Sustainable Growth for the Whole Community

Hamsey 2014-30
Neighbourhood Plan
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1 Foreword

The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Planning into the hierarchy of spatial planning in England, giving communities the right to shape their future development at a local level.

The Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan reflects community-wide comments, observations and concerns about its future, bringing them together with census information, strategic and statistical evidence into a “living promise” that mirrors the community’s overwhelming desire to make Hamsey Parish an even better place to live and work, both now and for future generations.

The plan has been produced by a Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group including Parish Council members, community volunteers, the school, church and local businesses with the help of Lewes District Council, the Southdowns National Park, Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) and Planning Aid England (the Royal Town Planning Institute).

Once the Plan has been made, following a favourable local referendum, the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan and become, with the Lewes District Council’s Local Plan, the starting point for deciding where development should take place and the type and quality of that development.
2 Why we need a Neighbourhood Plan

The Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) aims to make Hamsey Parish an even better place to live, now and for future generations. It covers the period 2014 to 2030 and recommends a review every five years.

The Neighbourhood Plan process enables communities to better shape their Parish, to inform how development takes place and helps to influence the type, quality and location of that development, ensuring that change brings with it local benefit.

The community of Hamsey Parish has a history of being proactive in taking local decisions. In 2004 the Hamsey Parish Plan was ratified by the Parish Council and set out a vision and action plan for how the Parish wished to see itself develop.

Under the Localism Act Neighbourhood Planning now provides an opportunity for the community to have a real say over local decision making, to achieve its long-standing goals through the planning system and to address the challenges and opportunities facing the future vitality of the Parish.

Whilst recognising that sustainable development is necessary to prevent our villages and economies from stagnating, we want to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development and where in our Neighbourhood Plan it takes place.

The HNP Plan is based on extensive research and influenced by robust engagement with the local community. All involved in developing the Neighbourhood Plan have listened carefully to all the feedback received from these consultations and have worked hard to ensure that the Plan incorporates and reflects the views of the community.

In the lead up to referendum the Planning Authority should consider this to be an important reference point and give it weight as a material consideration in any development planning decisions. If the HNP is supported in the Referendum it will form an integral part of the Local Plan for Lewes District. It will guide future development in the Parish.
3 Structure of the Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out:

- The Vision and Objectives for the future of Hamsey
- Overview — The position of Hamsey Parish and opportunities to achieve sustainable development for the whole community.
- The Policies — Providing the Community policy framework for managing new development so that it contributes to the vision, aims and strategy for our Parish.
- The Projects — Initiatives proposed to enhance our neighbourhood and way of life to be carried out in future by members of the community working together with appropriate authorities including Hamsey Parish Council and Lewes District Council

How the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared

The HNP has been prepared by the steering group with support coming from Lewes District Council (LDC) the South Downs National Park (SDNP) Action in Rural Sussex (AirS) and Planning Aid England (the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI))

Key Stages in preparing the HNP

A well-attended public meeting took at Beechwood Hall during the autumn of 2012, to discuss the proposal by LDC to increase housing in the Parish to the year 2030 and also to increase the number of traveller pitches which had sprung up (initially illegally) in the parish. After much discussion with members of LDC and the HPC, it was agreed that a questionnaire would be sent to each household to ask their opinion. There was a good response level circa 35%, with most supporting some development within the parish and 93% stating that there should be no more traveller’s pitches at Offham.

During early 2013 HPC initiated the process to seek approval from LDC to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for Hamsey Parish. Approval was duly granted and over the next few weeks a team of representatives from HPC, local residents, the school, church, businesses and LDC formed a steering group.

The steering group agreed that our overall vision should be a holistic plan to include the development policies which would in due course be identified and voted upon but also a Local Plan which would look at the wider aims of the community and in due course would identify projects which in many areas go hand in hand with the development plan.

Towards the back you will find the Appendix with explanations for some of the wording and abbreviations used in The Plan
Five Core Themes were identified:

- Housing Growth and Development
- Transport and Travel
- Education
- Social Recreation and Sports
- Local Economy

Each was allocated a chairperson and it was agreed that the themes would be built around our 3 core values:

- Sustainability
- Environment
- Health and Wellbeing

Consultation and Evidence Gatherings

A number of meetings were held with local businesses, the school and landowners to enable them to share their thoughts and ideas.

On the 5th of October 2013, nearly 100 attended a public open meeting at Beechwood Hall in Cooksbridge. Prior to this every household was delivered a vision and objectives brochure. Additionally several questionnaires were submitted asking for feedback and input into all our 5 core themes.

Each theme chairperson gave a presentation twice during the day and a question and answer session was added to the mix.

There was also a large detailed map of the Parish where all potential development sites as identified by LDC, were on display and residents were invited to place a coloured sticker on their site of choice.

Subsequently in January 2014 a major consultation took place by sending each person named on the Parish electoral roll a detailed questionnaire which was undertaken by AirS, a further open drop in session was held in February 2014 at which members of the steering group were able to answer questions from parish residents.

Over 35% of the residents completed the questionnaire and a detailed analysis was carried out of the data. An important communication tool throughout the process was the Hamsey Parish Newsletter which goes to each household every quarter and always included a HNP progress update.

How were stats assessed?

The Steering Group mobilised themselves to begin the process of gathering evidence to support the Plan. This included reviewing evidence reports prepared by Lewes District Council, preparing a neighbourhood profile using key national and local statistics and producing a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, which contains a broad range of statistics and information that helped to identify issues for the Parish. This information is provided in separate supporting documents.
4 Vision for Hamsey Parish

The Community’s Vision:

- To maintain and improve the quality rural natural environment, with protection in place for green spaces and woodland.
- To improve the infrastructure and therein the opportunity for non-motorised travel and increase the frequency of public transport.
- To evolve and grow sustainably whilst promoting the rural local character.
- To help provide an outstanding quality of life for future generations, whilst improving opportunities for all residents including younger adults to be able to afford to live and work within the Parish.
- To plan sustainable development using available natural resources to reduce our ecological footprint and minimise the need for fossil fuels.
- To continue to respect and reflect the views of the community.
5 Objectives

- Protecting the high quality natural environment of valued green spaces, ancient trees, wooded areas, hedgerows and watercourses.
- Conservation of wildlife through maintaining the countryside and improving biodiversity
- Better connected network of wildlife habitats and appropriate farm management to ensure that natural resources, habitats and species can adapt to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.
- Campaign for on-going improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity.
- An effective network of footpaths and new cycle paths linking the communities across the Parish with improved public transport provision to encourage increased movement by sustainable means and reduced car dependency.
- Preference should be given to housing developments that are closer to major transport hubs (notably Cooksbridge Railway Station), to Brownfield sites or already developed land, within easy access to shops, community facilities and to green open space.
- Prioritise local character in every element of change and growth
- Delivery of a housing growth strategy tailored to the needs and context of Hamsey Parish with an appropriate level of housing to meet local needs and improved access to essential services and facilities.
- Housing developments should use natural resources and incorporate ecologically sound design, materials and alternative energy supply built to minimum Code 4 for Sustainable Homes and offer appropriate green space.
- Sensitive development which protects and enriches the landscape and rural setting.
- Improving local facilities sufficient enough for existing and new residents.
- Strengthening and supporting economic activity.
- The protection of cultural heritage assets and shared common land is enhanced and contribute positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- To provide a more focused centre for the residents of the parish where there are amenities which support the daily lives of all ages and encourage shared opportunities for social, cultural and physical recreation.
- For the schools position within the community to be enhanced by improved buildings and parking provision with more opportunities for pre and post school provision for the nursery children and young people in the community
- Involve local people in an ongoing basis in the process of plan-making, monitoring and delivery of development.
6 Hamsey Parish

6.1 Introduction

Hamsey is a rural Parish. It covers 1144 hectares (2837 acres) and lies 3 miles (5km) north of the county town of Lewes.

The position of Hamsey Parish places it at the heart of one of the most distinctive landscapes in England. Mount Harry forms the western boundary of Hamsey Parish, the Bervern stream the northern boundary and the River Ouse with a classic flood plain forms the eastern boundary. At the crest of the South Downs adjoining Landport Bottom there is the historic Offham Chalk Pit overlooking the funicular railway from which lime from the chalk kilns used to be loaded directly on to waiting barges below.

Each settlement has its own distinctive character. Cooksbridge is the largest settlement and geographically at the heart of the Parish. Home to Cooksbridge railway station and Hamsey Community Primary School Cooksbridge has the potential to be an even more effective hub for life in the parish. Hamsey village sits almost exactly on the Greenwich Meridian at zero degrees longitude.

The distribution of settlements in the parish means that two villages, Hamsey and Offham fall largely within the South Downs National Park. The settlements of Cooksbridge (Old Cooksbridge) and Bervern Bridge lie mainly outside the National Park.
6.2 A brief history of Hamsey Parish

The earliest evidence of human activity is from the Mesolithic period, when a group of hunter-gatherers camped near the river at Hamsey, at that time a large inlet of the sea. In Neolithic times people met at the causewayed enclosure on Offham Hill, one of only five such communal monuments in Sussex.

The Romans also left their mark. A Roman road crosses the parish on the Greensand ridge between Resting Oak and Deadmantree hills. Just to the west, at Wickham Barns, Roman pottery kilns have been excavated. To the east, in Barcombe, a Roman villa was discovered in 1998. Members of the Mid-Sussex Field Archaeological Team have been excavating there for the past 8 years (see the MSFAT website on the links page).

We know there was a Saxon settlement at Hamsey in AD925 and it is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. A contract survives for the building of a manorial hall in 1321 to the east of Hamsey Church, although if this was ever completed is not confirmed. Lords of the Manor of Hamsey have included the families of de Cheyney, de Say, de Clinton, Willoughby, Dudley, Lewknor, Alford, Wenham, Parlington and Monk Bretton. Lords of the Manor of Coombe, (Offham), include the families of de Say, Radmelde, Comber, Pelland, Scrase, River, Bridger and Shifnner.

The Battle of Lewes, where Simon de Montfort defeated King Henry III, took place on Offham Hill in 1264. This, along with the battle of Evesham the following year, helped to pave the way for our modern parliamentary system.

The church at Hamsey served the parish from before the Norman Conquest until the new church of St Peter was built at Offham in 1859. There are records of a chapel of ease at Offham in the 16th century.

Farming has been the main activity in the parish for many centuries, but a tannery existed in the 16th-century while local people also found employment in the chalk pits at Offham, the brickyard at Bevern Bridge and the old brewery at Cooksbridge. The river was canalised in the 18th century.

The railway arrived in the 19th century and this led to the growth of a new settlement around the station at Cooksbridge. It is now the parish’s biggest residential area. Downsview Cottages date from the 1920s, Chandlers Mead dates from the 1950s and Malthouse Way was built in the late 1990s.

Hamsey Primary School was built in Cooksbridge in 1907 to replace the old schoolhouse at Offham.

The Malthouse at Cooksbridge was built in the 18th century and last used for malting in 1912. It was used as the village hall as early as 1919 but was given up for this purpose on 30 September 2007. A new village hall, known as Beechwood Hall, was opened on October 1st 2007. Situated at the recreation ground in Beechwood Lane the whole project took just three years to complete.
7 Landscape and Environment

7.1 Overview

Character

In accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance the community wishes to see the rural nature of Hamsey Parish and their communities protected for future generations. Most of the land in the Parish is used for agricultural purposes.

The rural nature of Hamsey Parish supports the need to maintain and enhance the countryside and improve biodiversity.

A key part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive involved undertaking a detailed assessment of the Hamsey Parish landscape character. All new development needs to harmonise with and reflect the setting of the Parish.

Flooding

See Scoping Report 3.10 Environment

Low lying areas of the Parish adjacent to the Ouse are at risk of flooding. The risk extends to low lying parts of the village of Hamsey where it is adjacent to the Ouse and a band of land running north of Cooksbridge. (see map 9: ‘Areas of Flood Risk’ Appendix 3) Since the major period of flooding in 2000 much has been done to protect the area by ensuring ditches are well maintained. Areas were also flooded in Cooksbridge and Offham which continue to be at risk in times of heavy rain. These floods are caused by run off from the Downs and surrounding fields.

Any future development should preserve existing green spaces, hedgerows and trees. Developers should endeavour to create more wildlife habitats.(see Woodland Trust documents, “Trees can help reduce flooding and improve water quality “ Appendix 2).

Any new development will need to demonstrate that due regard to flood attenuation has been incorporated.
**Habitats**

The settlements and wider countryside of the parish contain features of significant local wildlife value.

See Appendix for Map 2 (sites of Special Scientific Interest), Map 3 (Local Wildlife Sites), Map 4 (Priority Habitats), Map 6 (Ancient Woodland Inventory), also Map SR3. See Scoping report for details of these sites, many of which are within the South Downs National Park.

Hedgerows in the parish form important corridors for wildlife including badgers and foxes, small birds such as finches, great tits and blue tits; bats, dormice, dragonflies and butterflies. The high hedges offer nesting sites for endangered bird species including the Song Thrush. Small woodland areas in the parish provide important habitats for many species such as the tawny owl, bats, newts and great spotted woodpecker. A sample of the Some of the recorded wildlife in the parish can be seen on the Sussex Wildlife Trust’s Biodiversity report (see Appendix).

In any new development on a brownfield site which adjoins a wildlife habitat such as an ancient woodland or waterways care must be taken to preserve and maintain a thriving, living landscape. The SDNP Partnership Management Plan, “Bigger, better connected and managed habitats reduce threats to species diversity”.

There is a well tended allotment next to the railway at Cooksbridge.

The green infrastructure within the parish needs to be maintained as it provides many social, economic and environmental benefits including:

- Places for peace, tranquility, outdoor relaxation and play.
- Space and habitat for wildlife with access to nature for people.
- Climate change adaptation eg flood alleviation.
- Environmental education.
- Local food production.
- Improved health and well being-lowering stress levels and providing opportunities for exercise.

In the village social survey, when asked what they most liked about living in the village, 53% said, “beautiful countryside”.

The Community feels it is very important to identify and protect designated Local Green Spaces of special significance.
Pollution

As the A275 runs through the middle of Offham, Cooksbridge and Bevernbridge there is concern for the air pollution from road traffic particularly in Cooksbridge where cars wait at the level crossing. This poses a risk, especially to people with asthma, to children, pregnant women, older people and cyclists.

There is a high dependency on car use, due to irregular public transport, no cycleways and no local amenities such as a local shop or post office in Cooksbridge.

“Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion” (NPPF 4:30, Appendix)

To enable a greater appreciation of the Parish’s landscape features and interaction with the wildlife, access to the countryside needs to be achieved via a network of public footpaths and cycle paths that cross the Parish. However at the moment the local school children still need to cross over and walk on the road to reach the village Hall and Bevernbridge has no connecting footpath or cyclepath to Cooksbridge where the Parish school, railway station and social centre are.
7.2 Local Green Spaces

Throughout the Parish there is a network of multi-function green spaces which helps to provide a natural life support system for people and wildlife. This network of both publicly and privately owned land needs to support native species, maintain ecological processes and help prevent flooding, sustain air and water resources and contribute to the health and well being of the community.

The Lewes District Outdoor Playing Space Review, 2004 and also The Lewes District Council Informal Recreational Space Study, 2005 identified Hamsey as having a shortfall of informal play space in natural green space. See Appendix.

Paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that specific plots of land that are demonstrably special to the local community may be protected against development.

Identified here are five designated Local Green Spaces within the parish that are demonstrably special to the local community, namely:

- **LGS4** - Ancient Woodland at the Old Hamsey Brickworks Site, Bevern Bridge
- **LGS3** - Field adjoining West of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park
- **LGS2** - Field to rear of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park
- **LGS1** - The Platt, Beechwood Lane, Cooksbridge
- **LGS5** - Graveyard at Old Hamsey Church
LGS1- The Platt, Beechwood Lane, Cooksbridge

The Platt is a small woodland bordering the East side of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park, accessible from Beechwood Lane. For many years local residents have enjoyed regular sightings of bats, owls and small woodland animals in this woodland. The trees provide a tranquil, healthy and beautiful space for the community to enjoy from the community playing fields at Beechwood Rural Park. Bridesong is enjoyed by visitors to Beechwood Hall & Rural park all throughout the year.

Mature trees and hedges reduce the effect of flooding to neighbours further down the lane, onto the A275 and over the road to Malthouse Way. Numbers of bats recorded here have fallen in recent years and there is a growing concern that more protection should be put in place to protect their habitat and halt the decline.

There is little woodland left in the parish and the community feels that they wish to protect this tranquil and beautiful space. A community petition to safeguard the woods adjoining Beechwood Hall & Rural Park signed by some residents at the time of the initial Neighbourhood Plan Consultation highlighted the need for Local Green Spaces to be designated (see 6.2 of this document, Local Green Spaces)

LGS2- Field to rear of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park

This field is rich in biodiversity, including rare Grass Vetchling and Pyramidal Orchid, recorded with Sussex Wildlife Trust in June 2014, see picture (right). Hedgerows border each side.

The field is tranquil, beautiful and offers unobstructed views of the South Downs including the impressive backdrop of Mount Harry. This open, undeveloped tract of greenfield adds to the rural feel of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park.

There is a Public Right of Way access across the field and the community enjoys walks here. It is an especially popular route for dog walkers.

LGS3- Field adjoining west of Beechwood Rural Park

Currently used for pastoral farming, this is a beautiful and tranquil place with Public Rights of Way, popular with walkers and dog owners.

It provides a peaceful and beautiful setting for Beechwood Hall & Rural park users as well as unspoilt views to the South Downs, including the impressive backdrop of Mount Harry.

This open, undeveloped tract of greenfield adds to the rural feel of Beechwood Hall & Rural Park.

It is accessed via the Children’s play area in Beechwood Hall & Rural Park over a stile contructed and erected by community volunteers The Monday Group.
LGS4- Old Hamsey Brickworks, Bevern Bridge

This ancient woodland, which has been walked through for the best part of two centuries (70 years by some local residents), boasts beautiful lakes and spectacular scenery. Public access was recently restricted by way of a barbed wire fence.

Up to 100 geese in a single night land each year at the lake. The lake and woodland offer an important habitat to birds, animals, plant life and the ancient trees and hedges themselves. Nearby development plans should be able to demonstrate measures to protect the trees and inhabitants from the detrimental effects of development, including noise and pollution.

The Community would like to see the woods protected and maintained for future generations. Ideally the community would like to be able to access the woods as they were permitted to do so in the past.

LGS5- Graveyard at Old Hamsey Church

The church at Hamsey was first recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 we know there was a settlement at Hamsey in AD925. The church is positioned in a beautiful and tranquil spot with panoramic views across the parish. The church can be seen clearly from Offham Hill, from Lewes at the top of Landport estate and from the Lewes to London train line.

Many generations have celebrated life events and celebrations from christenings and evensong to burials at Hamsey church. The community wishes to see the green area around the church protected as a place for quiet reflection and peace.
7.3 Biodiversity

The Community places considerable value on the enhancement of biodiversity in the Parish, including the creation and preservation of wildlife habitats, the conservation of native hedgerows, the planting of native trees and wildflowers and the protection of wildlife corridors. Species Recorder report by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (Appendix) shows a sample of the extraordinary range of wildlife recorded in our woodlands, hedgerows, waterways, green spaces and buildings. The report also highlights that numerous members of the community over many decades have cared enough about these birds, insects, animals, plants, butterflies etc to take the time to record formally them. The Biodiversity of the Parish will also be affected by the agricultural farming methods practiced by the farming landowners.(see map Agricultural Land Classes Hamsey)

To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability, planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity and the potential sensitivity of the area or proposed development to adverse effects from pollution, should be taken into account."

Local farming methods used will also impact greatly on climate change and the prevention of future flooding and biodiversity. Any large scale agricultural or industrial plan which would bring many heavy lorries to small rural roads would be of significant concern. The impact of carbon emissions as well as the carcinogenic effects of particulate matter and nitrogen oxide from diesel vehicles in any new development will need consideration.

See “Adapting to Climate Change” www.defra.gov.uk/adaptation Appendix

As stated in the SDNP Management Plan, “The richness and diversity of species and habitats are vital to conserve as they support and underpin many of the processes we rely on to sustain our lives.” This rings particularly true to the Hamsey Parish Community as we are a rural parish who appreciate the delicate balance between human and nature.

Within our rural community, planning policies and decisions should also limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
7.4 Climate Change

The Community supports the national move to a low carbon future. The Plan plays a role in helping secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. This has been very successful in the building of the Parish’s Beechwood Hall which is a sustainable low carbon building with ground source heating, solar panels and a wind turbine.

As stated in the ‘South Downs National Park Management Plan’, a well managed ecosystem, “helps to regulate our climate, stores flood waters, filters pollution and provides opportunities for us to improve our health and well being.” See appendix for Ecosystem Services Delivered in the South Downs National Park.

Cooksbridge has been chosen as the site of any future development as it is the centre of the travel network with the railway and bus Services and where children need to travel daily to school.

The community expressed a preference for developing brownfield sites that were available within the Parish.

We see the new development in Cooksbridge being an opportunity to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems through co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers. We hope to reduce car use and the heavy dependency on oil and LPG as heating for residents.

The plan also encourages energy efficient improvements to new and existing buildings and the incorporation of sustainability measures such as rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, high standards of insulation and renewable energy systems.

7.5 Community Feedback

Consultation on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan revealed the following key issues in relation to this topic that the policy seeks to address: ( Neighbourhood Plan Survey Report)

- 92.3% agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan should “Promote sustainability in our parish; this will help to preserve our eco system and support social, community and cultural life.”

- 78.0% agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan should “Focus new housing on Cooksbridge so that we maintain the rural character of the environment of the parish.”
• 77.5% indicated medium to high support for the proposal that priority should be given to ecological construction methods for any new developments, in order to maximize energy conservation and emission reduction.

• 84.0% indicated medium to high support for the proposal that priority should be given to housing proposals which utilize design and landscaping in spaces around buildings thus maximizing wildlife potential by the use of native species.

• 76.8% indicated medium to high support for the Covers site and 54.3% gave The Hamsey Brickworks medium to high support. Both of these are brown field sites as opposed to the Greenfield sites which were put forward which received lower support. The highest score of low support (47.9%) was given to the Woodland by Beechwood Lane and Hall. (see Action in rural Sussex Survey Report p.6) “A petition To stop the woodland and Rural park and any green land in and around Cooksbridge to be destroyed for new housing” also reflected the strength of feeling on this issue by some local residents. (See Appendix)

• 57.2% indicated medium to high support for the assertion that the South Downs National Park is an asset to the community and they support promoting its accessibility for the benefit of parish residents and visitors.

• 92.5% indicated medium to high support with regard to the maintenance of hedgerows and footpaths as important for encouraging access to the countryside.

• 87.7% indicated medium to high support with regard to maintaining of the balance between modern farming methods and protecting the local eco system.

• 81.3% indicated medium to high support for the proposal that any future development should encourage residents to walk and/or cycle around the parish thus reducing carbon emissions.

• 90.3% indicated medium to high support with regard to the proposal that any new development in the Parish should have strict controls regarding, noise and traffic congestion.

As the result of new houses being built villagers were asked how any planning gain should be used (see Action in Rural Sussex Report feedback p.13)

• 77% wanted accommodation for a community shop.

• 76% wanted more parking spaces within the village

• 66% wanted improved footpaths linking the station to Beechwood Hall.

• 56% want improved cycle routes

• 56% want communal space for children’s play within the new houses
7.6 Heritage Assets

The Community wishes to conserve heritage assets for future generations and to protect the buildings and sites against change of use.

- **St Peters Church at Hamsey and St Peters church at Hamsey**
  The parish is served by two unique churches dedicated to St Peter which span a thousand years of Christian worship. The ancient church, known as Hamsey Church, is without electricity. Services are held there from May to September and concerts take place through the year. At Christmas there is a candle lit Carol Service which is always well attended. St Peters, Offham was consecrated in 1860. The churches form an important part of our local heritage.

- **Hamsey Community Primary School**
  The school was constructed in 1907 and lies at the heart of Cooksbridge.

- **Cooksbridge Railway Station platforms, car park and associated land.**
  The station buildings were originally constructed in 1847 and were the beginnings of the settlement of Cooksbridge.

- **Three Public Houses**
  The Rainbow Inn built in 1749, situated in Old Cooksbridge, The Blacksmiths Arms built in 1760 in Offham, and the 19th century Chalk Pit Inn which lies just within the boundary on the edge of Offham are the three remaining public houses in the Parish.

- **The Roman Road crosses the parish on the Greensand ridge between the Resting Oak and Deadmantree hills.**

  The Battle of Lewes where King Henry III was defeated by Simon de Montfort took place on Offham Hill in 1264. Offham Chalk pits which were in use from 1807-1870 show the site of Jessop’s funicular railway built in 1809.

  As stated in The Scoping report, four settlements in the parish have listed buildings: old Cooksbridge(13), Hamsey (14), Cooksbridge (7) and Offham (14).

  For listed buildings within the Parish see maps 10,11, 13 and 15. For conservation areas in Hamsey and Cooksbridge see map 12 and 14.
Heritage Map of Hamsey Parish, produced in 2001
7.7 Landscape and Environment Policies

**HNP/EN1** New development should not harm the network of local ecological features and habitats but maintain and enhance existing ecological corridors and landscape features (such as trees, water courses, all ancient trees and all hedgerows) for biodiversity.

**HNP/EN2** The countryside of the Parish (land outside Limits to Development) will be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife. Development which would have a significant adverse impact on the countryside or the defining characteristics of the landscape will not be approved.

**HNP/EN3** The designated Local Green Spaces will be protected. Development that is harmful to these Local Community Green Spaces will not be approved. This will include all public rights of way and access to the South Downs National Park. Designated Local Green Spaces listed LGS1,2,3,4,5.

**HNP/EN4** To focus new housing on Cooksbridge so that we maintain and enhance the rural character of the environment of the parish enabling Cooksbridge to be a more effective centre for life in the parish and thus supporting local welfare.

**HNP/EN5** That all new developments in Hamsey Parish help secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. Any new development should have strict controls regarding pollution, noise and traffic congestion.

**HNP/EN6** Any new development in the Parish must respect the character of the listed buildings and sites and the buildings used by the community considered as Heritage Assets

**HNP/EN7** Developments proposing to change the use of the Parish Heritage Assets: 2 existing churches, 3 public houses, the school and the station, will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that reasonable efforts have been made to secure their continued use for the present purpose of places of worship and or community gathering. These would only be considered as change of use if this would benefit the community.
7.7 Landscape and Environment Projects

1. To construct a safe passage to enable all children and adults to travel safely through the Parish by interconnecting pathways and cycle ways thus reducing the need for car travel for local journeys and reducing carbon emissions.
2. Further development of a community allotment or community garden. A small community orchard could be established with support from the local organization Common Cause. Local produce to be sold within the Parish.
3. To strengthen links/dialogue between landowners/farmers and the Parish Council (representing residents) on the subject of crop spraying and movement of heavy agricultural traffic.
4. The conservation and creation of appropriate size, variety and quality of habitat throughout the Parish to support a wide range of species. This has already taken place at the station with ongoing community maintenance.
5. Working with residents at Bevern Bridge Area Residents Association to negotiate access to the ancient woodland and lake there.
8 Health and Wellbeing

In October 2013 81 residents also took part in a social survey in a structured interview to express their thoughts and feelings about living in the Hamsey Community (see appendix: "What’s it like living in Hamsey?")

All recognised the importance that Beechwood Hall now played but the biggest single concern was about the lack of other local facilities within Cooksbridge—"no shops, post office or pub". The pub in Cooksbridge was demolished to make way for a small housing development in 2013. As stated in The Scoping report, Hamsey parish is less well served in the provision of a recognised centre. Cooksbridge has the potential to play this role but needs more amenities to enable residents to make more informal contact. In this way the community would be able to support the more vulnerable residents and build a more sustainable, caring and healthy community.

The Church plays an important part within the community with regular events and gatherings.

The Community of the Parish come together for the annual Hamsey Festival which takes place at Beechwood Hall in the summer.

Throughout the year there is a regular programme of dance, yoga, and other classes at Beechwood Hall. It is used as a rehearsal space, for the community annual Jumble Sale and for school concerts and private functions. Cultural events have been provided through Applause.

There is a Hamsey Community Web site, www.hamsey.net and a quarterly newsletter, Hamsey News which is delivered to every household free of charge.

There is an active Parish Council, but not yet a Youth Council.

However, there is strong feeling within the Parish that there is no community centre such as a village shop which people can access easily and interact on a daily basis. It is felt that the more vulnerable members of the community could receive better support if daily contact at a social hub was more accessible. Residents feel the need for a local shop where residents of all ages can walk to and meet as a community.

Young parents also felt that they lacked opportunities to meet socially at pre-school groups.

There is no medical centre and residents have to travel out of the Parish to receive medical care. In the social survey 83% of residents travelled to Lewes to see their GP, 9% to Newick or Ringmer, but 6 as far as London.

Although there is a youth shelter for young people to meet, increasing vandalism in the Parish may imply that there is a need for more provision for youth. Lack of public transport at the weekends and in the evening means that those who are not able to drive or who do not have cars have difficulty with shopping, travelling to college and work and socialising outside the Parish.
8.2 Health and Wellbeing Policies

**HNP/HW1** To plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of the community and residential environment.

**HNP/HW2** To encourage practices and initiative that will make Hamsey Parish a safe and accessible environment for all ages.

**HNP/HW3** To provide a more focused centre for the residents of the parish where there are amenities which support the daily lives of all ages and encourage shared opportunities for social, cultural and physical recreation.

8.3 Health and Wellbeing Projects

1. Further development of youth projects, including formation of a Youth Council

2. Provision of benches for community to sit in other areas of the village

3. Community shop where local produce can be sold.

4. Noticeboards can be sited for lift share schemes to medical centres and other necessary journeys.
9 Housing and Growth Development

9.1 Overview

There are currently 250 dwellings in the parish of Hamsey. The majority are located in the village of Cooksbridge whilst the remainder are spread around the Parish including the smaller settlements of Offham, Old Cooksbridge, Bevern Bridge and Hamsey village.

The local planning authorities (Lewes District Council and the South Downs National Park) have, under the Core Strategy Plan for the District, specifically scheduled that Cooksbridge, (within the parish of Hamsey), should accommodate a minimum of 30 houses in the period up to 2030. The Parish is looking to plan positively to meet its identified local housing requirement, ensuring that the growth addresses the specific needs and wishes of the community whilst preserving and enhancing the character of the Parish as a whole.

The best villages have developed through incremental growth that harmonises with the existing character of their setting and buildings. The boundary of the SDNP passes through the Parish such that the villages of Offham and the majority of Hamsey are within, whilst the remainder of the Parish is adjacent to it. Thus it is essential that the supply of new homes must be realised in accordance with the distinctive features, scale and grain of the Parish.

The combination of an existing concentration of properties, a successful village school, the main road access (A275) and a mainline railway station with direct main line services north to London and south to Lewes and beyond, (with connections to Brighton), make Cooksbridge a natural focal point and community centre for the Parish.

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes is essential to support sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities. This will underpin a well-balanced population that is vital to the on-going viability of local services and prosperity of the Parish, particularly in light of the community's increasingly ageing population.

Affordability remains a key housing issue for the Parish and there is a compelling case to meet local targets for affordable housing provision, with average house prices too high for those on average incomes and a significantly greater proportion of detached and semi-detached households (verses both East Sussex and England). Predictably, the low proportion of terraced households and flats (again verses both East Sussex and England) is even more marked, serving to further exacerbate the shortage of affordable properties and the related exodus of those aged less than 35 years, for whom the affordability ratio is way beyond their scope. The requirement to provide 40% affordable units on-site, addresses this issue and such affordable units will be provided for those individuals in housing need, with a local connection as agreed with the Parish Council and will remain affordable in perpetuity.

The community recognises that housing development can sometimes bring wider benefits, such as the redevelopment of brownfield sites, securing the on-going use of a building, granting appropriate change of use and providing much needed affordable homes. Such proposals will be supported in accordance with this policy and the Neighbourhood Plan. Housing sites must be carefully considered and will only be acceptable where they meet the site selection principles and are consistent with the HNP taken as a whole.
9.2 Community Feedback

Consultation on the subject of housing policy and the results from the survey undertaken in conjunction with Action in rural Sussex, identified the following key issues to be addressed by the Hamsey Parish Neighbourhood Plan:

Results - firstly in terms of the overall vision for the parish of Hamsey, (expressed as % of respondents):

Where housing development should be focused and the rationale:

- New housing should be focused on Cooksbridge in order to maintain the rural character of the environment of the Parish -
  This was supported by 78%

- Cooksbridge should be developed as an effective centre for the residents of the Parish, providing:
  - improved facilities for travel,
  - improved community facilities and
  - enhanced opportunities for active leisure and social activities
  This was supported by 88%

Identifying the key responsible community considerations:

- Affordable and social housing should be provided at an appropriate level to meet the identified needs of the community
  This was supported by 83%

- Sustainability must be promoted within the Parish, helping preserve the eco system and supporting social, community and cultural life.
  This was supported by 92%

Results - secondly in terms of the section specific to Housing & Accommodation, (expressed as % of respondents):

(Note: Within the survey, in the individual sections, respondents were typically asked to express "support" on a 1 (Low) - 4 (High) level. In analysing responses, “strong support” is interpreted as those indicating support at the combined levels 3 and 4.)
Size and scale of new housing development:

- 72% - strong support for the allocated number of 30 houses.
- 28% - strong support for more than 30 houses, leaving a corresponding 72% expressing relatively low support

Related potential community benefits:

- When asked how any planning gain (expressed as an amount of cash per house built given to the community, thus linking development to community benefit), should be used, strong support was expressed as follows:
  - 73% - for more parking spaces
  - 72% - for accommodation for a community shop
  - 62% - for improved cycle routes
  - 63% - for communal space (within housing development) to allow children to play
  - 60% - for improved footpaths linking the railway station to Beechwood Hall

Balance of appropriate design considerations, materials and construction methods:

- 86% - strong support for giving priority to utilisation of local materials, wherever practicable, to help reduce environmental impacts and stimulate the local and regional economy
- 78% - strong support for giving priority to ecological construction methods, for new developments, in order to maximise energy conservation and emission reductions.
- 84% - strong support for giving priority to housing proposals that utilise appropriate design and landscaping in spaces around buildings thus maximising wildlife potential by use of native species.
- 78% - strong support for new housing developments to create an environment for children’s traffic free play area

Provision of a broader range of housing options to address community needs:

- 62% - strong support for including an element of self-build provision in new housing development
- 58% - strong support for an element of warden assisted housing within new housing development.
- 66% - strong support for exploring forms of co-operative house ownership that enable collaborative management
Types of housing considered most appropriate:

When asked to identify the types of housing felt most appropriate for new housing in the Parish strong support was expressed as follows:

- 84% - for semi-detached houses
- 71% - for terraced houses
- 55% - for detached houses

The options of bungalows and flats received comparatively low support, 46% and 28% respectively in terms of "strong support", but most notably strong expressions were made at the lowest support (level 1), 36% and 59% respectively.

Importance of accessibility/mobility considerations:

- When asked to identify the importance of accessibility in mobility terms for each user group in any new housing development, whilst there was universal strong support, it was predictably most marked for; families (76%) and retired/sheltered people (83%)

Provision of Travelers sites:

- The limit, of one site for four pitches, as currently approved by Lewes District Council and South Downs National Park was strongly supported by over 93% of respondents.

Site selection feedback - preference for prioritisation of Brownfield Sites:

At both the Open Day and within the survey, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee provided information and a detailed map, (see below/Appendix ?), identifying the sites within the parish of Hamsey that have been identified and assessed by Lewes District Council as part of their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Residents were asked to indicate their level of support for housing development at each site and to identify "any other sites for consideration".

The results showed the strongest support for the site designated (10HY), part of the area currently occupied by the company Covers, in a semi industrial/retail capacity.

Thus, 77% expressed strong support for this site, the next highest levels of strong support being for (09HY), opposite Beechwood Hall at 55% and (05HY), Hamsey Brickworks at 54%, but notably the (09HY) site provoked a more polarised response with 34% expressing their opposition by voting for (level 1) the lowest support option.
The following points are particularly notable:

- Both (10HY) and (05HY) were the two Brownfield Site options
- (10HY) is centrally placed within Cooksbridge consistent with the support already expressed for the overall vision focusing new housing on Cooksbridge with an affordability element, establishing Cooksbridge as a community centre and promoting sustainability.
9.3 Housing Growth and Development Policies

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee has made the decision not to undertake specific Site Selection, preferring to work alongside Lewes District Council and acknowledge the value of their expertise, with particular regard to the work they have undertaken with their SHLAA. Instead, the Steering committee has concentrated on setting out the key parameters against which Site Selection should be assessed and determined and these are reflected in the Policies below:-

9.3.1 Site Selection Policies

**HNP/H1** The minimum requirement of 30 houses should be met by housing site or sites within Cooksbridge, (consistent with the Core Strategy Plan).

**HNP/H2** Priority to be given to such site or sites that demonstrate an ability to accommodate a community focus function as well as space for housing (i.e. provision of community facilities such as a retail food outlet and a multi-use health space and facilities for small businesses)

**HNP/H3** Priority to be given to ‘brownfield’ sites for housing over ‘greenfield’ sites.

**HNP/H4** Priority to be given to housing sites which do not extend the outer boundaries of an existing settlement.

**HNP/H5** Potential sites must not adversely affect the landscape character of the South Downs National Park (this applied to sites outside the Park boundary but are materially affecting the visual impact of views from the Park).

**HNP/H6** Potential housing development sites must not adversely affect the ecological capacity of the site or by way of mitigation, must be able to demonstrate ecological intensification on an adjacent site.

**HNP/H7** Housing sites must demonstrate safe pedestrian and vehicular access onto connecting roads.

**HNP/H8** Priority to be given to housing sites which are within five minutes’ walk of public transport links.

**HNP/H9** Priority to be given to housing sites which can demonstrate enhanced pedestrian and cycle connections to the station, Beechwood Hall and the primary school.

**HNP/H10** Priority to be given to housing sites which are not situated within the Environment Agency’s flood risk areas, i.e. Flood Zone 2.

**HNP/H11** Sites must demonstrate adequate provision exists or can be upgraded for incoming utilities, including potable, surface and waste water, electricity, gas, telecommunications and refuse collections.

**HNP/H12** Sites for housing development should be sufficiently buffered from possible adverse human health impacts, i.e. intensive agriculture or industrial processes.

**HNP/H13** Sites should make use of green infrastructure as identified in the Core Strategy/Local Plan.
9.3.2 Housing Mix Policies

**HNP/H14** Provide a mix of homes and housing options, taking into account objectively identified local housing needs, as evidenced by the latest information available from Lewes District Council.

**HNP/H15** Ensure the Parish is a balanced community, including an appropriate element of affordable housing, (as specified in the Lewes District Council Core Strategy / Local Plan).

**HNP/H16** Ensure the overall mix of new housing meets the needs of both present and future residents, consistent with Lewes District Council’s housing needs assessment.

9.3.3 Housing Design Policies

**HNP/H17** Developments to clearly demonstrate excellence in design contributing towards neighbourhoods by being sustainable, adaptable, resilient and creating places where people want to live, work and play.

**HNP/H18** Ensure building design and choice of materials are in context, enhancing the local character whilst complying with UK and EU energy efficiency targets, consistent with overall objectives relating to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

**HNP/H19** Housing density for the District is 40 units per hectare as set out in the South East Plan. In order to reflect the diversity of sites within the Parish of Hamsey, densities higher and lower than this target will be considered provided they are supported with evidence to demonstrate an effective and sensitive balance between the sustainability credentials of the site, efficient use of land and provision of green and community infrastructure.

**HNP/H20** Ensure housing design is in accordance with The Code For Sustainable Homes (or equivalent scheme) and reflects the latest environmental/sustainability standards including such aspects as:-

- Solar access for all dwellings with house positioning (South facing) designed to best capitalise on this natural resource. Road layouts to capitalize on full benefits of solar availability
- Minimum glazed area to floor area ratio to ensure sufficient internal natural daylight availability
- External/street lighting specifications to minimize light pollution
- Complementary hard and soft landscaping promoting native species and wildlife.
- Facilities/space to grow fruit and vegetables
9.4 Housing Growth Development Projects

1. Identify and specify use of appropriate sustainable/environmentally efficient options in new build development, e.g. heat source pumps.
2. Ensure where viable, the use of locally sourced building materials, thus supporting local businesses and helping to reduce environmental impact, whilst remaining consistent with the policy of ensuring design and materials are in context, enhancing the local character.
3. Specify high speed (fibre optic) broadband as a minimum requirement for new housing, consistent with the performance needed to support local businesses.
4. Work with developers to ensure the necessary network of related community benefits are derived from new housing, specifically:
   - Designated car parking facilities
   - Network of footpaths and cycle ways linking new housing with Beechwood Hall, Hamsey School and the community centre
10 Transport and Travel

10.1 Overview

Hamsey is largely a rural Parish. The busy A275 runs through the settlements of Cooksbridge and Offham, campaigning by local people during the last few years has resulted in reduction to the speed limits to 30 MPH through Offham which is an accident black spot and the busier settlement of Cooksbridge, where both the railway level crossing and the local school are sited, these create backed up and increased traffic as well as parking issues, which can be potential dangerous for the children attending the school between drop off times and is an issue for nearby residents.

Public transport

Cooksbridge has a main line railway station; trains go directly to London, Lewes, Eastbourne and stations in-between, whilst also giving good access to Brighton.

There are currently few stopping services, outside of the peak hour trains to service London. The station partnership was set up by local residents to campaign for one stopping service per hour; this group is supported by the local MP, local school, the SDNP and the Parish Council.

The absence of a more frequent service results in many more car journeys to local towns and Brighton, whilst some residents who often travel to London drive to Hayward's Heath and other stations.

The local bus services to Lewes, surrounding area and nearby schools offer an important and well used service during the daytime on weekdays.

There is a lack of services in the evening and no train services at weekends. There are no bus services on a Sunday.

Footpaths and cycle lanes

There is a footpath on the east side of the A275 running from Offham to Hamsey school which comes to an end around the Rainbow pub in old Cooksbridge.

There is practically no footpath on the west of the A275, or on Beechwood Lane which leads from the A275 to Beechwood Hall. This is a major hazard for both adults and children wanting to use the hall and the park which are seen as a main focal point in the Parish. There is no footpath joining the train
station to Beechwood lane and hall, which also restricts the ability for people to access the SDNP by foot.

The Parish Council and a group of local residents are campaigning for a footpath along Beechwood lane to the hall. This is supported by our local District Councillor, Hamsey School and Beechwood Hall trustees. The latter along with the Parish Council have committed to part funding these works if agreed with the Lewes District Council.

There are currently no cycle lanes along the A275, which results in the growing number of people who do cycle using the busy A275. This is potentially dangerous due to the fairly narrow width of the road particularly when used by lorries. Some cyclists, including children use the footpath on the east of the A275 which is far from ideal.

A cycle lane along the side of the A275 would further increase the number of cyclists, commuting to work, station, school and South Downs National Park and would result in a reduction in car journeys and alleviate parking difficulties at the school and station.

The creation of a cycle lane is supported by the local Member of Parliament, the local District councilor, Hamsey School, The Station Partnership, Parish Council and Beechwood Hall Trustees.

Improved Transport services, the creation of a cycle lane and more footpaths, would improve the overall wellbeing for many residents and have a positive effect on the environment.

10.2 Community Feedback

Consultation on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the results from the survey undertaken in conjunction with Action in rural Sussex revealed the following key issues in relation to this topic that the policy and associated projects seeks to address:

- 83% of those responding indicated medium to high importance to have more stopping trains at Cooksbridge station
- 52% of residents responding would use a bus service which ran on a weekend to a weekday timings
- 45% of residents responding would use a bus service which ran later in the evenings and night
- 74% of residents responding indicated moderate to high support for increased parking facilities as a potential benefit from the NP
- 79% of residents responding indicated medium to high support for resolving the parking problems at dropping off and picking up time during the school day
- 70% of residents responding indicated that it was of medium to high importance that there is a network of safe cycle lane/pedestrian paths between the South Downs, Beechwood Hall, Cooksbridge Railway Station and Hamsey School
10.3 Transport and Travel Policies

Development should:

**HNP/TT1** Identify the realistic level of traffic it is likely to generate. It must assess the potential impact of this traffic on pedestrians, cyclists, road safety, parking and congestion within the parish and include measures to mitigate any impacts. Development that would give rise to unacceptable highway dangers will not be permitted.

**HNP/TT2** Maximise opportunities to walk and cycle, including between Hamsey School, Cooksbridge station, Beechwood Hall and the South Downs National Park.

**HNP/TT3** Ensure that there is adequate off street parking and wider communal parking allocated

**HNP/TT4** Secure a safe cycle route/lane the length of the Parish along the A275 from Bevern Bridge to Offham and extended to Lewes.

10.4 Transport and Travel Projects

Key objectives of projects included in the wider Neighbourhood Plan:

1. Secure at least one stopping service at Cooksbridge station per hour, 7 days per week
2. Secure more bus services to run, at weekends and late evening
3. Resolve the issue of parking during school drop off and pick up times
4. Increase overall parking faculties as a result of development
5. A footpath from the station to Beechwood Hall
11 Education

11.1 Overview

The parish is fortunate to have a community primary school that is a valued part of the parish. In the last decade staff, parents and children have played an increasingly significant part in the life of the community, making it a vibrant focal point for the community.

Hamsey School was built in 1907 to replace the old schoolhouse at Offham as a school for the local community. It continues to serve this purpose, but it now also welcomes many families from a wider area, including Lewes and surrounding villages.

Because of its popularity the school's Published Admission Number (the Reception class) has been increased to 15 and the overall school to 105. Reception class was oversubscribed in 2013 and 2014 with 16 new pupils joining the school. The school has the capacity for 105 pupils and in September 2014 has 95 on roll.

Attainment at Hamsey School is good. In 2014 Hamsey School outperformed national attainment in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The school enjoys an enviable outdoor environment complete with an extensive field, wildlife pond, story circle, willow shelters and ‘outside classroom’ all of which provide an invaluable extra resource to enrich the both the play and learning of the children.

Cycling: Some children ride bikes to school with their parents. They are at risk on the busy road as there are no cycle ways. Some ride on the foot path. Many more have expressed a wish to cycle but do not through fears around road safety.
**School Hall:** There is a small school hall where whole community activity cannot be shared. At such times, the children walk to Beechwood Hall (marked Beechwood Hall & Rural Park on below map). To reach Beechwood Hall the entire school must walk in supervised groups along the busy A275, across the level crossing, cross the A275 with no formal pedestrian crossing and walk up Beechwood Lane, which is a narrow lane, with no pavement and the national (60mph) speed limit in place. As Beechwood Hall is a community building hired out in advance to the public, this space is not always available for school events, especially at late notice.

There is not enough room in the school hall to accommodate the entire school at lunchtimes, so year groups must take turns to eat and to play. Particularly for the younger children rushing to make space for older children, the school requires a larger space where the whole school can come together and where parents and carers can be seated and be involved in assemblies, productions and events.

**Temporary Classrooms:** Hamsey School currently utilises 2 temporary classrooms to meet the increase in pupil numbers in recent years. These temporary classrooms are known to suffer poor lighting, high energy costs, erratic temperature changes with excessive, humid heat in summer and numbing cold in winter. There is no running water supply to the classrooms. These classrooms are not sound proofed like permanent structures made of traditional bricks and mortar. Children are easily distracted by the sounds of the younger children playing in the Free Play area situated outside their classrooms. These temporary classrooms suffer from Poor ventilation (shown through condensation on windows). As well as causing odour, poor ventilation and excessive heat which affect children’s concentration and can be unhelpful to allergy sufferers such as those with asthma. All of these factors can compromise the learning experience of a child and make conditions difficult for teachers to teach in.

As the temporary classrooms grow older they are more susceptible to the above issues as well as frequent maintenance needs.
11.2 Community Feedback

72.4% of respondents to the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan Survey said it was important that Hamsey Parish has a village school.

73.9% felt it was beneficial to children, parents and the community if children attend their local school.

67.2% thought the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan should make a priority of supporting the school in replacing temporary classrooms and improving provision for whole school assemblies and performances.

63.8% felt the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan should make a priority of solving the parking problems at the beginning and the end of each school day.
11.3 Education Policies

**HNP/ED1** Build or extend the School Hall for communal activities

This would enable the school to have whole school activities and performances on site. With improved facilities the school can become an even greater catalyst for children and parents sharing opportunities for learning and social activities.

**HNP/ED2** The School Playing Field should be protected against development unless it is for the improvement of the school or for parent drop off parking.

11.4 Education Projects

Building work needs to be carried out to expand the school main hall. There is a provision under the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2014 No.385 for developers to be required to provide funding to local communities for infrastructure enhancements. This may be a fund for building works.

1. Temporary structures (Portakabins for two classrooms) should be replaced with more suitable, permanent structures.
2. Dual cycle and foot pathway through the parish extending from Bevern Bridge to the north of the parish down through Cooksbridge and Offham to Lewes adjoining the south of the parish will provide a safe passage to children and parents/carers to walk or cycle to school. This will ease congestion, improve road safety for cyclists and for overtaking vehicles, alleviate the growing parking pressure and promote healthy lifestyles for pupils and their families by making it easier for children aged 5-18 to achieve the government target of 60 minutes per day of moderate exercise. The cycleway will make the school more accessible for Adult Learning opportunities in the evenings, when bus services cease. It would reduce the volume of traffic as parents of older children could allow them to cycle instead of being driven, to School and to Beechwood Hall. A cycle path will help to reduce pollution throughout the parish and in particular near to the school in Cooksbridge where stationery traffic queues daily at the level crossing situated there.
3. Improved buildings and opportunities for post school study by young people and adults would be beneficial (Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and Scoping Report 4.5).
4. Hamsey School would benefit from allocated car parking in or around the school for families to use at pick up and drop off times. The school is not prepared to create a car park in the school grounds at this time. Developments may consider using surrounding land to this end. Some spaces on grass verges in the village next to the school currently shared by both parents and by train commuters from Lewes and surrounding villages could be kept available to children for these drop off and pick up times by applying parking restrictions of Maximum 2 hours Stay or such-like. Surface protection and widening of these areas may be necessary if they are to become a permanent solution.
5. Suitable safe crossings to be made available between any allocated parking and the school. Speed continues to be monitored.
6. A footpath with raised kerb running along one side of Beechwood Lane, from the junction of A275 to Beechwood Hall & Rural Park would provide a safer passage for children and teachers visiting
12 Recreation and Sport

12.1 Overview

Hamsey Parish is interwoven by a network of footpaths providing access to residents and visitors from the flatlands of the Ouse delta plain to the Sussex South Downs. The footpaths are seen as key in providing access to the countryside and in maintaining the rural aspect of the parish. The Monday Group, a local charity builds and maintains stiles and sign posts thereby affording greater accessibility and awareness of the routes of the path of the paths.

The parish is in the privileged position of being partly within the South Downs National Park. Recognised as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the South Downs is home to a multitude of vibrant working communities such as are found within the parish and is steeped in history and traditional English culture. Green rolling pastures, open spaces, ancient woodlands and river valleys truly encompass the National Park’s ethos of being one of ‘Britain’s Breathing Spaces’ providing residents and visitors to the parish opportunities to engage in activities such as walking, cycling or horse riding across the South Downs to more sedate pastimes like exploring the wildlife on offer be that the wide range of indigenous flora and fauna to watching wildlife and birds. The South Downs also provides an important educational link to the parish’s unique history in promoting heritage sites such as the Hamsey Heritage Trail.

Cooksbridge boasts having its railway station within yards of the boundary of the South Downs National Park which is seen as a fundamental gateway for visitors to access the facilities available within the National Park. The HNP supports limiting travel by car wherever possible and the parish is actively
lobbying the rail provider to provide a greater rail service which will service not only the commuter population but also the recreational user.

It is key to the HNP that the settlement of Cooksbridge is linked to the South Downs National Park by the creation of a cycle paths along the A275 and by enhancing and improving the footpaths that already exist. The HNP promotes the health and well-being of its residents and wishes to encourage a positive health culture by providing easy access to the wonderful rural and historic environs on its door step.

**Beechwood Hall and Rural Park**

Cooksbridge has as one of its main attributes the Beechwood Hall and Rural Park. Built in 2007 as a cutting edge environmentally sustainable building with its own wind turbine it is at the heart of the parish’s social and recreational activities. Tucked under the South Downs, with outstanding views towards Black Cap and Ditchling Beacon, Beechwood Hall’s four-acre rural park offers something for everyone. There is a well-equipped children’s play area and an outdoor table tennis table. Pitches are laid out for five-a-side football, junior cricket and stool ball. The park also offers a welcome rest point for ramblers on their way to or from the South Downs. It has a special picnic area which can be used by all for lunchtime sandwiches or delightful summer evening barbecues.

Beechwood Hall and Park hosts several local clubs and societies and is the venue for various social and cultural activities and hosts the parish’s annual Village Fete.

It is fundamental to the HNP (Hamsey Neighbourhood Development Plan) that any development within Cooksbridge further enhances and integrates Beechwood Hall and the Park within the villages by a providing safe and easy access to the Hall. The HNP promotes Beechwood Hall and Park as being at the heart of the parish meeting the identified needs and wants of resident thereby building social capital by providing a catalyst for community gatherings encouraging a community that cares for its wellbeing.

Part of the receipts received from New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to deliver new community infrastructure supporting the social and recreational wellbeing of residents of the parish and, where necessary, planning obligations will be used to address the impacts of development proposals.
12.2 Community Feedback

Consultation on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan revealed the following key issues in relation to this topic that the policy seeks to address:

- Beechwood Hall and Rural Park and its facilities meet the needs of the community – 37.1% agreed
- Beechwood Hall and Rural Park meet my need as a resident – 41.3% agreed
- The proximity of the South Downs national park encourages me to use it for recreational purposes – 37.5% agreed
- The South Downs National Park is an asset to the community – 57.2%
- Provide facilities for young people – 91 %
- Encourage community involvement – 90%

The following plans, documents and strategies support policy 4:

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Lewes District Local Plan
- South Downs National Park Policy
- Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
12.3 Recreational and Sport Policies

**HNP/RS1** Development that supports the vibrancy and vitality of Hamsey village centre by diversifying and enhancing the accessibility of Beechwood Hall and Rural Park and the South Downs National Park will be prioritised.

**HNP/RS2** Existing community green spaces should not be built on.

**HNP/RS3** Proposals for development will be required to identify their likely impact on local infrastructure, services and facilities and to demonstrate how any such impacts will be addressed. Account should also be taken of the cumulative impacts arising from the new development combined with other schemes that have planning permission.

12.4 Recreational and Sport Projects

1. Beechwood Lane – footpath from Beechwood Hall & Rural Park to meet A275
2. Cycle Path along A275 connecting Offham and Bevern Bridge to the recreation facilities in Cooksbridge. Also to link the Parish to recreation in Lewes.
3. Recreational activities within the Rural Park
4. Increase provision for young people and pre-school children.
13 The Local Economy

13.1 Overview

Hamsey Parish has a diverse economy with a number of striking characteristics, notably when compared both nationally and to East Sussex as a whole. Historically, farming has been the key driver behind the prosperity of the Parish, but in line with experiences seen across the British countryside, the Parish has seen significant socio-economic changes as a result of increasing affluence, the rise in car ownership and the movement of population from town to country. Although the land is still farmed, the number of farmers and agricultural employees has reduced dramatically, with many farm buildings now either redundant or converted to other uses.

The diversity is reflected both in terms of the nature or type of business and the manner of conducting business.

Thus, notable businesses/employers include; Agriculture, (still prominent and now concentrated within a small number of large and commercially viable enterprises), a nationally recognised Orchid Nursery, a Blacksmiths, 3 public houses, various holiday and B&B accommodation, wholesale/Retail Building Supplies, Architectural Services, Building Renovation & Carpentry Specialist and a firm providing Specialist Lighting Services, the latter having featured in the 2012 London Olympics.

Whilst the above businesses are a valuable source of employment, drawing on a wide pool of skilled workers from both outside and within the Parish, they are of limited day to day service to the majority of residents within the Parish. As consumers, their needs are addressed by a small selection of providers including, a farm shop, a filling station and three public houses, one of which is currently for sale, potentially as a residence. This lack of businesses that essentially “provide for” the residents is a consistent and recurring issue for the Parish and is at the heart of the vision to establish a vibrant and effective community centre within Cooksbridge.

The work pattern or manner of conducting business within Hamsey Parish differs significantly not only from the national picture but also from that of East Sussex. Thus:-

| The proportion of people employed: | - | 72% in Hamsey, (69.9% for England.) |
| The proportion who are self-employed: | - | 22.7% in Hamsey, (9.75% for England), |
| The proportion working from home:   | - | 8.8% in Hamsey, (3.5% for England). |

(Source: Census 2011).
Further insight is provided by examining the detailed breakdown whereby within Hamsey Parish versus East Sussex, the following trends can be highlighted, (Source: Census 2011):

- Higher proportion by Industry Sector of:
  - Professional, Scientific & Technical 10% in Hamsey, (6% for East Sussex)
  - Agriculture, Mining & Utilities 5% in Hamsey, (2% for East Sussex)

- Higher proportion by occupation of:
  - Managers, Directors & Senior Officials 17% in Hamsey (12% for East Sussex)
  - Professional Occupations 24% in Hamsey, (18% for East Sussex)

- Lower proportion by occupation of:
  - Caring, Leisure & other Services 5% in Hamsey, (12% for East Sussex)

Much of the above can be explained by the polarised nature of the working patterns within the Parish. A significantly larger proportion, (than nationally or in East Sussex) are either self-employed and/or working from home, whilst, a notable cross section commute daily to London. They typically commute either from Cooksbridge station or, as a function of the very limited service, from other stations, requiring them to drive either to Lewes or Haywards Heath. Both options being counter to sustainability objectives.

There is a clear irony that Cooksbridge, having expanded with the arrival of the railway, is today handicapped by its poor timetable and limited provision of stopping services, particularly given the significant Leisure & Tourism opportunities (with the associated employment /economy benefits), provided by the establishment of the South Downs National Park, for which Cooksbridge Station is a natural gateway.

Over the past fifty years, rural settlements have become attractive to an increasing number of mobile individuals and their families who choose to live in the country but work in the town or city.

Hamsey Parish, as a rural community, is not unique in suffering from the limited availability of workspace and jobs, frequently forcing local people of working age to leave the area. This is evidenced by the unemployment statistics (Source: Census 2011) for Hamsey Parish which, whilst broadly in line with the national average overall (4.6% v 4.4%), amongst 16-24 year olds is almost twice that nationally at (2.2% v 1.2%). This loss of the working age population has social as well as economic consequences. Communities where there is a daily exodus of people of working age can also struggle to provide the viable conditions for many community services and facilities.

The HNP sets out to maintain and encourage the Parish’s existing local economy to support the ongoing sustainability of the community and will strive to support the sustainable growth of a range of businesses and enterprises in the Parish. Notable opportunities include rural tourism and leisure facilities that benefit local businesses, residents and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside.
13.2 Community Feedback

Consultation on the emerging HNP revealed the following key issues in relation to this topic that the HNP seeks to address:

Key Benefit Requirements Identified:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>In Support % *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved Train Services Stopping at Cooksbridge station</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of High Speed Broadband/ Fibre Optics</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Parking Facilities</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Sustainable Environment</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Integration within the Community</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Residents supporting provision of a Local Shop</td>
<td>61**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * denotes % of respondents who on an ascending scale of 1-4 in terms of support level - voted 3 and 4

** denotes % of respondents who in open ended responses mentioned this as the "type of business they would like to see be expanded or developed within the Parish".
13.3 The Local Economy Policies

The following types of employment related measures and development will be supported:

**HNP/LE1** Early introduction of High Speed Broadband/ Fibre Optic capability commensurate both with the stated needs of traditional and established businesses and also to support the significant proportion of work from home enterprises.

**HNP/LE2** Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities, such as local shops, sports venues/ facilities and public houses, supported by an appropriate level of parking facilities.

**HNP/LE3** Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses

**HNP/LE4** Ensure that all new employment development should respect the character of its surroundings by way of its scale and design, not harm the surrounding landscape and safeguard residential amenity and road safety.

**HNP/LE5** Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all appropriate types of business and enterprise, both through conversion of existing buildings and small-scale appropriately designed integrated units within new build development.

**HNP/LE6** Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses, the community and visitors. Where appropriate, this should include supporting the provision and expansion of facilities which are required whilst respecting the character of the countryside.
### HNP Appendix 1: Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing does not include low cost market housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code for Sustainable Homes</td>
<td>CSH</td>
<td>The code for Sustainable Homes is the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. It is an environmental assessment method for rating and certifying the performance of new homes and it is possible to secure a rating of between 0 and 6, with 6 being the most sustainable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>The suite of documents which are used when making decisions on planning applications. Once our HNP has been passed by Referendum, it will become one of the documents in the Development Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Corridors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Avenues for wildlife movement, often along streams, rivers, hedgerows or other natural features. They connect green spaces together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan</td>
<td>HNP or Plan</td>
<td>The full title in the Localism Act is ‘Neighbourhood Development Plan’. It is a plan document for a defined area, subject to examination in public and approved by a referendum. It will be used on approval in the determination of planning applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listed buildings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Buildings and structures which are listed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as being of special architectural and historic interest and whose protection and maintenance are the subject of special legislation. Listed building consent is required before any building works can be carried out on a listed building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(The) Localism Act</td>
<td></td>
<td>An act of parliament that became law in April 2012. The Act introduces a new right for local people to draw up ‘Neighbourhood Development Plans’ for their local area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Housing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Housing for sale or rent where prices are set on the open market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Panning Policy Framework</td>
<td>NPPF</td>
<td>The National Panning Policy Framework was published by the government in March 2012. It sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Open Space</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open space that is open to the public and is normally owned and managed by a public organisation, such as Lewes District Council or Hamsey Parish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Accessible Open Space</td>
<td>Open Space that is open to the public and is normally owned and managed by a private owner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referendum</td>
<td>In the context of this Neighbourhood Plan, a vote by local residents to decide whether or not to adopt the Plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</td>
<td>Sites of national importance for nature conservation purposes; they are statutorily protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering Group</td>
<td>The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is made up of members of the community including local residents, business owners and members of the Hamsey Parish Council. Through its constitution it was given the responsibility to produce the Neighbourhood Plan for the area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment</td>
<td>Assessments made compulsory by a European Directive (the SEA Directive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
<td>A process of appraising policies for their social, economic and environmental effects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Preservation Order (TPO)</td>
<td>A legally enforceable order made to the Local Planning Authority (Lewes District Council) to protect trees and woodland in the interests of public amenity.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## HNP Appendix 2: Supporting Evidence

### Environmental Policies HNP/EN1-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Internal link</th>
<th>External link</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scoping Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapting to Climate Change</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/adaptation">www.defra.gov.uk/adaptation</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species Recorder:Document 'Desktop Biodiversity</td>
<td>biodiversity</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


| Report- Land at Beechwood Lane, Cooksbridge + 1km radius’ by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre |

**Health & Wellbeing Policies HNP/HW1-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</td>
<td><a href="#">Scoping Report</a></td>
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## Housing Growth and Development Policies HNP/H1-20

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<tr>
<td>Local Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamsey Village Design Statement</td>
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<td>Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan</td>
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## Transport and Travel Policies HNP/TT1-4

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Station Partnership Strategy document</td>
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### Education Policies HNP/ED1-4

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### Recreation and Sport Policies HNP/RS1-4

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### Local Economy Policies HNP/LE1-6

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<tr>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamsey Parish Community Plan</td>
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<td>District Local Plan</td>
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<td>Hamsey Village Design Statement</td>
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<td>Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan Community Profile</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Local Wildlife Sites. Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Priority Habitats</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation (European Designation) within 0.5 miles of Parish Boundary</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ancient Woodland. Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© Lewes District Council</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Agricultural Land Classes Hamsey</td>
<td>© South Downs National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cooksbridge and Offham Areas of Flood Risk</td>
<td>© Lewes District Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cooksbridge Area Listed Buildings</td>
<td>© Lewes District Council</td>
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<td>Hamsey Village Listed Buildings</td>
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<td>Northern Hamsey Parish Conservation Areas</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Northern Hamsey Parish Listed Buildings</td>
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<td>Offham Conservation Areas</td>
<td>© Lewes District Council</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Offham Listed Buildings</td>
<td>© Lewes District Council</td>
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<td>Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© Sue Rowland</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Hamsey Parish outline</td>
<td>© Sue Rowland</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Footpath Map of Hamsey Parish</td>
<td>© Sue Rowland</td>
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