating in the parish in the welcome pack to newcomers</p>	-	<p>Residents</p> <p>Parish Council</p>	
<p>3. More for older people</p> <p>Requests for activities such as Keep fit/gentle exercise, Dance classes, Walking group</p> <p>To support requests for Boules/ petanque provision</p>	<p>If any resident within the parish is interested in setting up a new class, activity or group please contact the Parish Council.</p> <p>A local Pub to set this up</p>	-	<p>Residents</p> <p>Local Pub</p>	
<p>4. Community Buildings</p> <p>To investigate residents' requests for a new, bigger multifunctional community centre/village hall, with parking – for leisure and to hire out</p> <p>To investigate requests to open up and make more use of the sports pavilion</p> <p>To encourage the use of the school facilities more for community use</p>	<p>The Village Hall Management Committee has done a survey within the last 18 months. Village Hall Management Committee to pick up on these new and previous findings and investigate further, and report back to the community</p> <p>The pavilion could be used as a meeting room. Urge Parish Council to look at whole picture of buildings within the parish that could potentially be for community use - and come back with recommendations as to how to improve use, or maybe rebuild it, and so on.</p> <p>The village hall is often fully booked. There is a need for an alternative venue. Would recommend that the Village Hall Management Committee hold talks with the school regarding functions they cannot cater for.</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>2006/7</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>Village Hall Management Committee</p> <p>Bridge Village Sports Trust</p> <p>VH Cmmittee School KCC Mill Centre</p>	
<p>5. Crime/Fear of Crime</p> <p>To lobby for increased police presence and visibility and foot patrols</p> <p>To support residents' desire to appoint a Community Warden and have community policing for perceived 'unsafe' areas</p> <p>We recommend villagers comply with the advice of the Police to report to them all incidents, crimes and any suspicious behaviour</p>	<p>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED: Community Policeman shared currently with other villages. Recommendation however, that he reports regularly to Parish Council at their meetings with updates.</p> <p>Parish Council to lobby Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council for a permanent community warden</p> <p>Remember crime rates in Bridge are low. The fear of crime does exist although most villagers feel safe. Recommendation that the Parish Council publicise details of how to report crimes - to either the local Police and / or the Public Safety Unit so that a true picture of the village may be obtained. FOR INFORMATION: The Public Safety Unit has had successes with ABA's (acceptable behaviour agreements) and ASBO's (anti-social behaviour orders) served on nuisance youths.</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Parish Council, Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council</p> <p>Parish Council, CCC and KCC</p> <p>Residents, Parish Council, Police, Pub.Saf. Unit, Neighbourhood Watch</p>	

<p>To give support for residents' desire for more/improved street lighting in poorly lit areas</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch</p>	<p>All residents can report in confidence any instances of anti-social behaviour, graffiti and vandalism to The Public Safety Unit, Herne Bay Police Station, Gordon Road, Herne Bay, on 01227 289260, or email public.safetyunit@canterbury.gov.uk</p> <p>For Parish Council to keep under continuous review requests for new street lighting, with low level lighting as preferred option where appropriate</p> <p>Bridge has a well-established Neighbourhood Watch network. The Police would be delighted to hear from anyone not currently covered by a watch wishing to enquire about setting up a scheme in their road. They can contact PC Ken Bradshaw for details on 01227 817127 or the NHW centre on 01227 817140.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch, Police and KCC</p>	
<p>6. Amenities Villagers would like to see no loss of the same level of shops and businesses in the parish, with the pubs, Post Office and chemist and supermarket also to remain</p> <p>To support residents' desire to maintain Bridge school at the same capacity and standards.</p>	<p>Parish Council to give a Recommendation to retail business owners to form some sort of consortium/independent traders association - to help each other and support each other. The Parish Council would be supportive of any action.</p> <p>Villagers are urged to shop locally to support the retail businesses.</p> <p>Parish Council to write to Kent County Council Local Education Authority (LEA) and ask to be consulted in any aspect of future changes - in size, numbers, standards of the school.</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>Done</p>	<p>Parish Council Businesses</p> <p>Parish Council KCC LEA</p>	
<p>7. Bus Services To support residents' concerns over bus services schedules, availability and pricing structure</p> <p>Assistance with travel to the hospital</p> <p>That a Bus Timetable be made available</p>	<p>Parish Council be requested to have discussions with Stage Coach about the high cost of using the bus from Bridge to Canterbury and their pricing structure and availability</p> <p>FISH Scheme offers a volunteer transport service</p> <p>- Recommend that Bus Timetables are periodically put into the "On the Nail" magazines and when there are changes these can be put in the Parish Newsletter - Bus Timetable also to be on Parish noticeboard as so often vandalised at bus stop</p>	<p>2006/7</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Done</p>	<p>Parish Council Stage Coach</p> <p>FISH Scheme</p> <p>Parish Council</p>	
<p>8. Natural Environment More flowers/shrubs More flower beds/flower tubs</p> <p>Lopping of overhanging trees</p> <p>Clean the river and banks/regular maintenance</p> <p>To have a supply of plastic recycling bags stored in the village somewhere so residents don't have to go Canterbury.</p> <p>More litter bins and more dog bins</p>	<p>Recommend extension and enhancement of "Bridge in Bloom" competition to encompass a wider range of properties including residential, for example, a new category of smallest garden</p> <p>Contact CCC to lobby landowners to carry out</p> <p>The Environment Agency is responsible. This is carried out twice-yearly currently (For information, can't be done until after 5th July to protect wildlife)</p> <p>ACHIEVED:A supply is available at 48 High Street</p> <p>ACHIEVED:3 more have been provided</p>	<p>Already in hand</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>-</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Done</p>	<p>Residents</p> <p>Env Agency and Riparian Owners</p> <p>Residents</p> <p>Parish Council</p>	
<p>9. Built environment Preservation/upkeep of historic buildings in the village – that they be maintained to a high standard.</p> <p>That the low-cost housing needs of young families and the elderly in Bridge be investigated</p>	<p>That Parish Council be asked to keep an eye on historic listed buildings to ensure owners keep to a high standard. (See table of Listed buildings).</p> <p>Parish Council to carry out a Housing Needs Survey utilising the expertise of the rural housing enabler at Action with Communities in Rural Kent</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Survey done July 2005</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>PC, CCC & Housing Enabler</p>	
<p>10. Rural setting/protect boundaries That support is given to the majority of residents' demand that Bridge remain a village by: - Protecting the open countryside around the village/retaining the green belt between Bridge and Canterbury - No area increase in development/retain boundary limits, No large scale new building/housing development; small, mixed low-cost development only - No more building on Greenfield sites -Protect trees, fields, walks, footpaths, hedgerows, woodland, wildlife & habitats</p>	<p>- That the Parish Council be vigilant in ensuring urban creep does not get any closer/maintaining green belt around the village</p> <p>- Only sympathetic, in-keeping planning applications to be favoured by the Parish Council.</p> <p>- To set up a steering group to undertake a Village Design Statement for the area in conjunction with Canterbury City Council Planning and Development Control department</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2007</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council (sub group) and Canterbury City Council</p>	

<p>11. Parking That an investigation into addressing lack of parking in Bridge be conducted</p> <p>Enforcement of cars parked illegally on yellow lines/zigzags and footpaths</p> <p>That ways of improving parking on the High Street be investigated</p>	<p>Parish Council to look at feasibility of all options in all areas around the row of shops including the re-visiting of previous plans to develop off-street parking near the village centre</p> <p>Once more parking has been secured, as a second stage for the Parish Council to look at (with KCC Highways) Residents Only parking on the High Street –with annual chargeable residents permits introduced –and/or time limits introduced</p>	<p>In-hand</p> <p>In-hand</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council, KCC</p>	
<p>12. Traffic That measures to combat speeding traffic through the village be implemented</p> <p>To give support for villagers' desire for stricter regulations regarding the size of lorries or a ban on lorries through the village (except for deliveries/unloading) be investigated</p>	<p>Parish Council to ask for speed cameras and/or secure the operation of mobile police-operated speed cameras</p> <p>Parish Council to lobby Highways Agency through City and County Councillors to get a lorry ban over 7.5 tonnes /and/or weight restriction at either end of the village – except for unloading or deliveries</p> <p>The Parish Council is approaching the major users of heavy vehicles to persuade them to educate their suppliers to avoid the village wherever possible.</p> <p>Restrictions are difficult to obtain as the High Street is a classified 'A' Road.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Continuing</p> <p>Discussions with major users</p>	<p>Parish Council Police</p> <p>Parish Council KCC Highways</p> <p>Parish Council, KCC Highways</p>	
<p>13. Traffic calming/Road signs To give support to residents desire that existing traffic calming measures be reviewed and new measures and possibilities be investigated, such as the provision Flashing Speed Indicator signs on approach to 30 mph limit</p> <p>To look at feasibility of making the bottom of Union Road one way</p>	<p>- Parish Council to make enquiries to KCC Highways to replace existing with rumble strips and report back to the village</p> <p>- To investigate costs, feasibility of flashing speed sign</p> <p>Parish Council to investigate this suggestion and talk to Highways Agency</p>	<p>In-hand</p> <p>In-hand</p>	<p>Parish Council, KCC Highways</p> <p>Parish Council, KCC</p>	
<p>14. Roads and pavements Roads in need of repair Pavements and footpaths in need of repair</p> <p>To give support for better provision for cyclists/Cycle lanes, such as a cycle lanes to Canterbury Park & Ride and cycle lanes to Canterbury/Kingston</p>	<p>FOR INFORMATION: Footpaths and carriageways - repairs do get done on an ongoing basis but major schemes go into a yearly bidding pot. Inspections are carried out: Main roads = monthly, Side roads = twice yearly Footpaths = yearly But if a member of the public complains then an additional inspection is organised. Ring the district council and ask for Highways Inspectors. For Parish Council to look at feasibility of additional cycle lanes, particularly to these areas, and to make recommendations to and talk to Highways about this</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Scheme already submitted to KCC</p>	<p>KCC Highways</p> <p>KCC Highways Residents may highlight repairs Parish Council, KCC Highways</p>	<p>KCC</p> <p>KCC</p>
<p>15. Better communication links between the Parish Council and residents: Keep residents well informed and up to date with all that's happening, events, meetings, and so on. Maintain the flow of relevant information from government (national / local) to enable reaction to impending change.</p> <p>To support residents' desire for more Open meetings</p> <p>For the introduction of a Parish Council Surgery</p>	<p>To continue with the production of quarterly Parish newsletters to all households</p> <p>To keep the notice-board up to date, and to include the details of local amenities and clubs</p> <p>Parish Council to continue to hold their Annual Parish Meeting. All Parish Council meetings are open to residents who are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>To re-instate the bi-monthly public surgeries with both a Parish and City councillor in attendance – offering residents an opportunity to raise issues and concerns. Parish Council to request attendance of City Cllr</p>	<p>Actioned</p> <p>Actioned</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council</p> <p>Residents Parish Council</p> <p>Parish Council & City Council</p>	
<p>16. Miscellaneous To support residents' requests for more public benches/seating</p> <p>Welcome pack/local directory for new people to the area to be produced</p>	<p>ACHIEVED: Seating installed outside Londis shop and Western Avenue</p> <p>Parish Council to look at producing a Welcome Pack to include a copy of this Parish Plan booklet and a list of amenities, clubs and societies</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>Parish Council</p>	

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The Directors of Skippers of Bridge

The Noel Tatt Group

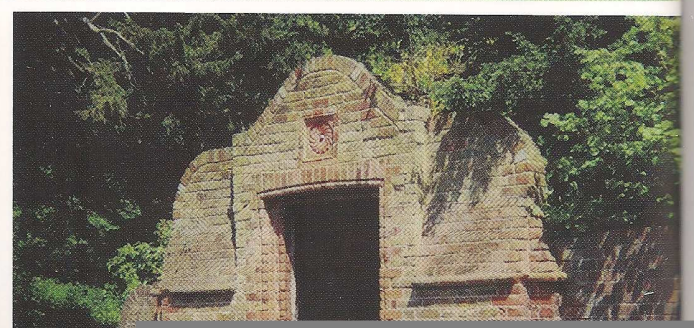
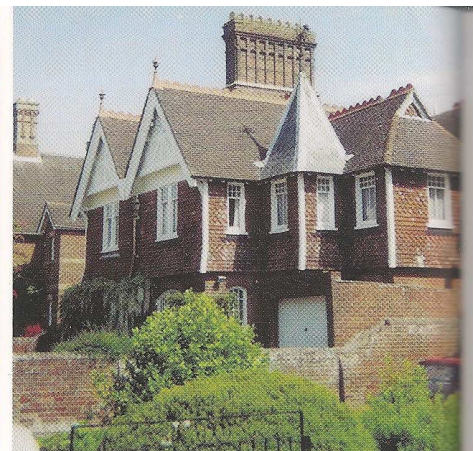
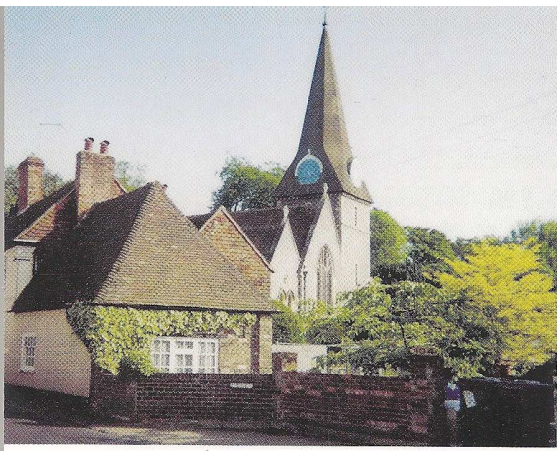
Laurie Wakeham, of Laurie Wakeham Butchers

Alan Walton, formerly of The White Horse

Frank Whitten, of F. Whitten Accountants

And all the residents of Bridge.

The information in this document is correct at the time of publication.



East Kent from the Air



By John Guy

Published by Meresborough Books

INTRODUCTION

Since the last war aerial photography has developed as possibly the most important new tool for historians and archaeologists in recognising archaeological sites. Crop and vegetation marks in particular often give a clue to buried remains. Aerial views were made prior to 1939, of course, but these are few and the quality often poor. The medium really came into its own as a reconnaissance aid during the war, when it was noticed that all manner of details, not normally visible on the ground, were clearly discernible from the air.

In these more peaceful times air photography has been put to many uses and a number of very interesting books have been published using aerial views as their principal form of illustration. Unfortunately, few of these publications are localised so that they have little 'local interest' value. I hope this book fills that gap for Kent readers, for even the most familiar of scenes acquires a completely new interest value when seen from the air. Aerial photography gives a more complete picture of any particular feature because it shows the entire landscape which surrounds it. It has not been my intention to write a history of Kent, nor to follow any strict chronological sequence of places or events. Instead, I have simply tried to put together as varied and interesting a collection of aerial views as I could and to cover as many aspects of our county as possible. Because there are few really old aerial photographs available it has not been possible to compile a 'bygone' book in the accepted sense. Where possible, however, I have selected the oldest views available. I was also limited by the material available for publication and many areas have patchy air cover, to say the least. Throughout this book I have used the marvellous collection of aerial photographs held at Cambridge University, which I consider to be the finest of its type. No doubt, as the years go on, full aerial coverage of the entire county will eventually be achieved.

In making my selection I have tried also to choose the more unusual, or at least less familiar views. A number of local newspapers have, over the years, published excellent

aerial views of several of our larger towns and, largely speaking, I have avoided repeating those. Instead, I have concentrated my efforts on those areas not so well covered, the coastal regions and rural areas in particular. In so doing I hope to have provided as wide a cross-section of the county as possible, in terms of date and location, new as well as old, the familiar and the unusual.

The captions have deliberately been kept short so as not to detract from the photographs. No attempt has been made to give 'potted histories' of each location (readers are recommended to consult the many local history books available to do this more fully), the captions simply pointing out interesting or unusual features to aid identification.

Following each caption heading are two sets of numbers in brackets. The first is a six-figure Ordnance Survey reference number (the 1:25 000 Pathfinder series is recommended, because of its greater detail, to accompany this book) which refers generally to the approximate position of the camera — though occasionally to the centre of the photograph, as appropriate. The second number in brackets refers to the date each photograph was taken or, where followed by a question mark, believed to have been taken.

Most of the photographs are oblique views, but occasionally I have selected a shot taken directly overhead. These were included partly to give a contrast and partly because it was felt they showed the particular landscape feature I wished to illustrate to better advantage.

While every attempt has been made for accuracy in identifying the exact location of each view and in compiling the captions, some errors may be evident, especially to those local people whose specialised knowledge of a particular region is better than my own. I apologise for any such errors but take full responsibility for them and would be grateful if interested readers could point them out so that any future editions might be corrected. Having said that, I hope that your appreciation of this book is not spoiled and that you thoroughly enjoy this aerial excursion over the lovely landscapes of Kent.

A Note on the Illustrations

All of the photographs in this book were taken from the Cambridge University Collection (copyright reserved). I gratefully acknowledge their help in compiling this selection and for their permission to reproduce them.

In order to do proper justice to the county and include as many areas as possible, I have divided the photographs into two volumes, West and East Kent, using the Kent County Council district boundaries as my guide. The views in each volume do not appear alphabetically, but topographically, taken approximately in a clockwise fashion. In the volume on West Kent I have stretched the boundaries a little to include several of those towns now lost to London's suburbs, but which should rightly be considered part of Kent.

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THE SWALE AND RIVER MEDWAY ESTUARY [923723] [20-6-72]

Looking over Queenborough to the mouth of the Swale and the River Medway Estuary. Chetney Marshes occupy the centre of the picture with Stangate Creek beyond. The ships on the far bank of the Medway are docked at the former oil refinery on the Isle of Grain, now dismantled. The distinctive outline of a sailing barge can be made out in the mouth of the Swale.



QUEENBOROUGH

[909723] [7-7-71]

This view shows Queenborough in more detail with its once busy creek dividing the lower-left quadrant and the impressive High Street immediately above. To the right of the picture, just below centre, is the former school, its playground lying over part of the castle site, defined as the large circular earthwork between the school and the railway station.



SHEERNESS

[908751] [26-5-61]

The former Royal Naval Dockyard at Sheerness has since closed down, but is now a thriving commercial port. The area right-of-centre is Blue Town. The seafront and fun fair can just be made out at the extreme right edge.



SHEERNESS

[910733] [13-6-67]

Panorama looking north-east towards the seafront. The wide dark line running through the centre of the photograph is the defensive moat, known as the Barton's Point and Queenborough Lines, built to protect the landward approaches of Sheerness Dockyard. Today it is partly used as a boating lake.



MINSTER, SHEPPEY

[956730] [13-6-67]

The abbey church of SS. Mary and Sexburga sits prominently on a hill near the centre of the photograph, clearly visible for miles around. Although much of Minster has been developed as a very pleasant seaside town, at its heart is a very ancient settlement of old houses.