

# West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033



Regulation 14 Consultation June 2018

# 1. FOREWORD

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A Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document, introduced in the Localism Act 2011, which allows local people to have a say in the future growth and development of their community. **This Regulation 14 consultation draft** of the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan sets out a number of policies all of which have the aim of preserving the unique characteristics of the parish, whilst welcoming improvements and change that will ensure the vibrancy of the community into the future. Policies cover the protection of the countryside and local amenities, support for local businesses and provision of new sustainable housing development. Although construction of homes is a controversial issue, we need new homes to contribute towards the wider need in the district and to ensure a supply of suitable affordable and marketable homes for local residents who wish to stay in the village close to family, friends or employment.

The Plan and its supporting background documents were prepared following significant public consultation by a Steering Group, reporting to West Bergholt Parish Council and consisting of:

- Brian Butcher, Jenny Church, Terry Claydon, Janet Crichton, Rowly Castiglione, John Gili-Ross, Murray Harlow, Jo King, Günter Klaphake, Andrew Savage, Phil Spencer, David Short Harry Stone Stuart, Thackrah, Bob Tyrell, Laura Walkingshaw.

In addition, the following have made valuable contributions to the work of the Steering Group:

- Phil Cook, Paul Downer, Jacqui Jenner, Austen King, and photographers Gail Stubbings and Tony Morris.

On behalf of the Parish of West Bergholt I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with the project. I would also like to thank the following for their assistance and support:

- Sarah Sapsford and colleagues at the RCCE; Alison Eardsley, Planning Consultant during the evidence gathering and analysis stage; Ann Skippers, our Planning Consultant, for giving us the benefit of her vast knowledge and experience in planning and neighbourhood planning, and for extensive help and guidance with drafting documents and policies;
- The Supporting Communities in the Neighbourhood Planning programme, funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government and administered by Locality in partnership with the Royal Town Planning Institute (including Planning Aid), the Community Development Foundation, Urban Vision, Eden Project and URS; together with Groundwork UK, Community Rights Programme Team, which funded the assistance from Planning Aid and provided grant funding to help with consultants' fees and other aspects of the process;
- Colchester Borough Council officers and Councillors for guidance and encouragement, in particular Cllrs Marcus Harrington, Dennis Willets, Brian Jarvis and Lewis Barber officers Rachel Forkin and Sandra Scott.

Finally, the Parish Council and the Steering Group would like to thank all those residents and those who work within the parish who have participated in the public consultation events, responded to the surveys and shown support for the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Chris Stevenson Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group & West Bergholt Parish Council, May 2018**

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## 2. LIST OF POLICIES

### Neighbourhood Planning Policies

Policy Area	Policy No.
<b>Village Society and Community Planning Policies</b>	
Quality of life and wellbeing	PP1
Designation of local green spaces	PP2
Existing public open spaces	PP3
Community Facilities	PP4
<b>Environment Planning Policies</b>	
“Area of Separation”	PP5
“Character Area” of the village	PP6
Historic and character buildings	PP7
Mature trees & hedgerows	PP8
Roadside planting and hedgerows	PP9
Biodiversity	PP10
Essex Coast RAMS	PP11
<b>General Housing Planning Policies</b>	
The number of dwellings to be constructed in the NP period	PP12
Use of Village Design statement	PP13
Infill development and amenity of neighbours	PP14
Dormers	PP15
Views across the village	PP16
Boundary walls, fences and gates	PP17
New agricultural buildings	PP18
Conversion of agricultural buildings	PP19
Parking	PP20
Exception sites	PP21

Policy Area	Policy No.
Coalescence with Colchester	PP22
<b>Development Policies for New Build within the new sites earmarked for development</b>	
Walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements	PP23
Speed reduction and accessibility improvements.	PP24
Cemetery provision	PP25
Provision of sports facilities	PP26
<b>Business, Commerce and Employment Planning Policies</b>	
Expansion of existing business parks	PP27
Sustainability	PP28
Farm diversification	PP29
New businesses, rural tourism and homeworking	PP30
<b>Community Safety Planning Policies</b>	
Burglary and other crime.	PP31
Parking standards	PP32
<b>Communication Planning Policies</b>	
Broadband services	PP33
<b>Transport, Highways and Infrastructure Planning Policies</b>	
Vehicular and pedestrian access	PP34
Traffic impact	PP35
Provision of secure cycle and other storage	PP36
Public rights of way.	PP37
Community Infrastructure Levy	PP38

## Community Parish Policies

Policy Area	Policy No.
<b>Village Society and Community Parish Policies</b>	
Community buildings and village hall complex	CP1
Village societies, clubs and other community-based organisations	CP2
Parish office and community hub	CP3
<b>Environment Community Parish Policies</b>	
Mature native trees	CP4
Streetscapes	CP5
New areas of open space	CP6
Loss of green space	CP7
Protection of views	CP8
<b>Business, Commerce and Employment Parish Policies</b>	
None	
<b>Sports and Recreation Community Parish Policies</b>	
New sports activity areas	CP9
The Lorkin Daniell playing field	CP10
The Poor's Land	CP11
New consolidated sports areas	CP12
<b>Community Safety Community Parish Policies</b>	
Neighbourhood Watch	CP13
Road safety	CP14
Anti-social and other behavioural issues	CP15
Crime and fear of crime	CP16
20 mph speed limit zones	CP17

Policy Area	Policy No.
<b>Communication Community Parish Policies</b>	
A West Bergholt communications forum	CP18
The Village Bulletin	CP19
Opportunities for residents	CP20
Website and printed material	CP21
Residential information pack	CP22
<b>Transport, Highways and Infrastructure Community Parish Policies</b>	
Traffic management	CP23
Traffic channelling	CP24
Cycling and walking	CP25
Parish bus services	CP26
Highway maintenance	CP27

### 3. INTRODUCTION

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#### About Neighbourhood Plans

The Localism Act 2011 introduced a number of measures allowing communities to shape the future of their area and to deliver the sustainable development that they need. One of these measures is the Neighbourhood Plan. This is a new type of planning document, which can set policies for the use of land setting out the expectations of the community and the quality and type of development sought. A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with a higher-level planning policy at district, national and European level and must be based on evidence. Following community consultation, it will be examined by an independent examiner and must be approved by residents at a local referendum. The made or adopted plan will become part of the development plan for the local area and will be used in determining planning applications and appeals.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to stop development. There is a requirement for new homes nationally and every Neighbourhood Plan must plan for new growth.

West Bergholt Parish Council resolved to prepare a plan so that the community could work together to shape the future of the village and have a say about where new homes should go and what they should look like, how the local economy should be supported, how the countryside and open spaces of the village should be protected and how local facilities and infrastructure could be improved.

The Parish Council, although the sponsoring body for the Neighbourhood Plan, recognised that the wider community had to

play a major role in producing the plan and so agreed that a Steering Group made up of Parish Council representatives and people from the community be set up to write the plan and consult upon it.

#### The Purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan has a number of functions. In a strict planning sense, it relates to the use and development of land and, in this sense, its primary purpose is to help in deciding future land allocations for a variety of uses, notably, but not exclusively, housing and subsequently planning applications in the Plan Area. However, it is also an opportunity to cover in a holistic sense a great deal more. Communities have manifold needs and a Neighbourhood Plan allows these needs to be set out in a way that the community can plan for priorities that it feels need addressing, everything in fact from sport to transport! Thus, the Neighbourhood Plan for West Bergholt will be a successor to the current Parish Plan and will contain separately identified aspirations and ideas that go beyond the strict planning and development remit of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Localism provides the opportunity for local decisions to be made by local people. As long as it can be demonstrated that the Neighbourhood Plan is inclusive and deals with potential and planned growth, then there is no reason why it would not be agreeable to the community when submitted for referendum or by Colchester Borough Council, which must approve the plan.

The purpose of this document is therefore to:

- Set out a framework to guide residents, local authorities and developers on how the community wishes to manage and control future

development in the Plan Area over the next 15 years, along with its facilities, services and environment;

- Record the historical and existing status and nature of the community and its environment;
- Establish an Action Plan that provides the community with a prioritised plan to improve its facilities, services and environment on a voluntary and assisted basis.

The Neighbourhood Plan therefore:

- Identifies the main community issues and objectives for West Bergholt as a whole;
- Makes proposals for the development and use of land and allocates land for specific purposes;
- Sets out the community's policies for the management of development;
- Provides an Action Plan that schedules a series of desired projects arising from the communities' vision for sustainable growth in their Neighbourhood Area;
- Documents the mechanisms for monitoring and the timescales for delivering the plan and its proposals.

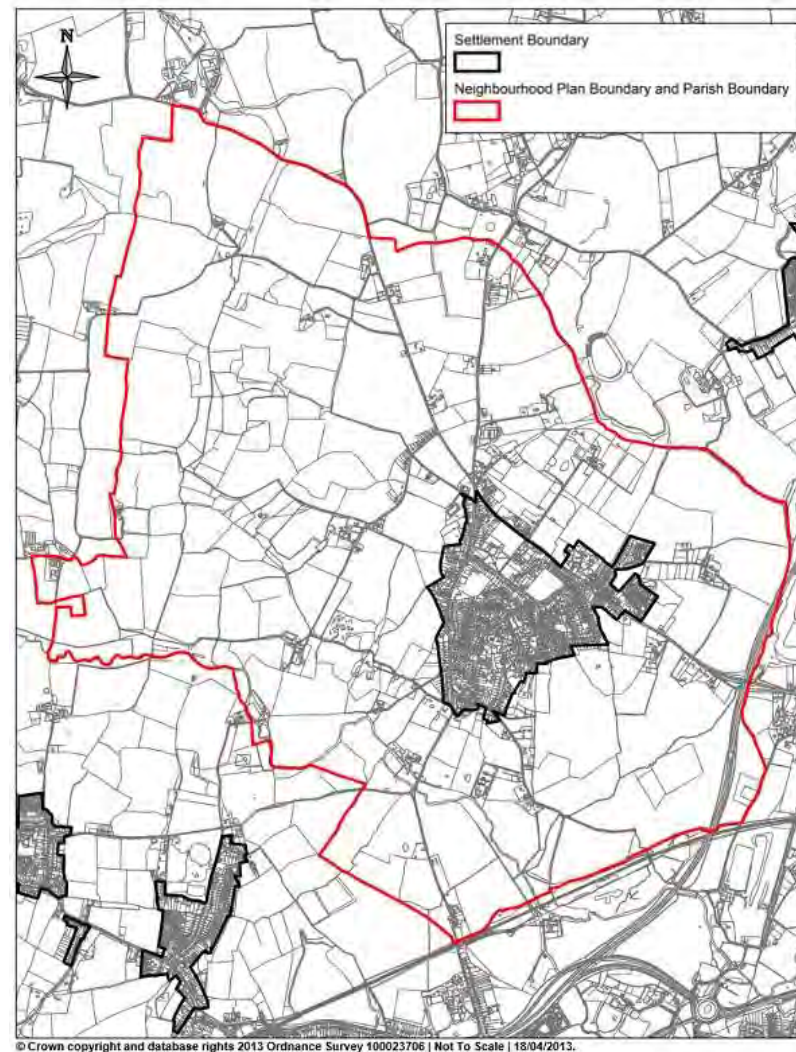
### The Neighbourhood Plan Period

The West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will be for the period from 2018 to 2033.

### The Plan Area

Following an application to Colchester Borough Council to designate the parish of West Bergholt as a Neighbourhood Plan area, a statutory

consultation was held in June 2013. No objections were forthcoming and the plan was confirmed and is shown below:



## 4. PREPARING THE PLAN

### How the Plan was Produced

The plan was a community-led affair but affiliated to the Parish Council who acted as its sponsor. The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by village workshops, community surveys and other parish meetings. The process was overseen by a Steering Group, made up of both residents and business owners within the parish of West Bergholt, who valued the opportunity to have a say in the future shape and development of their village.

### Legal Requirements

A Neighbourhood Plan must comply with a number of conditions, known as the Basic Conditions. These require that the Plan:

- Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development;
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
- Does not breach and is compatible with European Union (EU) obligations;
- The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

### National Policies and Advice

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) is the principal document in which national planning policies are contained.





Government guidance is provided on the Planning Practice Guidance website.

## Sustainable Development

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

## Wider Policy Context for the area

West Bergholt sits within a number of other plan and service areas including:

- National Government which sets out Planning Policies & Frameworks and other matters including strategic infrastructure;
- Essex County Council which produces plans for a number of functions including minerals and waste, education, social services, highways and libraries;
- Colchester, which produces the Local Plan for the Borough area;
- Its own Parish Council, which has at its heart the representation of its community to other bodies, as well as specific localised functions covering open space, parish facilities such as community buildings and other facilities such as play and recreational activities;
- Service Specific Plans such as those set out by the Police and Fire Services and the National & Mental Health Services;
- Deregulated private bodies such as transport and utility bodies, which provide us with power, water and public transport services;
- Voluntary sector which comes in a variety of guises to fill gaps in the public and private sector.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out to ascertain which areas would benefit from intervention and to sound its community out on areas where they think planning could be carried out at a local level.

## Development Plans for the area

The development plan for the area consists of the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 and the Essex & Southend Waste Local Plan 2017, which currently provide the local planning policies which govern minerals and waste development in Essex. Colchester Borough Council have produced a set of adopted Development Plan Documents (DPD) that are referred to as the adopted Local Plan which guides future growth and development in the Borough up to 2021.

The DPD comprises the:

- Core Strategy (adopted 2008, amended 2014);
- Site Allocations DPD (adopted 2010);
- Development Policies DPD (adopted 2010, amended 2014);
- Proposals Maps (adopted 2010);
- Tiptree Jam Factory DPD (adopted 2013).

The biggest impact on local land use planning matters is Colchester's Local Plan, which currently spans 15 years from 2009 to 2023. A new Local plan is in the process of being formulated to cover the period up to 2033. Our Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and it has also taken into account the direction of the emerging Local Plan, although the relationships with other service and planning bodies is in fact equally if not more important.

## EU obligations

CBC has determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will be/will not be required under the EU SEA Directive.

CBC has also determined that a full Habitats Regulations Assessment of the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan will be/will not be required.

## Human Rights

The Neighbourhood Plan must comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and be compatible with the rights protected by the European Convention of Human Rights, including those dealing with privacy, discrimination and property.

The *Basic Conditions Statement* explains in detail how the West Bergholt Neighbourhood Plan complies with the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

## Consultation & Engagement

The Steering Group overseeing the development and assembly of the Neighbourhood Plan was keen to establish the following:

- Reaching the attention of as large an audience as possible;
- Providing regular opportunities to participate at key stages in the plan's production;
- Providing feedback opportunities;
- Giving information;
- Partnering with organisations which have a stake in the plan.

The group set out to do this via its meetings, workshops, surveys, exhibitions, face to face meetings and through a visible presence on the website, village notice boards and in the Village Bulletin. A full consultation and involvement summary is provided in the appendices.

## Consultation Base 'the current situation'

In November 2012 and then again throughout 2013, workshops and surveys were undertaken to establish how people felt about the village and to establish key lines of enquiry. Surveys of households, businesses, schools and colleges were undertaken. Results are included in the appendices, but key points were recorded as follows:

In total, nearly 500 households representing over 1000 people responded to the various consultations.

Key issues identified were:

- Traffic issues and road maintenance - Road safety;
- More facilities for older children;
- Residents having a say in new development;
- Smaller starter or mixed-use developments favoured - Minimum possible new development favoured;
- Better provision of broadband;

Other points identified were:

- Strong degree of support for maintaining the identity of the village - Very strong support for preserving the environment;
- Residents feel safe in the village from crime or anti-social behaviour.

## Consultation Base Issues and Options

In April and May 2015, an issues and options exhibition and consultation were carried out. This took the information from the earlier surveys plus independent evidence from desktop research and played this out to the community through a range of scenarios and propositions. Results are included in the appendices, but key points were recorded as follows:

- 98% of residents thought it was very important or important to have a Neighbourhood Plan;

- 93% of respondents felt that giving residents a chance to influence and shape the plan and associated development was the most important reason to have one;
- Over 80% supported the vision for the plan;
- Support for the objectives, issues and proposals for the plan components were supported by well over 50% of residents;
- Option one restricting the amount of housing to 100 units over the Neighbourhood Plan lifetime emerged as the clear favoured option.

### Consultation on the Draft Outline Plan and Policies

In October 2016, a consultation on the draft plan and policies was undertaken.

Key points were as follows:

- 70-90%+ agreement on policies;
- Broad agreement to the location of new housing.



## 5. ABOUT WEST BERGHOLT

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### A Brief History of West Bergholt

West Bergholt is a small compact rural parish located to the north west of Colchester comprising an area of 929 hectares. Dating back to the 11th century the village was originally known as Bercolta, later recorded as Bergholt Sackville, after the Sackville family who held the main manor from the early 12th century to the 17th century. The village is recorded in the “Doomsday Book”. It was finally named West Bergholt in the early 20th century to distinguish it from East Bergholt in Suffolk.

The landscape surrounding the village is attractive and undulating and is bounded to the south and west by the sloping valleys of the river Colne and St Botolph’s Brook. The north and east are arable farmlands interspersed with small woodlands. Indeed, the name Bergholt is derived from the Anglo-Saxon terms ‘beorg’ meaning hill and ‘holt’ meaning wood. There are seven local wildlife sites of importance for nature conservation, including the famous Hillhouse Wood (owned and administered by the Woodland Trust) known to many as the ‘Bluebell Wood’.

The village has 34 buildings listed for architectural merit. The only grade 1 listed building is the Church of St Mary in Hall Road, adjacent to Bergholt Hall. Now redundant, but still consecrated, the church is used for special services and village events. The building was originally Saxon in origin.

West Bergholt has evolved into its current form through circumstances to meet local needs and demands. Historical development has resulted in the broad shape of the village in terms of houses and amenities provided to meet the needs of residents, and this has largely determined the shape of the settlement boundary which has remained unaltered for many years.

The village has had a largely agricultural heritage and the population settled at approximately 1200 from 1801 to 1961. During the 1800’s the village was

home to Daniell's brewery which operated successfully until the 1950’s. The new owner, Truman's, operated from the site until 1989, when it was developed into houses and flats.

### Population

The village expanded significantly in the 1960’s and 1970’s and currently has a population of 3,344 residents and 1,363 households. The Parish has a large elderly population compared with Colchester Borough as a whole. In addition, it has a slightly larger population of those aged 5 to 17 years. Approximately 20% (675) of residents are of retirement age compared with 15% at Borough level and approximately 17% (574) are aged 5 –17 years. This compares with approximately 14% at Borough level.

### Village Society and Community Facilities

The village features a large 400 place primary school, “Bluebells” Pre-School and other child and baby care facilities. There are 2 churches (Church of England and Methodist) with an additional redundant church used on special occasions. There is a doctors’ surgery and a pharmacy in the village and the general hospital is about 3 miles away. The village voluntary Care Network has over 20 members who can be contacted for transport when required. There are two general stores, one incorporating a post office with access to banking facilities, a gift shop, hairdressers, and three Public Houses. There are other commercial outlets including a garage workshop, shops and business parks.

The venues available for hire for groups to meet include the Orpen Hall and the attached John Lampon Hall, where there is parking available. There is a Social Club attached to the Hall that is open in the evenings and weekends.

The Parish Church and the Methodist Church have meeting rooms for hire. All are well used. The Lorkin-Daniell field and Poor's Land are available for recreation and are often used by the local West Bergholt Football Club and the Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club respectively.

The Cricket Club has the use of a field off of the main Colchester Road. There is a Multi-Use Games Area on the Lorkin-Daniell field which is available for hire for tennis and other sports. The Scout hut is situated on the Heath by the Primary School and is well used by different groups and activities. The green field areas can be made available for events. There are 3 areas of children's playground equipment and an area for 140 allotment plots.

## Environment

The Parish has a wonderful mix of undulating farmland with the beautiful river Colne valley accessed by a network of public footpaths including public access to ancient woodland. The vast majority of the parish is rural with agriculture the dominant feature (both arable and dairy). Within the village, there are numerous ponds, open spaces and vegetation that complements the built environment. As a result of a good network of local roads and Public Rights of Way (PROW), there are numerous opportunities for the community to enjoy both local environments within the main village settlement and those close at hand in the surrounding countryside.

The village has 3 main areas of open space, the Lorkin-Daniell Field in Lexden Road with the Orpen Village Hall on site, the area of Heath land in Lexden Road, where the primary school is sited and Poor's Land in Colchester Road. All areas are available for sport or recreation. There is an area of 140 allotments in New Church Road and a cricket pitch in Manor Road.

The rural landscape provides some accessible green space such as Hillhouse Wood and many PROW, including long distance paths such as the Essex Way. Also, within the settlement boundary are the large playing fields by the Orpen Hall and the open space at Poor's Field, as well as the Village

Green (known as The Heath), pockets of smaller green space generally within housing areas (amenity greens), the churchyards, allotments and three ponds. The village does not have a formal public park or garden as such within its boundaries, however there are some older properties that have significant trees or hedgerows that contribute to the rural character and biodiversity value of parts of the village. A few trees are protected with Tree Preservation Orders. Hedgerows and verges within villages are generally not protected.

When considering the built environment although there is a mix of eclectic modern housing styles, the village has nevertheless a good range of older buildings of architectural value with many listed buildings including several of both architectural and historic importance.

The surveys conducted in compiling the Neighbourhood Plan overwhelmingly revealed that existing public open spaces and important landscape and wildlife areas were universally valued and as a result should be protected.

## Housing and Planning

The growth in population in the late 1960s and in the 1980's was the result of new estates being constructed and a variety of styles mark this expansion such as those around Lexden Road, Mumford Road and Pirie Road, as well as the development on the former Truman's brewery site. More recently there have been smaller developments usually consisting of four or more bedroomed detached properties closely positioned on sites with the settlement boundary.

In preparing the Village Design Statement in 2011 the housing areas of the village were divided up into character areas to help distinguish the mixture of vernacular and modern housing styles and help assess the applicability of housing and extension proposals.

West Bergholt remains a highly desirable village in which to live. Being situated just outside and to the northwest of Colchester – Britain’s Oldest Recorded town, West Bergholt village is conveniently placed for those residents who work in Colchester and its close proximity to the A12 means that it is well placed for people who work in Ipswich or Chelmsford. Being only 2.5 miles from the main railway line into London has meant that West Bergholt has become an extremely desirable commuter location.

It was the land released for development in the 1960’s, 1970’s and 1980’s that marked the most significant increase in housing numbers within the village. Due to the location of most of the new estates the village 'look and feel' was maintained with some supporting improvements to facilities for the community. It has to be said though that the modern housing design was at odds with the older housing and although functional the design and style now looks dated and the housing no longer meets the needs of the Parish in terms of the mix of tenure and the lack of affordable housing.

The formal Settlement Boundary indicates the boundary inside which there is a presumption that development will be allowed (subject to planning permission). The opportunities for such development are reducing over time and therefore there is likely to be the need for some additional growth.

It is evident from the consultations undertaken so far, including the 2008 West Bergholt Parish Plan, that whilst some wish the village to stay exactly as it is without expansion, many more envisage a limited and appropriately planned increase in development providing the types and numbers of new housing to meet the needs of the Parish whilst maintaining the village character.

## **Business and Commerce**

Nowadays, with the decline in agricultural employment, many residents commute to Colchester for work as well as travelling to towns such as Ipswich and Chelmsford because of the close proximity to the A12. It is also

a desirable location for those commuting into London being only 2.5 miles from the main railway station.

In most cases the commercial and employment areas have evolved over time. As well as two general stores (including a post office in the Co-op), a pharmacy, a hairdresser’s, an accessories shop, three public houses and other commercial premises there are business parks located in Colchester Road, Nayland Road, Bourne Road, Fossetts Lane and at Armoury Farm. These house independent businesses as well as offering some office space. There is a showground located in Nayland Road which is used for events such as the annual historic vehicle show. In addition, there are many small businesses which operate from people’s homes. These all provide local employment whilst harmonising with village life.

## **Sports and Recreation**

The village currently has use of the following building and land assets

- The Lorkin Daniell playing field and the Orpen Memorial Hall are village assets held in Trust and managed by the Trustees which is the Parish Council
- The John Lampon Hall constructed to the rear of the Orpen Hall in 2001, is owned and managed by the Parish Council. These assets are available for public use and hire.

Over the years the Parish Council in its capacity as Trustee for Charity land, has added to or enhanced the village hall buildings located in Lexden Road to meet the ever-increasing demands of a thriving and vibrant village. Booking demand for the village halls increases annually and these buildings are used at near full capacity. The expansion of the hall is essential if future demand over the next 15 years is to be met.

Other community buildings exist and are owned and maintained by organisations, each being largely self-financing. They include:

- St Mary's Hall – administered by the Church of England Church committee
- Methodist Hall - administered by the Methodist Chapel committee
- Scout Hut - administered by the Scout group but located on Trust land

Village open spaces held in trust and managed by the Parish Council include:

- Lorkin Daniell Playing Field
- Village Green – to the south of Heathlands School
- Poor's Land – to the north of Heathlands School
- The Allotments

The Cricket pitch and club house are located on privately owned land and is managed by the cricket club

Recreational Facilities, the current situation

The Lorkin Daniell Playing field hosts:

- A full-size adult football pitch
- A club house and changing facilities
- Training area for Bergholt Heath Youth Football Club
- A children's play area
- A Multi User Games Area (MUGA) used for tennis, 5 aside football and basketball

Poor's Land provides a recreation area for:

- Junior football
- Dog walking
- Heathlands school sports day events
- Annual village fireworks display
- Visiting mobile attractions - Circus etc.

## Community Safety

Crime in West Bergholt is generally low but with the withdrawal of neighbourhood policing and regular PCSOs, crime has been rising. Current snapshots reveal the following incidence of crime and its composition:

Number of crimes: 3 per month

Typical composition: Theft from Vehicle, Burglary, Antisocial Behaviour

The parish no longer has an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village. As a result of neighbourhood policing changes there is no longer a regular mobile police presence where residents can seek advice or make their concerns known.

The village is part of Colchester Zone 3 Local Community Action Panel (L-CAP) meeting quarterly and attended by "Resolver Partners". Residents and businesses can report local issues and obtain progress feedback on resolution actions. The Police, Zone Warden, Youth Officers, Housing Officers and Councillors work towards suitable issue resolution initiatives. Village related Issues are reported to the L-CAP by Parish and Ward Councillors.

The village has a very active Community Speed Watch group (CSW) with resource and equipment being shared with Eight Ash Green. The CSW group is recorded as being in the top five most active groups in Essex.

Snow clearance volunteer teams are in place and the Parish Council maintain equipment and salt supplies for use by volunteers

An emergency plan for the village has been drawn up to support Colchester borough and the emergency services.

## Communication

Communication in this sense refers to “official” means of relating information that the Parish Council needs to undertake, as well as “unofficial” ways to get messages across from differing interest groups within the village to the population. The key objective was supported by nearly 98% of the neighbourhood plan questionnaire respondents.

There are 4 main channels in which the village communicates;

- Face to Face
- The quarterly Bulletin and the occasional Village Newsletter
- West Bergholt Website
- Social Media

The full Parish Council meets 10 times a year (excluding the months of August and December). There is always time set aside for villagers to air views, ask questions or make comments. The PC sub-committees meet as frequently prior to the main meeting. Village residents are welcome to attend the “Environment and Highways” sub-committee, the “Premises and Recreation” sub-committee and the “Planning” sub-committee.

The Co-op, pharmacy and schools are at the centre of village life and you will often see people passing the time with friends and family.

### Bulletins and Village News

The Parish council supports the publication of a quarterly Village Bulletin which is delivered to all households. A brief, more up to date “Village News” is produced most months when there is no Bulletin and displayed in the notice boards and on other sites around the village.

The Parish Council also maintains a number of notice boards which are now kept up to date regularly. In addition, the church and school have their own newsletters.

### West Bergholt Website

West Bergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events electronic copies of the bulletin, village updates and details of the parish councillors.

### Social media

There are a number of active sites for West Bergholt and the clubs that resound in them. The majority of the sites have a good number of followers. The village website is managed by a third party.

### Facebook (note member numbers as of July 2016)

West Bergholt Neighbourhood plan page (232 members)– this provides updates to the community and the progress around the plan

West Bergholt Hub and community page (1046 members) – this provides advice, adverts, questions and village updates.

West Bergholt and surroundings selling page (864 members) - this provides a place for locals to see any second-hand goods.

West Bergholt latest news (7 members) – this provides local village updates

There are also a number of Facebook pages for the cricket club, football club, parent and toddler group, Bergholt Youth Group and West Bergholt Pharmacy all totalling circa 850 members.

### Twitter (note member numbers as of July 2016)

- West BergholtPC (120 followers) – this provides latest news and updates



- West BergholtCC (255 followers) – this provides updates for the cricket club
- West BergholtFC (497 followers) – this provides updates for the football club

## Transport and Highways

The village has generally good main (B1508) and minor road connections to the A12, Colchester town centre, the rail station, Tollgate retail area and towards Sudbury and the rural Essex-Suffolk border area.

Bus services are provided by two companies, Chambers, providing an hourly service to Colchester and Sudbury, and First Bus that operates a 30-minute frequency peak and daytime service to the town centre via the Rail Station. On Sundays the frequency of buses drops to two hourly. School buses serve the main secondary schools whilst the voluntary Care Network helps patients attend clinics.

Information gathered during the Parish Plan established the following: General accessibility to a car: 92% have driving licences and 81% have access to a car

Typical usage of different modes of transport have been calculated from a travel diary survey conducted by Essex County Council some time ago. (ECC 2005)

Car	Bus	Train	Cycle	walk
86%	28%	23%	25%	64%

Popular destinations are: the rail station and adjacent retail park, town centre, the hospital, access to the A12 and the Stanway/Tollgate area for retail shopping.



## 6. VISION, AIMS AND FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING OUR PLAN

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### A vision for our parish and village

The Neighbourhood Plan intends to influence the future for the better by the concerted actions of many agencies and organisations and to do so in harmony with the wider community in West Bergholt. This will have an impact on West Bergholt as a place and will similarly affect its community as individuals, families and groups of citizens. This is reflected in a vision statement which was tested out during consultation periods, with the majority of those providing feedback feeling it was appropriate for a plan lasting many years.

#### The West Bergholt Vision Statement

“By 2033 West Bergholt will be a prosperous community which has taken control of its destiny through local decision-making; which has achieved a sustainable mix of development; and where the combination of the built and natural environment provides an attractive location for residents, businesses and visitors alike.”

### Our Aims

Our community, its residents, clubs, societies, organisations, businesses and individuals aspire for an ever-improved quality of life. These aspirations are many and varied. We have grouped the main aspects under the overarching aims, set out below:

- Creating a sense of community:

*To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups to interact and take part in a wide range of activities and improve communication between and across community groups.*

- Caring for our environment:

*To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of accessible open space.*

#### Enhancing and expanding community amenities:

*To provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of sport and recreation, community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas.*

#### Integrating sustainable communities throughout the parish:

*To support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development and change, through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs, infrastructure needs, changes in land use designation or husbandry.*

### Taking Action

This process of implementing our Neighbourhood Plan will be through the following:

- Realising the objectives of the plan through:
  - Enforcing compliance with the plan’s Planning Policies
  - Developing an action plan including infrastructure requirements to realise the ambitions in both the Planning and Community Planning Policies

## 7. SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY; A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE OF WEST BERGHOLT

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### What do we mean by sustainable growth?

For most people sustainability relates to the use of the planet's resources and the impact this has on the natural environment and the resultant quality of life for its inhabitants. Whilst this remains undoubtedly true, sustainability in planning terms has widened to incorporate all the factors that sustain communities. These include:

- Environmental matters, the health and quality of our natural and built environments.
- Economic outlook, the opportunities to enable a prosperous community and enabling aspects such as access to jobs, ability to successfully trade and the necessary infrastructure to maintain prosperity.
- Social & Community wellbeing, covering everything from our health to the ability of people to interact with their society.

In our Neighbourhood Plan we are taking a holistic view of our community and concentrating on what will be our needs going forward, not just our immediate requirements, but the needs of our children and even grandchildren. What sustains a community now cannot be assumed to be suitable for future generations.

### The framework for developing our plan

We have adopted a strategy to meet our vision and aims

In order to do this comprehensively a framework of eight working areas which Map directly or indirectly onto the aims has been assembled:

- Village Society and Community
- Environment
- Housing and Planning
- Business, Commerce and Employment
- Sports and Recreation
- Community Safety
- Communications
- Transport, Highways & Infrastructure

The scope of each identified working area includes planning and non-planning related matters. Not all of the activities relate to the development and use of land. Therefore, whilst each working area is presented in full here, non-planning issues are identified separately and distinguished from the planning policies later on in this document.



<b>Village Society and Community Facilities</b>
<i>Scope:</i> To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities including as volunteers. Identifying vulnerable people in our society and ensuring they get the support they need to maintain a thriving community support network.
<i>Activities:</i> clubs, societies, volunteering and mechanisms to strengthen the community and look after the vulnerable. To provide improved community facilities which support local groups especially in the areas of community buildings, telecommunications and meeting areas
<b>Environment:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations and to explore opportunities to create new areas of recreational open space.
<i>Activities:</i> the quality of our built and natural environment, its protection, enhancement and improvement.
<b>Housing and Planning:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> support limited expansion in the parish and involve the local community in all aspects of development through consultation and active involvement to determine new housing needs.
<i>Activities:</i> the quantity, quality, location and provision of new dwellings in the parish
<b>Business and Commerce:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> creating opportunities to work and trade locally
<i>Activities:</i> Seek to examine controlled expansion of existing employment opportunities or new opportunities if scope exists; maintain and, where practical, enhance the existing facilities of retail and eating and drinking.

<b>Sport and Recreation:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> promoting increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport.
<i>Activities:</i> Provide new areas of open space for formal and informal sport and recreation to promote healthy living and lifestyles.
<b>Community Safety:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low and where the chance of being the victim of a traffic related accident is minimised.
<i>Activities:</i> dealing with perceived and real safety issues, whether criminal or traffic related and working with the police, the community at large and highway authority.
<b>Communication:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> keeping the community informed through a wide range of media and promoting two-way dialogue and creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making
<i>Activities:</i> to improve communications through a range of activities with our website and social media at its core to provide residents with a means to be consulted on village affairs
<b>Transport:</b>
<i>Scope:</i> moving around in the parish on foot, on bikes, by horse, by car and by bus and ascertaining the wider infrastructure requirements
<i>Activities:</i> maintain and improve existing accessibility by bus, walking and cycling. Introduce 20mph zones or streets. Improve maintenance of our highways, bridleways, pathways and verges. Investigate the infrastructure of power, water and drainage

## 8. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COMMUNITY – PROMOTING INCLUSIVE GROWTH

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### Addressing our Children’s Future

Currently West Bergholt benefits from a range of assets and an environment which suits many in the community, but the forward nature of our plan means we need to examine whether the “place” aspects and the “people” aspects are indeed well matched in the future. We have decided to do this by looking at the people aspects first, and to assist with this we have made some generalisations. No one family group or indeed single person household, has the same needs or characteristics but by looking at typical needs we can tease out at a strategic level the issues that need to be addressed.

To promote community wellbeing and village sustainability as a whole the needs of separate but often interlinked family types need to be identified.

The various family types are defined as;

- Younger Families - Early years play, pre and primary schooling
- Developing Families – Families with children in teenage years
- Mature Families – All adult households
- Single / couple adult living
- Senior years (largely retired residents)

We have further looked at the eight categories of our plan and made an assessment of the likely differing needs of each household type. This in turn gives an appreciation of the various facilities that will be needed in future years.

### Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements

Currently West Bergholt has the assets needed to provide the facilities to support the current needs of the community. To a large degree this has come about as a direct result of the generosity and good planning by village benefactors. For example, Mr O.G. Orpen, (director of Daniell’s brewery) whose estate paid for the village hall known as Orpen Hall in the 1938 and Mr T.D. Daniell who donated 4 acres adjacent to the Orpen Hall in 1939 currently housing an adult football pitch, tennis courts and children’s play area. Similarly, Poor’s Field (c. 5 acres) and the village allotments (c. 6 acres) were donated by other benefactors.

Future benefactors with a willingness and financial ability to provide additional community assets such as those provided under the estates of Mr Orpen or Mr Daniell are most unlikely. In addition, other facilities such as the various housing stock, the transport services, our roads, footpaths and pavements, the shops and business facilities have largely been either market-led, developed over hundreds of years or planned centrally by upper tier bodies.

Given the above and the seemingly endless directions in which our plan could lead us across our eight categories, the strategic building blocks of our plan can emerge in a way that makes sense not only in their own right but which will best suit the needs of the community. This will help enable a sustainable outcome for all.

### Younger Families and Developing Families - Early Years Play, Pre and Primary Schooling

Whilst the needs of this family group are currently adequately provided for through existing facilities in the village, some facilities are operating at maximum capacity. In particular affordable housing for young families is scarce and as a result some may be forced to move away from the village even though other facilities such as the school would normally attract them.

Children's play areas are located at; The Lorkin Daniell playing field; Earle Havard / Pirie Road; Pocket Park - Maltings Park. All three play areas are constrained by limited space for future expansion in their current form. Pre-School facilities are provided by Blue-Bells which almost fully occupies the Orpen and John Lampon Halls during the term time week days. A lack of storage space means that equipment used by this award-winning group has to be moved and stored outside the Halls

Heathlands Primary School was extended to provide 50 additional spaces in 2014 for the children of West Bergholt and neighbouring villages. It is assumed this expansion will meet the schooling needs for the next 15 years. However, no provision was made to ease the congestion caused by parents bringing their children to school by car.

Footways and cycle paths to and around the school are in need of improvement. A new footway on the south side of Colchester Road adjacent to the school would be highly beneficial to help promote walking to school and ease parking during school time. Dedicated cycle paths would help parents feel more confident in allowing their children to cycle to school.

#### **Summary of future needs:**

- Improved provision of affordable housing
- Expansion and updating of children's play facilities
- Measures to improve traffic safety around the school
- New footways and cycle paths to change means of travel to school

#### **Developing Families with Teenagers**

State funded secondary schools, grammar and comprehensive, are available outside of the village with some public transport available to and from Colchester schools. There are independent schools in the local area but also a small number of parents organise transport to schools in areas such as Ipswich. A few teenagers do cycle to school during term time when light and weather permits although there are no dedicated cycle paths

between West Bergholt and Colchester or Lexden. Various clubs and sporting activities are available for teenagers including football, cricket, tennis, scouts, girl guides, etc. Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) operates from within the village halls and weather permitting uses the Multi User Games Area and Lorkin Daniel Playing Field. This group has nearly 100 members and meets fortnightly. Holding additional club nights depends on attracting a sufficient pool of volunteer helpers. A youth shelter was constructed on the Lorkin Daniell playing field by the Parish Council and Essex County Council in 2012 but there is a growing need and demand to provide a venue, such as a café, for young people to meet socially. Unfulfilled demand has existed over a number of years for a skate park to be provided however lack of suitable space and funding has meant this has not come to fruition. Facilities for adults within this group are met through clubs and recreational pursuits in the village. Neither an indoor nor outdoor gymnasium exists in the village nor is there a swimming pool. Adequate number of pubs, and restaurants exist to meet the needs of the future.

#### ***Summary of future needs***

- Provision of a venue with the facility for young people to meet socially
- An expansion and upgrading of sports facilities and opportunities.

#### **Mature Families and Couples, Adult Households**

As West Bergholt is deemed a desirable place to live many younger adults continue to live in the village, sometimes with their parents, as they grow up and parents tend to stay in their family homes when children leave. For those wishing to downsize it is often not easy to find alternative suitable accommodation. Shops, a Post Office and Pharmacy provide an invaluable service and residents consider themselves fortunate to have a well appreciated Doctor's Surgery. A pleasant environment is important to this group and so open spaces, including the Allotments, walks and woods need to be well maintained. Facilities for adults within this group are met through

clubs and recreational pursuits in the village but these need to be expanded and well publicised.

***Summary of future needs:***

- Maintain and develop the pleasant environment provided by the village open spaces.
- Improve sports facilities and encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities

## **Single Adult Living**

Some living accommodation exists to meet single adult requirements and is provided through flats and apartments in various locations including the Truman Building in Maltings Park. Many of the facilities needed for this group match those defined above, but in particular there is a need to encourage involvement in clubs, societies and sports activities. At present the village has adequate pubs and restaurants but an alternative venue for meeting socially, especially for single adults, would be desirable.

***Summary of future needs***

- Encourage opportunities for involvement in a full range of activities
- Provision of a venue with a facility to meet socially

## **Senior Years, Largely Retired Residents**

Whilst some property downsizing does occur, many in this category choose to remain in the original family home. Sometimes there is a reluctance to leave the home where the family grew up and in other cases there is a lack of suitable or affordable senior years housing. Bungalows are sought after and desirable throughout the village and often change hands very quickly. Other features in the village currently that are relevant to this group include:

- There is no sheltered accommodation within the village which houses a resident warden.

- Sufficient clubs and societies exist to meet most needs but may need to be better publicised.
- An adequate public transport system provides the means to shop in the Town centre or to travel further afield if desired.
- A well- developed Care Network involving volunteers provides transport for those that need it, generally for medical appointments.
- A local Doctors' Surgery and Pharmacy provides vital services for this group of residents.

As a caring society it is essential that vulnerable residents in this group, especially those without local family and friends, are identified. A vulnerable residents register should be established and names shared with the volunteer organisations.

***Summary of future needs***

Make the village “senior friendly” both by providing a safe environment and sufficient well publicised recreational activities.

- Ensuring an adequate supply of appropriate accommodation
- Maintaining an efficient Care Network, well supported by volunteers
- Providing good appropriate communications with all senior citizens, especially the lonely and vulnerable.

## Matching Strategic Needs to Family Type Requirements & Prioritisation

Category	Younger Families Pre school	Developing Families	Mature families	Single adult living	Senior Years (largely retired residents)
Village society & community	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓
Environment	✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Housing & planning	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓
Business & commerce	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Sports & recreation	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓
Community Safety	✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Communications	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓
Transport, highways & infrastructure	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓

✓✓✓ Highly relevant    ✓✓ Moderately relevant    ✓ Minor relevance





## 9. DEALING WITH THE STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY ASPECTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It is realised that Neighbourhood Plan's although part of the planning system must also inspire the wider community, and so each of our strategy elements has been examined in terms of how it affects three important aspects:

- Matters affecting land use: aspects of the plan which change “place” through new land uses are a statutory planning matter in the main and so these are shown on our plans and Maps and articulated in each section
- Matters which may or may not affect land use but which certainly require formal discussion are covered by Neighbourhood Plan Policies, again articulated in each section
- Projects and Initiatives: those activities which are largely community aspirations are listed in each section separately

This Neighbourhood Plan will thus contain development and use of land policies, but that, as part of that process and through engaging with the community, many other matters have emerged and these are captured as community aspirations.

### How the Plan takes the strategy in action

In the chapters that follow each of the elements is examined to ascertain what Planning Policies are needed to guide either development proposals or what Community Parish Policies are needed to bring about improvements to people or place aspects where the emphasis is what the community can achieve in concert with others rather than with developers.

In ascertaining the policy basis, the following thought process has been employed:

Stage	Output
One	What the base line situation is. This evidence base is crucial to understand the starting point for assessing needs. The evidence comes from a number of sources:
	Databases, inventories and reports already in existence and readily available
	Surveys which have been undertaken during the Neighbourhood Plan's production, these may be factual or public perceptions
Two	With the evidence base established the Strategy then passes through the following stages:
	Define issues & opportunities
	Define options
	Define priorities
Three	Produce a robust set of policies. There will be two types of policy, Planning Policy and/or Community Parish Policy

## 10. POLICIES

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### Introduction

This part of the Plan contains the Policies that will help to meet the community's vision for West Bergholt and address key issues that have been raised during consultation. Planning Policies relate to the use and development of land. Community Parish Policies relate to the wider aspirations which the community can achieve through their own efforts.

The planning policies will be taken into account by the local planning authority, Colchester Borough Council and other decision makers when determining planning applications and appeals. Development proposals will also be determined with reference to national policy and the development plan. In addition, these planning policies will guide developers and prospective applicants.

Each policy category is preceded by an introductory section, which outlines the background and intent of the policy and refers to relevant evidence contained in the supporting documents and other evidence base material, which is listed in Appendix 2.

The website also provides copies of or links to the remaining evidence base documents or explains where they are available. In all of the analysis we have asked ourselves "Is what we have fit for the next 15 years?" To help with this a SWOT analysis has been undertaken.



# 11. VILLAGE SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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## Objectives

- To improve and extend opportunities for all age groups and the wider community to take part in a wide range of activities
- To identify vulnerable people or groups in our society and ensure they get the support they need.
- To promote and raise awareness of opportunities to increase participation and to maintain a thriving community support network.
- To improve facilities for the community

## Background & Intent

The village is the principal location for facilities for individuals, groups, clubs and societies to meet and take part in recreational and social activities. As a result, in part due to the generous benefactor- provided bequests in the early to mid-part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been ample provision of meetings areas at the Orpen Hall Complex supported by those at local churches, as well as large areas of open space at the Lorkin Daniell Field, Poor's Land, Village Green and Allotment Gardens. A large number of individuals and clubs and societies use these facilities on a regular basis.

However, in understanding the future requirements of the village and parish it has been instructive to understand pressures that are being felt and whether these assets are well placed to provide for the future particularly as the village expands. These pressures have emerged through examining various information sources and through surveys

## Community Buildings

There is a large village hall complex available to hire and indeed this is a community building not controlled by the Parish Council but operated

under a trustee arrangement. Part of the building is a Social Club open to all members of the community to join.

The halls and rooms are booked up weeks if not months in advance and for some uses e.g. indoor sports is not really adequate for all the purposes asked of it. There is no Parish Office and no Community Centre. Hence the village lacks a central point of contact and co-ordination relying on these points of contact to be made virtually through email etc. Elsewhere other meeting places are available to hire such as the Scout and Guide hut and through the Churches.

Feedback from surveys highlighted these limitations and there was support for expansion where this was affordable and practical.

To support further use by the community new or expanded facilities at the Orpen Hall complex will be required.

## Community Facilities

Away from buildings there are allotment gardens, 3 play areas, two sports fields and a multi-use hard court area; the recreational areas are predominantly used for football and tennis. There are regular users of all these facilities which are very well established.

Overall there are currently plots for future allotment holders but little opportunity for further uses of the sports areas. This matter is picked up later in the document, however the feeling is that some consolidation is required to allow for informal use of open spaces as distinct from regular uses. Major drawback for sport include the lack of changing facilities and toilets.

Of concern is also the rapidly diminishing space in the churchyard for burials and this is expected to become exhausted within two years.

## Community Activities

There is a wide range of clubs, societies and interest groups and there is interest in more being set up all the time. The main issue here is over-use of the hall facilities which is covered above. Although the clubs and societies cover children up to age 15 and middle and older age groups, there is a lack of activities for older teenagers and younger adults. Central to promotion of these activities is the use of information systems, electronic booking arrangements and the link up with the website and social media. As a further example of the pressure on facilities the extensive use of the hall complex by the Bluebell pre-school group is testament to the need to enable daytime activities to be catered for as the population ages and older residents endeavour to find places to meet up.



## Summary SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A great number of clubs and societies which cater for a wide range of interests.</li> <li>• A good community spirit which encourages residents to volunteer to support clubs and promote village activities.</li> <li>• A range of social opportunities for retired people</li> <li>• A thriving Youth Group for 10-14-year olds which meets fortnightly run by local volunteers.</li> <li>• An oversubscribed school and play group</li> <li>• Local Doctor's Surgery</li> <li>• A well-supported variety of village shops including a hairdressers &amp; Post Office</li> <li>• Allotments right in the heart of the village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting areas are nearly always fully booked some time in advance.</li> <li>• Poor or patchy broadband service.</li> <li>• Public toilet facilities lacking in the village.</li> <li>• No community focal point, coffee shop or informal meeting area.</li> <li>• Facilities for older children and young adults are lacking.</li> <li>• St Mary's churchyard almost full.</li> <li>• No Parish Council administration centre.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of community facilities at the Orpen Hall complex.</li> <li>• Provision of a centralised, coordinated booking system for rooms</li> <li>• Introduce enhanced and faster broadband service for the whole village.</li> <li>• Provision of a community focal point.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced village interaction and Lack of village cohesion</li> <li>• Increasing social isolation particularly for certain age groups</li> <li>• Closure of clubs and societies as a result of lack of volunteering</li> <li>• Loss of key facilities to housing.</li> </ul>

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilet facilities for users of recreational areas.</li> <li>• A coffee shop.</li> <li>• Enlarged children's play areas e.g. adventure playground.</li> <li>• ((Further development of website and use of social media. Into Communications))</li> <li>• Provision of a new cemetery or burial ground.</li> <li>• Provide Parish Council administrative centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of younger volunteers as a result of West Bergholt becoming more of a dormitory village.</li> </ul>



## The Plan's Approach

The Approach in the plan is threefold:

- to provide more buildings facilities,
- to investigate further activities for young adults and
- to seek to open a community centre not just for the Parish Council administration but also to allow an informal meeting area where residents and visitors can meet over coffee and where new facilities can be considered such as space for a community library etc.

## Policies

Policy No.	Village Society and Community Planning policies
PP1	All development must demonstrate an enhancement to the quality of life and wellbeing of the local community and, where appropriate, promote diversity and enhance community cohesion through the provision of new facilities or contributions to existing ones. The loss of existing community buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.
PP2	The areas to be designated as Local Green Space, are shown on Map PP2. Proposals for any development on Local Green Spaces will be resisted other than in very special circumstances.
PP3	Existing areas of public open space will be designated as "Local Green Space" and protected, managed, maintained and improved to promote regular use and community enjoyment. (See Map PP3)
PP4	Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, particularly those for young/old/etc. [as desired] people, will be supported

Policy No.	Village Society and Community Planning policies
	provided that the development is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and is conveniently accessed for residents of the village and will not result in unacceptable traffic generation or parking requirements that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated.

Policy No.	Village Society and Community Parish Policies
CP1	In order to provide for the needs of the parish the village hall complex consisting of the Orpen and John Lampon Halls will be further enhanced as a community resource; further community buildings may be considered for construction or purchase should opportunities present themselves.
CP2	Village societies, clubs and other community-based organisations will be actively promoted through a variety of communication channels. New community members will be informed how to participate in village and parish life through all available media channels, both electronic and print based.
CP3	Provision for a parish office/community hub will be supported.

## 12. ENVIRONMENT

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### Objectives

- To maintain the distinctiveness of the parish and its identity by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment for the enjoyment of future generations
- To explore opportunities to create new areas of open space
- To integrate new areas of development into the environment in a way which complements the built and natural environment

### Background & Intent

Standing on the edge of the Colne valley and atop a hill rising from St Botolph's Brook, West Bergholt and its village is sited in attractive landscape with a mixture of arable and dairy farms extending from the curtilage of the village itself. Within the village are areas of open and recreational space and allotments and although there is a mixture of urban form the village has a good proportion of historic and grade listed buildings. Both rural and urban environments throughout the parish are valued by our community. There is no doubt that the village and its setting within a very rural parish, its degree of separation from the urban area of Colchester, its general lack of urban features such as dual carriageways, rail lines, pylons and industrial complexes, make the area a very desirable and pleasant place to live, and one where natural and human activity can thrive.

So, whereas the environment is well maintained and looked after there are aspects which need careful attention if future generations are to continue to enjoy it. These may be classified as areas where protection is needed, enhancements to quality of man-made and natural environments and accessibility to environments.

### Open Spaces

Open space in the parish is predominantly sited in the village where the recreational areas (when not used for sporting activities) are available for walking, jogging and exercising. There is a fragment of ancient heath in front of the village school as well. Due to the way that development has blended in with the environment these areas are attractively lined with mature hedges and tree planting, some of which are protected by TPOs which overflows into neighbouring streets creating natural walking routes which reinforce the feeling of being in a rural area despite the expansion of the village to over 3000 inhabitants. The main issue over recent years is that the majority of the recent housing developments that have been built have not made provision for further open space. An aspect that was picked up in the Parish Plan was that biodiversity action plans are required for the open spaces and allotment areas and especially the heath notwithstanding the need for these to continue to serve sports uses and cater for informal recreation.

### Colne Valley

On the west and south-west approaches to the village, the topography changes and land slopes down to the Colne Valley which can be reached by numerous footpaths which are extensively used by residents. The area also houses Hillhouse Wood an area of established woodland purchased by the community and which is maintained by a "Friends" group with overall stewardship in the hands of the Woodland Trust. Although this area has general protection by CBC countryside policies, there is a need for a careful mix of improved access, good husbandry and only allowing development of a sympathetic type which respects this special landscape setting. The community surveys demonstrated a strong affection for this landscape.

## Urban Character

The village has the greatest concentration of housing in the parish and despite the rather unsympathetic non-indigenous styles which have appeared of late, a number of character areas are discernible and have been included in the Village Design Statement. Developers are encouraged to respect the style in each case, when building new housing or when householders are considering extensions to their properties. There are several listed buildings which are adequately protected from either wholesale change or unsympathetic extensions. More recent development whilst it has respected the fragments of former hedgerows that still exist in the village including headlands on the edges of the settlement has had a tendency to ignore enhancements to the streetscape which would include urban realm features such as seating and paved areas as well as tree planting and landscaping. Poor examples of this include the Mumford and Pirie Road estates which contrast markedly with the “Lanes” character areas in the older parts of the village. (see Map X)

## Informal Recreation

Great use is made of the many footpaths leading from the village to all other parts of the parish, especially the Essex Way which in this part of Essex links the neighbouring parish area of Fordham to the west of the parish with Great Horkesley to the east. There is a general lack of bridleways and few dedicated cycle ways. It is an ambition to recreate the circular walking and cycling guides which help people navigate their way around the village to enjoy the many historic and attractive features that exist.

## Environmental Stewardship

With the loss of certain public services which the community used to take for granted comes the need for environmental stewardship. The village has the services of two handy men who attend to vegetation management as well as picking up litter and making running repairs to communal gates and

fencing. This is an ever-expanding area of the Parish Council’s work and care will be needed with new development to ensure that future housing areas are afforded a similar level of stewardship. Funding these “village wardens” is a constant concern.





## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surrounded by open countryside</li> <li>Attractive open farmland</li> <li>Protected woodland and trees</li> <li>Colne Valley</li> <li>Rural Open spaces</li> <li>Some historic and listed buildings</li> <li>Historic character areas in residential neighbourhoods</li> <li>Separation from Colchester's urban sprawl</li> <li>Area of wild heathland in the centre of the village</li> <li>Three ponds of differing ecological importance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time consuming and professional Management of rural areas and open spaces required.</li> <li>Litter and fly-tipping</li> <li>Lack of bridleways.</li> <li>Legacy of poor quality urban planning of previous large developments</li> <li>Need for biodiversity action plans for open spaces</li> <li>Dog fouling</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the available amount of public open space especially where new development is proposed.</li> <li>Enhancing our environment through planting and urban realm improvements.</li> <li>Protecting vulnerable environments through community action.</li> <li>Improved access to rural environments through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern that future development proposals will adversely affect the urban and rural environments that we all enjoy.</li> <li>Natural landscape may degrade over time if not managed.</li> <li>Overdevelopment leading to lack of wildlife corridors in the village</li> </ul>

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhanced public rights of way.</li> <li>Sympathetic management of open spaces to promote wildlife</li> <li>All planting programmes undertaken to enhance the natural &amp; visual environment</li> <li>Developing relationships with local land &amp; property owners to enhance the natural, visual environment (hedges &amp; verges)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invasive species-related diseases altering the landscape for the poorer.</li> </ul>



## The Plan's approach

The approach to this area of the plan is very much seeking to ensure that new development is able to make a positive contribution to the environment either through its design or through contributions to the upkeep of the environment.

## Policies

Policy No.	Environment Planning Policies
PP5	An "Area of Separation" will be designated for the part of the parish to the south east and west of the settlement boundary, as shown centred on Map PP5. Changes in land use that adversely affect the key landscape and visual characteristics of the area will be resisted. Access to the countryside will be improved through use of the existing public rights of way network.
PP6	A "Character Area" of the village will be designated, as shown centred on Map PP6, this area, which reflects the built local distinctiveness of Essex's heritage, will be protected from degradation.
PP7	Changes to important historic and character buildings will be resisted where the visual aspect of the locality will be adversely affected by the proposals.
PP8	Any development that would result in the loss of trees or hedgerows of arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances where the benefit of development is considered to outweigh the benefit of preserving trees and hedgerows, development will only be permitted subject to adequate compensatory provision being made. The retention of trees and hedgerows in situ will always be preferable. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, replacement provision should be of a commensurate value to that which is lost.
PP9	Roadside planting and hedgerows would be encouraged.

Policy No.	Environment Planning Policies
PP10	<p>All development should protect and where appropriate enhance biodiversity by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient and species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands; and</li> <li>Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna; and</li> <li>Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, or ancient woodlands; and</li> <li>Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and recreation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species; and</li> <li>Providing a net gain in flora and fauna; and</li> <li>adopting best practice in sustainable urban drainage.</li> </ol> <p>Proposals will demonstrate that ecological considerations have been properly assessed in relation to the application site and those adjacent to it where appropriate. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures will be carried out. Where this is not possible and the development would harm biodiversity will be resisted.</p>
PP11	All residential development within the zones of influence of European Sites will be required to make a financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast RAMS, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on European Sites. In the interim period, before the Essex Coast RAMS is completed, all residential development within the zones of influence will need to deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level HRAs, or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Habitats Directive.

Policy No.	Environment Community Parish Policies
CP4	There will be a general presumption to encourage retention of mature native trees within the settlement boundary.
CP5	Streetscapes will be enhanced through planting and good verge and hedge management.
CP6	New areas of open space will be incorporated within the village maintenance plan and all open spaces will be enhanced through a biodiversity plan which seeks to improve the conditions for wildlife.
CP7	Development that results in the loss of green or open spaces or that results in any harm to their character, setting, accessibility or appearance, general quality or to amenity value will only be permitted if the community would gain equivalent benefit from provision of a suitable replacement.
CP8	The plan seeks to protect and enhance the views as indicated in MAP CP8. Any development or alteration to an area within these views must ensure that key features of the view can continue to be enjoyed including distant building, areas of landscape and the juxtaposition of village edges and open agricultural countryside.



## 13. HOUSING AND PLANNING

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### Objectives

- To support limited expansion to meet the identified needs of the parish
- To involve the local community in all aspects of development planning through consultation and participation
- To provide for a mixture of tenure type reflecting the housing needs of the community
- To conserve and protect the existing character and environmental setting.

### Background

West Bergholt is an attractive place to live due to the surrounding countryside combined with accessibility to larger towns, travel hubs and employment areas. There are many long-term residents of the village, including families going back several generations.

There is a growing elderly population and house prices are higher than the national average. Older residents do not wish to move from the village, but a number would like to move to smaller homes that are more suitable for their circumstances. As a result, some remain in larger homes that could be more suitable for family accommodation.

Housing is split between the original irregular pattern of housing in the Lanes area of the village with the newer styles of estate type development characteristic of the 1960's, 70's and 80's.

### Tenure type and demand for housing

There is a long-standing need for affordable housing for local people, particularly for young adults wishing to live independently and for young families.

Consultations have shown that residents want West Bergholt to remain a village and that its character should not be harmed by inappropriate new housing development, particularly that which might add to traffic and parking problems around the village.

Yet the majority of residents accept the need for new homes. There is a desire for a mixture of housing types, with highest support for small family homes for sale followed by affordable homes for local people to rent, and lowest support for large family homes for sale.

Residents state that good design is important and new houses should not have a harmful impact on existing homes.

Overall there are a number of aspects to consider here including tenure type, number of dwellings required, wider sustainability issues and pressure from outside the village. As the population gradually ages, there is a need for limited housing to support new families, either from within the village or from outside. This helps maintain the balance of the age pyramid. Secondly there is a need to identify the right balance of housing type, and thirdly because there is little room inside the current settlement boundary there is a need to consider changes to its boundary.

There are currently 1500 dwellings in the parish with planning permission in place for a handful more (April 2018). The majority of homes are owner occupied.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure a supply of sufficient homes to meet local needs and contribute to the retention of a sustainable community. An appropriate housing mix must suit elderly residents as well as first time buyers and those needing affordable homes. Valued parts of the landscape will be protected by building as far as possible on brownfield sites or sites where development will not have a harmful impact on the countryside.

## Other concerns

There is limited space for new development within the settlement boundary and many houses within the area have inadequate parking facilities, leading to on-street parking.

Residents value the countryside and wish to protect it from inappropriate development.

## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character housing areas of a mixed style, age and tenure</li> <li>• Popular facilities are conveniently located for existing housing.</li> <li>• Existing Village Design Statement</li> <li>• Village separate from Colchester by natural and man-made boundaries</li> <li>• All housing areas close to attractive landscapes</li> <li>• Well established village character</li> <li>• Green spaces well distributed amongst housing</li> <li>• Active and experienced Parish Council Planning Committee</li> <li>• Dedicated &amp; committed Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal opportunity for downsizing</li> <li>• Limited opportunity for affordable housing</li> <li>• Commuter village leading to overinflated property market</li> <li>• Gentrification of the village affecting the availability of affordable homes</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mixture of development sites available for consideration</li> <li>• local landowners willing to contribute to the village</li> <li>• Opportunity to influence own destiny with Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Opportunity to redress the balance of housing types</li> <li>• Chance to develop housing stock for younger people</li> <li>• Chance for older people to downsize and free up family properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tendency for new housing to be expensive, executive homes</li> <li>• land on all sides of the village vulnerable to speculative development</li> <li>• Attractiveness of village leads to housing shortages</li> <li>• Most new housing at inflated prices</li> <li>• Most developments on small scale to avoid the requirement to build affordable homes.</li> </ul>

## Identifying Housing Needs

As local planning authority, CBC has determined the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for the district using projected growth figures provided by the Government. In its Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), which was updated in PPPPP, CBC set an OAN figure for the district of 11,152. The emerging District Plan provides for 7,853 new homes in the district by 2033.

A target for West Bergholt has been set in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan Policy ss15 in the latest draft Local plan of 120 dwellings. This is higher than the 100 proposed during early consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Housing Supply & Tenure Type

A number of sites were assessed for their suitability and availability for housing development during the Plan period. The Report on the Assessment of Potential Housing Sites (Appendix X) explains the methodology used and sets out the individual assessments.

To assist the focus of where new housing might be developed, a number of principles have been devised in consultation with Colchester Borough Council, in that development:

- should only be considered if abutting the existing 'Settlement boundary'.
- should not reduce the separation of the village from Colchester.
- should not encroach on (or visually affect) the 'area of the parish to the south east and west of the settlement boundary' which has been designated as an Area of Separation in PP2.
- should be close to the main village amenities.
- should be able to contribute to addressing 'Transport, Highways and Infrastructure' needs.
- should be located such that any traffic impacts are satisfactory, or any adverse impacts are satisfactorily mitigated
- may continue within the settlement boundary but only where a limited number of "windfall" sites present themselves.
- any development abutting the settlement boundary should provide for a mix of housing and incorporate areas of open space. should consist of smaller housing units which respect the identified needs of the community including affordable housing, housing for downsizing and starter housing.

These principles have been applied to the areas of development put forward to date as part of Colchester's local Plan preparation.

The household neighbourhood plan survey indicated over 40% preference for the following types of development:

- Starter/low cost homes for first time occupiers/young families
- Small, mixed group, developments
- Warden assisted or sheltered housing
- "Downsizing" housing

Following this, the 'Issues & Options' Questionnaire indicated support for around an additional 100 new dwellings, of which the majority would be 'of type, style and numbers deemed necessary to meet the Parish's needs.'

Then in November 2015, a full 'Housing Needs Survey' was commissioned from the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE). Their report indicated that 53 people had given details of different local accommodation required in the next five years and beyond. Whereas some of this could be provided by the commercial sector as houses to buy (34%), there remained a need for rental accommodation and shared ownership.

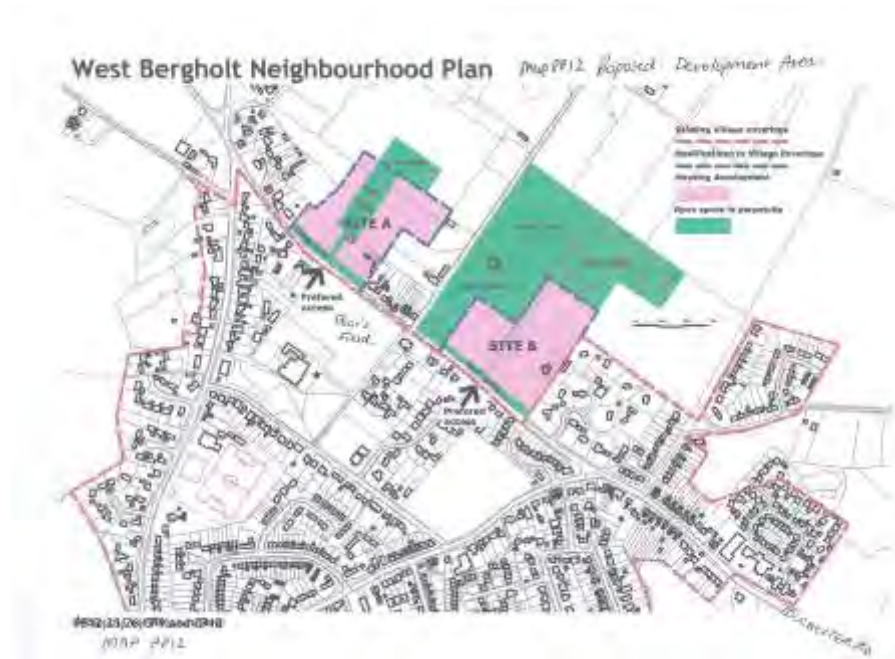
Furthermore, the timescales that this need was predicated on were:

Next 5 years: 25 units 5 – 10 years: 28 units

The survey only covered up to 5 years or over. However, we may assume that local need would be similar between year 11 and year 15 of the plan making a grand total of around 75 homes needed to satisfy local need. Whereas this would accommodate local need it is reasonable to assume that some additional housing would be required from people wishing to move into the village – say a further 25 units making a grand total of 100 units over the 15-year lifetime of the plan. This equates to an average building rate of around 6 or 7 houses per annum.

Sites identified for allocation contained in two locations of Colchester Road one opposite the Poor's Field and the other opposite the Treble Tile Public House.

The sites are shown below in pink.



## The Plan’s Approach

A number of policies allocate sites. Each of the site allocation policies have a number of criteria designed to ensure that new development reflects and respects the character of West Bergholt and to enable it to integrate into the prevailing character of the locality in which it is located as identified in the Village Design Statement which helps to identify the key characteristics of our parish.

These measures will help to ensure that a high standard of development and design is achieved in West Bergholt and will discourage development that looks out of place and is poorly integrated with its surroundings.

## Commentary on policies

Policies below relate to sites at Sites A and B.

The site allocation policies, together with other Plan policies, are intended to ensure that a high quality of design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings is achieved in line with this core planning principle in the NPPF.

## Affordable Housing

New housing developments can be required to include a percentage of affordable homes.

## Planning Applications

Any development proposals for sites allocated in this Plan will need to obtain planning permission from CBC, which will consider the application against its own policies and national policies together with the policies of this Plan.

## Policies

Policy No.	General Housing Planning Policies
PP12	<p>The minimum number of dwellings to be provided over the Neighbourhood Plan period will be 120. These dwellings will be provided on Site A and Site B as shown on MAP PP12.</p> <p>Development on land on the North East side of Colchester Road and identified on Map PP12 as Sites A and B for one, two and three bedroomed dwellings suitable for first time buyers, homes for older people or small families will be supported.</p> <p>The total area of land for new development is approximately 6 hectares (15 acres). The density of the development should not exceed 20 dwellings per hectare.</p>

Policy No.	General Housing Planning Policies
	<p>A mix of housing tenure will be encouraged. It is expected that the development will include affordable housing including affordable rent or shared ownership.</p> <p>Satisfactory access must be provided.</p> <p>A 12-metre strip of land parallel to the Colchester Road will be retained and integrated into the design and layout of the scheme to respect the semi-rural village aspect.</p> <p>Landscaping will be an important and integral part of the design and layout of the scheme. It is expected that all principal roads will incorporate a minimum 1 metre wide green verge to each side.</p> <p>In order to ensure that a stock of smaller dwellings is retained to meet the village's needs, permitted development rights will usually be withdrawn for extensions through the imposition of conditions on any grant of planning permission.</p>
PP13	<p>All new development should be of a high-quality design and sustainable construction is encouraged. Account should be taken of the guidance and principles in the Village Design Statement. In particular new development and any additions or extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an acceptable impact on the valley sides.</li> <li>• Provide or retain garden sizes appropriate to the size of the development and reflective of the character of the area in which the development sits.</li> <li>• Buildings must respect and be in harmony with the surroundings in respect of plot width, layout, building lines, materials, height, proportion and scale</li> </ul>

Policy No.	General Housing Planning Policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning applications must show contextually the impact of their proposals on adjacent building by means of adequately detailed plans with accurate street elevations.</li> <li>• There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of adjoining residential properties.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, any infrastructure required for new development will be expected to be provided in a timely manner and before the development is substantially occupied.</p>
PP14	Any infill development should reflect the character of the surrounding area and protect the amenity of neighbours. It should reinforce the uniformity of the street by reflecting the scale, mass, height, form, materials, fenestration and architectural details of its neighbours.
PP15	Dormers should be used sparingly and be subservient in nature.
PP16	Careful consideration should be given to the impact of construction on views across the village.
PP17	Details of all boundary walls, fences and gates around the site shall be as submitted drawing but should not lead to urbanisation.
PP18	Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on the landscape.
PP19	Alternative use of agricultural buildings must not have any adverse effect or cause any disturbance to any adjacent property. Buildings must be suitable for conversion.
PP20	Compliance with Essex parking standards will be sought for new or adapted dwellings. New parking directly in front of property on the road should be avoided.
PP21	Proposals for affordable housing on rural exception sites will be supported if it meets all of the following criteria:



<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>General Housing Planning Policies</b>
	<p>I. Is justified by evidence of need through a local housing needs survey for the village</p> <p>II. Is located outside the “Area of Separation”</p> <p>III. Is appropriately located and designed to respect its surroundings and</p> <p>Does not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement.</p>
PP22	Development will not be permitted in the area shown on Map PP22 if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between West Bergholt village and Colchester or reducing their separate identity by reducing the separation between these two settlements.
<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Development Policies for New Build within the new sites earmarked for development</b>
PP23	All new developments will provide on-site, or contribute towards, appropriate measures to assist walking, cycling, public transport use as well as other highway improvements and links to village facilities.
PP24	Colchester Road (in the vicinity of the two development sites), will be the subject of speed reduction and accessibility improvements. New mini roundabouts are to be installed at the junctions of the new development areas with Colchester Road, and a new zebra crossing sited to allow access to the rest of the village safely including the school and sports fields. This is to be funded by the developers of Site A and Site B.
	<b>Development Policy specific to Site A</b>
PP25	The provision of a Cemetery on land indicated on Map PP12 will be supported.
	<b>Development Policy specific to Site B</b>
PP26	The provision of sports facilities (team ball sports) on land adjacent to the cricket club as indicated on Map PP12 will be a requirement of the developer of this site.



## 14. BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

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### Objectives

- To support local business and retain local employment
- To encourage local employment opportunities through controlled expansion of existing employment located on, or adjacent to, the existing business parks

### Background & Intent

The main employment in the parish is a mixture of traditional farming activities (and those which have evolved) to diversify these on existing and former farm sites); business parks which in the main consist of small multiple units of varying size and scale; more isolated businesses; healthcare; retail and leisure/entertainment and finally businesses run from home. The NP will need to provide the opportunity for further employment which is likely to come from the business parks and a summary of these follows.

### Pattens Yard - Nayland Road

This is a long-established village business enterprise site, which provides mixed-use office space and storage type facilities. A number of business tenants operate from this site. In 2015 planning permission was granted for limited development of the buildings facing the entrance to the site which greatly enhanced the site appearance whilst providing expansion. The site lies on Nayland Road with little if any on street parking occurring and vehicles are parked within the boundary of the business park. Site ownership changed in 2013 following planning and boundary rationalisation of the site. Conditions were placed on operating hours etc. at this time. This business park largely operates in harmony with the wider village community providing local mixed employment. The green space to the immediate west of the active building business area is under the same ownership and

presents an ideal area for future expansion if required. Agricultural and private land is evident on all sides to the west of Nayland Road. This site is capable of being expanded to increase and enhance village business opportunities.

### Business Park – Armoury Road

This is a well-established business park formed initially as a family business and has developed to accommodate mixed business types for more than 40 years. The only road to the site is Armoury Road, which starts at Colchester Road as a public road and it then becomes a private road (un-adopted by the local authorities) at the north-east end to feed the business park and some residential housing. The condition of the private road is maintained through private investment. The site is surrounded by open space used for the stabling and exercise of horses to the west and farmland laid to crops to the north, east and south. Low-density residential homes form part of the main site with the nearest properties making use of the stable facilities. A number of small mixed and diverse businesses operate from within the industrial units located on this site. Lying to the north east of the village and on sloping ground towards the A12 this business park is capable of expansion without overly compromising the wellbeing of nearby residents. Some improvement to Armoury Road will be necessary if this site is expanded and any resulting increased traffic may have an impact on those residents that live in and off Armoury Road towards Colchester Road.

### Bourne Road – Business Park Bourne Farm

A small but well-established business-park is located at the bottom of Bourne Road operated as a family business. The business park provides mixed business accommodation originally from a set of farm outbuildings, which have been renovated and updated over the years. Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms

of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley. The site lies on Bourne Road, which is fed by Chapel Lane, Queens Road and Newbridge Hill (Lexden Road). Bourne Road is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and in places it narrows significantly as it passes through the more densely residential areas to the west of the site towards the village core. If the site is to be considered for expansion, then traffic restrictions should be imposed for vehicular access to the site so as to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents along Bourne Road. Bourne Road becomes a dead end from a private vehicle perspective once the road meets Bourne Farm. There is a public right of way footpath that continues from Bourne Farm towards Braiswick and Play Golf course.

### **Fossetts Lane – Business Park Chancers Farm**

A small modern conversion of former poultry sheds this business park provides mixed business accommodation. Open space farmland surrounds the business park on three sides and expansion to the park in relation to open space available is possible. The area is located within the Colne Valley and any potential expansion must be considered in terms of erosion of the natural characteristics of the valley. The site lies on Fossetts Lane, which is fed by Church Road and Mill Lane (in Fordham) and Rams Farm Road leading toward West Bergholt village. Fossetts Lane is an adopted road maintained by Essex County Council and is extremely narrow making the business park unsuitable for HGV access. If the site is to be considered for expansion, then the usage of Chancers Farm must remain of the service industry type/light or specialized manufacturing with minimal traffic movements in order to retain the rural feel currently enjoyed by residents. Although the site is in the parish adjacent fields to the west are in the neighbouring parish of Fordham.

### **Other Employment Areas**

These are provided by:

- Village shops
- Pubs
- The Parish Council
- Churches
- The Hop House
- Various peripheral businesses inside and outside the village
- Farms

These commercial, retail and employment sites provide useful opportunities to work locally and any expansion plans will be viewed sympathetically on a case by case basis.

In particular every effort will be made to include these in advertising in the Village Bulletin and in the Business Directory on the village website.

Farm diversification sites will be supported as a means of improving employment opportunities in the more rural areas of the plan.



## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good mix of employment in the parish, both modern and traditional</li> <li>• Several small business park sites</li> <li>• Reasonable road access to employment sites</li> <li>• Three well-used village pubs</li> <li>• strong concentration of professional trades in the village</li> <li>• Variety of shops</li> <li>• Strong agricultural community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of space for shops to expand</li> <li>• Poor accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to business parks</li> <li>• Lack of dedicated parking at shops.</li> <li>• Limited retail facilities</li> <li>• Lack of integration of business parks with the village</li> <li>• Poor broadband</li> <li>• Lack of employment areas zoned in the Local Plan as employment sites</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All business parks have capability to expand</li> <li>• Promotion of businesses through marketing and publicity</li> <li>• New broadband connectivity</li> <li>• Upgrading of business parks</li> <li>• Further farm diversifications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pub Companies altering tenancy agreements and pubs subject to short term closures and long-term threat of redevelopment for housing</li> <li>• Business parks being developed as housing sites</li> <li>• High business rates</li> </ul>

## The Plan's Approach

This will be to support appropriate expansion of the business parks and encourage and support individual businesses wherever possible.

## Policies

Policy No.	Business, Commerce and Employment Planning Policies
PP27	<p>Proposals to upgrade or extend existing employment sites will be supported provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the impact on the amenities enjoyed by occupants of nearby properties is acceptable; and</li> <li>• they do not compromise the character of the area or openness of the countryside; and traffic impact is acceptable in terms of highway safety and living conditions of residents. Proposals may be required to submit a traffic impact analysis or transport assessment which is proportionate to the development and demonstrates traffic impact and any measures which may be taken to mitigate impacts</li> </ul>
PP28	<p>There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provide employment and are of demonstrable benefit to the local community. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the commercial premises or land in question have not been in active use for at least 12 months and there is little, or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment generating user. This must be proven through an independent sustained marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months; and</li> <li>• the new use will not be hazardous to road safety or to the living conditions of residents.</li> </ul>
PP29	<p>Development proposals for the diversification of farms will be supported where this enables production from the land to continue and where:</p>

Policy No.	Business, Commerce and Employment Planning Policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. There are no significant negative effects upon the landscape.</li> <li>ii. It does not result in significant increased traffic by way of Heavy Goods Vehicles on rural roads.</li> <li>iii. There is sustained or increased local employment.</li> </ul>
PP30	<p>Proposals for new rural businesses, including the provision of tourism-related facilities, attractions &amp; accommodation, and homeworking will be encouraged when they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. They do not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity;</li> <li>b. They do not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape, tranquility or Green Infrastructure network of the Parish and they include suitable access and car parking.</li> </ul>



## 15. SPORT AND RECREATION

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### Objectives

- Promote increased opportunities to get active and participate in sport and informal recreation.
- To develop our recreational facilities to meet the needs of an expanding population
- To tailor facilities to the needs of all ages
- To make best use of our sports and recreational facilities and
- To consider the need for new areas of land for organised sports

### Background

The formal sports and recreation facilities in West Bergholt are limited in the main to the village although there are plenty of opportunities for informal recreation through areas of open space and public rights of way which allow the public access to the countryside. There are also signed cycle routes in the area within easy access of the village. In the appraisal of this area of the plan it has become apparent that it is the open spaces in the village which are in danger of becoming inadequate to serve the needs of a growing population and one whose demographic is changing. Coupled with a need to allow people increased opportunities to improve their health and well-being the Neighbourhood Plan has identified the following areas where improvements are needed:

- Formal sports facilities
- Areas and management of open space

### Lorkin Daniell and Poor's Fields

The adult football pitch together with its associated clubhouse dominates the Lorkin Daniell playing field limiting realistic expansion and enhancement

of the village hall footprint, children's playground, Multi User Games Area (MUGA) and tennis facilities.

The people of our parish should have access to the very best affordable facilities both now and in the future. However, the location of the football pitch limits expansion and enhancement of family recreation and play facilities sited on the Lorkin Daniell playing field. West Bergholt FC has previously attempted to purchase land for a new site, and to enlarge and improve its clubhouse but has been unsuccessful due to the prohibitive cost.

There is a lack of informal recreational areas for ad hoc non-team-based sports use and too much emphasis on open spaces being used for football. Even for formal sports use there is a lack of good "clubhouse" facilities e.g. Poor's Field. Other drawbacks for these areas include: lack of a skate park or teenage outdoor play areas and lack of an adventure playground for children past the age where they would enjoy the playground that exists. Although the MUGA is popular the tennis courts are too few in number to form the basis for a tennis club which would need three courts to allow competitions and club tournaments.

### Changing the emphasis of current sports areas and introducing new facilities

It is evident that not everything can be accommodated on the current sites, and so it is proposed to look for a further site so that there can be a differentiation between informal sport and children's play areas and the formal team sports. New sports areas and purpose built facilities such as clubhouses and changing areas could be incorporated into a new site, and relocation of the football pitch and associated clubhouse to a consolidated and centralised team and dedicated recreational sports area, would benefit the entire community by releasing a significant part of the Lorkin Daniell field for improved child, teenage play and generalised recreation use, in the existing Lorkin Daniell and Poor's Field sites there would then be the

opportunity for more planting and seating together with expanded provision of children's adventure play area equipment with zip-wires and similar provisions for older children. Relocating the football pitch and clubhouse would also open up the Lorkin Daniell playing field to more diverse family uses including providing space to expand the already heavily booked village halls as well as affording the MUGA additional space for an additional tennis court and the provision of an all-weather 5 aside football area. The children's play facilities could be vastly improved and expanded to appeal to children of all age groups.

Overall consolidation of sports and recreation areas to optimise usage would allow the following benefits to accrue:

- Teenage and child play and recreational facilities could be expanded across that part of the Lorkin Daniell playing field currently occupied by the adult football pitch, allowing potential enhancement of facilities similar to those provided in Marks Tey, Great Horkesley or the Maldon children activity centre.
- Expansion and enhancement of the village hall facilities would be possible which are currently limited and unlikely to meet demands for the next 15 years.
- Allow dedicated areas of the village hall complex for pre-school activities.
- Allow more indoor club and pastime activities to operate from the village hall complex located centrally within the main village residential area.
- Allow expansion of the village halls car park to safely accommodate future needs for pre-school and Heathlands school drop-offs, use of the MUGA or for car parking whilst adults and their children enjoy the child and teenage play facilities.
- Future proof team sport within the village. New and existing sport needs can be met through a purpose designed and designated area.

- The junior football team can be relocated to the new area releasing Poor's Field for more generalised recreational or school use activities as required. Poor's Field is Trust property with the trust objective being that of general recreation provision.
- The future of the village cricket team would be secured.
- Opportunities for development of an enhanced children's play area



## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good recreational opportunities for popular organised sport</li> <li>• Open spaces allow informal recreation</li> <li>• Team sports and children's' play areas provided</li> <li>• Network of PROW and cycle routes</li> <li>• Popular allotments based at central location in the village.</li> <li>• Variety of indoor recreation clubs for various ages</li> <li>• Well-established team sports clubs for all ages.</li> <li>• Floodlight Multi Use Games Area based at village hall.</li> <li>• Hill House Wood recreational facilities in local woods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporting areas often confined to single usage</li> <li>• Sporting areas not available due to regular bookings</li> <li>• Lack of changing and toilet facilities</li> <li>• Poor vehicle access and parking inadequate at some sites</li> <li>• Overuse of existing facilities leads to degradation.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New development areas may allow further areas of open space and opportunities for further sports pitches</li> <li>• Possibility of amalgamating formal sports in one area</li> <li>• Reallocation of space in the Lorkin-Daniell and Poor's Field sites for informal recreation</li> <li>• Development of PROW and cycle routes</li> <li>• Development of Bridleways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of opportunities for all members of the community</li> <li>• Lack of facilities leading to depleted health of the community</li> <li>• requirement to travel away from the parish for some sport and recreational facilities</li> <li>• Lack of volunteers running sporting clubs</li> <li>• Vandalism of facilities.</li> </ul>

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online booking form for floodlight MUGA</li> <li>• Purpose-built changing &amp; toilet facilities</li> <li>• Parish Council uses expertise &amp; contacts to support clubs with grants and manoeuvring the bureaucracy.</li> </ul>	

## The Plan's Approach

As a fundamental first step towards future sustainable and planned village growth it is important to identify and reserve an area that can be dedicated exclusively for team or specialist sports. In meeting this objective any future potential housing and business development areas could be planned and implemented in a co-ordinated manner which would not compromise the earmarked village recreational areas. Any land chosen should be capable of meeting the immediate needs of football clubs in the village and be enhanced in phases to meet future sporting needs. Taking into account the nature and gradient of land in and around the village, an appraisal of a number of different sites was undertaken. The analysis appears in the evidence report of such.

## Proposal for a Site Off Armoury Road

Map PP12 shows an ideal location for any future consolidated team ball sports. This land is outside the settlement boundary and is used for arable farming. There are several advantages to this site



- Within easy reach of the main residential areas which is largely
- located to the south and east of the site with agricultural land lying to the north
- Adjacent to the existing cricket club and cricket pavilion
- Road access is available off Armoury Road
- Site greater than 10 acres in area
- Space available for car parking
- Site can be developed for sport in phases to meet evolving demand. Plenty of space to accommodate adult and junior football, rugby other team sports, practice facilities and teenage play facilities.

## Policies

Policy No.	Sports and Recreation Community Parish Policies
CP9	New sports activity areas will be developed as opportunities arise. Consolidation of sports activities may take place as a result. The favoured location for new sports areas are shown on Map PP12.
CP10	The Lorkin Daniell playing field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.
CP11	The Poor's Field will be increasingly managed so as to allow improved access to recreational activities.
CP12	New consolidated sports areas will be expected to promote a wide variety of sports. Clubhouse facilities and parking must be provided, and the facility must have good accessibility to other parts of the village. The favoured site for new sports facilities is adjacent to housing Site B shown on Map PP12.



## 16. COMMUNITY SAFETY

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### Objectives

- To create an environment which promotes a feeling of safety where the perception and incidence of crime is low,
- To see the traffic circulation and parking environment managed to minimise the chance of being the victim of a traffic-related accident
- To help protect vulnerable members of the community from harm in and around the home and from inclement weather

### Background

Crime and fear of crime and the perceptions of safety on the streets in the parish is a constant concern although in recent years the anti-social aspects have reduced somewhat. This is very much an area demanding a multi-agency approach involving the police, emergency services and emergency planning officials together with village organisations and residents. Such an approach is also needed for promoting safety in the home especially in an area that has an increasing number of elderly residents who may be at risk of burglary, deception-type crime and even risk of fire.

### Crime and Fear of Crime

Although crime levels are low there is a perception of a lack of police presence and as a result of neighbourhood policing changes there is no longer a regular mobile police presence where residents can seek advice or make their concerns known. The area no longer has an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the village.

The village is part of Colchester Zone 3 Local Community Action Panel (L-CAP) meeting quarterly and attended by “Resolver Partners”. Residents and businesses can report local issues and obtain progress feedback on resolution actions. The Police, Zone Warden, Youth Officers, Housing

Officers and Councillors work towards suitable issue resolution initiatives. Village related Issues are reported to the L-CAP by Parish and Ward Councillors.

A recent development which is being pursued is the recruiting of a Special Constable for the village who can deal with a variety of issues such as anti-social behaviour and traffic and parking offences. A further initiative is that of a Fire safety volunteer to work with the Fire Service to promote safety in the home.

### Community Safety

An emergency plan for the village has been drawn up to support Colchester borough and the emergency services. Snow clearance volunteer teams are in place and the Parish Council maintain equipment and salt supplies for use by volunteers.

### Road Safety

The village has a very active Community Speed Watch group (CSW) with resource and equipment being shared with Eight Ash Green. The CSW group is recorded as being in the top five most active groups in Essex. There is also a traffic and safety group which has drawn up a traffic safety plan for the village and which has a special focus on the 400-place school which causes general issues of safety for young students traveling to school but also an ever-growing problem of illegal, anti-social and dangerous parking at school drop off and pick up times.

## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively low levels of crime</li> <li>• An existing traffic and safety group and strategy</li> <li>• Snow-clearing volunteers</li> <li>• Emergency plan</li> <li>• Community speed watch</li> <li>• Parish Council able to respond to emergency with retained staff</li> <li>• Facebook Hub a good warning mechanism</li> <li>• Strong community spirit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeding and parking issues</li> <li>• Large primary school results in many younger students walking around the village at peak time</li> <li>• Oversubscribed school leads to increased parking pressures</li> <li>• Lack of street lights may lead to a perceived feeling of vulnerability</li> <li>• Lack of regular police presence</li> <li>• Elderly population vulnerable to bogus callers and from dangers around the home and at times of inclement weather</li> <li>• Trip hazards caused by poor footway condition</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic safety plan/20 mph zones and streets</li> <li>• Special Constable Scheme</li> <li>• Safety in the Home Fire Service Initiative</li> <li>• L-Cap/community safety panel</li> <li>• On line reporting tool</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Watch and possibility of using existing Trygve app.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Escalating crime</li> <li>• Traffic speed and volumes increasing due to expansion of village with attendant risk of serious accident</li> <li>• Rural hinterland difficult to police</li> <li>• Difficult of recruiting volunteers</li> <li>• Rural crime rapidly increasing.</li> </ul>

## The Plan's Approach

The Essex Neighbourhood Policing role is constantly changing. Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) roles have been cut. Dedicated PCSO's have to be 100% funded by the community. Alternate policing methods could be considered. Volunteer Special Constables are being recruited with full powers of arrest matching those of regular police officers. A further example of the volunteer sector meeting community needs of today and the future. Special Constables are a means of meeting community policing needs in the future. Occasional antisocial behaviour occurs and local police presence would help control such behaviour. A Traffic Safety Plan (TSP) for the village which concentrates on the roads around the school and the junction of New Church Road and Chapel Road. Appropriate expansion of the TSP should be a consideration for all new building development sites.

## Policies

Policy No.	Community Safety Planning Policies
PP31	All areas of new development are to be designed so as to reduce the incidence of burglary and other crime.
PP32	Design of new road layouts that discourages indiscriminate parking and promotes a safe pedestrian and cycling environment will be supported.

Policy No.	Community Safety Community Parish Policies
CP13	Neighbourhood Watch schemes including Speed Watch and Farm Watch will be encouraged and supported.
CP14	Road safety issues will be highlighted through regular monitoring of issues and plans of action developed with the relevant agencies. Particular attention will be paid to areas around the school, the Co-op and other areas of high pedestrian footfall.

Policy No.	Community Safety Community Parish Policies
CP15	Anti-social and other behavioural issues will be monitored and reported to the authorities and measures developed with the Police and the Community Safety Partnership to reduce their incidence.
CP16	Crime and fear of crime will be monitored, and remedial actions discussed and devised with the police and other community safety groups.
CP17	Where new streets are proposed, these should be 20 mph speed limit zones



## 17. COMMUNICATION

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### Objectives

- To keep the community informed through a wide range of media,
- To promote a two-way dialogue through creating the opportunity for participation in democratic processes and decision making.
- To enable the community to participate in forums and discussion groups about issues at large in the parish

### Background

There are 4 main channels in which the village communicates;

- Face to Face
- Bulletins and Newsletter form
- West Bergholt Website
- Social Media

Communication channels are constantly changing and methods can always be improved. Different age groups use different methods and the main concerns are:

- How to manage the communication channels
- Which information to put out to achieve maximum exposure of issues and events
- How to co-ordinate effort so that communication between different groups is put to best effect

### Democratic Aspects

The Parish Council has its main meeting and its committees and sub-committees but is anxious to build on the task and finish groups and more permanent single-issue groups that it has started to spawn. Groups exist covering the annual village fete; the traffic and safety group; the village

broadband group; the multi-games area users committee and of course the Neighbourhood Planning Group. The emphasis will be to support groups and draw in volunteers who can act as a pool for other groups and societies to draw upon and to tap the huge resources and skills that exist within the community.

### The Village Bulletin

The Parish council supports the publication of a quarterly Village Bulletin which is delivered to all households. A brief, more up to date “Village News” is produced most months when there is no Bulletin and displayed on the notice boards and available at other sites around the village. Feedback from the surveys suggested that the Bulletin is a much-loved publication which even with all the electronic mediums available people want to see continue. The main issues to combat are modernising the content, introducing more “newsy” material to dovetail with the retrospective nature of the reporting. The emphasis will be to supplement the current editor with an editorial team and some parish reporters.

### Conventional Noticeboards

The Parish Council also maintains a number of notice boards which are kept up to date regularly. In addition, the church and school have their own news-letters. There is always a call for more noticeboards but although these can be considered the immediate need is to better manage the ad-hoc posters and informal notices pinned to most telegraph poles in the village. Here it is proposed to better utilise purpose-built sign hangars at strategic locations to affix event-type community news items.

### West Bergholt Website

West Bergholt.net – the website page for the village provides a calendar of events, electronic copies of the bulletin, village updates and details of the parish councillors. Its strengths lie in its dedicated webmaster who posts news stories and relays smaller snippets of the same items to Facebook and

Twitter. The website will continue to be updated and used for an increasing number of uses such as village surveys and parish polls for example. One initiative from the past is being resurrected both electronically and in paper form, that of the Welcome pack for new residents.

## Social Media

There are a number of active sites for West Bergholt and the clubs that exist in the parish. The majority of the sites have a good number of followers. The issue here is how organisations can follow up comments many of which can be utilised to better effect by providing clarification on popular items such as planning issues, broadband updates and crime activity.

## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Village Bulletin</li> <li>• Facebook Hub and Community and NP Groups</li> <li>• PC meetings</li> <li>• Working Groups which encourage community participation</li> <li>• Notice boards</li> <li>• Communications Officer at PC</li> <li>• Annual Village meeting and village events</li> <li>• Community information from the Police</li> <li>• Trygve app. For traffic safety issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information can be poorly sequenced and communicated</li> <li>• Social media information based on opinion not facts</li> <li>• Social media information not acted upon due to poor take up by various groups and ages</li> <li>• Scattergun approach to information</li> <li>• Data security</li> <li>• Retention of useful information amongst special interest groups</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further use and development of Website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling that data is not used to good effect</li> </ul>

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further Facebook Groups</li> <li>• Use of Twitter, Instagram etc</li> <li>• Making more specialised information available e.g. crime</li> <li>• Create a village forum</li> <li>• Welcome pack for new residents</li> <li>• Developing the potential of the Village Bulletin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hidden concerns only appearing within groups and not shared</li> <li>• Suspicion</li> <li>• Resentment of officialdom</li> <li>• Poor participation in Council activities</li> <li>• Socially isolated groups which do not use electronic media</li> <li>• Threat of hacking</li> <li>• Trolling threat on Social Media.</li> </ul>

## Our Plan's Approach

We believe the various methods of communication we have in the village put us in a strong position for the future. The explosion of the internet and social media is growing year on year and our current platforms give us a great advantage to reach out to more locals. One critical point to reference is ensuring we have the right broadband capability and to ensure this is sustained.

## Policies

Policy No.	Communication Planning Policies
PP33	<p>Development of new, high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported.</p> <p>Proposals for new developments must demonstrate how they will contribute to and be compatible with, local fibre optic networks or high-speed internet connectivity. This could be demonstrated through a "Conductivity Statement" accompanying a planning application. Such statements</p>

Policy No.	Communication Planning Policies
	<p>should consider land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements, known public broadband infrastructure and their speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, fibre, satellite etc.) and a realistic assessment of connection potential or contribution to the expansion of any such networks.</p> <p>Where no high-speed internet connectivity is available, as a minimum and subject to viability, suitable ducting that can accept low-cost upgrade for Fibre to the Home or other cabling should be provided to the public highway, a community led local access network or another suitable location.</p> <p>Where possible additional ducting should be provided that contributes to a local access network for the wider community. The costs associated with this can be considered alongside any other requirements and be subject to viability testing.</p>

Policy No.	Communication Community Parish Policies
CP18	A West Bergholt communications forum will be established consisting of a mixture of age groups and skills to help ensure all groups within the community are represented.
CP19	The Village Bulletin publication will be reviewed, and improvements made.
CP20	Communications will be consistent, and opportunities made available for residents to feed their thoughts back to other organisations.
CP21	The website will be developed as the principal means of day to day communication and information although printed information will be maintained via the Village Bulletin, monthly newsletters and traditional noticeboards as demand requires.

Policy No.	Communication Community Parish Policies
CP22	All new residents will receive an information pack to introduce them to the activities and organisations available in the village.



## 18. TRANSPORT

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### Objectives

- To make getting around the parish and elsewhere by foot, bicycle, car and bus simple, more convenient and safe.
- To ensure critical infrastructure is provided for new developments
- To enable wider transport infrastructure to be improved upon, especially to calm traffic, control parking and improve walking and cycling

### Background

The village has generally good main (B1508) and minor road connections to the A12, Colchester town centre, the rail station, Tollgate retail area and towards Sudbury and the rural Essex-Suffolk border area.

Bus services are provided by two companies, Chambers, providing an hourly service to Colchester and Sudbury, and First Bus that operates a 30-minute frequency peak and daytime service to the town centre via the Rail Station. On Sundays the frequency of buses drops to two hourly. School buses serve the main secondary schools whilst the Care Network. and Community bus services offer a bookable service for those unable to use conventional public transport easily. Footways are generally provided adjacent to the majority of roads and the area is covered by 30mph speed restrictions. There are no cycle ways although a signed cycle route to the rail station using the main road has been provided in recent years and similarly the National Cycle Network route 13 skirts the village providing a means of accessing the wider countryside

### Connectivity and Traffic Management

Connectivity is reasonably good for the village and indeed across the parish area, although the highway infrastructure is by no means modern. Thus,

links to the south west to the A12 and to retail parks on the edge of Colchester is via a narrow and winding lane – Argents Lane or via another country lane leading to a level crossing. This route draws in traffic not only from the village but from across the parish and indeed north Colchester. Whilst there is no desire to see this route upgraded there is a feeling that heavy good traffic could be more controlled and prohibited, save for access. The main route through the village also attracts its fair share of through traffic including skip lorries from a nearby recycling company in a neighbouring parish. Since this road is the one that passes the favoured areas of development there will be a need to introduce traffic regulating facilities such as crossings and perhaps mini-roundabouts to “calm” traffic speeds and intensity. Elsewhere in the more residential areas there is a strongly supported desire to regulate parking and introduce 20 mph streets or preferably 20 mph zones.

### Highways

The main concerns with the infrastructure, aside from traffic circulation is the fabric of the main routes and residential side streets which are beginning to show their age. The intention with this issue is to establish a better dialogue with the County Council to enable inspection and maintenance regimes to be better understood and to receive better notification of when repairs and surfacing programmes will be carried out.

### Bus Services

The main bus service to the railway station and the town centre is at 30-minute frequencies and information about arrivals and departures in real time is now available via Smartphones. Coupled with services provided by the other operator, this means that there are 4 services per hour. This should do much to improve the perception of service frequency and reliability and increase the numbers using the bus. It is considered vital to get information on frequency and real-time information out to all households rather than hoping that this information will naturally be passed



on. Such an initiative is vital to establish sustainable travel patterns in any new developments that are built. Through the plan's implementation it is intended to work with bus companies on a range of incentives to use the bus including multi-operator tickets, books of multi-journey tickets and reduced price for family travel.

## Cycling

Cycling should be far more prevalent than it is. Journeys to the railway station to Colchester are less than 3 miles in length whilst journeys across the village are at most 10 minutes away by bike. Similarly, for recreational or health pursuits cycling in the parish is an absolute delight of riding in mostly lightly trafficked roads with great views over the Colne valley or across towards Suffolk and Constable Country. The issue is normally lack of information coupled with the natural fear of traffic. A cycle user group is a possibility to extol the virtues of cycling for leisure or utility journeys and to establish where physical infrastructure such as cycle ways or parking facilities could be introduced.

## Walking

There is a good provision of footways (pavements) and footpaths but some facilities are missing. These include footways in New Church road leading to the school and in Nayland Road leading to one of the employment zones at Patterns Yard. There is also a need for further crossings along Lexden Road and Colchester Road. Lastly recreational walking guides would help publicise the public rights of way to the community to help encourage health and family circular walks.

## Summary of SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compact main village with good accessibility on foot to many services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate on street real time information about bus service arrivals</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonably frequent bus services</li> <li>• A B road affording access to Colchester, rail station and A12</li> <li>• Local Taxi company located in the village</li> <li>• Community and Care Network transport for mobility impaired residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of cycle ways and cycle parking</li> <li>• Missing stretches of footway</li> <li>• Poor residential road maintenance</li> <li>• Lack of pedestrian crossings</li> <li>• Poorly sited bus stops</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe cycle ways</li> <li>• Footways leading the school and to the rural outskirts of the village</li> <li>• Traffic management improvements to reduce the dominant effect of traffic</li> <li>• New development links to the school and village centre</li> <li>• Encouragement to use improved bus service</li> <li>• A village mini-bus for community use</li> <li>• 20 mph zones or streets</li> <li>• School travel plan and cycle training</li> <li>• Bus services to the hospital</li> <li>• Improved PRO signing and information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking spill-over onto narrow streets</li> <li>• Traffic dominated streets</li> <li>• Speeding traffic</li> <li>• Intimidating pedestrian and cycle environment</li> <li>• Further degradation of highway assets including signing, road and footway condition and PROW</li> <li>• Damage caused by agricultural machinery</li> </ul>

## Our Plan’s Approach

Although there has been some growth in the village there is nothing to suggest that major road infrastructure is required, rather it is likely to be the management of traffic and parking, together with the introduction of more bus services and the improvement of the walking and cycling environment that should be the focus.

### Policies

Policy No.	Transport, Highways and Infrastructure Planning Policies
PP34	Developments must be safely located with regard to vehicular and pedestrian access, ensuring adequate visibility.
PP35	Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards village transport safety schemes.
PP36	Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and storage for mobility scooters where appropriate, minimising their visual impact by design.
PP37	Existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways provide a high level of amenity value and will be protected. New development should take every opportunity to enhance existing networks and provide new networks where appropriate.
PP38	Any planning applications for new development within the Plan Area must demonstrate how they can contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure and other development projects prioritised by the community. This may be through contributions via a section 106 agreement or through payment of any Community Infrastructure Levy. In particular, the community has currently identified the following projects as priorities. In all cases, priorities will be reviewed annually. (See Appendix X)

Policy No.	Transport, Highways and Infrastructure Community Parish Policies
CP23	Traffic management will be introduced to control parking and to improve the environment for cycling and walking in residential streets.
CP24	Traffic will be channelled towards principal roads, i.e. B1508 (Colchester Rd/Bures Rd), Lexden Rd, Chapel Rd, Argents Lane, Nayland Rd and Chitts Hill.
CP25	Cycling and walking will be promoted and will be considered as part of all infrastructure projects.
CP26	Parish bus services will be promoted and improvements sought. New minibus services will be introduced where appropriate.
CP27	A high standard of maintenance will be sought for roads and pavements, ditches & verges.



## 19. MONITORING AND REVIEW

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The Neighbourhood Plan is written to cover the period to 2033. It is anticipated there will be changes to Planning Law and the introduction of different development sites during this time period. It is possible there may be very early changes as the Colchester's Site Allocations process is not yet complete or adopted.

To ensure that the Plan continues to promote development and is appropriate for West Bergholt it will be reviewed by the Parish Council, or group specifically appointed for that purpose every five years.

To ensure the policies written in the plan are observed, the Parish Council will focus special attention on all proposed development. Planning

applications will be monitored as they progress to ensure amendments are fully compliant with the adopted Plan.

An initial Action Plan has been produced and this is included in the appendix to the plan; this is expected to evolve over the lifetime of the plan. The initial ideas are based upon the many suggestions made by the community during the many consultations that have been held during the plan's preparation. Additionally, an Infrastructure plan has been assembled which potentially can be funded through new development, s106 or CIL contributions or other funding opportunities. This Plan is also in the appendix.



# APPENDIX 1 – MAPS & LISTS

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Map PP2	Local Green Spaces (to be designated)
Map PP3	Existing Local Green Space
Map PP5	Area of Separation
Map PP6	Character Area
Map PP12	Proposed Development Area
Map PP22	Coalescence with Colchester
Map CP8	Views Map (And Photos Below)
List one	Initial Action Plan
List two	Infrastructure