

Ticehurst

Flimwell

And

Stonegate

**VILLAGE ACTION
PLAN**

2003 - 2012

**Parish Council approved
2nd September 2003.**

Preface

This Action Plan has been put together as a follow up to the Village Action Plan meetings held in Ticehurst Village Hall on October 17th 2002 and in Flimwell and Stonegate during January 2003. A further meeting to which all who indicated they were willing to assist, were invited, took place in February. Comments from these meetings and the questions circulated are included in the plan. The meetings were widely advertised and attended by about 400 people in total.

Funding for the meetings, advice and support has been received from the Countryside Agency, 'Action in Rural Sussex' at Lewes and Rother District Council, all of which is gratefully acknowledged.

The first part is an assessment of the Parish as it is today whilst the Action Plan itself is at the back with references back to the relevant section of the Assessment. A ** appears in the Assessment where an action point is relevant. As well as the Action point matrix a short, more easily readable Action Summary is also included at the conclusion.

The Village Assessment Flimwell, Stonegate and Ticehurst, East Sussex

Introduction:

1. This assessment was written in 2002, and updated in the Spring of 2003 at times when considerable changes are taking place in the Ticehurst Parish area. The assessment is the base line in formulating an Action Plan for the Parish.
2. For the sake of clarity, the area under discussion throughout this assessment is the Civil Administrative Parish of Ticehurst, which in addition to the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary's, Ticehurst, also includes the Ecclesiastical Parishes of Flimwell and Stonegate. Herein after, if differentiation between the smaller parishes is required, the units are referred to as the Flimwell, Stonegate and Ticehurst Wards.
3. Ticehurst parish is part of Rother District and therefore its own Action Plan has, broadly, to mesh in with Rother District Council policies which in turn have to be compliant with those of the County Council in East Sussex. Overall the South East Regional Office at Guildford has certain powers which superimpose on any plans produced at a lower level of administration.
4. Nonetheless, it is the Government's intention that the planning process should be pyramid shaped with basic input coming from the base of the lesser authorities upward to the peak rather than be superimposed from the peak downward. In any structure of merit there has to be some cohesion which in planning terms usually means compromise but this should not stop unconventional or possibly 'unpolitically correct' views being expressed at the base levels.
5. This assessment as written is not necessarily agreed by all parishioners. The draft has been available at each of the Action Plan meetings and it has been on the Village Web site (www.ticehurst.info). Many parishioners have therefore had opportunities to comment on it. Significant minority views to any points are noted as appendices to a section.

TICEHURST PARISH IN 2003

I Geographic

1. A location map of the village is shown as the front piece. (Maps reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey).

2. General and Geographic

A TICEHURST (Map Reference TQ690302).

The Village lies on a major East-West ridge of Wadhurst Clay and Tunbridge Wells sandstone at a height of about 110 metres OD at a point where it is joined from the South-East by a spur carrying the B2099 road.

Immediately to the north of the village, streams help to feed Bewl Bridge Reservoir, from which the River Bewl flows north to join the River Teise and then the Medway to reach the Thames Estuary and North Sea at Sheerness. To the south, the ground falls away steeply to the River Limden, which joins the Rother at Etchingham and so to the Channel at Rye. This qualifies the Ticehurst/Wadhurst area as one of the principal watersheds of the South-East. From the Village, there are extensive views, particularly to the South, over predominantly wooded countryside.

Ticehurst village is centred on the Square (a Conservation Area), immediately to the north of the medieval church and round this area are most of the older buildings dating from the 17th Century and earlier. Many of the houses in this area are tile-hung and there is a high proportion of white painted weatherboarding. Around this nucleus are various areas of recent development, the largest being Springfields and then clockwise, Lower Platts, Upper Platts, St. Mary's Close and Hillbury Gardens. At Dale Hill to the north-east is a small cluster of earlier settlement with at least one house dating back to the 15th Century. There is another hamlet to the north-west at Three Leg Cross by the 15th Century Bull Inn, halfway between Ticehurst and the reservoir. To the west, approximately 1.5 km along the B2099, there is the hamlet of Wallcrouch.

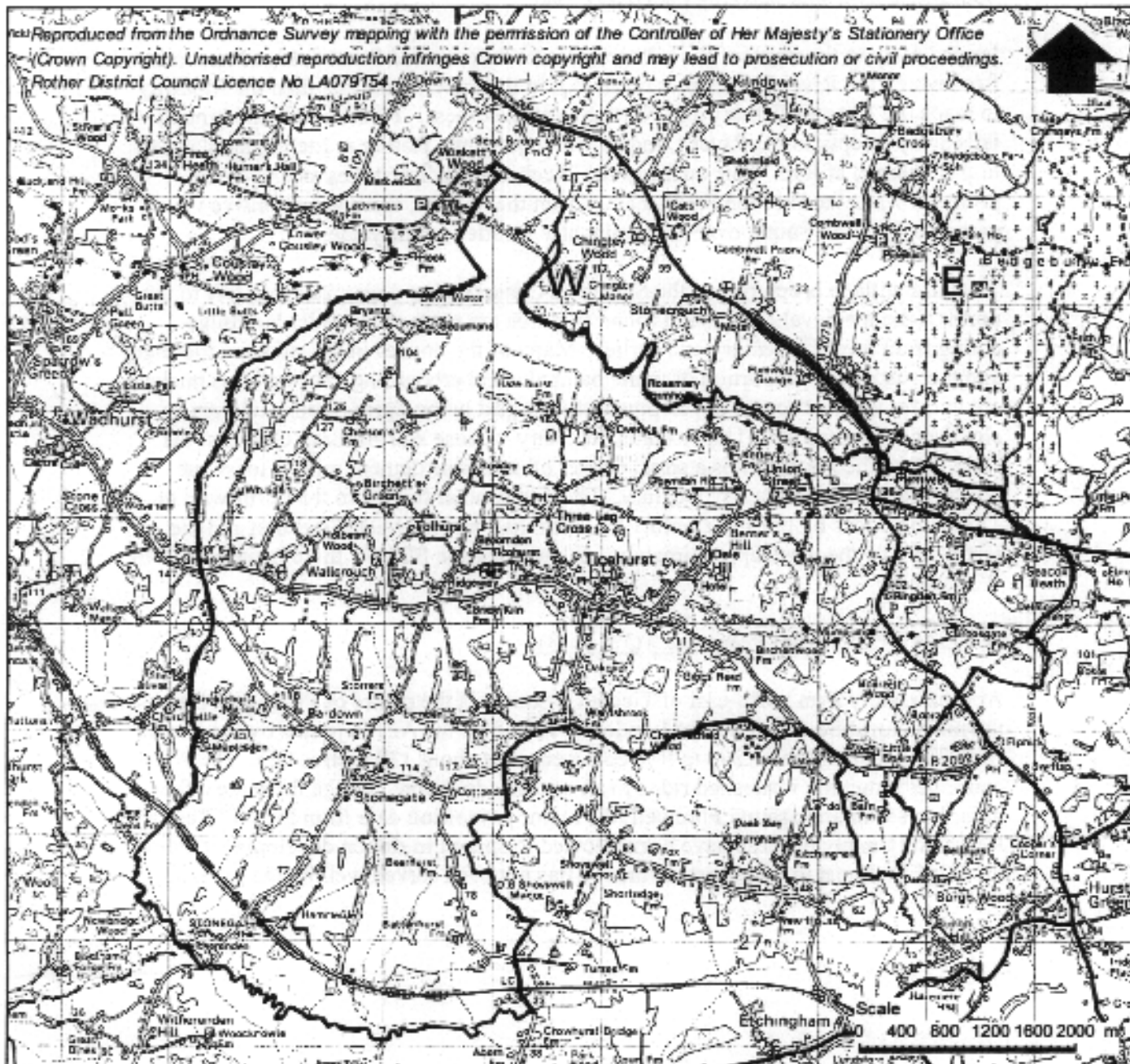
B FLIMWELL (Map Reference TQ714313).

Approximately 3km north-east of Ticehurst Square is the centre of Flimwell. Here the main North/South road from London to Hastings, the A21 is joined by the B2087 from Ticehurst and the A268 to Rye commences at about 130 metres OD. The A268 continues along the watershed ridge in an easterly direction. Whilst there are a few older houses in and around Flimwell, the major proportion date from the 20th Century. Regrettably many of these have been allowed to sprawl in ribbon development along the B2087, almost to Ticehurst. Flimwell has not been served well by the planning

process as recent developments such as Furze House (now Bewl Close), Wardsdown Nursery, Clarks Yard and Berners Hill Garage are out of scale with the village that they are located in. The new houses built are just too much bulk for each of those sites.

C STONEGATE (Map Reference TQ667285).

About 3km south-west of Ticehurst on a spur, running south-east from the main watershed ridge, also at about 110 metres OD, is the village centre of Stonegate. Between Stonegate village centre and that of Ticehurst, runs the steep sided valley of the River Limden, which drops almost 100 metres in height from it's spring source at Shovers Green on the western border of the Parish to where the Stonegate/Ticehurst road crosses it 4km downstream at Wardsbrook. Most houses, the Church and School in Stonegate Village Centre date from the 19th and 20th Centuries with older properties dotted around, off, or alongside the local lanes.



II Demographic

1. Whilst past experience is not necessarily, a guide to the future, it is worth noting significant changes that have taken place over the last quarter of a century.
2. The population has grown by almost 25%. The additional housing has been largely due to the growth of estates on the former Wardsdown Nursery in Flimwell, extensions to the Springfields/Farthing Hill complex as well as the extensive conversion of redundant farm buildings into dwelling houses.
3. Traffic is thought to have increased by a much higher percentage, although this has not been statistically measured. It is most noticed by increased parking congestion in the village centres. Also on the minor roads where verge damage is now common throughout the Parish. Traffic calming and management is deemed a requirement of any Village Action Plan.
4. There has been only a small loss of retail facilities in the Parish, apart from in Stonegate Ward, which now has no formal retail outlets (formerly 2). The local business community has survived the draw of out-of-town supermarkets near the neighbouring towns far better than many other villages of our size. Nonetheless, the retention of a good range of shopping, services and support facilities is a concern that features in the Action Plan.
5. Agriculture was the main employer in the Parish but this has changed and is likely to shrink further. A separate paragraph on the farming outlook appears later in the report, but it is apparent that so far as employment is concerned, the designation of a considerable number of owners and employees still working on the land has changed from 'farming' to 'leisure' with such things as golf courses, and increased horse ownership, already having turned agricultural land to recreational uses.
6. There are over 200 businesses registered in these three wards, 170 of which are large enough to be VAT registered. The majority of these would be classified under 'service'. The largest individual employer is the Ticehurst House Healthcare facility, with about 250 employees on it's pay roll – not all local, but mainly from East Sussex. The future of this unit currently has some doubts due to the existing facilities no longer being able to meet legal limits set for this sort of activity but it is anticipated that an alternative facility within the Parish can be agreed. Another significant employer is the Hotel/Golf complex at Dale Hill. There are thought to be some 900 employee jobs in total throughout the Parish.
7. There are surprisingly few positions in the village which are staffed by persons paid for directly by Central, County, District or even the local Councils out of taxes. The teaching and support staff at the local two Primary Schools in the Parish, are technically employed by the local governing bodies of the schools, but

obviously they are funded through public monies controlled by East Sussex Education Department. Otherwise there are the research staff at the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB') unit at Flimwell who are funded by central government and the 15 local authorities of the A.O.N.B. A very few part-time jobs such as the Ticehurst Parish clerk and the Schools Crossing (lollipop) lady are also paid from public funds. Gone are local policemen, and the roads maintenance depot off Ticehurst High Street. The quango Milk Marketing Board artificial insemination centre has closed. Even our own refuse is collected by employees of a contractor working from a depot in Bexhill over 20 miles away..

8. The Parish is fortunate to have three schools, all of good reputation and all catering for primary school ages, within the Parish. Two are Church schools, within the state system and one, Bricklehurst, is fee funded in the private sector. Stonegate Primary has recently added a new Hall and is well supported by an active Parents' Association. Ticehurst School is currently awaiting to move into a brand new building with an attached playing field at Stecllands Rise and will be re-designated as Ticehurst and Flimwell School. This school too, has an active number of voluntary helpers. The total number of full and part-time staff employed in the Education sector within the Parish is around 45-50. All pupils over 11 have to travel to schools outside the Parish, either elsewhere in East Sussex, in Kent or as boarders elsewhere. Younger children can attend a number of pre-school groups.
9. According to statistics supplied by the High Weald Office, 22% of the population is under 16. 56% is 16-59 years old and the remaining 22% is 60 or over. The village had 110 claimants for Income Support in 1998. (Latest data available).
10. For the past 25 years a high quality local news sheet, 'News & Views' has been produced entirely by voluntary effort on a monthly basis, with a distribution of about 700 per issue. The 12 to 14 2-sided A4 sheets of each copy are approximately split 50/50 between local advertising and comment, news, forthcoming events, reports or correspondence. Ticehurst and Flimwell churches also produce a monthly magazine, whilst Stonegate church participates in the Wadhurst Parish magazine 'Focus'. Ticehurst Parish has its own website www.ticehurst.info, www.stonegatevillage.info and www.flimwell.info and participates in the Local Sussex Police 'crime report' web.

III STATISTICS

A Population 1991 Census 3117 of which 1487 male and 1630 female.
The current estimate, used by the High Weald AONB Unit at Flimwell is 3700. 2001 census data not yet available.

B Households Total of 1422 of which 640 are in central Ticehurst, 119 in hamlets of Dale Hill, Three Leg Cross and Wallcrouch 255 in Flimwell, including Berners Hill 89 in Stonegate and 319 in traditional farmsteads and other dispersed areas of the parish.
NB Some 30 dwellings are excluded, that see themselves as Flimwell but are technically in Kent (Goudhurst Parish).

C Road System (Approx) in Kilometres 38.7 total - of which

i) Trunk Roads (A21)	2.7km
ii) Other 'A' Roads (A268)	1.5km
iii) 'B' Roads (B2099/2087)	9.8km
iv) Unnumbered 'through' roads	8.5km
v) Other tarmaced	16.2km

D Other Services

- i) Rail - Stonegate Station - London to Hastings main line
- ii) Bus - Route 254 Hastings to Hawkhurst-Flimwell-Ticehurst - Wadhurst - Tunbridge Wells.
- iii) Approximately 2 square km of parish is under Bewl Water
- iv) Approximately 6 square km is ancient or planted woodland
- v) Approximately 1 square km is golf courses (2 x 18).

E Other

- I) One Hotel - Dale Hill Hotel 4*
- II) Five Public Houses/Inns
- III) One Hospital - Ticehurst House (Specialist).
- IV) Three Schools (all for primary school age)
- V) Two Village Halls - Ticehurst and Stonegate
- VI) Three Churches - all Church of England
- VII) Twenty Retail Shops/agencies
- VIII) Three coach operators
- IX) One petrol filling station
- X) Two Post Offices (sub) and one Bank (part-time). (Flimwell sub PO has been forced to close - possibly permanently- due to 3 armed raids during Spring 2003).

IV The Infrastructure Now and in the Future.

1. Summary Basically, the road system, rail connections, the overhead or underground networks for water, sewerage, gas, power and communications are adequate for the village(s) size that currently exists or is likely to be in place over the next decade. There are a number of minor exceptions to the above statement and the one major uncertainty of the A21 that divides the Flimwell Village community. There is also much controversy as to whether mobile phone masts are required.
2. ****The A21 at Flimwell.** Traffic continues to grow in volume and the A21 through Flimwell now carries some 18,500 traffic movements a day. The road, particularly the stretch north of the cross roads and into Kent, has an appalling accident record and is recognised as one of the most dangerous stretches of that class of road in England. The noise, fumes and danger divide the linear settlement of Flimwell into two parts, a division symbolized by the position of the two social centers of the village – St Augustine's Church to the east of the A21 and the Village Stores to the west.

A massive scheme for the regeneration of Hastings is under consideration, involving large amounts of European money. Improved transport links to London are an essential requirement and therefore improvements to the A21 seem now more likely to proceed than at any time in the last half century.

The Highways Agency published its outline scheme late in 2002, but it has met with much opposition from those affected along the whole of its length. In Flimwell a major objection centers upon the proposal to drive an enormous cutting across the village, and we note how this will be avoided at Scotney by the use of a tunnel/bridge. Several alternative routes have been put forward. At the time of writing, the Minister has not announced his decision on how to proceed.

3. ****Other Roads.** Some traffic calming measures, alterations to signs and speed limits and the possible creating of one or two 'mini roundabouts' are already under discussion. Rosemary Lane is now marked as a 'single road with passing places' and should be rebuilt as such. It has been suggested that consideration be given to making Birchetts Green and Birchetts Green Lane and also possibly a re-routed Vineyard Lane into 'Quiet Lanes'. These roads are part of the designated sign posted footpaths around Bewl Water.
4. ****Side Walks.** (Roadside footpaths). With the increase in motor traffic few of our roads are safe to walk without proper curbed footpaths being provided and funds have not been brought forward by ESCC for such work. There are two sections which are now urgent and others which over the next 10 years should be connected. First, a proper footpath from Upper Platts to the Village Hall is long

overdue. Secondly with the relocation of the Primary School to Steellands Rise, the need for a proper footpath from the Cherry Tree Inn to Coronation Cottages becomes more obvious. Ideally, the whole length of this road from Flimwell to Ticehurst should have a pathway provided.

5. ****Bridleways and Cycle Paths.** A major flaw in the infrastructure of the three village 'units' of Ticehurst is expected to become more apparent over the coming years. As is shown in section nine, the number of horses resident in the parish for recreational purposes has grown and is expected to grow further. Bewl Water is growing in popularity as a venue for cycle riders. The heavy clay close to the surface makes many non-hardcored paths virtually impassable for extended periods. In short a cohesive bridle path or cross country cycle track system does not exist.
6. **Rail** Ready and easy to use access to London is a priority for many of our parish residents. Parking difficulties at Wadhurst Station are outside the scope of this parish but should be noted as a matter of concern. Additional and unobtrusive parking can be provided at the only railway station in the Parish at Stonegate.
7. **Other Services** Much of the underground pipework has been upgraded over recent years and it is to be hoped that the amount of digging up of roads will decline sharply. We expect to see a new trunk water main installed cross-county to help balance water needs elsewhere from surplus capacity at Bewl. A potential increase in the height and thus extent of Bewl Water is not seen as a matter of major concern due to provisions already made when the Reservoir was first commissioned.

V Governance and Boundaries

1. Summary Minor boundary alterations should take place for logical and logistic reasons. Decision making has moved further away. How can we bring it back closer?
2. Boundaries are nearly always historical and may now seem somewhat arbitrary. They are always difficult to change but that should not stop anyone trying to correct obvious inconsistencies where better representation and governance can be achieved. One much requested change is to integrate those parts of Flimwell which lie in Kent, principally Flimwell Close, into East Sussex/Rother District Council and Ticehurst C.P. Theoretically this could be simply done by realigning the County/constituency boundary from the eastern tip of Bewl Water at approximately longitude 0-26'E latitude 51-0.35'N due east for 2km and then due south for approximately 700 metres to join the existing co/const boundary within Bedgebury Forest, north of Mount Pleasant Farm in Flimwell. This would also have the benefit of bringing the whole of the Mick Gould Motors site under one authority and would bring works for A21 improvements at Flimwell (see IV 2) all within one County. At a local level there is still a case for a minor shift of the Parish boundary to bring Myskins and Hillside Farm into Stonegate ward of Ticehurst, rather than being part of Etchingham parish.
3. Rother District is dominated by Bexhill with different priorities from those of the Country areas inland. We are told that the Rother District Council's officials endeavour to correct the 'coastal bias' of a built in majority of elected urban representatives. However, we think that there are no Rother District Council employees actually based in the Northern quarter of the District or within 5 miles of Ticehurst, and the fact remains that the elected representatives for the country areas are outnumbered by the urban representation. Perhaps with modern inter-office communications there should be an office in, say, one of our village halls or the Annexe at Woodroffe Lodge, where plans, payment queries and other District matters could be handled locally for the benefit of parishioners for both Ticehurst and neighbouring villages such as Etchingham, Hurst Green and Burwash.
4. **Policing This is provided by the Sussex Police, nominally from the Senlac Division based at Battle. For the majority of parishioners this was the most mentioned item of concern at the Action Plan meetings. Police presence is negligible and response times too slow. This is a matter that affects all local rural communities and needs improvement across the County. The possibility of a Community Warden for the area is under discussion.
5. **Emergency Services Fire and rescue services are provided in the first instance by the Retained Brigade of the Sussex Fire Service based at Wadhurst. The Heathfield depot is the nearest East Sussex Ambulance location.

VI Public Places

1. Summary The beauty of the High Weald around Ticchurst is due to the sympathetic management of the countryside through the ages, whilst the historic and architectural beauty is man made through the care of a thriving community down the years that includes both the crafts and professional trades as well as the multitude of owners. Nowadays the Parish, in the centre of the AONB is still reliant on retaining its' natural beauty as both a means of bringing tourist finance into the area and also for maintaining it's ambience as a friendly locality where people can live, meet, shop, socialise and relax in comparative safety in green and pleasant surroundings. To do this, it is essential that there are sufficient public places to move, stand, sit and meet without hassle, or inconvenience to other residents and visitors.
2. Movement Another section deals with the infrastructure (IV) but in the context of this section it has to be remembered that by far the largest land area in the Parish that is occupied and owned by Public Authorities is the road system. Effectively, a very high proportion of this 'public space' is now denied to the population for doing anything other than 'moving' in a vehicle. There are remarkably few sections of road where a child could be allowed to cycle unsupervised in safety and many areas where none but the most competent adult would also venture as a cyclist. Much the same applies to adults walking along the road beyond where the footpaths cease outside the main village limits. Thus it becomes even more vital that a balance is kept so that the car, which has now become essential to life in the country, is welcomed and accommodated in the village centres without being allowed to dominate them. Equally, there have to be areas where pedestrians or cyclists have precedence.
3. Ticchurst Square and surroundings. The Square and Church Street play a very vital role in the Parish. It is on the pavements, or in the shops nearby where much of the meeting and greeting takes place and so it should remain. To do this, serious thought has to be given as to how the public space available here can be increased without harming the character of the area or the viability of the business community. The options are limited because most of the land concerned is in private hands and a prerequisite would be the prior consent of the owners concerned:
4. Ticchurst Car Park This is not used as much as it could be because, fortunately it is still usually possible to find a nearer parking point to the village shops but also because being out of sight, it is out of mind. It has been suggested that public toilet facilities for the village be provided in this area and an extended area for the recycling facilities to provide a wider scope of recycling possibilities.

5**Ticchurst Institute The most obvious public space in Ticchurst is the Campbell Newington Institute and Recreation Ground off the eastern end of the High Street. This century old building provides the Village Hall, premises for an active and flourishing Village Club, a Youth Centre as well as outside childrens' playground areas. A new multi-court play area for a variety of all weather sports activities is planned as also are proper changing facilities to enable the splendid playing field to be used to it's full potential. These improvements, together with internal updating to meet the necessary standards required in the 21st Century, are currently subject to sufficient funding being obtained from a variety of sources. The application process is in hand. Improvement plans have been passed by the District Planning Office for this listed building. This is seen as number one priority for action by the Parish Council.

6. ** Flimwell Flimwell is fortunate to have a successful and popular shop which acts as the social information centre for the village, but this is small. Flimwell lacks any other obvious centre for public access but the opportunity exists if the funds are made available for this to be rectified. The Corner Farm site acquired from Alsford by East Sussex County Council is already designated as the location for a new Flimwell Village Hall to provide a meeting place for the local community. This site is adjacent to a high quality Recreation and Cricket ground and close to the Village's shop-come-post office. With a bit of imagination and funding from grants available to promote tourism plus the goodwill of various regulating bodies, this site in excess of one acre could be redeveloped to provide good off street parking, a tourist information facility and even a View Point to pick up in particular, the excellent Southerly vista. Being just off the A21 the Corner Farm location has the potential to be the 'Welcoming Point' for all the attractions of the High Weald, both in Sussex and in Kent. An accommodation booking point and other services such as a medical centre could also be incorporated. Nearby is located Wealden Woodnet – an enterprise linked to East Sussex County Council, Sussex University, Plumpton Agricultural College and the location of the High Weald AONB Unit's office. There is an excellent hall at this site.

7. Stonegate Stonegate is fortunate to have both a good quality hall which is a popular venue for users and a beautifully located playing field.
8. Bowl Water Although Bowl is not in the public sector but is owned by Southern Water Ltd, this section would not be complete without some reference to the Round-The-Water footpath system which is always open to the public for walking. Through the summer months it is also open for cycling and largely for horse riding. This uses public lanes within the parish, particularly to avoid the waterside area designated as a bird sanctuary and to cross the Rosemary Lane causeway. The increasing popularity of the latter as a parking point (free!) particularly for families to offload cycles and for walkers doing the full 14-odd

mile perambulation may need attention if it is not to cause difficulties to local residents. Southern Waters' parking areas are fee paying.

VII Leisure

Summary The Parish is well set up for leisure except for the young. The question is are we getting value from our Council tax payments to Rother District Council as virtually all the leisure facilities in the village are privately funded.

1. With one multi-starred hotel (Dale Hill), five pubs, a small café and regular visiting fish and chip or kebab vans, most tastes and pockets can be catered for within the parish and neighbouring parishes can supplement the 'eating out' choices without too far to travel. A number of good Bed and Breakfast guest houses supplement the Hotel's accommodation.
2. There are two golf course at Dale Hill and two others within 5 miles to serve golfers. There is a leisure center and pool attached to the hotel with another at Uplands Community College in Wadhurst. We have angling, sailing and rowing on Bewl Water. Tennis is played on many private courts or at a club in nearby Wadhurst. There are many excellent walks, and some off road cycling around Bewl or in Bedgebury Forest. Football and Cricket are played by local teams on local grounds. Pashley Manor gardens are a noted tourist attraction.
3. Indoors, Ticehurst Village Club runs a variety of social events throughout the year, has two snooker tables and hosts activities such as darts and line dancing. Facilities exist to put on amateur dramatic productions in two locations, one in Ticehurst and another in Stonegate. The Youth Club attached to the Village Institute provides a useful meeting place for the under 20's, but unfortunately due to inadequate funding, is only open for short periods because sufficient qualified staff are not available.
4. **Over £4 million is spent annually by Rother District Council on 'Parks, Recreation, Entertainment and Tourism'. This is just under 11.5% of the total expenditure of the District Council. As the fourth largest area in the District, after Bexhill, Battle and Rye it is somewhat surprising that more support for District funded Tourist and Leisure projects has not been forthcoming to this Parish. It is to be hoped that as a direct result of the drawing up of this Action Plan a more equitable share of the Council Tax provided by the parishioners here, under the above segments, is returned to the parish as grants or subsidies for our youth work and leisure facilities, such as the multi-court or additional sports trainers and teenage support staff.

VIII Environmental and Sundry matters

Summary Cause for optimism here – depending on your own view of the countryside!

1. Bowl Water By far the most fundamental change to affect this Parish in the last half of the 20th Century, was the creation of the Bowl Reservoir. The geographic change of a new large area of water making a natural boundary along most of the Parish's northern boundary is the most visible and dramatic change. A number of previous 'through' lanes are now dead ends. The loss of economical land has almost certainly been more than made up by increased revenue from tourism, fishing and reservoir associated jobs. Scenically, the blend into the High Weald has been well managed. It is in the fauna that the most subtle changes can be noted. Large numbers of water fowl now over-winter here and many previously rarely seen birds have become permanent residents. The large flights of mainly Canada Geese can be seen as a great delight and benefit by many, but the landing and feeding of these flocks on farmland throughout the district is seen as a problem and economic damage by quite a few farmers and other landowners.

2. Fauna Apart from the Bowl related changes to our local wildlife, other reported changes also welcome to some, but less welcome to others, are:

A - Many more deer (both Roe and Fallow) either resident or passing through the woods and fields in the parish.

B - An increase in the number of badgers, probably due to less culling following the demise of local dairy herds. (Badgers are alleged to spread T.B to dairy cattle). They are also now 'protected'.

C - Fewer hedge nesting birds, possibly accounted for by the steady spread of the grey squirrel. This creature has made the nation's red squirrel extinct in the Weald and has now become a real pest despite increased culling particularly to protect fruit crops.

D - Foxes are still widespread, although now probably more likely to receive a premature death through a traffic accident or by being shot in their prime than when the area was hunted. Culling in one form or another has always to be a part of life in the countryside where introduced species have no natural balancing system and although offensive to some will remain part of countryside life whatever city or town dwellers or others wish to happen.

E - Rabbits are a major pest doing much damage to both open land crops and fruit and planted trees.

F - A wild boar was an A21 casualty some 5 years ago.

3. Flora The great Hurricane of 1987 caused local havoc and destroyed many fine old trees but 15 years of Nature's powers of recovery are evident so that few would spot today where the worst ravages of that night hit. Woodland grants have actually led to more woodland being planted – fortunately with many broad leaved trees. We are also fortunate to have areas of ancient woodland and some amazing 'Gill woodland' in the steep stream valleys carved out of the clay/sandstone soils, (see also 1X3 below).

Changing farming patterns have and will continue to make minor changes to the look of

the countryside. Wild rape seed plants are now common along the hedgerows where once it was only Wild Oats or Cow Parsley. Bluebells and Primroses flourish where not so long ago they were seriously affected by too much spray drift. On the deficit side, the rare Heath Lobelia once well established in a Flimwell site of Nature Conservation importance, is now in danger of extinction through lack of scrub control. As a plus, a unique coloured orchid has been discovered in the Flimwell area.

4. ****Waste Management** This comes under environmental issues because potentially it poses one of the greatest threats to our countryside throughout the Parish. We all know or should know that disposing of our waste in East Sussex is going to be a significantly expensive item in our tax rate. Most of the more obvious 'holes' where historically the waste generated locally was disposed of locally, have been filled. Most of the isolated homesteads had a small quarry or some other area where disused machinery, broken items etc, were dumped and eventually earthed in. The rest was burnt or composted. Not so easy in the villages where increasingly weekly collections – unsorted – have been taken to central points in the county for disposal – 'Out of sight – out of mind'! With these points now full and outdated, fresh schemes have to be evolved. One such scheme is to build a large incinerator which could be sited at Mountfield (former Gypsum mine), or logistically more sensibly between Hastings and Bexhill and/or on the outskirts of Eastbourne, the coast towns, where tonnage-wise, the vast majority of the waste will be generated. As another AONB village we have much sympathy with Mountfield in it's opposition to an out-of-scale intrusion into its environment. Perhaps this is an area where centralisation has gone mad. As responsible inhabitants we already have a good record of sorting and recycling glass, paper, plastic, tins and old clothes through the one recycling centre off Pickforde Lane. By the very nature of the current County proposals, whereby everything is looked at on a macro rather than micro basis, we have little incentive to compost, bonfire, recycle or even change shopping habits to 'reusable' packaging in order to reduce the waste sent to central points from the Parish because we know that the big coastal towns will not be making identical efforts. We should have recycling points in each village centre and probably a central bonfire point, but decision making and the funding for such activities have been taken from us and our peer villages.

5. **Pollution** The High Weald should aim to be largely pollution free. Much work has been done to clean up the undersized, outdated or outright non-existent sewerage and septic tank systems that have been leaching out into the main streams and this should continue. Noise pollution from aircraft is noticeably less than 20 years ago, in spite of increased air traffic and Gatwick being but 25 air miles almost due west. Aircraft have got quieter which is just as well for with 3 distinct flight paths crossing the Parish at different heights, there is almost always a plane in sight on a clear day. Traffic noise and that of garden machinery are more and more audible. There are isolated problems from the heavy goods vehicle workshops at Flimwell, but in general there is rarely too much noise to prevent enjoyment of the many country sounds around. Light pollution is equally subjective. As a general rule the Parish Council will rarely agree to more street lights being added to those already maintained by the local precept on the Council Tax.

IX Employment and Worksites

Summary One of the great strengths of Ticehurst Parish is that primarily it is and has long been a 'working village', rather than a dormitory location or market centre. Statistically there is a lower unemployment level than in many other East Sussex villages. Many of these jobs are 'cottage type' or work from home and many not particularly highly paid or even full time. Our aim is to ensure that every opportunity is given to maintaining or increasing work opportunities that are consistent with an existence within A.O.N.B. This Council will always object to the loss of business sites for prospective residential building.

1. **Farming and Horticulture.** The numbers employed directly by the farming community have been falling for years, although this was traditionally the economic mainstay of the community. The problems that have afflicted the British Farming industry such as B.S.E., export bans because of foot and mouth disease or the distortion in the market place resulting from L.A.C.S. (EEC) payments or penalties have been particularly hard felt on the poor soils of the High Weald. We grow good grass but our steep slopes and small fields amongst woodlands are not ideal for modern agricultural machinery, or for supporting the large herds required nowadays for dairy farming. So the grass is increasingly used for short periods of grazing or over-wintering sheep, many from flocks based on Romney Marsh. There is some beef fattening and hay making, much of which goes to the increased number of horses. Many fields are now given over almost exclusively to horse grazing. All these are activities that require little manpower, other than the occasional use of contract labour, often based well away from the parish. There are some signs of an increase in areas under soft and orchard fruit. However, by and large the agricultural sector has sunk to a level where there is barely sufficient return to justify the retention of employees to keep our hedgerows, marginal areas and cross-country tracks in the conditions we have been used to seeing, without 'environmental' grants so to do.

2. **Forestry.** Allied to farming, but currently employing even smaller numbers are people working with trees. The forest areas that once covered the Weald have been extensively cut over the last few centuries but this part of South-East England in general does represent the most wooded part of the country and a number of forestry or tree surgery companies are managed from the Parish. There is the potential to utilize more efficiently and extensively the large areas of coppiced woodland that have fallen into disuse, as a carbon neutral source for heat and power raising.

3. **Redundant Farm Facilities.** As traditional farming has fallen away, alternative uses for both the land and the buildings have been necessary. So far as the land is concerned 'keeping it open' has been and has to be the main priority. The 36-holes of the Dale Hill golf course is the most obvious change of use from farming to retained and maintained open space in the Parish. Many good examples of excellent conversions of farm buildings exist. To take just one, Gibbs Reed on the B2099 road, employed at its peak as

a farm, the farmer, plus four paid employees. Today it is the work-site for over 50 employees in a whole range of service activities from smoking fish, world-wide distribution of back copies of magazines, to construction of exhibition stands and the operation of a specialist reception facility, licensed to host marriage ceremonies and other events. Other farms provide bases for many other activities most successfully. In some cases the success can lead to problems of over growth when, for instance, access to the site is not really suitable for the traffic attracted.

4. Light Industries There are a few custom built light production facilities which provide both full time and part time job opportunities; most notable of which are the Weald Smokery at Flimwell and the Advartex clothes/printing works at Ticehurst. More of these light industrial activities would be welcomed.

5. Service Industries The majority of jobs within the Parish are classified under this broad category although sometimes reclassified to smaller groups such as 'leisure' (e.g. Dale Hill Hotel and golf complex) or 'transport' (e.g. the coach companies and HGV and car repair garages). Nearly all the above have developed their own worksites along the A or B roads although a number of the car servicing facilities are in rented former farm related facilities. Many of the other service activities take place in the back yards – garages or spare rooms of residential properties. This trend can be expected to increase as more and more businesses are run on the internet or by computer and business post transactions. However, there is a requirement for some actual dedicated office space where the numbers employed have grown beyond what can be handled in a house. One shop and flat unit in Ticehurst has already been temporarily converted for office use.

6**. Future Work Sites Mention was made in paragraph three above to one farm located activity that is on a lane not suitable for large articulated lorries. Lanes such as Lynden and Pickforde are not, and cannot, realistically be made suitable for HGV's with overall length sometimes approaching 50 plus feet. Business on such lanes should either relocate or have facilities available elsewhere where HGV's can be handled safely. This implies that potential commercial sites are allocated within the Parish along or very close to the A and B roads. A number of such locations do exist both at Flimwell (A21), or the Wallcrouch Grain Store area (B2099) with several other locations also possible). Unfortunately against the Parish's wish, the District Council permitted the former Berners Hill Garage site on the B2089 to have a change of use from business to residential.

X ** Property and Housing Developments

Summary This is always going to be the most controversial part of any Village plan, since potentially land values and thus the pockets of individual owners may be affected by any decisions based on the conclusions. The approach taken is, therefore, one quite simply of analysis of facts; formations of opinions based on the facts expressed clearly as seen in favour of the overall environment and local benefit. There is a built-in prejudice of trying to rule out any 'nimby' (not in my backyard) bias. The final conclusions should be those which we wish the District Office to adopt in their policies so far as planning applications, village parameters and planning decisions are concerned relative to Ticehurst Parish.

The best estimate we have is that in 2001, there were 1422 households in the parish. This is about two and a half times the number from one hundred years earlier. Ticehurst centre has 640 dwellings plus a further 119 in the hamlets of Dale Hill, Three Leg Cross and Wallcrouch. Flimwell has 232 dwellings, with a further 23 at Berners Hill. Stonegate has 89 and there are 319 households in the traditional farmstead sites or otherwise, dispersed throughout the parish. Figure 00 shows how rapidly Ticehurst centre grew after World War II.

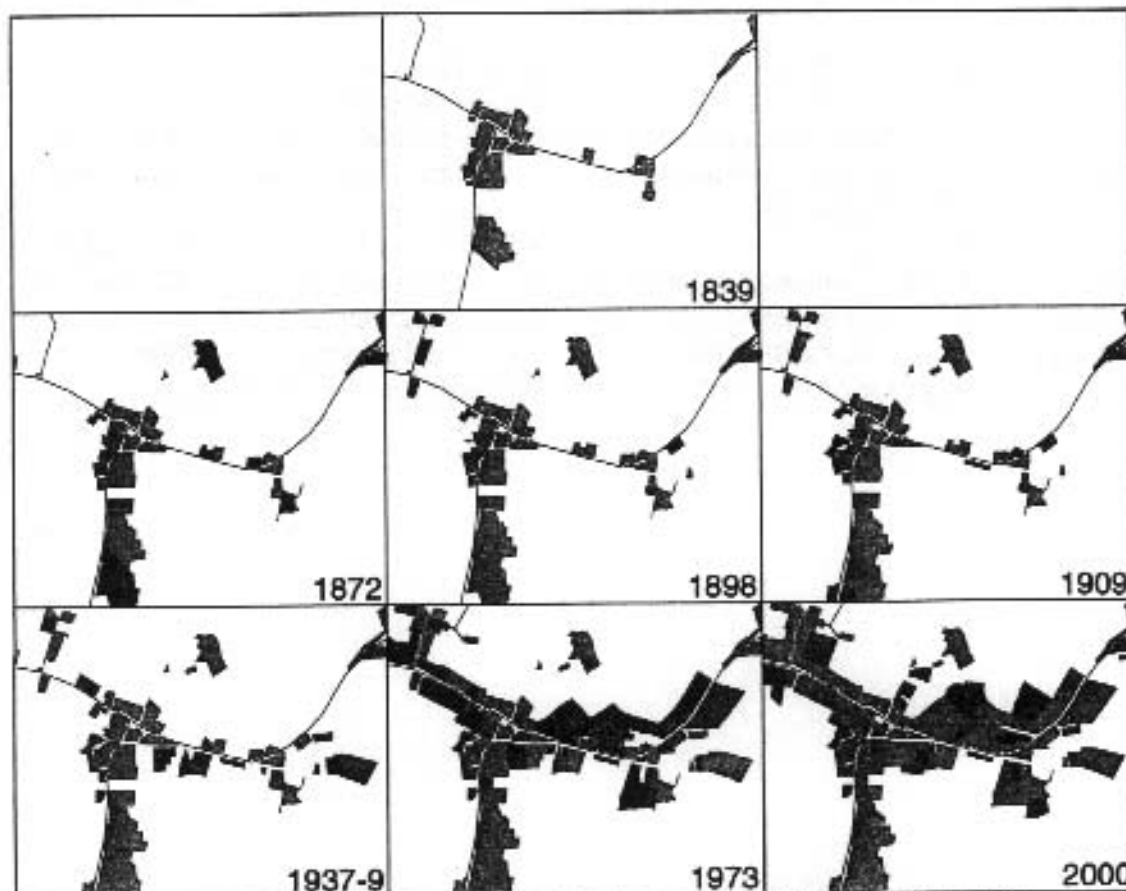
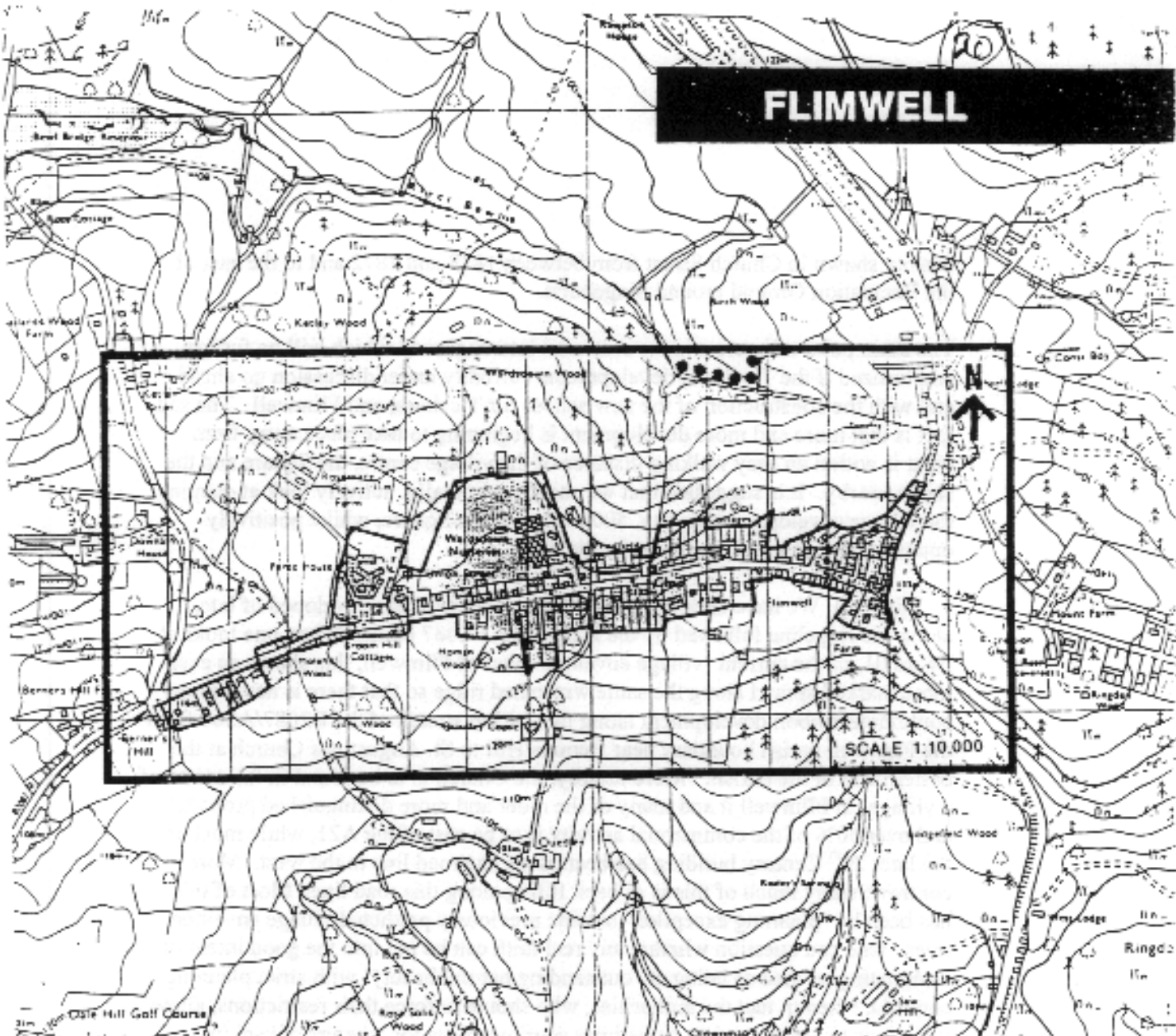


Fig. 00. The development of Ticehurst village centre between 1839 and 2000. In addition to the expansion of area (most notably since the 1930s), the density of development is also increasing. Source: HW AONB Unit.

FLIMWELL



Settlement name or type	Number of households 2001	% of households 2001	Number of households 1881	% of households 1881	% of population 1881*	Number of households 1839	% of households 1839
Ticehurst	640	45.0%	144	24.9%	24.5%	105	31.3%
Flimwell (inc. Union Street)	252	16.3%	98	17.0%	15.2%	49	14.6%
Stonegate	49	6.3%	19	3.3%	2.6%	9	2.7%
Dale Hill	41	2.9%	22	3.8%	3.5%	19	5.7%
Three Leg Cross	40	2.8%	41	7.1%	6.1%	13	3.7%
Wallcrouch	38	2.7%	18	3.1%	1.5%	8	2.4%
Berners Hill	23	1.6%	26	4.5%	4.1%	4	1.2%
Traditional farmsteads	154	10.8%	126	21.8%	24.1%	75	22.3%
Other dispersed	165	11.6%	84	14.5%	18.4%	54	16.1%
Sub-total of farmsteads and isolated settlement	319	22.4%	210	36.3%	42.5%	129	38.4%
TOTAL	1422	100.0%	578	100.0%	100.0%	336	100.0%

TABLE 3 Number and percentage of households by settlement or settlement type, Ticehurst civil parish, 1839, 1881 and 2001. The 'traditional farmsteads' are the 50 farmsteads that are identifiable from the 1839 tithe map and apportionment. Percentage distribution of population for 1881 is included.

density shown in Church Street from between 1839 and 1872 and to the east of the Recreation Ground around Singehurst.

The main point of interest is the east-west lateral growth which will be further emphasized if the Ticehurst developments currently under discussion go ahead and with the construction of the new school for Ticehurst and Flimwell. The sad fact is that more and more development is beginning to take place away from what is within an easy walking distance of the village centre, the Square and the shops nearby. It is suggested that we should eventually, actively look at opening the village envelope, within say, 500 meters of the Square, whilst positively opposing any development outside this limit.

1. Flimwell We have seen in figure 00 how Ticehurst has developed of late, along the ridgeline followed by the B2099 and B2087 roads. When one looks at figure 01, of the current 'village envelope' plan of Flimwell, this shows an even more marked sprawl along the same watershed ridge so that there is now almost continuous ribbon development along the 2.4 km stretch of the B2087/A268 from the Flimwell parish boundary near Berners Hill to St. Augustines Church at the eastern end of the parish. More usually, the Church is to be found in the centre of a village. In Flimwell it and many of the older and more distinguished properties and over 50% of the commercial activity is to be east of the A21, while most of the later 20th Century building has been along the road line to the west. More controversially much of this is as back filling along this road line. Most of this has been by 'planning exception' outside previously predicted village envelope lines. One can question whether any real faith can be put into the good intent of designating an area as being of 'outstanding natural beauty' with strict planning controls, when in fact the authorities, who should enforce their restrictions, allow variations to accommodate sometimes spurious pleas for 'change of use' in alleged 'brown field sites'.

2. Stonegate This village centre has a completely different character to that of its two sister wards in the Parish, not least because it is away from classified roads with no regular bus service or HGV traffic and it now has no shops or a pub. There is a blend of attractive country style cottages, more modern bungalows and houses with just the three 'public' buildings of the Church, Primary School and Village Hall to attract outlying residents in the ward to the village centre. The former Southern Counties Agricultural Trading Society site (SCATS) now used as a builders yard and garage/workshop, also acts as a small magnet for outsiders to come to the centre but without a post office or any retail outlet, the village lacks other co-ordinating points. The main characteristic of High Weald Villages was as a common trading point for the surrounding area – (effectively an easy horse ride away). Now Stonegate Village is reliant almost entirely on the car and van for its well-being with no local pub or shop in the Ward.

3. Other Hamlets Apart from the three villages of the parish, identified above, all of which have identified nuclei, there are a number of small hamlets that have broadly remained stable over the last 120 years. Alphabetically, Berners Hill, Dale Hill, Shovers Green (half in Wadhurst), Three Leg Cross and Wallcrouch, have not grown at anything like the rates of the three villages – see table 03. However, both Dale Hill and Berners Hill have nearly fallen into being absorbed into Ticehurst and Flimwell and only a small amount of countryside still separates Wallcrouch and Three Leg Cross from Ticehurst. Since small dispersed communities have always been a feature of the Weald for many centuries, it is worth looking a little more extensively at this feature of dwelling places in our community. To a considerable extent it can be seen that originally each little hamlet had its own reason for its existence – often a pub, a shop (e.g. Three Leg Cross or Wallcrouch which both had a pub and a shop until well into the 20th century). Shovers Green had a chapel and the big estates nearby that provided employment almost all the year round within easy walking distance. These factors are no longer so significant so there has to be a conscious effort to stop new builds for new builds sake if the ambience of the environment is to be maintained.

In the Hamlets identified above, it is probably sufficiently obvious that any significant new building project is going to be out of place. Most of the redundant farm buildings and tied cottages or other structures have been converted and enlarged to family sized homes or otherwise changed in use – so that significant increases in the number of dwellings is unlikely to affect, materially the nature of the hamlets as they exist today. Redundant buildings at Wallcrouch Farm and the former Milk Marketing Board site have become light industrial or other commercial business units providing local employment and trading facilities. To some considerable and important extent this continues the original entirely justifiable factor of maintaining a 'work and live' centre for the hamlet.

4. Isolated communities and the traditional farmstead The character of the Weald has been formed mainly by very many generations of farming activities that created the clearing in the natural woodlands, drained much of the land, hedged the fields, cleared the ponds and in general cared for the country we see around us today. These families usually lived on the land they cleared and farmed. As is noted in Section IX on employment, farming has had to change radically to meet global effects, changed requirements and new pressures. A high percentage of the traditional farms have gone out of business or have become merely temporary quarters for livestock owned and rotated elsewhere as seasons change. So far as dwellings are concerned, there has been a rush to sell off no longer needed farm buildings and even sub-divide former family estates where several generations often lived together in the centre of the land that provided their livelihood. Oast houses are an obvious example here of conversions, but in many cases the sub-division has been carried to extremes so that little 'mini estates' have been created at the ends of long drives or off country lanes, not designed to take the additional traffic that is often three, four or more hundred percents higher than when the

farm was kept as one unit. Looking around the Parish it is difficult to see any location at all where any further sub-division to create yet more multi housing units can be justified. There does remain a need to 'work' the countryside even if primarily this may be to over winter the Romney sheep flocks or provide winter fodder for local and distant herds of beef cattle, rather than our own dairy herds. Also, we need work centres for farming contractors or foresters. In short, the contention is that all future requests to take agricultural ties off both farm dwellings and farm buildings for conversion should only be for light industrial, commercial or even leisure use. Wallcrouch Farm, Gibbs Reed Farm or the Forge in Stonegate are good examples of such conversions and this is a trend that can still be encouraged.

5. Large Houses Some people still want and can afford large houses and their properties have long been a source of continuing employment for local trades people. There was a time 20-30 years ago, when there was pressure to break up such estates and indeed, similar to the break up of traditional farmstead, there are now many dwellings in the Parish where multiple, independently owned homes now exist where formerly there was just 'the big house' with it's satellite tied homes. Here again, it is thought the process may have gone too far, since we now see applications from sub-divided properties subsequently to provide additional garaging, stables or other ancillary buildings that should have been catered for before the sub-division took effect. One big and somewhat unique sub-division currently faces the Parish – Ticehurst House. As this at the time of writing is still subject to final decisions and possible appeals, little comment can be made other than to say that due to changing legislation, medical requirements and the age of the building, the redevelopment, sub-divisions and new building requirement are exceptional, are being treated as such and have been looked at as much for the employment prospects for this Parish as for the environmental or housing requirements of the area. Otherwise, perhaps each generation should positively seek to encourage an enlargement of an existing footprint to the point where the enlarged property becomes a steady employment centre and a property that the neighbourhood can be proud to have nearby.

6. **Affordable Housing This term is sometimes used for Housing Association or local authority housing. In the context of this paragraph we are using the term in the literal English sense – irrespective of who provides the housing stock. Eventually with 'rights-to-buy' legislation what really matters is whether there is enough housing stock available to meet all the requirements of the local residents, not who provides it. What is 'affordable housing' for one person, may well not be affordable to another. Most people may find the 'affordability' of their homes alters during their working career so that they can well afford to extend their original 'affordable' limit by enlarging their home rather than physically relocating. In short, we should always expect and even encourage the up-grading and enlarging of properties. To see this going on – a look for instance, at Horsegrove Avenue, will show that many of the houses originally built in the 'affordable' range have now been enlarged and would not be affordable to a good

many first time buyers in the village. The corollary is that there will never be enough 'affordable' housing since there should be a steady creep of this housing up market. Therefore 'non affordable' or 'executive type' housing should not be put on land where housing that new owners can see might later be enlarged, could instead be built. At the older end of the market – for the 'last time' buyers, the increased age range being achieved does lead to a new need not necessarily for 'sheltered housing' but where newly bereaved or possibly for couples where driving is no longer an easy option, can find comfortable homes in a small easy to manage dwelling within easy reach of the facilities the villages offer. Again, such housing has to be 'affordable' so far as special features, easy access, secure surroundings, and easy to handle services are build in and where a far faster turnover of owners is a common feature. We have an excellent example of such housing at Cross Lane Gardens. Blocks of flats would seem out of place in this area, but with imagination 'country-style' flats or terraces with some space around them, if well designed, need not be out of place in the village of Ticchurst or even Flimwell.

7. **Architecture** What constitutes a good 'design' is subjective and what to one person may seem excellent, modern or sound to another, could be seen as a carbuncle in this environment. All we ask is that so far as is legally possible, uniform designs are avoided and that efforts are made to match in with the existing housing stock, using for preference local materials and individual designs.

8. **Retrospective applications and enforcement** Ideally, this should be rare which unfortunately is not the case today. Unless Government at all levels shows resolution in penalizing heavily those who flout planning laws, this 'green and pleasant land' which is our Parish does not stand a chance of remaining so throughout the twenty-first century.

XI Conclusion

Summary So we come towards the finish of our current appraisal of the Parish and its possible development. But in the end it all comes down to People – the Parishioners, the salaried officials who serve us, our visitors and our elected representatives.

1. **Community Spirit** The people of the Parish have long had a good record of participating. Volunteers are not always keen to come forward but when encouraged, it is rare that volunteers are not found to stand for elections for the Local and District Councils, for the various positions in the three Churches, for the charities, clubs and other activities that make a village 'tick'. Inevitably there are occasional hiccups but in general we are a 'self-help' community and we need a continuing stream of the younger members of the Parish to consider offering some of their time to cover future needs.

2. **This Appraisal** Where now with this appraisal? It has been just the first major step to forming an action plan.

In its draft form it has been on the web for some months and hard copies have been widely available for comment. It is far from perfect and certainly not complete. Inevitably it had to be researched and put together by a very small group to provide the skeleton and body to make a comprehensive review. By making it freely available to virtually all who should be interested or directly affected by any suggested policies to be followed, everyone in the Parish had and still has a chance to input and be in a position to claim ownership as a participant which is very important. This final draft has been produced, taking note of suggestions made. The Action Plan is being formally adopted by the Parish Council and will then be used as an aid in our efforts to get grants in specific schemes, influence planning decisions and pressurize government departments for such matters as the A21 improvements. At best it can only be – like all plans – a blue print for what we would like to see happen. What in fact will happen will be influenced over many years by myriads of individual decisions by very many people about investing to improve their properties and businesses or continuing to support local craftsmen, shop keepers and other service suppliers. On the major issues of policy (e.g. whether or not to allow planning in certain locations) the adoption of an Action Plan will carry more weight. During the next decade detailed discussion will be required to define precisely where variations to the village envelopes of Flimwell, Stonegate and Ticehurst should and should not take place. These will be with Rother District Council and/or East Sussex County Council.

3. **And Finally** It is the constructive comments of each and every parishioner that counts. Any comments that you wish to make put in writing please to The Parish Clerk, The Village Hall Lower High Street, Ticehurst, East Sussex, TN5 7BB. All comments should cite Section and Paragraph numbers and although they will be used anonymously, it would help if you would add your name, address and preferred telephone number, (all of which will be kept confidential) in order to verify your rights to comment and in case of any queries we need to ask of you.

** The plan will need updating regularly and your comments will help whenever received.

Action Plan Ticehurst Parish 2003 - 2012

A Housing Development and Planning

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

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

No need is seen, within the next ten years, to expand the agreed village envelopes with the exception of the Corner Farm site at Flimwell, already under discussion.

B Transport and Roads

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

On the B road system, we will lobby for mini-roundabouts or similar calming measures at the critical junction of the B2087 and B2099 near the Ticehurst Village Institute and at the fourway junction in central Stonegate. Also possibly Lynden Lane/Burnt Lodge Lane, with attention to speed limits and better road markings, through several hamlets. On the minor road systems, we will seek better curbing and ditching in areas where the road edges are prone to disintegration. We aim to make Birchetts Green Lane, a designated 'Quiet Lane'.

C Community Centres

We aim to get funding to refurbish the Ticehurst Village Institute and provide multi-court facilities on the Recreation Ground. We will support efforts to establish a Village Hall in

Flimwell. At Stonegate we would support proposals to provide extra space to compliment the existing Hall.

D Ticehurst Village Square

We are overtly aware of increasing pressure of the Village Square by parked vehicles and will examine carefully all proposals whereby this conservation area can be expanded for use by all those who wish to use the local businesses located around the Village centre.

E Minor Projects

To assist in the viability of the local economy, the Parish Council will support all efforts to bring Broad Band facilities to the village. We aim to get improved local Tourist Information displayed and will seek to get both Rother District and East Sussex County Council services based in part within the Parish. We will support efforts to expand the Weald Woodnet facility at Flimwell and encourage any retail outlet development at Stonegate.

F Accessible Surgery

Requested by many participants in Village meetings. Discussions are in hand with the local practice, but it was pointed out that alternative 'accessible' facilities do exist in the neighbouring village of Wadhurst, to all those who have their own transport. Nonetheless, the aim is to provide for all.

G Communication

The Parish Council is constantly looking at cost effective means of communicating with all parishioners. We welcome any suggestions. We support East Sussex County Council's aim to have BroadBand available to every part of the Parish.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED MATRIX.

THE ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Ref	PROBLEM	ACTION	By Whom + Together With	Likely Cost To Parish	Timescale
IV.2	A21 Flimwell	Work with Highways Agency and County Council to ensure ACCEPTABLE improvements, not only for through traffic but for local traffic/pedestrians	Highways Authority East Sussex County Council Parish Council Member of Parliament RALC Peer Villages	No cost	Immediate & ongoing
IV. 3	Traffic Calming B and C Roads, particularly Wallerouch, Flimwell and Stonegate.	Speed limit changes and mini-roundabouts	East Sussex County Council Parish Council and County Councillor	Not known	2005
IV. 4	Pedestrian pavements to Upper Platts and Tinkers Lane	Provide the case and raise awareness of need	Parish Council East Sussex County Council	50%-50% contribution of £1000 Parish contribution	2006
V. 4	Lack of Policing and Vandalism	Liase with Sussex Police	Parish Council East Sussex County Council RALC	No cost	Ongoing
V. 4	Fear of Crime and Vandalism	Possible appointment of Community Warden	Police Authority East Sussex County Council Parish Council Peer Villages	No cost	End 2004

IV. 5	Quiet Lanes	Birchetts Green, Burnt Lodge Lane and Borders Lane	East Sussex County Council Parish Council Rother District Council Countryside Agency	£200 contribution	2004
VI. 3	Ticehurst Square Improvements	Form committee of Business community and other owners to discuss proposals.	Parish Council to organize Rother District Council	£100	2008
VI. 5'	Ticehurst Institute Recreation Ground	Obtain grants for renovation works	Parish Council Beatrice Drewe Trust with Community Fund Heritage Fund Rother District Council Charities	£30,000	Ongoing to 2007
VI. 6	Flimwell Village Hall	Site reserved – obtain funding	East Sussex County Council Weald Woodnet Parish Council Flimwell Trust	To be Determined	Ongoing
VII. 4	Additional share of RDC Leisure Budget	Lobby RDC for regular grants	Parish Council and District Councillors	Nil	2004/2005 Budget
VIII. 6	Waste Management	Better Recycling – cheaper and extended local disposal	Rother District Council East Sussex County Council Parish Council Contractors	Nil	2004 and ongoing
IX. 6	Business Development sites	Protect existing sites and develop new sites on 'A' or 'B' roads only.	Parish Council Rother District Council	To be determined	Ongoing

X. 1	Village Parameters	We see no need to alter the existing parameters with the exception of Ticehurst House & Corner Farm site at Flimwell	Parish Council Rother District Council East Sussex County Council SEEDA	Nil	Ongoing
X. 7	Provision of Affordable Housing	Positive bias against executive type homes in favour of lesser value homes	Parish Council Rother District Council Local developers	Nil	Ongoing
X. 7	'Late Life' Housing	Active support for 'easy to manage' retirement homes.	Parish Council Developers Rother District Council Social Services	Nil	Ongoing
X. 8	Compatible Architecture	Planning applications to be scrutinized.	Parish Council Rother District Council	Nil	Ongoing
X. 9	Reporting unauthorised Developments	Every Parishioner Parish Council Rother District Council	Rother District Council compliance section Lawyers	Nil	Ongoing
X1	Action Plan Updating	Update	Parish Council	£500	Mid 2005

The Ticehurst Action Plan

Towards the end of 2002, the public Action Plan Meeting for Ticehurst was held in the Village Hall. About 69 questionnaires were returned. 115 comment slips were posted and 51 Action Ideas were recorded on the white boards.

This is a summary of comments:

1. What we like about Ticehurst:- The village has an individual identity, the shops and shop-keepers play an important role in our satisfaction. The Square features high on the list and residents want it lively, smart and less congested with parked cars and free of litter. An attractive village centre is appreciated. People who move here like the community spirit and the friendliness of the villagers. Many also like Ticehurst to be a working village. Next to the village centre the rural beauty of Ticehurst's surrounding countryside is highly valued.

2. What we dislike about Ticehurst:- Speeding through-traffic, heavy goods vehicles on lanes and parked cars in the village centre. Youngsters who get up to mischief and vandalism. Residents also dislike the amount of litter around, a consequence of excessive packaging. Next down the list comes lack of pavements (footpaths) and street lighting. Almost as many cite increased 'light-pollution'.

3. Top priorities:- The most frequent demand is for affordable houses for locals. No more executive houses with 4/5 beds but terraced houses built in local style. The majority want Ticehurst to grow at a slower rate. This allows for current development plans at Farthing Hill, Ticehurst House and the old school site. Pavements to residential outskirts of the village and serving the new school. The encouragement of local employment and commercial enterprise so long as it is not noisy or smelly. High on the list is a pedestrian crossing from Bell Cottages to the Square, the smartening of the village centre and more activities for young children and teenagers.

4. Transport:- 90% of users seem to consider public transport inadequate because the buses do not run evenings or weekends or link up with a train at these times. Those who do not use Public Transport tend to consider the service adequate.

5. Planning:- Most considered it satisfactory. They mentioned that it could be more democratic but there was little criticism of the Parish or District Council system.

6. Position of new housing:- The majority wanted to build within the village envelopes. The main suggestions are already ear-marked for houses – the old school site, Ticehurst House and at Farthing Hill. Other suggestions were around Upper Platts and Dale Hill near the new school. About half the replies felt the village needed no new housing, small groups of houses using redundant farm buildings in scattered pockets in the countryside. All new properties to have adequate off-street parking.

7. Policing and Social Services:- A high percentage of replies perceived crime and vandalism as a major source of grievance and the absence of a local village Bobby was a

reason for the problem. People were scathing about the police presence in the village – ‘crap’, ‘haven’t seen one’, ‘non-existent’, ‘police by remote-control’, ‘abysmal’ and ‘new laws, no enforcement’ were among the descriptions used. It would appear that fewer people actually bother to report to the police as they get more remote.

In contrast most people are highly complimentary of the local surgery and home care. The only jibe at the health services is that one has to be fit enough to climb the stairs.

8. Youth Club:- Replies from the Youth Club are interesting: They like a small community and friends are important. They dislike bully boys and trouble-makers. Their priorities are more social activities. They think public transport (buses) is inadequate. The policing is ‘rubbish’ and a local policeman would provide a feeling of safety and security in the village.

STONEGATE At a lively and well attended meeting in Stonegate Village Hall last January many of the same points raised in Ticehurst were raised. For instance, lack of policing, traffic concerns, particularly near the school and the need for affordable housing for first time buyers. A major concern was the lack of a community ‘gossip centre’ such as a shop or pub. Ideas included the formation of a Stonegate Club based at the Hall, but it was agreed that this needed to be a ‘self-help’ arrangement with local volunteers getting together to start and staff such a Club.

FLIMWELL The meeting in Flimwell was not so well attended. It was delayed to be able to use the then, brand new and spectacular hall at the Weald Woodnet Centre just off the A21 in Yellow Coat Wood.

The predominant concern was the proposal to re-route the A21 trunk road in the vicinity of Flimwell. Preliminary proposals from the Highways Authority were almost unanimously opposed as being ill thought out and likely to create more noise pollution and be an environmental disaster that would split the village, without really solving the local and through traffic problems on the A268 and B2089.



Ticehurst Parish Council

To each and every household in Flimwell, Stonegate and Ticehurst.

Dear Parishoner

We have completed a Parish Appraisal and drawn up an **Action Plan** for our villages and area. This follows the meetings and extensive consultations held in each village last winter.

The appraisal and Action Plan are contained in a 32 page booklet, illustrated by some maps, a free copy of which you can obtain for your household. Most of the costs have been underwritten by a grant from the Countryside Agency (Central Government). Hopefully you will find the booklet easily readable and of interest to all who live in the Parish.

In summary the **Action Plan** looks at:

1. Ways we can protect the Parish from over development
2. Improve the centres of our villages
3. Lobby for better traffic management on all our roads
4. Tackle problems of vandalism and the lack of policing
5. Help develop work opportunities and provide affordable housing to keep a balanced community.
6. Assess how we can best keep our AONB Villages attractive places to live, in an ever changing environment.

All you have to do to get your copy is to complete the form below and take this letter to either:

The Flimwell Village Stores

The Reception area at Stonegate School or

The Post Office in the Village Stores in Ticehurst,

Where it can be **exchanged** for a copy of the Action Plan booklet.

Name.....

Address.....

Flimwell/Stonegate/Ticehurst/Three Leg Cross/Wallcrouch – (delete as necessary)

This exchange is only available until December 15th – thereafter by post to The Clerk,
The Village Hall, Lower High Street, Ticehurst, enclosing a s.a.c. – 72p A4 size.

PARISH TRANSPORT GRANT

WE HAVE IT!!!

THE PARISH COUNCIL IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE WON AN AWARD FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY FOR THE SUM OF £10,000 TO HELP ESTABLISH BUS SERVICES THAT WERE REQUESTED IN THE COURSE OF THE WARD MEETINGS LAST WINTER.

During the course of these ward meetings there were three separate services which were identified as being of particular interest to the villages. Each of the three can be available to any member of the parish and we hope and intend that pick up and delivery home can be somewhat more personal than a normal bus service. Depending on demand, we hope that the route could include some of the more outlying areas, provided that the pick-up points are accessible by coach, as well as the main villages of Ticehurst, Flimwell and Stonegate.

The three potential services each once weekly are:

1. A shopping trip to Tunbridge Wells Thursday morning 9.30 – 12.30
calling for an hour at one of the main supermarkets, a stop at the Kent and Sussex hospital to enable visiting and for a further hour at Victoria Place shopping mall. (The choice of supermarket may depend upon which one is the most generous in subsidising the operation).
2. A short term visit to Wadhurst Tuesday morning 9.30 – 10.30
to enable visits to surgeries, opticians, banks or shops.
3. Evening trip to Tunbridge Wells Friday evenings 7.00 – 10.30
calling at the town centre as well as the cinema complex.

The services will be run by Warrens Coaches and provided that there is sufficient demand, we hope to start on **TUESDAY 18th NOVEMBER**. The days of the week and precise times of the journeys are open to revision if needed.

TO START WITH THESE SERVICES WILL BE FREE !!!

We do not expect this 'freebie' to continue and will intend to make a charge albeit a highly subsidized one, if the routes prove popular. We need to know as soon as possible the likely level of demand for each or any of these services and would ask you to return the attached reply slip to one of the following, **WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RECEIVING THIS LETTER**.

1. David Maynard, Windmill Hill, Cross Lane, Ticehurst
2. Ticehurst Post Office.
3. Flimwell Stores
4. Stonegate School

IF THERE ARE NO REPLIES THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE – IT IS NOW UP TO YOU.

In the event of over subscription we would expect to give priority initially for the shopping and the Wadhurst service to those who have no other form of public transport i.e. Stonegate. For the Friday entertainment services to the younger people in any of the villages.

We do not want the plan to fail because people did not hear about it or are too apathetic to bother to reply. Please tell your neighbours about it and discuss it amongst yourselves.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.

David Maynard for Ticehurst Parish Council

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE REGISTRATION FORM BELOW:

In future we can only contact and organize for those who register now, as it is expensive to circulate every household in the parish.

REGISTRATION FOR VILLAGE TRANSPORT 2003

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER.....

Number of people in your household who might use the service:-

Age:

Under 18	18 - 60	Over 60
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I would be interested in using the following services (please circle the most likely option):

Tunbridge Wells shopping:

Weekly	Once a month	Twice a month	Occasionally
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Wadhurst:

Weekly	Once a month	Twice a month	Occasionally
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Tunbridge Wells Entertainment:

Weekly	Once a month	Twice a month	Occasionally
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Would you still be interested if a charge of £1.00 for Wadhurst and £2.00 for Tunbridge Wells were levied? Yes No

I have my own car and am not interested in any of this!!