

LAVENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVISION



QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

July 2021

WELCOME

Our Neighbourhood Plan was issued in 2016, taking us through to 2031. Five years on and it is time to review and update our Plan and vision for Lavenham, to ensure our changing needs are reflected. The Questionnaire is a way of listening to the views of the Lavenham community, which are key to the future of the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP2).

We encourage everyone over the age of 16 to take part.

The Questionnaire should be completed online at bit.ly/LNPqu using one of the Access Codes provided at the top of the letter that came with this Guide.

Three codes are provided so that other members of your household can present their independent views. If you would be more comfortable completing a paper copy, or would like additional access codes, please follow the instructions in the letter.

The Access Code means that your response will be anonymous. However if you choose to email comments in response to the question at the end of each section, your details will be stored securely in accordance with the UK Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Data Protection Act 2018. We will remove your data once the LNP2 work has been completed.

There are two levels of support to help you complete the questionnaire.

1. **This printed and illustrated Questionnaire Guide is to be used as you complete the Questionnaire. It summarises the key statements in the Plan relevant to each question.**

2. More detailed and essential background information for each question can be found in the Supporting Document found on the LNP2 website (bit.ly/LNPhome).

The 2016 Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan is also on the LNP2 website.

What is the purpose of this Questionnaire?

It is the **first stage** in the formal process of revising a Neighbourhood Plan. **The next step** will be to analyse the Questionnaire responses. Your responses may show that the Plan continues to reflect the views of Lavenham residents, or may indicate weaknesses in the Plan which could be addressed as we move forward with the revision. **The final step** is adoption by Babergh District Council. You will be consulted throughout the revision process before adoption by the Council.

Babergh District Council (jointly with Mid Suffolk District Council) is updating its district-level Local Plan and our revised 15-year Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared in the context of the emerging new Joint Local Plan (JLP). A revised and strengthened Neighbourhood Plan could have a bigger influence on future development. But to have that influence, it must reflect the views of local people.

Closing date for Questionnaire submission: Tuesday 10th August 2021



Our Neighbourhood Plan 2016 to 2031

The purpose of the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan is to help us to shape our housing, educational, commercial and leisure needs for the future. Its stated objective is “to make Lavenham a more sustainable community and to formulate and define the policies that are required to achieve this.”

The 2016 Neighbourhood Plan describes Lavenham as a vibrant and self-reliant community of around 1,800 people fortunate to live in what has often been described as England’s finest medieval village. It is designated as one of 10 ‘core’ villages in the Suffolk district of Babergh.

The 2016 Plan says Lavenham has a good range of shops, services and facilities. It describes the village as an important tourist destination but adds that the environment of Lavenham’s special character needs protection. It recognises that the balance of our community is threatened by an ever-increasing divergence between young and older age groups.

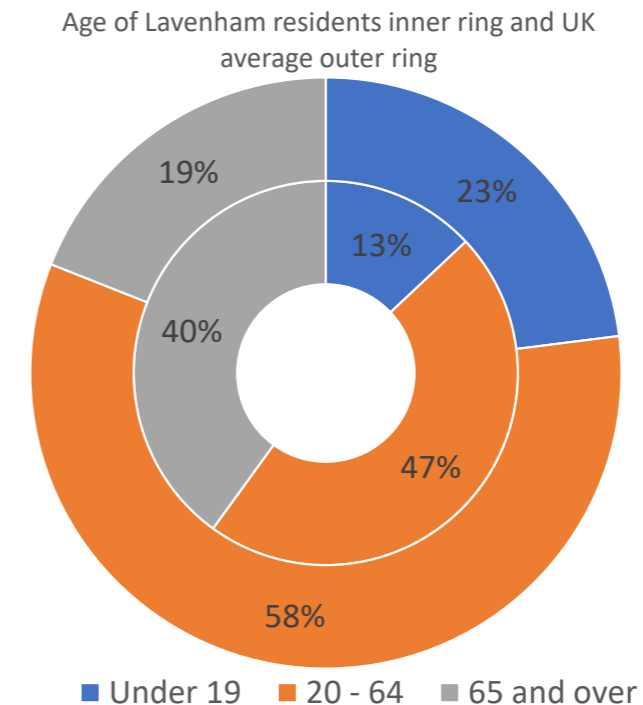
Responding to these concerns, our 2016 Plan’s two key issues are:

1. **Achieving *sustainable development in Lavenham*** – through policies that will enable a better balance between the age groups of residents, and that will allow more young people to live in the village.

2. **Preserving *Lavenham’s unique qualities***, including our historic core and surrounding countryside, to maintain our position as an important tourism destination.

Looking to the future, the graphic below shows how Lavenham’s population compares to the UK average, and while our population is increasing slowly it is not yet redressing the imbalance between age groups.

Our Plan says that Lavenham’s economy is underpinned by tourism, and although numbers are difficult to assess, easily affected by weather and pandemics, it remains central to Babergh District Council’s JLP which our Neighbourhood Plan must take into account.



Section 1: Objectives and Aspirations

This information supports **Q1, Q2 and Q3** in the Questionnaire.

Q1) Objectives and Aspirations:

One: Investment in **affordable housing** for younger people would be the main driver in making Lavenham a more sustainable community. As the total population grew, the proportion of working age people with young families would increase. But the village infrastructure, particularly capacity at Lavenham Primary School, would need to improve.

Two: Residents want **small mixed developments** (up to 24 houses) with an emphasis on 2 and 3 bedroomed homes. This type of development would also appeal to those wishing to downsize and improve the housing choice for older people.

Three: **New development** will be supported, so long as it contributes positively to Lavenham's unique character, and so long as continued enjoyment of the surrounding countryside is also ensured.

Four: **Lavenham's economy** continues to depend on tourism, central to which is the village's historic core. Heavy traffic is a problem and downgrading the A1141 to B-road status with a weight limit is an aspiration. Additional car and coach parking facilities are also aspirations.

- A partial weight restriction has been introduced eastbound in Water Street.
- Changes are being made to car and coach parking facilities.

Five: **Employment** in tourism is expected to grow, and additional jobs are expected in high-tech fields, education and care for older people. The importance of conservation would mean that jobs in building services are also likely to continue to flourish. An increase in affordable housing should enable more people both to live and to work in the village.

Q2) Recent housing schemes

The developments illustrated opposite represent a degree of expansion, which should be compared with other villages nearby and further afield in Babergh district.

Q3) Comments and suggestions Section 1

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put Q3 as the subject.



The Halt



4

Osier View



Aerial View of Peek Close



Aerial View of Bears Lane and Osier View

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Section 2: Housing

This information supports **Q4, Q5 and Q6** in the Questionnaire.

Q4) Our Plan's Housing Policies (in summary) are as follows:

Policy H1: Strong preference for **small developments** (up to 24 homes), located inside the village built-up area, or at the edge of the built-up area – provided they respect Lavenham's landscape, townscape and views.

Policy H2: Developments must contribute to **meeting local housing needs**, both existing and future – this will require mixed developments, with 2 & 3 bedroom homes to cater for both young people, and older residents looking to downsize.

Policies H3, H4, H5: Developments should include 35% **affordable housing**, designed to be integral to the development, and to be offered first to people with a strong local connection.

Policy H6: Homes specifically for **elderly people** should be located within walking distance of the village centre, and should preferably be inside or at the edge of the village built-up area.

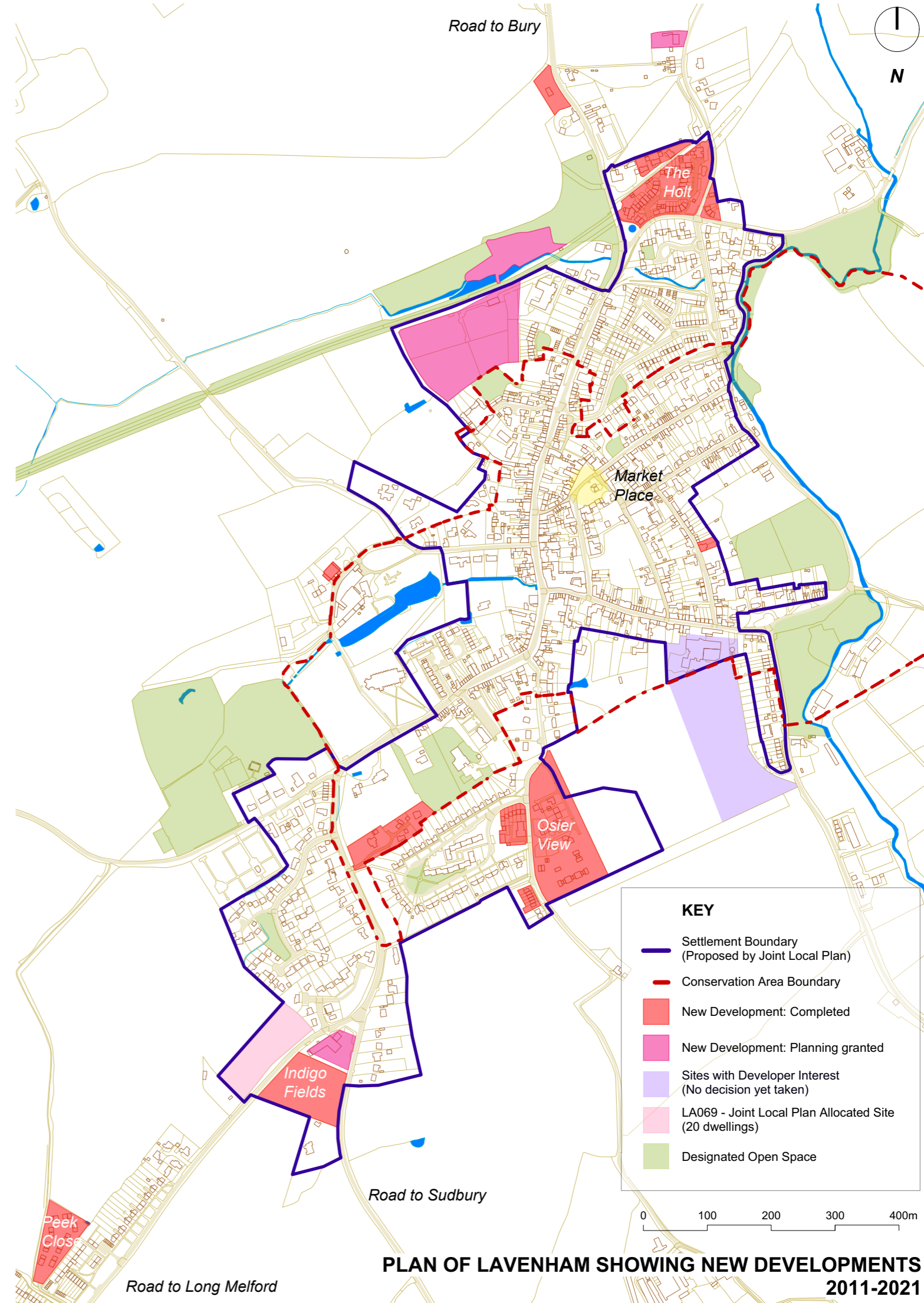
Q5) Babergh's planning records for Lavenham show that in the 10 years since 2011, 146 homes have been built, including one development of 44 homes (pre Neighbourhood Plan) and two of 25. As of May 2021, a further 36 have planning permission. Of the total 182, built or planned, 66 are designated as affordable.

Q6) Comments and suggestions Section 2

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put Q6 as the subject.



Aerial View of Howletts Garage and Indigo Fields



Section 3: Design Policies

This information supports questions **Q7 and Q8** in the Questionnaire

One of our Neighbourhood Plan's key issues is preserving Lavenham's unique qualities. The historic core of our village is medieval and a designated conservation area. The new estates built so far are all outside the historic core, but they are visible and they do influence the feel of our village, as design and heritage cannot easily be separated.

Q7) Our Plan's Design Policies (in summary) are as follows:

• **Policies D1 & D2:**

*All developments will be expected to **preserve and enhance Lavenham's distinctive character**, and proposals which are not designed to a high quality will be opposed*

• **Policy D3:**

***Replacement dwellings and infill development** within the built-up area will be expected to incorporate good quality design. (These developments should not have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring occupiers, or impact significantly on the landscape setting or the conservation area)*

Q8) Comments and suggestions section 3

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamn2@aol.com and put Q8, as the subject.



Hall Road



8 Market Lane



Modern development in Lavenham



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Section 4: Heritage

This information supports **Q9 and Q10** in the Questionnaire

Our 2016 Neighbourhood Plan included four Heritage projects. One of these, for Lavenham to seek **World Heritage Status**, is no longer seen as feasible and is withdrawn.

Q9) Our Plan's remaining Heritage Projects (in summary) are as follows:

• **P14: Compile a Local List of non-designated heritage assets:**

New guidance on the process required has been issued by Historic England. Inclusion in a Local List enables these to be taken into account in planning applications affecting them or their settings. It is hoped that we will complete our Local List by the end of 2022.

• **P8: Development of educational facilities about Lavenham's heritage, especially for younger visitors to the village:**

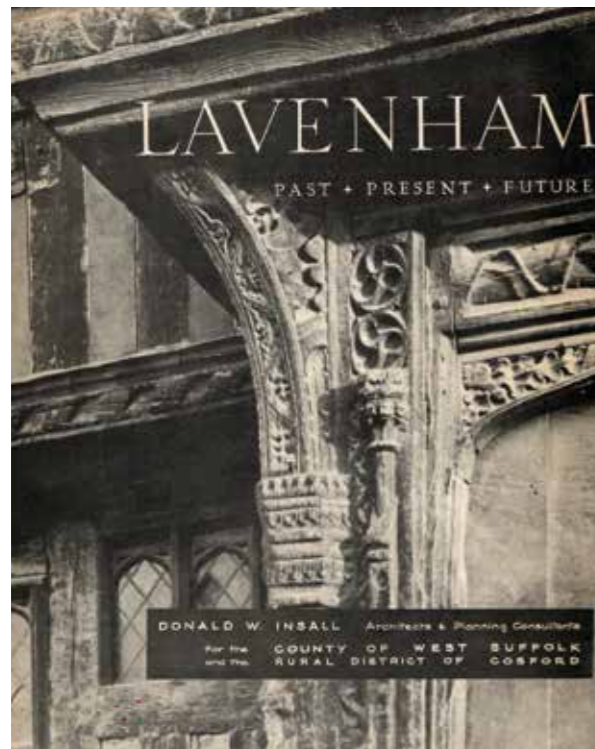
Our Primary School is intending to use Lavenham as a whole school geography and history study topic for summer term 2022. We hope that a legacy of this educational project will be material that can be accessed by younger visitors to our village.

• **P1: Limit access to the Lavenham's historic core by Heavy Goods Vehicles:**

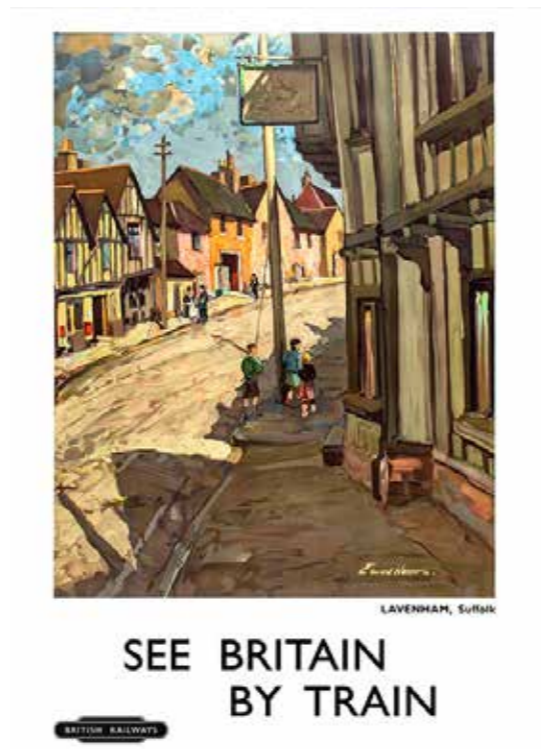
A limited weight restriction has been introduced in one part of the historic core – eastbound in Water Street.

Q10) Comments and suggestions Section 4

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put Q10, as the subject.



1961 Past and Present Report



Historic Rail Poster



Historic Character of Lavenham

Section 5A Community Facilities Policies

This information supports **Q11 and Q12** in the Questionnaire

Individual expectation and use of community facilities means responses to and interest in these policies will vary. Many people will call on their own experience when answering this section and it is hoped that the Questionnaire response will identify their relative importance. The Plan itself (**bit.ly/LNPone**) has a list of community facilities on p40, and the Questionnaire Supporting Document has supplementary information relevant to this section.

Q11) Our Plan's Community Facilities Policies (in summary) are as follows:

- **Policy C1**

*Proposals that would damage **existing facilities and services** will be resisted unless equivalent facilities are re-provided and accessible to all users.*

- **Policy C4**

*Encouraging proposals that include the provision of **public allotments**.*

There are currently no allotments in Lavenham, but provision is included in the approved plans for housing development in Norman Way. Interest in acquiring allotments has also been shown recently, and the Parish Council has been lobbied to identify further allotment sites.

- **Policy C5**

*Support developments that would result in the loss of a **health care facility** only if the facility is either replaced or moved to a suitable location.*

The principal health care facility in Lavenham is the GP Surgery, which is a branch of the Long Melford Practice. Lavenham Parish Council is currently considering whether it should apply to have the Surgery designated as an Asset of Community Value. This would be to minimise the possibility of Lavenham not continuing to have a GP Surgery.

- **Policy C5**

*Support suitable developments within the village built-up area that would meet local **retirement and care home needs**.*

- **Policy C6**

*Support change of use of the **existing primary school site** (if the school is successfully relocated), preferably to meet local retirement and care home needs.*

Our primary school has a physical capacity problem. If it relocated to a bigger site, it would be under pressure to increase its intake. This means that more children would need to be both living in its catchment area and wanting to attend primary school in Lavenham. A viable relocation proposal has not yet come forward.

Q12) Comments and suggestions Section 5A

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamn2@aol.com and put Q12 as the subject.



Examples of Community Facilities

Section 5B Policies for Infrastructure

This information supports **Q13 and Q14** in the Questionnaire

Q13) Our Plan's Policies for Infrastructure, including open spaces, (in summary) are as follows:

- **Policies C7 & C8**

Supporting proposals to expand **electronic communications** networks, and to improve broadband speeds.

- **Policy C3**

Protecting the existing network of **footpaths and bridleways**, and expecting development proposals to link into this network where appropriate.

- **Policy C2**

Identified **open spaces should be safeguarded**, Additional open space or green infrastructure will be a required as part of new developments.

- **Policy C2**

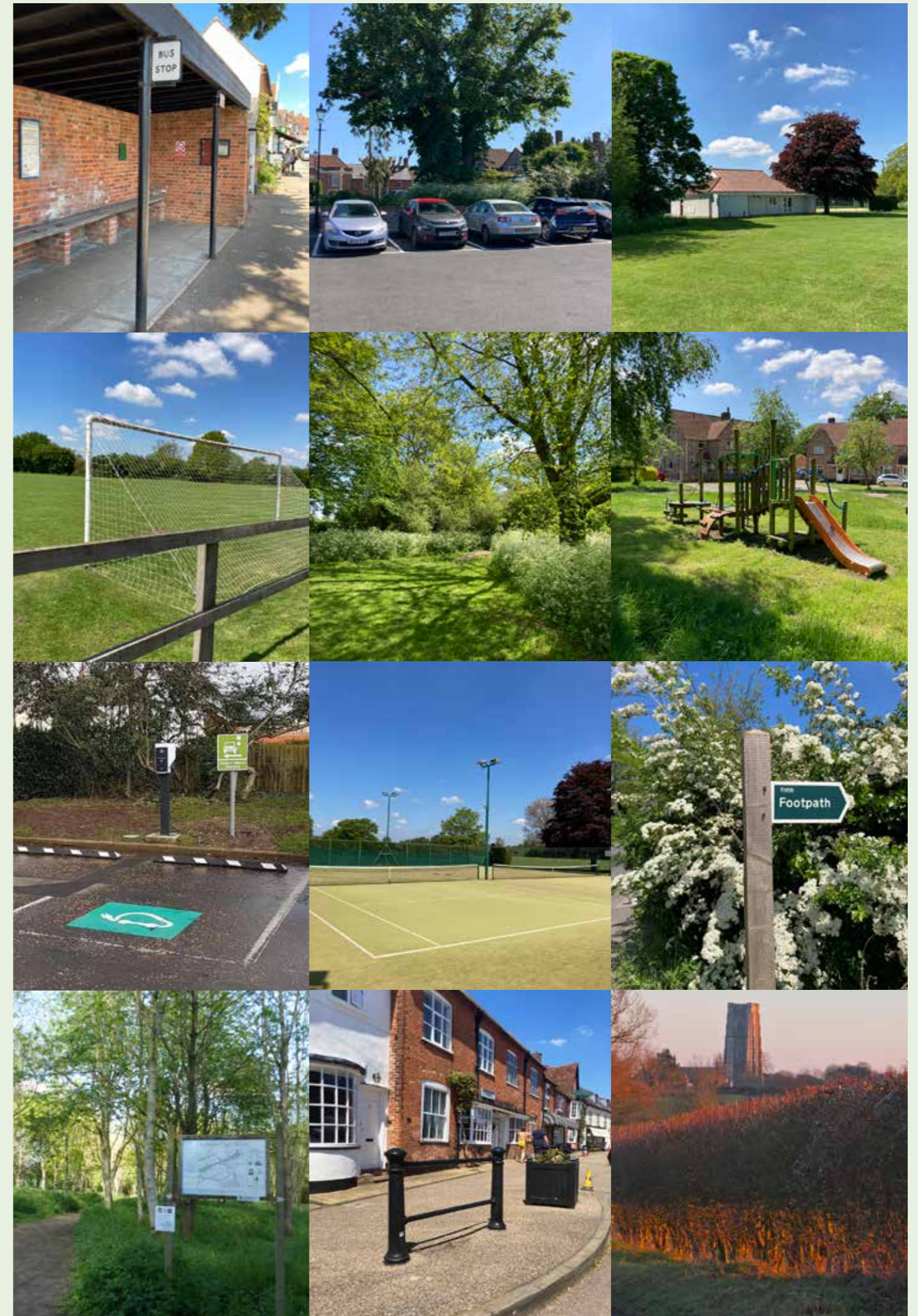
Possibly allowing the development of an open space, to achieve the successful relocation of the **primary school** onto a larger site.

Q14) Comments and suggestions Section 5B

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Defined View 7
(from the Landscape Character Assessment)



Examples of Community Infrastructure

Section 5C: Community Facilities and Infrastructure Projects

This information supports **Q15 and Q16** in the Questionnaire.

Our 2016 Neighbourhood Plan includes a programme of seven Community Facilities and Infrastructure projects. We would like to understand the relative importance of these projects.

Q15) Our Plan's Community Facilities & Infrastructure Projects (in summary) are as follows:

- **Project P10**

Adequately signpost, regularly inspect and maintain Lavenham's network of **statutory footpaths**.

- **Project P2**

Extend or re-design **existing car parks** to accommodate more vehicles.

Prentice Street car park has been redesigned to provide more spaces with provision for electric charging points which have also been installed in the Church Street car park.

- **Project P3**

Create a **reserved parking area** for employees of Lavenham businesses.

- **Project P4**

Support **proposals for coaches** to use existing bus stops and park outside the village.

- **Project P5**

Support **additional car park proposals**, but not on sites that could be used for affordable housing or to relocate the primary school.

Plans for an additional car park, on the Water Street Gas Works site, were announced in December 2020.

- **Project P7**

Continuing support from Lavenham Parish Council for **maintenance and development of open spaces, public toilets, street cleaning and other services**.

Plans to refurbish the public toilets, in both Prentice Street and Church Street car parks, were announced in December 2020. Work on these schemes is currently (May 2021) ongoing.

- **Project P6**

Resist any proposals to remove restrictions that **inhibit speeding along the main village roads**.

Continue to support on-street parking that inhibits speeding along the main village roads and to resist on safety grounds any proposals which would lead to increased speeds.

Q16) 20mph speed limit

The recent approval of a 20mph speed limit in nearby Bildeston village suggests a more pro-active approach, which could also be applied to inhibit speeding in Lavenham.

Q17) – Q21) Public Transport and Private Vehicles

Several of our Plan's infrastructure projects listed above concern car parking and related matters, including the provision of charging points for electric vehicles. Please help us to think about future projects by giving us some information about your use of public transport and private vehicles.

Q22) Comments and suggestions Section 5C

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put the Q22 as the subject.



Section 7: Environment

This information supports **Q29 to Q33** in the Questionnaire

Our 2016 Neighbourhood Plan says the landscape in which Lavenham is situated is of high visual and historic quality, and the countryside setting contributes to the village's amenity value. The views into and out of Lavenham are a very important part of Lavenham's historical appeal. 12 Defined Views of particular importance were identified, and are listed in pages 52 & 53 of the Plan (bit.ly/LNPhome).

Q29) Our Plan's Environmental Policies (in summary) are as follows:

- **Policy ENV1:** Resist development proposals that adversely affect the **defined views** or do not have regard to the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) findings or the qualities of the Special Landscape Area.

As part of revising our Plan, the 2015 LCA will be updated. Most of the views assessed in 2015 are not expected to have changed, but additional important views may be identified by the LCA update. These and any other changes will be included in our revised Plan.

- **Policy ENV2:** Support proposals to erect **solar panels, satellite dishes and aerials** that do not have an adverse impact on the historic setting of Lavenham, our conservation area or defined views.
- **Policy ENV3:** Support proposals to **enhance Market Place's amenity value**, which do not create parking problems or an adverse impact on our conservation area.
- **Policy ENV4:** Support **renewable energy** projects, providing they are located to avoid any significant adverse impact on our defined views.

Q30) Climate Change

Since 2016, the broad subject of climate change has become critical to local plans, including the recently submitted Babergh & Mid Suffolk JLP.

Q31) Water Management

One aspect of climate change is surface water management, both to conserve water and to reduce flooding. Surface water flooding occurs in some parts of Lavenham.

Q32) Our Plan's Environmental Projects are as follows:

- **Project P11:** Support for local action to conserve existing countryside **hedgerows and small areas of woodland**, to ensure that landscape quality is maintained.
- **Project P12:** Engage with the Environment Agency, to encourage regular maintenance and conservation of the **River Brett**.

Q33) Comments and suggestions Section 7

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamn2@aol.com and put Q33 as the subject.



The importance of the environment

Section 8: Employment and our local Economy

This information supports questions **Q34 and Q35** in the Questionnaire

Covid19 caused immediate changes to the world of work, some of which are likely to remain. The implication for Lavenham is that modern technology could enable the number of residents working locally (at, or close to, home) to grow significantly over time. This trend would require home adaptations (for some residents literally working at home), and provision of suitable workspace in Lavenham (for local people working close to, but not at, home).

Q34) Our Plan's Employment and Economy Policies (in summary) and Projects are as follows:

- **Policy E2:** Support proposals (consistent with other policies) to encourage the development of **small businesses**.

These proposals could include provision of workshops or small industrial units in building away from the village historic core, and the provision of infrastructure – including high-speed broadband – required by creative and similar businesses.

- **Project P9:** Extend the **tourist and visitor season** by encouraging a year-round programme of activities.

- **Policy E1:** Support proposals to improve **Tourist Information facilities**.

Q35) Comments and suggestions Section 8

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put Q35 as the subject.



The Great House and Little Hall

Section 9: Our Neighbourhood Plan's Overall Approach

This information supports questions **Q36, Q37 and Q38** in the Questionnaire

Q36) The previous sections of this document together relate to all our 2016 Neighbourhood Plan's policies and projects. Taking all these parts of our Plan together, we would like to know how well overall you think our Plan has done in dealing with the key issues it said we were facing in 2016.

Q37) The key issues identified in 2016 are:

- **Key Issue 1**

*To achieve **sustainable development in Lavenham** – through policies that will enable a better balance between the age groups of residents, and that will allow more young people to live in the village.*

- **Key Issue 2**

*To **preserve Lavenham's unique qualities**, including our historic core and surrounding countryside, and to maintain our position as an important tourism destination.*

Q38) Comments and suggestions Section 9

Space for comments is very limited (max 250 characters including spaces, typically 45 words). Longer comments can be made by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com and put Q38 as the subject.



Osier View

Section 10: The Last Pages

This information supports questions **Q39 to Q45** in the Questionnaire

Now tell us a bit about yourself, please:

In the last pages of the questionnaire, you are asked to tell us a bit about yourself. This information will help us to ensure that findings from the questionnaire fully represent the range of views in Lavenham. But, if you prefer, you can complete the other parts of the questionnaire and not provide this information.

Q46 – Q48) Keeping in touch:

If you would like to receive emails regarding news updates on the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan, you can provide your email address and formally give us consent to do this. You can withdraw your consent for us to contact you at any time by emailing lavenhamnp2@aol.com.

Q47)

Ofcom describes Broadband speeds of below 30Mb as 'regular' or 'fast'. 'Superfast' is between 30 and 300 Mb, and 'Ultrafast' is above 300 Mb.

Speedtest.net (or similar broadband speedtest checker) will give you this information.

What next?

We hope to provide the findings from the Questionnaire in late summer, pandemic restrictions permitting, through a public meeting which everyone will be invited to attend.

Further village consultation may be needed before a revised Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan can be put through the required regulatory processes.

The Revision working group currently expect the revision to be completed by the end of 2022, and the Lavenham community will continue to be kept informed and consulted as the process moves on.

Note on Confidentiality:

Any information you provide by completing our questionnaire, or by giving your contact details will be handled in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. Any reports we publish based on findings from the questionnaire will not contain personal identifiable information. They will only contain anonymously formatted results. These results may be shared publicly and included in our revised Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan. All information collected via the questionnaire will be held for a period of seven years from the date of survey closure. If you have any queries about your involvement with this questionnaire, please email lavenhamnp2@aol.com

