



## PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

CUCKFIELD COTTAGE HOMES  
CHURCH PLATT  
CUCKFIELD  
WEST SUSSEX  
RH17 5LA

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING SINGLE STOREY FLAT ROOF REAR EXTENSIONS AND FIRST FLOOR FLAT ROOF DORMER WINDOWS,  
ERECTION OF 1 ½ STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS ON THE FOOTPRINTS OF THE EXISTING SINGLE STOREY EXTENSIONS AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT DORMER WINDOWS.  
REFURBISHMENT OF THE EXISTING FLATS AND ERECTION OF A 1 ½ STOREY SIDE EXTENSION TO PROVIDE TWO ADDITIONAL FLATS (2 x 1 BED FLATS) FOR CUCKFIELD COTTAGE HOMES CIO

CLIENT: CUCKFIELD COTTAGE HOMES CIO  
(CHARITIES COMMISSION REFERENCE 1214631)

15<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2025

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Appendix A –	Action in Rural Sussex Housing Needs Survey Report – Cuckfield, September 2012.
Appendix B –	Email correspondence from the Senior Private Housing Options Officer.
Appendix C -	'The Cuckfield Cottage Homes: A Short History' which includes the Bequest.

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Sadler Planning is instructed by Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to prepare a Planning, Design and Access Statement to demolish the existing single storey flat roof rear extensions and first floor flat roof dormer windows. Erection of 1 ½ storey rear extensions on the footprints of the existing single storey extensions and erection of replacement dormer windows. Refurbishment of the existing flats and erection of a 1 ½ storey side extension to provide two additional flats for Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO (Charities Commission Number 1214631).
- 1.2 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been written by Kathryn Sadler BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI who has over 20 years experience of working as a Town Planner within local authorities and private practices within the southeast.
- 1.3 The Statement should be read in conjunction with:
  - The Plans provided by Cerowski Architects,
  - The Heritage Statement and Statement of Significance provided by DGC Historic Buildings Consultants,
  - The Archaeological Assessment prepared by Chris Butler of CBAS,
  - The Transport Report provided by Reeves Transport Planning,
  - The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provided by C.T Ecology,
  - Preliminary Roost Assessment provided by C.T Ecology, and
  - The Bat Emergence Survey with Bat Mitigation Strategy provided by C.T Ecology

## 2.0 Background and The Proposal

### Background

2.1 The Applicant of the application is Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (Charities Commission Number 1214631) who provides homes (Alms Houses) for people who:

- (i) are in need, hardship or distress; and
- (ii) are sixty or over; and
- (iii) are followers of a Christian faith with preference being given to members of the Church of England; and
- (iv) are resident in the area of benefit (Deanery of Cuckfield which includes Haywards Heath) with a preference for those persons living in the Parish of Cuckfield.

2.2 Almshouses are the oldest form of social housing in the United Kingdom, providing independent living in a safe, community-led environment. Almshouses provide a unique accommodation model, representing a charitable form of self-sufficient, low-cost community housing that is held in trust in perpetuity for local people in housing need.

2.3 There are currently six flats which can be occupied by people that meet the above criteria.

2.4 Residents pay a monthly maintenance charge and are responsible for:

- internal decoration during occupancy with the agreement of the Trust;
- furnishing and cleaning of their Home;
- their own use of water (and related sewage charges);
- installation and maintenance of telephone and broadband services;
- payment and administration of their own Council Tax liability; and
- reclaim of any allowances to which they might be entitled, including the reclaim of any unspent element of the television licence that they might bring with them.

2.5 The Almshouses fall below the standard that would be expected in comparable, contemporary accommodation and in particular, suffer from the following disadvantages:

- The flats are smaller than the minimum size recommended for one-bedroom units by reference to Nationally Described Space Standards.
- A communal heating installation does not allow individual residents to control their own environment, a problem that is particularly acute in extremes of weather.
- There is poor sound attenuation between floors and at staircases where there is limited separation between the flats.
- There are damp issues resulting from original Victorian methods of construction.
- The living quarters of the first floor residents are separated vertically from their ground floor bathroom and toilet facilities, with access via relatively steep staircases, an issue of particular concern given the age of the residents.

2.6 The Applicant has submitted four Pre-Application enquiries (references DM/20/4058, DM/21/3010, DM/22/3140 and DM/23/1206) over the last 5 years and the latest feedback on DM/23/1206 stated:

- *"The width of the proposed side extension now respects the dimensions and rhythm of the existing façade to the terrace.*
- *The fenestration and setting out of this elevation also appears, subject to detail, sympathetic to the existing façade.*
- *The extension continues to be shown as set back from the existing façade, and set down in height, which aids an appropriately subordinate relationship between addition and host building.*
- *The depth of the extension to the rear has been reduced, and the roof form amended to address concerns regarding bulk. Subject to provision of an appropriately detailed side elevation this aspect of the scheme is now also considered acceptable.*
- *The proposed alterations to the rear of the existing terrace, comprising the addition of pitched roofs to the existing flat roofed rear additions and dormer windows, are as previously stated not considered contentious and should in fact result in an improvement to the appearance of that part of the terrace.*
- *The proposal as amended, and subject to detail, is considered to preserve the special interest of the terrace as an NDHA and the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area, as well as the positive contribution which the terrace currently makes to the settings of the Church and other associated listed buildings. This meets the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF. I also consider that the proposal as amended meets the requirements of the Council's adopted Design Guide.'*
- *Officers agree with the comments of the Conservation Officer, and that the proposal would preserve the NDHA, the character of the Cuckfield Conservation Area and the setting of the surrounding listed buildings. I would therefore suggest that this proposed design is submitted as an application for full consideration."*

2.7 Although the Applicant was pleased to have received support for the last Pre-Application submission (DM/23/1206), they were concerned that several of the planning officer's design recommendations would adversely impact the scheme's overall financial viability. This was confirmed by a high-level cost analysis provided by the trust's quantity surveyor who identified certain "decorative" elements (the addition of pitched clay tiled roofs to each of the existing dormers and rear single storey extensions) as creating additional costs without commensurate benefits. Moreover, development of the scheme to accommodate the planning officer's recommendations meant that some of the existing fundamental shortcomings (particularly the small ground floor bathrooms serving the first floor flats, along with the steeply pitched staircases) would not be solved.

2.8 Therefore, in January 2024, Cerowski Architects prepared a further sketch plan set, with a focus on enlarging the units, reducing the pitch of the staircases, and carrying out 'Structural Works' which could unlock additional funding for the charity.

2.9 The fundamental issues with the previous proposals were that the bathrooms for the existing first floor flats (though larger) remain on the ground floor level which is not acceptable for elderly people. Further issues arose where the relative 'depth' of the plan

(the distance from the eastern to western side of the building) increases to the point where some of the rooms, including in one case a bedroom, become 'land locked' with no external side window, and only a rooflight.

2.10 Of fundamental importance to the project is its financial viability. Grant aid will only be forthcoming if the design involves improvements that will enable the flats to be offered to a wider range of occupiers. By altering the staircases it will make the flats fully accessible to elderly/disabled people. The flats would in any event need to be increased in size to meet contemporary standards and would need to achieve a modern EPC rating.

2.11 As the property is owned by a charity, the project team have had to balance the cost to value equation in the following ways:

- The 1 ½ storey rear extensions have been set out on the footprint of the existing single storey rear extensions. If, following suitable analysis of the existing walls and footings by a Structural Engineer, it was determined that they could support the additional load, the ranges could be extended whilst retaining the existing ground floor walls, footings and structure.
- Similarly, the first floor is proposed to be entirely clad in hung tiles, which could allow for a timber framed construction with full fill insulation, a breather membrane, battens and tiles externally, and insulated plasterboard internally. This would be a lighter weight construction and a thinner wall thickness than load bearing masonry, and so would save costs whilst adding floor area.

2.12 Therefore, due to the financial viability of the proposal, the project team have had to look at increasing the amount of first floor accommodation in order to enlarge the flats, make alterations to the staircases and locate the bathrooms for the first floor flats on the first floor. These alterations would enable the charity to obtain grant aid which would help pay for the proposed works.

### Proposal

2.13 This planning application and conservation area consent proposes to demolish the existing single storey flat roof rear extensions and first floor flat roof dormer windows. It would involve the erection of three 1 ½ storey gable extensions on the footprints of the existing single storey rear extensions and the erection of replacement dormer windows. The existing flats would be refurbished and a 1 ½ storey side extension is proposed to provide two additional flats for Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO which is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (charity number 1214631).

2.14 The 1 ½ storey side extension would be set down from the existing ridge height of the cottages and would be set back from the front elevation giving the extension a subordinate appearance. The walls would have brick to the ground floor level and tile hanging to the first floor level with brick detailing in between to match the existing cottages.

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2.15 The 1 ½ storey rear gable extensions would have brick to the ground floor level and Sussex red tile hanging to the first floor level. This includes decorative banding of club, arrowhead and fishtail profiles to align with the existing details. The brickwork would include Sussex bond with head detail of dentil course (red projecting headers, with set back blackened headers) with stretcher bond over, and finally header bond over that. All to match the extant detailing to the existing range.

2.16 The roofs would consist of clay tiles with hiplets to the roof forms to reduce their massing. Two flush conservation style roof lights would give light to two of the gables.

2.17 The proposed replacement dormer windows on the rear elevation would be set down from the ridge height of the cottages and the ridge of the proposed gables. The dormer windows would have lead effect dark grey single ply roofing with applied rolls visible to the western edge of the flat roofs. The new dormer windows would be more thermally efficient than the existing dormers.

2.18 All new windows would match in detailing to the existing windows in the eastern elevation.

2.19 The works involved are as follows:

- Flats 1, 2 and 3 would gain an 'accessible' sized W.C. (1.5m x 2.2m), along with (in the case of flats 1 and 2) a more generous entrance hall leading on to their bathrooms.
- The proposed side extension would be set back from the eastern building line and is larger with a floor area of 49m<sup>2</sup> as required by space standards and grant aid.
- Each of the existing flats has been amended to have a floor area of over 39m<sup>2</sup> as required by Nationally Described Space Standards for 1 bed 1 person.
- Structural work would be necessary to all units, and therefore would further qualify the proposals for grant funding.
- As the roofs of the rear ranges (pitched and flat) would be for the most part new, there is an opportunity for increasing the insulation in these areas significantly, which would help in achieving the EPC rating required for grant funding.

2.20 This proposed scheme intends to solve the fundamental issue of the long term viability of the building for its users and the Trustees. The design aims to address the issues by:

- Providing larger units.
- Locating the bathrooms for each unit on the same floor as the principal living spaces of the unit.
- Adding two additional units to address local needs for housing of this nature, and to improve the financial viability of the Cottage Homes Trust (charity) in the long term.

- Improve the visual appearance of 20th Century elements of the Cottage Homes, positively contributing to the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby Heritage Assets.

2.21 The existing gross internal floor areas of the flats are:

- Flat 1 – 39.7m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 2 – 39.6m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 3 – 39.2m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 1A – 33.0m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 2A – 30.0m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 3A – 34.1m<sup>2</sup>

The existing gross internal floor area is 215 metres squared.

2.22 The proposed gross internal floor areas of the flats are:

- Flat 1 – 42.2m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 2 – 44.5m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 3 – 44.5m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 4 – 48.6m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 1A – 45.3m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 2A – 45.2m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 3A – 46.6m<sup>2</sup>
- Flat 4A – 46.5m<sup>2</sup>

The proposed gross internal floor area would be 363 metres squared.

2.23 Therefore, the application proposes an increase in the total gross internal floor area of 148 square metres.

2.24 The existing outbuilding would be retained and used for the storage of bikes, mobility scooters and bins.

2.25 The foul drainage is shown on the plans and is planned to utilise the existing mains drainage. The surface water drainage would also utilise the existing surface water drainage system connected to the mains system.

### 3.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

3.1 The site is an attractive and characterful terrace of 19<sup>th</sup> century houses, located within the built up area of Cuckfield and within Cuckfield Conservation Area. The Council considers Cuckfield Cottage Homes to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) which is sited within the setting of Holy Trinity Church (a grade I listed church) and the Grade II listed gates and monuments which are within the churchyard.



Image Above: Shows Listed Buildings and Structures within proximity of the site.

3.2 The application site is currently split into three ground floor flats and three first floor flats, sat within a communal garden. The flats have a large garden with pedestrian access points within the north west and north east corners of the site. The northwest pedestrian access point gives access to Church Platt via a 10ft wide right of way and the northeast pedestrian access point gives access to the paths around Holy Trinity Church and The Old School House.

3.3 There is no on-site vehicular parking but as residents are elderly, they often don't have cars and rely on bicycles, mobility scooters, walking and public transport to get around. There is a communal outbuilding which is used to store bicycles and mobility scooters securely.

3.4 There are bus stops just 200m walk from the site in Cuckfield High Street which give access to Haywards Heath, Uckfield, Crawley and Horsham.

3.5 To the east of the site is Holy Trinity Church and the church yard. The eastern boundary of the site consists of a hedge. To the south of the site is the wider church yard and the southern boundary of the site consists of a hedge. To the west is The Old Clergy House and the western boundary consists of a 1.8m high close boarded fence with mature trees to screen. To the north is Mason Cottage and Church Bank House and this northern boundary consists of a brick wall and also a 2m high close boarded fence with vegetation to screen.

3.6 There are no public footpaths within proximity of the site or to the south of the site.

3.7 The site is within flood zone 1 which has a low chance of flooding.



Photo Above: The Cuckfield Cottage Homes (Six Flats)



Photo Above: The Southern side elevation of the Homes

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Photo Above: The existing flat roof extensions and flat roof dormer windows on the rear of the flats



Photo Above: The outbuilding to be retained for storage of bicycles and mobility scooters



Photo Above: The southwest corner of the building showing the existing single storey flat roof extensions and the flat roof dormer windows on the rear of the building.

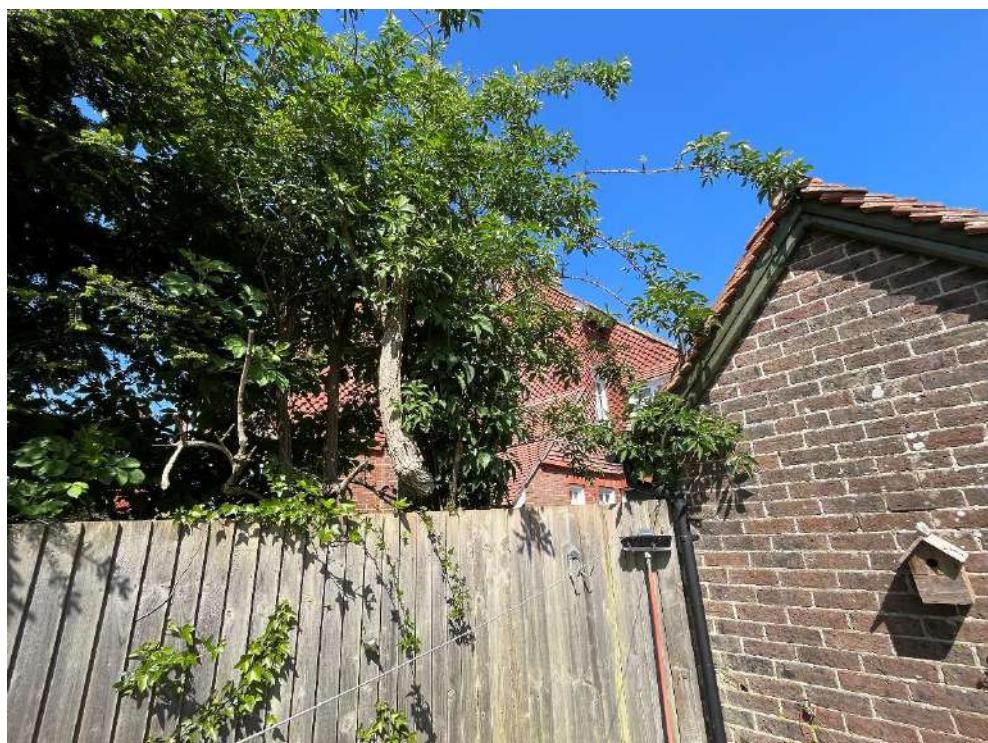


Photo Above: The view of The Old Clergy House from the site

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Photo Above: The rear elevation of Mason Cottage which consists of a lean-to outhouse/shed to the boundary wall and a dormer window which is blocked up.  
Mason Cottage's orientation is facing southwest towards Church Platt.



Photo Above: Holy Trinity Church which is sited to the northeast of the site

#### 4.0 Planning History

##### 4.1 Cuckfield Cottage Homes planning history is set out below:

08/03793/FUL	Replacement windows to east elevation, Approved 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2009.
DM/19/2088	Yew Tree – Reduce crown by 2m in height, No Objection.
DM/20/4058	Pre Application Enquiry for Extensions and internal alterations to existing terrace of Almshouses – January 2021.
DM/21/3010	Pre Application Enquiry for revised extensions and internal alterations to existing terrace of Almshouses with the aim of rationalising the layout and providing additional units – November 2021.
DM/22/3140	Pre Application Enquiry for revised extensions and internal alterations to existing terrace of Almshouses with the aim of rationalising the layout and providing additional units – 2022.
DM/23/1206	Pre Application Enquiry for the Conversion of existing building into 6 flats, side extension to provide 2 additional flats and replace rear flat roofs with tiled pitch roofs – October 2023.

## 5.0 Planning Policy

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies in the Development Plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The documents that comprises the Development Plan are:

- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, Adopted March 2018

5.3 Mid Sussex District Council is reviewing and updating their District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to some of the policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan. Therefore, this planning application has been assessed against the polices of the current adopted District Plan.

5.4 Mid Sussex Design Guide (SPD) adopted November 2020.

5.5 Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan (Submission Plan) 2011 - 2031, was made in May 2014.

5.6 On 12th December 2024, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and sets out the governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024

5.7 Paragraph 8 indicates that there are three elements to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental.

5.8 Paragraph 11 confirms that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, the NPPF states that this means:

*"Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

ii. *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination."*

5.9 Paragraph 61 supports the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and establishes the importance that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

5.10 Paragraph 63 continues on to establish the importance of planning to meet the housing needs of different groups in the community. This includes, those who require affordable housing, including social rental dwellings. Cuckfield Cottage Homes proposals for the development of two Almshouses would evidently assist in securing the aspirations of the Framework in this respect, delivering much needed affordable housing to meet the needs of local residents of Cuckfield, the Charities' area of benefit.

5.11 Paragraph 73 continues on to recognise that small and medium sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly.

5.12 Paragraph 131 states the creation of high-quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

5.13 Paragraph 135 requires developments to function well and add to the overall quality of the area across the lifetime of the development, be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and be sympathetic to local character. Development is expected to establish and maintain a strong sense of place and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.

5.14 Paragraph 193 states "*When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

- a) *if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) *development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons<sup>70</sup> and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*

d) *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."*

5.15 Paragraph 207 states "*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*"

5.16 Paragraph 212 states "*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*"

5.17 Paragraph 216 states "*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*"

#### Mid Sussex District Plan

5.18 Policy DP4 (Housing) states "*The District's OAN is 14,892 dwellings over the Plan period. Provision is also made of 1,498 dwellings to ensure unmet need is addressed in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. There is a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031."*"

5.19 Policy DP5 (Planning to meet future housing need) states "*The Council will continue to work under the 'Duty-to-Cooperate' with all other neighbouring local authorities on an ongoing basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Housing Market Areas, prioritising the Northern West Sussex HMA as this is established as the primary HMA."*"

5.20 Policy DP6 (Settlement Hierarchy) states "*Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement.*"

*The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:*

1. *The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings; and*
2. *The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement; and*
3. *The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.*

*The developer will need to satisfy the Council that:*

- *The proposal does not represent an underdevelopment of the site with regard to Policy DP26: Character and Design; or*
- *A large site is not brought forward in phases that individually meet the threshold but cumulatively does not."*

5.21 Policy DP21 (Transport) states "Development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, which are:

- *A high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy;*
- *A resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time;*
- *Access to services, employment and housing; and*
- *A transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use. To meet these objectives, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether:*
  - *The scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel noting there might be circumstances where development needs to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses (see policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy);*
  - *Appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, have been fully explored and taken up;*
  - *The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages;*  
*The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable;*
  - *Development which generates significant amounts of movement is supported by a Transport Assessment / Statement and a Travel Plan that is effective and demonstrably deliverable including setting out how schemes will be funded;*
  - *The scheme provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network, including the transport network outside of the district, secured where necessary through appropriate legal agreements;*
  - *The scheme avoids severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation;*
  - *The scheme protects the safety of road users and pedestrians; and*
  - *The scheme does not harm the special qualities of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through its transport impacts.*

*Where practical and viable, developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.*

*Neighbourhood Plans can set local standards for car parking provision provided that it is based upon evidence that provides clear and compelling justification for doing so."*

5.22 Policy DP26 (Character and Design) states "*All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:*

- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);*
- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development."*

5.23 Policy DP27 (Dwelling Space Standards) states "*Minimum nationally described space standards for internal floor space and storage space will be applied to all new residential development. These standards are applicable to:*

- Open market dwellings and affordable housing;*
- The full range of dwelling types; and*
- Dwellings created through subdivision or conversion.*

*All dwellings will be required to meet these standards, other than in exceptional circumstances, where clear evidence will need to be provided to show that the internal form or special features prevent some of the requirements being met."*

5.24 Policy DP28 (Accessibility) states "*All development will be required to meet and maintain high standards of accessibility so that all users can use them safely and easily. This will apply to all development, including changes of use, refurbishments and extensions, open spaces, the public realm and transport infrastructure, and will be demonstrated by the applicant.*

*With regard to listed buildings, meeting standards of accessibility should ensure that the impact on the integrity of the building is minimised.*

### *Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings*

*Developments of 5 or more dwellings will be expected to make provision for 20% of dwellings to meet Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(2), with the following exceptions:*

- 1) *Where new dwellings are created by a change of use;*
- 2) *Where the scheme is for flatted residential buildings of fewer than 10 dwellings;*
- 3) *Where specific factors such as site topography make such standards unachievable by practicable and/or viable means;*
- 4) *Where a scheme is being proposed which is specifically intended for the needs of particular individuals or groups, where a greater proportion may be appropriate.*

### *Wheelchair-user dwellings*

*Category 3 – Wheelchair-user dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(3) will be required for a reasonable proportion of affordable homes, generally 4%, dependent on the suitability of the site and the need at the time.*

*The Requirement will also apply to private extra care, assisted living or other such schemes designed for frailer older people or others with disabilities and those in need of care or support services.”*

5.25 Policy DP30 (Housing Mix) states “*To support sustainable communities, housing development will:*

- *provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) that reflects current and future local housing needs;*
- *meet the current and future needs of different groups in the community including older people, vulnerable groups and those wishing to build their own homes. This could include the provision of bungalows and other forms of suitable accommodation, and the provision of serviced self-build plots; and*
- *on strategic sites, provide permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, as evidenced by the Mid Sussex District Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment or such other evidence as is available at the time; or the provision of an equivalent financial contribution towards off-site provision (or part thereof if some on-site provision is made) if it can be demonstrated that a suitable, available and achievable site (or sites) can be provided and made operational within an appropriate timescale, commensurable with the overall scale of residential development proposed by the strategic development; and serviced plots for self-build homes where a need for such accommodation is identified.*
- *If a shortfall is identified in the supply of specialist accommodation and care homes falling within Use Class C2 to meet demand in the District, the Council will consider allocating sites for such use through a Site Allocations Document, produced by the District Council.”*

*Evidence of housing need will be based on the best available evidence (including local evidence provided to support Neighbourhood Plans).”*

5.26 Policy DP34 (Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets) states "*Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:*

- *A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal.*
- *Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use.*
- *Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- *Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;* • *Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- *Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.*

#### *Other Heritage Assets*

*Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.*

*The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.*

*Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance."*

5.27 Policy DP35 (Conservation Areas) states "*Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:*

- *New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;*
- *Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;*
- *Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;*
- *Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;*

- Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;
- New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.

*Development will also protect the setting of the conservation area and in particular views into and out of the area.*

*New buildings of outstanding or innovative design may be acceptable in conservation areas provided that their impact would not cause material harm to the area."*

5.28 Policy DP38 (Biodiversity) states "Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- *Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- *Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and*
- *Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.*

*Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.*

*Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution.*

*Geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites."*

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Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 – Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

5.29 The relevant policies of the submission draft (Regulation 19) plan are:

- Policy DPS2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)
- Policy DPS6 (Health and Wellbeing)
- Policy DPB1 (Character and Design)
- Policy DPH1 (Housing)
- Policy DPH3 (Sustainable Development – Inside the Built-Up Area)
- Policy DPH7 (Housing Mix)
- Policy DPH11 (Dwelling Space Standards)
- Policy DPH12 (Accessibility)

Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, May 2014

5.30 Policy CNP1 (Design of New Development and Conservation) states "*New development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it:*

- a) *Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Cuckfield as defined on Map 3 - Conservation Areas and Character Areas, by way of;*
  - i. *height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,*
  - ii. *the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and*
- b) *Is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset and*
- c) *Follows guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and*
- d) *Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site, and*
- e) *Creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users, and*
- f) *Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and*
- g) *Makes best use of the site to accommodate development."*

5.31 Policy CNP4 (Protect and Enhance Biodiversity) states "*Proposals should protect and enhance biodiversity by:*

- a) *Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands, and*
- b) *Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna, particularly between urban areas, and*
- c) *Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, and*
- d) *Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and re-creation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species and*
- e) *Providing a net gain in flora and fauna, in particular those defined on Map 6 - Biodiversity, and*
- f) *Adopting best practice in Sustainable Urban Drainage."*

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5.32 Policy CNP 7 (Housing Development within the Built Up Area Boundary) states "*Housing development within the Cuckfield built-up area boundary, as defined, will be permitted including infill development and change of use or redevelopment to housing outside the designated Cuckfield village centre and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre where it meets the following criteria:*

- a) *The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building, or curtilage for new dwellings, and the character of the street scene.*
- b) *Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.*
- c) *Gaps which provide views out of the village to surrounding countryside are maintained.* d) *Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- e) *The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and*
- f) *The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded."*

5.33 Policy CNP 10 (Building Extensions Within and Outside the Built Up Area Boundary) states "*Building extension will be permitted where it meets the following criteria:*

- a) *The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene.*
- b) *Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.*
- c) *Gaps which provide views out of the village to surrounding countryside are maintained.*
- d) *Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- e) *The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and*
- f) *The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded."*

5.34 Policy CNP 16 (Transport Impact of Development) states "*Proposals will be permitted where they meet the following criteria:*

- a) *Safely located vehicular and pedestrian access with adequate visibility exists or could be created; and*
- b) *Development proposals would ensure sustainable transport links to the principal village facilities including the village centre, the primary and secondary schools and recreation open space are provided; and*
- c) *Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve the development, the development would provide, or contribute towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements; and*
- d) *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 local transport schemes*
- e) *Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and ideally storage for children's buggies and mobility scooters where appropriate*
- f) *Development proposals would maintain or enhance the existing routes of the twittens (public rights of way)."*

### Mid Sussex Design Guide (SPD)

5.35 Principle 49 (General principles for extensions) states *"Extensions should respond to the design of the original dwelling and applicants will be expected to demonstrate how local character has informed the design proposal. Extensions should also normally be designed to be well-integrated with the existing scale, form and massing allowing the original building to remain the dominant element of the property whether it has one or several additions.*

*Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to complement and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling. The design approach may benefit from coordinating with the existing pattern of window and door openings as well as employing facing materials to match those of the existing dwelling. Otherwise it should demonstrate the appropriateness of the alternative approach.*

*Extensions should not result in a significant loss to the private amenity area of the dwelling.*

*There are two general approaches to extending a property:*

- *Designing in the style of the existing building by closely matching its facing materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions; and*
- *Designing in a contemporary style that takes its cues from key aspects of the existing building that might include its underlying form and proportions, facing materials, window design and other specific architectural features. The success of this approach is particularly reliant on high quality facing materials and finishes, and this will normally need to be demonstrated through detailed elevations and section drawings.*

*Both approaches can create successful, well-designed extensions that can be mutually beneficial to both the house and the wider area.*

*All extensions and alterations should consider their impact on neighbouring properties (refer to Chapter 8 on residential amenity).*"

5.36 Principle DG50 (Front and side extensions) states *"Side extensions should normally be subservient to the original dwelling and typically be set-back from the front of the house to help define the original building.*

*The gaps between dwellings can sometimes positively contribute to articulating (for example, through the consistent rhythm of repeated houses) and adding interest in a street frontage or by providing views / visible connections to the surrounding countryside. Side extensions will therefore need to appropriately respond to the character of the street form and will not normally be accepted where they close an important gap and view."*

## 6.0 Planning Appraisal

### Principle and Housing Land Supply

6.1 DP4 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to provide 14,892 dwellings over the plan period, Cuckfield is considered to be a category 2 settlement which is considered to be a larger village which acts as a Local Service Centre providing key services in the rural area of Mid Sussex. These settlements serve the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and access to public transport.

6.2 The proposal is within the built up area boundaries of Cuckfield, the principle of additional windfall housing development is considered acceptable under Policy DP6 of the District Plan which states: *'Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement.'*

6.3 In addition, with Cuckfield being classed as a category 2 settlement in the settlement hierarchy listed under MSDP policy DP6, the application site can be considered to be a sustainable location for residential development. The principle of additional residential development is therefore acceptable owing to the sites sustainable location in accordance with DP4 and DP6 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This weighs heavily in favour in the planning balance.

6.4 As per planning legislation, a decision must be made in accordance with the development plan unless there are any material planning considerations which indicate otherwise. The policies contained within the NPPF are material considerations which should be taken into account in the determination of this application. This is confirmed within paragraph 231 of the NPPF.

6.5 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and states:

For decision-taking this means;

- "c) *approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or;*
- d) *where there are no relevant development policies, or the policies which are most important for the determining the application are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:*
  - i. *The application of policies within this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing development proposed; or*
  - ii. *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination."*

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- 6.6 Footnote 7 of paragraph 11(i) clarifies that the policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) and relate to habitats sites (and those and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets and other heritage assets of archaeological interest; and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change).
- 6.7 Footnote 8 of paragraph 11 clarifies that for applications involving the provision of housing, in situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year land supply of delivery housing sites (with an appropriate buffer) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery of housing has been substantially below (less than 75%) of the housing requirement for the last three years, then relevant policies for the supply of housing should be considered out-of-date.
- 6.8 A new standard method formula was published alongside the NPPF which gives Mid Sussex a significantly higher housing requirement than the current District Plan. As a result, and having regard for the need for an appropriate buffer, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as per the requirements of paragraph 78 of the NPPF.
- 6.9 In light of the above, this development needs to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The development is considered to be sustainable, and therefore this should weigh heavily in favour of granting permission in the paragraph 11(d) balance.
- 6.10 As part of this process, the weight to be given to development plan policies need to be assessed against the degree of conformity with the NPPF.
- 6.11 Policies DP4 (Housing) and DP6 (Settlement Hierarchy) are relevant to this application. These policies are considered to be policies relating to the supply of housing and as such can be considered to be out-of-date, having regard to the NPPF tests. As such, these policies can be given limited weight in the determination of the application.
- 6.12 Therefore the key test that must be undertaken when assessing this application is as set out within para 11(d) of the NPPF.

#### Housing Need

- 6.13 At a national level, the ONS 2022 based Household Projections were released in October 2025 and these show that one person households are expected to increase the most, up by 19.6% between 2022 – 2032 and the 85+ age group is set to grow by 42.3% (over double) the next largest increase (65 -74 age group). This shows that there will be greater demand for older peoples accommodation.
- 6.14 The Council prepared a Strategic Housing Market Assessment by Iceni Projects to inform the District Plan Review which was issued in October 2021. This highlighted that there were 64,455 dwellings in Mid Sussex in 2019. Of these, 87% are in the private sector (which

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includes both owner-occupied and private rented properties) and 13% owned by public sector organisations (including the Council and Registered Providers).

- 6.15 The assessment found that only 11% of properties were 1 bed, 24% were 2 bed, 38% were 3 bed and 28% of properties within Mid Sussex were 4+ beds. It is clear that there are fewer 1 bed properties available in the Mid Sussex area.
- 6.16 The report states that "*A growing older population which typically moves less often has also restricted housing market activity and chains, with fewer older households moving in part because of a compression of prices between 2- and 3-bed properties according to analysis from UK Finance.*"
- 6.17 The report looks at population change by age (for the 2011-2019 period). "*This generally identifies the greatest increases to be in older age groups (aged 65 and over) along with some notable population increases in the 5-14 and 50-59 age groups.*" The report goes onto state "*One of the key drivers of population growth has therefore been in the 65 and over age group, which between 2011 and 2019 saw a population increase of about 5,500 people; this age group increasing in size by 21% over the 8-year period.*" "*The largest growth will be in people aged 65 and over. In 2038 it is projected that there will be 43,700 people aged 65 and over.*" This demonstrates a real increase in demand for accommodation for older people.
- 6.18 The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) assesses Housing Market Areas (HMA) and confirms that Mid Sussex is primarily located within the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area (NWSHMA) and this is where the strongest links are. This position was first established in 2009 and has been confirmed since through the examination of each authorities' evidence base at examination. The most up-to-date SHMA concludes that this position remains supported by evidence.
- 6.19 Action in rural Sussex conducted a 'Housing Needs Survey Report' of Cuckfield in September 2012 as part of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan. Although this survey is now 13 years old it provides evidence of the need within the Parish of Cuckfield. Please refer to Appendix A for report. The survey showed:
  - 43.15% of homes in Cuckfield are detached;
  - 40.87% of homes in Cuckfield are semi-detached or terrace;
  - 15.41% of homes in Cuckfield are flats / maisonettes.
- 6.20 This shows that there are much fewer flats within the Parish of Cuckfield. When they looked at the tenure of these properties, the following was evident:
  - 76% were owner occupied;
  - 12% were housing association / council rent; and
  - 12% were private rent.
- 6.21 The survey showed the percentage of people living in the following type of property:
  - House 389 (87.22%);
  - Bungalow 9 (2.02%);

- Flat / Maisonette/Apartment/Bedsit 29 (6.50%);
- Caravan/Mobile Home/Temp. structure 0 (0%);
- Sheltered Housing/Retirement Housing (Social Sector) 8 (1.79%);
- Sheltered Housing/Retirement Housing (Private Sector) 7 (1.57%);
- Other 3 (0.67%);
- No response 1 (0.22%)

6.22 This demonstrates that very few people live within flats, retirement housing and social housing (social and private sector) within Cuckfield due to the lack of availability. It is clear that most people live within houses as this is the main type of property within the village.

6.23 The survey found that when residents were asked if they were in affordable housing need, a total of 11 respondents (27.50%) with a local connection who indicated a housing need were currently on the housing register, with 26 respondents (65.00%) not being on the housing register and 3 respondents did not complete the question (7.50%).

6.24 The survey found that there were 40 households in housing need who have a local connection and who could not afford to either purchase or rent on the open market. 18 were single person households (45.00%), 8 were couples without children (20.00%) and 14 were families with children (35.00%).

6.25 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO have been in dialogue with the Senior Private Options Housing Officer at Mid Sussex District Council (October 2025) and they have advised that there are currently 130 households in TA (single and families), 8 of which are over 55 years of age. Please refer to Appendix B for email correspondence from the Senior Private Housing Options Officer.

6.26 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO, has a waiting list for the flats and has regular enquiries about the accommodation. Therefore, this shows that there is a need for such residential units for people in need within the local area. This weighs strongly in the planning balance.

#### Housing Mix

6.27 Policy DP30 of the District Plan states that to support sustainable communities, housing development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development that reflects current and future housing needs. The proposal is to provide a total of 2 flats comprising of 2 no 1-bed flats.

6.28 As only two flats are proposed, it is difficult to provide a mix of dwelling types but they will meet the needs of those that are in need, hardship or distress and are sixty or over which is positive in the planning balance.

#### Dwelling Space Standards

6.29 The Government's Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards document was published in March 2015. It sets out space standards for all new residential dwellings, including minimum floor areas and room widths for bedrooms and minimum

floor areas for storage, to secure a satisfactory standard of accommodation for future residents. Policy DP27 of the District Plan supports this.

- 6.30 Policy DP28 of the District Plan relates to accessibility and requires all development to meet and maintain high standards of accessibility so all users can use them safely and easily.
- 6.31 Technical Nationally Described Housing Standards requires a 1 bed 1 person flat to have a minimum internal gross floor area of 39 sqm. The application proposes two new flats with floor areas of 48.6 and 46.5 square metres which exceeds this requirement.
- 6.32 It is also proposed to increase the floor areas of the existing flats through the extension of the building so that all the flats exceed the minimum gross internal floor area as currently three of the flats are below the required standard.
- 6.33 As such, the application is considered acceptable and complies with Technical Standards and Policy DP27 of the District Plan. The aim of this proposal is to provide bathrooms for all existing flats on the same level as the accommodation as at present all three first floor flats have their bathrooms on the ground floor level which is not ideal for older people. The proposal would therefore provide a much enhanced standard of accommodation for future occupiers of the units and thereby comply with Policies DP27 and DP28 of the District Plan. This is positive in the planning balance.

#### Cuckfield Cottage Homes

- 6.34 The Cottage Homes were founded in 1881 when the Sergison Trust conveyed Church Field on the west side of the churchyard to Miss Mary Frances Maberly, daughter of a former Vicar of Cuckfield. She acquired the land for the construction of the line of three cottages now known as The Cottage Homes.
- 6.35 In 1882 the homes were ready to receive their first residents. Originally the houses were built as three cottages and not six flats, this was a later alteration. The residents who were originally allowed to live at the cottages did so on the condition that they may have to have a lodger if the Trustees required it. The homes were formally opened with a service of dedication taken by the Revd Mount at Holy Trinity Church.
- 6.36 Between the 1880s and 1940s the homes changed very little. They still had outside shared toilet facilities, no running water (other than for WCs), brick floors in the kitchens, no electricity, and at least one upstairs flat that gained access through the kitchen of the downstairs flat.
- 6.37 Following the death of Ms Best in 1943, who had been one of the Trustees of the cottages, she bequeathed £1000 for the provision of two new cottages to be located to the southern end of the existing building. However with the onset of war and the rising cost of building materials, it was not possible to build the cottages. Instead the Trustees sought a change to the conditions of her will to allow them to modernise the existing accommodation providing electricity and indoor sanitation. This proposal seeks to address the wishes of Ms Best by providing two additional cottages to the southern end of the existing cottages. Please refer to Appendix C for the bequest.

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6.38 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes have been identified by the Council in pre-application advice as a non-designated heritage asset. These buildings are of aesthetic value given their Arts and Crafts style which has character and contributes to the diversity of the built form within the village.

6.39 The use of bay windows, pitched dormers, tile hanging and tall chimneys all add to the visual interest of the buildings. The rhythm of the front elevations of wide and narrow elements add to the aesthetic value of the cottage homes. The rear of the buildings are plainer, having been altered with a single storey addition in the 1950s and make less contribution to the significance of the terrace. Similarly, the gable ends have less visual interest than the front elevations with limited decorative features.

6.40 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes are of historic value reflecting the need for alms-houses within the village at the end of the 19th century. The original donation from the daughter of a former vicar reflects the connection of local families to the village. The continued use of the buildings for their original purpose further contributes to their historic value.

6.41 Given the age of the buildings, there is limited evidential value, although their Arts and Crafts style are reflective of building fashions at this time. There is some communal value derived from the historic and continuing function of the Almshouses which serve the local community.

#### Impact on Heritage Assets - Listed Buildings

6.42 The application cottages are not listed but are cottages of character. A Heritage Statement and a Statement of Significance has been provided with this application which has been prepared by Deborah Gardner of DGC Architectural and Historic Building Consultants as the site is within the setting of Holy Trinity Church (a grade I listed church) and the Grade II listed gates and monuments which are within the churchyard. For the full assessment on heritage assets please refer to the Heritage Statement and Statement of Significance.

6.43 Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states: *"Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:*

- A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use; Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*

- *Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.*
- *Other Heritage Assets Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.*
- *The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.*
- *Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance.”*

6.44 Holy Trinity Church is a Grade I listed Building which is sited to the east of the Almshouses. Our Heritage Consultant has fully considered these proposals and her professional opinion is that there would be no effect on the aesthetic value of the church as a result of the proposed extensions. The church would remain the main focal point within the village. The proposed bulk, mass and scale of the new extensions would not challenge this and would ensure the cottages remain seen as a subservient structure to the church and its surrounds. The location of the new extension has been kept away from the church so the additional bulk is unlikely to be seen, or where it will be seen will not draw the eye away from views to the church or from the church to the countryside beyond the churchyard. The aesthetic value of the church derived from the intricate carvings and decorative features would be unaffected by the proposed works at the application site which would continue to reflect the existing buildings and would contrast with the sandstone of the church.

6.45 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes are part of the history of the church reflecting its role in supporting the local community including through means of alms. The cottages function as Almshouses will still be understood if the proposed extension is allowed and there will be no change in the church's relationship with these buildings. The proposed works would have no effect on an understanding of how changes to the religious practices of the church have changed over time and how these are reflected in the layout of the church. Neither will it have an effect on its important role to the local community over time.

6.46 The communal value of the church would be entirely preserved by the proposed works. There would be no change to the function of the application site as a home run for the less fortunate as a result of the new extension. The communal aspect of the church's role in the use of the building would be unaffected. As would the importance of the church to the local community.

6.47 The proposed new extension would result in a change to the setting of the church but this would have no effect on its significance. The extension has been sited away from the church. Its bulk, mass and scale is entirely appropriate for the existing building and would not dominate views to or from the church. The design and materiality of the extension would blend with the existing building to minimise any visual change. The proposed works would not result in any change to an appreciation or understanding of the significance of the church or any effect on its heritage values.

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- 6.48 The proposed works would have no effect on the significance of any of the identified listed monuments by a change within their setting. The location of these grave markers within the churchyard will be unaffected by the proposed new extension which has been sensitively located. The design of the new extension would not draw the eye from the churchyard where these monuments are appreciated within the context of the church. There would be no change to an appreciation of the importance of the churchyard and the graves within it in reflecting the history of the village and the importance of the church to this by a change at the application site.
- 6.49 The significance of all the listed monuments within the churchyard will be entirely preserved by the proposed works.
- 6.50 At an overarching and strategic level, both the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and planning policy in relation to heritage assets seek to preserve interest and avoid harm. It is considered that the proposed works would not constitute harm therefore clear and convincing justification or public interest mitigations are not considered to be required.
- 6.51 The proposals would not have an adverse impact upon the values that underpin the significance or the architectural and historic interest of Holy Trinity Church in accordance with policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

#### Setting of Conservation Area

- 6.52 The proposed new extensions to the Almshouses would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. There would be no change to the aesthetic value of the conservation area as a result of the proposed works. The new extension has been sensitively designed to complement the existing building, and improving the appearance of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century rear outshots by providing more traditional detailing.
- 6.53 It is proposed to use matching materials to the existing building to ensure it blends with the host building and the vernacular character of the built form within the conservation area.
- 6.54 The bulk, mass and scale of the new extensions have been given careful consideration to ensure that they would not dominate the historic building. The set back of the new extension would ensure that there will be legibility between the historic core of the building and the new element. The new extensions would complement the existing building and bring them up to modern standards allowing for their long term occupation.
- 6.55 There would be no change to the historic value of Cuckfield Conservation Area as a result of the proposed extensions to the Almshouses. This building forms part of the Victorian development of the area (with later alterations) and demonstrates the importance of the church to the local community and in turn the church's role in providing for the less fortunate members of the congregation. The historic character of the village would be preserved by the proposed extensions. The function of the houses to offer accommodation to those in need would still be understood and would continue to illustrate an aspect of the villages history and institutions for the provision of the community.

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- 6.56 The evidential value of the conservation area would be entirely preserved by the proposed new extensions. These have been designed to reflect the original building materials and would improve upon the mid-20th century additions.
- 6.57 There would be no change to the communal value of the building as a result of the proposed works. The houses would continue to be used to help those deserving within the community and their history of serving as Almshouses would still be understood.
- 6.58 It is therefore considered that the proposal preserves the special interest of the terrace and the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area as well as the positive contribution the terrace makes to the setting of the Church and other associated listed structures in accordance with policies DP34 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the adopted Design Guide.

#### Public Benefits of the Proposal

- 6.59 Cuckfield Cottage Homes CIO, is a registered charity (charities commission reference 1214631) who provides homes (Alms Houses) for people who:
  - (i) are in need, hardship or distress; and
  - (ii) are sixty or over; and
  - (iii) are followers of a Christian faith with preference being given to members of the Church of England; and
  - (iv) are resident in the area of benefit (Deanery of Cuckfield which includes Haywards Heath) with a preference for those persons living in the Parish of Cuckfield.
- 6.60 The proposal would bring great public benefits to those that are elderly and less well off within the Deanery of Cuckfield. The existing six flats provide homes for people that would otherwise not be able to afford accommodation. As part of this proposal these flats would be renovated and bathrooms incorporated into the first floor flats. Currently, occupants of the first floor flats have to go down staircases to access bathrooms which is not ideal for elderly and infirm residents. The provision of two additional flats for people in need, hardship or distress would provide a great public benefit as more of these homes are desperately needed. The Applicant understands that this site is sensitive but also needs to secure the optimum viable use for the site to ensure that the charity remains viable and fit for the future. Therefore, this public benefit should be positive in the planning balance.

#### Archaeology

- 6.61 A Desk-based Archaeology Assessment has been undertaken by Chris Butler Archaeological Services Ltd in order to establish the likely presence and importance of any archaeological remains that may be affected by the proposed extension of the existing building.
- 6.62 This assessment has established that there is low potential for archaeology of all periods except the medieval and post-medieval, which have a high potential. However, as no archaeological interventions have taken place on Site to date, the archaeological potential of the Site could be described as unknown.

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6.63 An archaeological watching brief may be required by the County Archaeologist during the works, to monitor all groundworks – foundation trenching and ground reduction. This would ascertain the presence and significance of any buried archaeological remains which may be disturbed by the proposed development in accordance with Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This is neutral in the planning balance.

#### Design, Scale and Form

6.64 Principle 49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD highlights the general principles for house extensions. The origins and character of the Cuckfield Cottage Homes has been researched and has informed the scale, design and detailing of the proposed works.

6.65 Pre-Application feedback from the Council's Conservation Officer over the last few years has been taken on board within the latest design. It is considered that the width of the proposed side extension respects the dimensions and rhythm of the existing eastern façade of the terrace. The rhythm of the front elevation of wide and narrow elements have been repeated within the extension and add to the aesthetic value of the cottage homes. The fenestration and setting out of this eastern elevation is considered to be sympathetic to the existing eastern façade.

6.66 The extension is set back from the existing eastern façade and is set down in height which aids an appropriately subordinate relationship between the addition and host building.

6.67 The existing dilapidated flat roof dormer windows on the rear elevation would be removed and replaced by modern more aesthetic dormers that would result in an improvement to the appearance of the existing dormer windows. These new flat roof dormer windows would be positioned between the 1 ½ storey gables proposed on the rear elevation. Thus the dormer windows would assimilate into the existing roof form and would be screened by the 1 ½ storey gables.

6.68 The proposed 1 ½ storey gables which would replace the existing single storey flat roof extensions provide an enhancement to the visual aesthetics of the western elevation.

6.69 Pitched roof dormer windows were considered on the western elevation but these did not provide enough space internally to meet national space standards (each flat has to be at least 39 square metres) and the cost of building pitched roof dormers was considerably greater. Therefore, the Applicant had to consider replacing the flat roof dormers with higher quality flat roof dormer windows which would be set between the proposed gables.

6.70 The proposed scheme seeks to remove the existing single storey flat roof extensions which detract from the character of the terrace. The 1 ½ storey rear gables would be positioned on the existing footprints of the existing single storey flat roof extensions. The western elevation would have tile hanging to the first floor additions with gabled roof with hipllets to the end of each gable. This lowers the visual massing whilst mirroring the architectural detailing of the existing building. These gables would enhance the character of the rear of the cottages by replicating detailing on the more attractive eastern elevation.

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- 6.71 Small pitched roof dormer windows are proposed on the eastern and southern roof slopes to match the pitched roof dormer windows already in situ on the eastern elevation. These are modest in size and complement the existing proportions.
- 6.72 The approach that has been taken is to design the extension so that it closely matches the existing building in its facing materials, architectural features, window sizes and proportions.
- 6.73 It is considered that the extensions appropriately respond to the character of the existing cottages and the local area in accordance with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

#### Residential Amenity

- 6.74 Policy DP26 of the District Plan requires developments to demonstrate that it does not cause significant harm to amenities of existing nearby residents (or future occupiers), taking into account matters such as impact on light, privacy and outlook.
- 6.75 Policy CNP 10 (Building Extensions Within and Outside the Built Up Area Boundary) states "*Building extension will be permitted where it meets the following criteria:*"
  - a) *The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene.*
  - b) *Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.*
  - c) *Gaps which provide views out of the village to surrounding countryside are maintained.*
  - d) *Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
  - e) *The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and*
  - f) *The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.*"
- 6.76 There are three neighbouring properties that are sited to the north and west of the site. To the north is Church Bank House which overlooks (from its first floor windows) the front garden of Cuckfield Cottage Homes. There is a 2 – 2.5m high close boarded fence on the boundary which prevents views from the ground floor level. The extensions to the north west of the cottages would not impact their outlook, privacy or light.
- 6.77 To the north of the site is Mason Cottage which appears to be a single storey bungalow with its outlook to the west into its courtyard garden. The most northerly proposed gable would not impact the outlook or light to this western elevation. There is a small dormer window in the southerly roof which is blocked up with no outlook. There is no outlook from the ground floor of this cottage in a southerly direction as there is an old outbuilding with a corrugated roof that sits between the cottage and the 2m high boundary wall which prevents any views. 3 metres would be retained between the proposed gable and the boundary wall with Mason Cottage.
- 6.78 To the west is The Old Clergy House which is a large detached dwelling. The existing outbuilding which is to be retained is sited on the boundary with The Old Clergy House and this screens the majority of the views from and into the site from the neighbouring property. The Old Clergy House is already overlooked by the ground floor windows and first floor dormer windows in the western elevation of the cottages. However, there are a number of trees on the boundary which screen views between the two properties.

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- 6.79 The southern extension would retain at least 2.5m to the western boundary of the site, the existing outbuilding would be retained on the western boundary and all the existing vegetation and trees would be retained to help screen the proposals.
- 6.80 Although there is greater mass through the extensions, the ridge and eaves heights have been kept down and the design of the extensions greatly enhances the western and southern elevations of the cottages by removing the flat roof extensions and dormers and erecting high quality extensions that pick up the design detailing on the eastern elevation.
- 6.81 It is therefore considered that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution in accordance with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This is neutral in the planning balance.

#### Parking and Highway Impact

- 6.82 The six existing Cuckfield Cottage Homes and the two new units proposed are intended for people in need, hardship or distress, sixty or over, are followers of a Christian faith with preference being given to members of the Church of England and are resident in the area of benefit with a preference for those persons living in the Parish of Cuckfield.
- 6.83 There are currently six flats that are in need of renovation and adaption to provide DDA compliant living conditions and two new one bed flats are proposed.
- 6.84 Access arrangements are unchanged as part of this proposal. There is no opportunity to provide on-site car parking provision as there is only pedestrian access to the site. Storage facilities for push bikes and mobility scooters would be provided within the existing outbuilding on site.
- 6.85 The site is located just to the south of the High Street in Cuckfield. The village centre, with its wide range of shops, amenities and services is a short walk from the application site. There are regular bus services that provide a realistic travel choice for residents. These bus services provide access to Haywards Heath Railway Station so the local rail network is also accessible to residents. Therefore, it is considered that this site is highly sustainable.
- 6.86 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trustees, have advised that four out of the six current residents own a car, but they are rarely used, with existing residents collectively using their cars for one or two journeys per week. Ancillary vehicle movements such as those associated with deliveries would not create new trips on the road network. It would be reasonable to conclude that this proposal would not generate a traffic impact that would affect the current conditions.
- 6.87 West Sussex County Council's 2020 Guidance on Parking at New Developments has been used to understand the likely car parking implications of the proposed development. The Guidance sets out indicative levels of on-site car parking and considers key characteristics such as car ownership and accessibility to sustainable modes of transport. It is used as an

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initial guide for developers who should also undertake a site specific assessment and seek to balance operational needs, space requirements, efficient use of land and cost attributed to providing parking.

- 6.88 As there is no opportunity to provide on-site car parking, any additional parking demand needs to be accommodated within the existing on-street capacity. To test whether there is local on-street capacity a parking beat survey (PBS) has been undertaken. The process followed the guidance set out in section 7 of the 2020 Guidance on Parking at New Developments.
- 6.89 The PBS was undertaken on Thursday, 10th July between 01:00 - 03:00 to understand the current parking demand on local streets during the early morning, which is when resident demand is at its highest. The PBS was undertaken by individuals that are independent of the author of the Transport Report.
- 6.90 Typically, a PBS would be necessary on streets with parking controls. These controls would establish the spaces where cars would be able to park, whilst maintaining the free flow of traffic. There are no parking controls within Cuckfield, other than double yellow lines in some locations. Sections where parking would be inappropriate or was considered to be unwelcoming or unsafe by the survey team have been removed from the analysis.
- 6.91 A PBS is a measure of parking demand against capacity and this measure is called parking stress, which is expressed as a percentage. Typically, where a PBS is undertaken on streets with parking controls the material stress is 85%, on streets with no, or limited, parking controls this can be increased to 90%. These thresholds ensure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate daily variations in parking demand.
- 6.92 The collected data informs that the current parking stress was 83.3%. Adding the demand derived from the two additional vehicles increases the stress to 88.1%. These percentages are based on 37 parked cars and 5 empty spaces once the new demand has been added to the network. Visitor parking demand can be accommodated in nearby public car parks, the nearest is located on Broad Street, circa 300metres walk from the application site.
- 6.93 The results show that while local streets are busy, which would be expected in a location that was developed long before the private motor car was invented, there is capacity to accommodate the minimal increase in parking demand.
- 6.94 On this basis, taking all the relevant information into consideration, it is considered that the proposal of two new flats, would not have any unacceptable impact on highway safety, or severe impact on highway capacity in accordance with Policy CNP16 of Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

#### Sustainability / Energy Saving Measures

- 6.95 The existing flats are to be renovated and upgraded to improve insulation and thermal properties. In addition to these targeted improvements, the retention and reuse of the

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existing building structure also delivers significant sustainability benefits by minimising waste and significantly reducing the carbon footprint of the development.

6.96 The sustainability / energy saving measures proposed consist of:

- Improved thermal efficiency of the flats to achieve the EPC rating required for grant aid.
- Locally sourced materials to match existing, including clay roof and hung tiles.
- Water efficient fixtures and fittings.
- Thermal efficient new windows and doors within the extension.
- Reusing existing built fabric where possible, limiting change to less significant elements of the built fabric, preserving views across the churchyard and to the conservation area.
- All materials from the demolished elements would be removed from site by the contractor and taken to a licensed site for either recycling or safe disposal, dependent on the material.

6.97 In addition, the accessibility of the site, or the sustainable location of it, is a key consideration. The development is situated in a highly sustainable location within a category 2 settlement. Shops and services are only a few minutes walk to the high street where there are bus stops that give access to Haywards Heath railway station and other surrounding villages and towns. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with policies DP21 and DP39 of the District Plan. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in sustainability terms and this should be positive in the planning balance.

#### Drainage

6.98 Policy DP41 relates to flood risk and drainage and requires development to demonstrate it is safe across its lifetime and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

6.99 The proposed development is within flood zone 1 and is deemed to be at low fluvial flood risk. The proposed development is not within an area identified as having possible surface water (pluvial) flood risk.

6.100 It is proposed to connect the two new flats to the existing foul and surface water drainage system.

6.101 The proposal is thereby considered to comply with policy DP41 of the District Plan. This is considered to be neutral in the planning balance.

## Ecology

6.102 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken at the site by C.T Ecology. This found that the site is not subject to any statutory designations or non-statutory designations. The site has potential for bats and breeding birds with limited potential to support more mobile species such as badger and great crested newts.

6.103 The cottages were identified as having potential to support bat roosting features and a preliminary roost assessment has been recommended. No other targeted protected species surveys are required but C.T Ecology recommend adopting a precautionary approach to different elements of the works in relation to great crested newts, birds and badger to fully safeguard these species groups.

6.104 Although the site has limited potential to support great crested newt, due to part of the site falling within a red impact risk zone, precautionary measures would be implemented in order to fully safeguard this species. Based on the limited terrestrial habitat supported and the discrete nature of the works, it is not considered necessary to register the application on the District Level Licensing (DLL) Scheme which may otherwise be triggered by development. Instead, C.T Ecology recommend adopting a series of precautionary working measures to fully safeguard great crested newts and this approach is considered to be sufficient and proportionate in this situation to ensure the favourable conservation status of great crested newts is not impacted as a result of the works.

6.105 C.T Ecology undertook a preliminary roost assessment at the site on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025 and this concluded that the cottages have a number of potential bat roosting features and access opportunities, however these are more limited within the direct work impact zone.

6.106 The building has been assessed as having moderate potential to support roosting bats and the proposed works pose a potential risk to bats and their roost sites. In order to confirm the presence/absence of roosting bats at the site and confirm the impacts of the proposal, further bat surveys were required.

6.107 Three bat emergence surveys have been carried out between June and September 2025. A bat emergence survey report with a bat mitigation strategy have been undertaken and submitted with this application. This report concludes that the cottages support two common pipistrelle day roosts, supporting up to 4 bats, associated with areas of hanging tiles on the south and east elevations of the building.

6.108 To legally proceed with the proposed project, an appropriate bat mitigation licence would be obtained from Natural England before any impactful works commence. Following approval from Natural England, an appropriate bat mitigation strategy would be implemented to meet the licensing tests. Details of the licensing process together with an appropriate mitigation strategy for the scheme are provided in Section 5 of the Bat Emergence Survey Report with Mat Mitigation Strategy submitted with this application.

6.109 No further survey work is required to support this planning application. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with Policy CNP4 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF. This is considered to be neutral / positive in the planning balance.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

6.110 The total area of habitat to be lost to facilitate the development equates to 81 metres squared which comprises vegetated garden (modified grassland).

6.111 C.T Ecology have provided the BNG Metric which shows the total Biodiversity Net Gain delivered when applying the small sites metric would be 10.07% (habitat units) and 77.25% (hedgerow units). A management company manage the communal garden area, therefore on-site enhancements are possible as part of the 30-year BNG requirement. This has been confirmed by the client. The following habitat features will be incorporated post development:

- Existing grassland along the eastern boundary is relatively species-poor. 30m<sup>2</sup> of grassland would be enhanced to create wildflower grassland. Overseeding with an appropriate wildflower grassland mix would serve to enhance the sward with long-term meadow management promoting a diverse range of flowering species to develop throughout the growing season. Yellow rattle would be incorporated into the seed mix in order to suppress growth of coarse grasses during establishment;
- A total of four native trees would be planted within the grassland at the site; and
- A 30m length of native hedgerow would be enhanced through additional planting along the southern site boundary. This would comprise a minimum of two woody species which could include, but not be limited to, hazel and dogwood.

6.112 Therefore, the proposals would accord with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This is considered to be a positive in the planning balance.

### West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council Contributions

6.113 The Applicant is agreeable to entering into a planning obligation to secure the necessary West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council contributions. The infrastructure obligation would meet policy DP20 of the District Plan, the Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD and statutory tests contained within the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations. This is positive in the planning balance.

### Recreational Disturbance

6.114 Increased recreational activity arising from new residential development and related population growth is likely to disturb the protected near-ground and ground nesting birds on the Ashdown Forest.

6.115 In accordance with advice from Natural England, the HRA for the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, and as detailed in District Plan Policy DP17, mitigation measures are necessary to counteract the effects of a potential increase in recreational pressure and are required for developments resulting in a net increase in dwellings within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA.

6.116 The proposed development is outside the 7km zone of influence and as such, mitigation is not required.

## 7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Planning legislation requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is therefore necessary for the planning application to be assessed against the policies in the Development Plan and then to take account of other material planning considerations including the NPPF. The Development Plan in this instance consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

7.2 Courts have confirmed that the Development Plan must be considered as a whole, not simply in relation to any one individual policy. It is therefore not the case that a proposal must accord with each and every policy within the Development Plan.

7.3 The Development Plan and the NPPF seek to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes through promoting the development of previously developed and under-utilised land.

7.4 The proposal is supported by the Government's requirement to maximise development on sites and promote development on previously developed and underutilised land. As such, in terms of principle, the renovation, extension and provision of two additional flats within an accessible and sustainable location, that would positively contribute to the Council's housing supply should be supported. The site is within the built up area of Cuckfield which is a Settlement 2 Category. The site is considered to be a suitable and sustainable location for residential development. The principle of the proposal is considered acceptable, and this is positive in the planning balance.

7.5 The Senior Private Options Housing Officer at Mid Sussex District Council has advised that there are currently 130 households in TA (single and families), 8 of which are over 55 years of age. Cuckfield Cottage Homes also have a waiting list for available flats. Therefore, there is a need for these additional flats.

7.6 Technical Nationally Described Housing Standards requires a 1 bed 1 person flat to have a minimum internal gross floor area of 39 sqm. The application proposes two new flats with floor areas of 48.6 and 46.5 square metres which exceeds this requirement. The scheme also proposes to increase the floor areas of the existing flats through the extension of the building so that all the flats exceed the minimum gross internal floor area as currently three of the flats are below the required standard. This is positive in the planning balance.

7.7 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes have been described as a non designated heritage asset by the Council's Conservation Officer. It is considered that there is limited evidential value, although their Arts and Crafts style are reflective of building fashions at this time. There is some communal value derived from the historic and continuing function of the Almshouses which serve the local community. Therefore, substantial weight should be given to the fact that this proposal seeks to enhance the current provision of accommodation for the local community which supports their communal value.

7.8 The Cuckfield Cottage Homes are part of the history of the church reflecting its role in supporting the local community including through means of alms. The cottages original function as Almshouses would still be understood if the proposed extension is allowed and

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there will be no change in the church's relationship with these buildings. The proposed works would have no effect on the understanding of how changes to the religious practices of the church have changed over time and how these are reflected in the layout of the church. Neither would it have an effect on its important role to the local community over time.

- 7.9 The communal value of the church would be entirely preserved by the proposed works. There would be no change to the function of the application site as a home run for the less fortunate as a result of the new extension. The communal aspect of the church's role in the use of the building would be unaffected. As would the importance of the church to the local community.
- 7.10 The proposed new extension would result in a modest change to the setting of the church but this would have no effect on its significance. The extension has been cited away from the church. Its bulk, mass and scale is entirely appropriate for the existing building and would not dominate views to or from the church. The design and materiality of the extension would blend with the existing building to minimise any visual change. The proposed works would not result in any change to an appreciation or understanding of the significance of the church and churchyard monuments or any effect on their heritage values.
- 7.11 The proposed works would have no effect on the significance of any of the identified listed monuments by a change within their setting. The location of these grave markers within the churchyard would be unaffected by the proposed new extension which has been sensitively located. The significance of all the listed monuments within the churchyard would be entirely preserved by the proposed works.
- 7.12 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and planning policy in relation to heritage assets seek to preserve interest and avoid harm. It is considered that the proposed works would not constitute harm therefore clear and convincing justification or public interest mitigations are not considered to be required.
- 7.13 The proposals would not have an adverse impact upon the values that underpin the significance or the architectural and historic interest of Holy Trinity Church, listed monuments or the Conservation Area in accordance with policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.
- 7.14 There would be no change to the historic value of Cuckfield Conservation Area as a result of the proposed extensions to the Almshouses. This building forms part of the Victorian development of the area (with later alterations) and demonstrates the importance of the church to the local community and in turn the church's role in providing for the less fortunate members of the congregation. The historic character of the village would be preserved by the proposed extensions. The function of the houses to offer accommodation to those in need would still be understood and would continue to illustrate an aspect of the village's history and institutions for the provision of the community.
- 7.15 It is therefore considered that the proposal preserves the special interest of the terrace and the character and appearance of the wider Conservation Area as well as the positive contribution the terrace makes to the setting of the Church and other associated listed

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structures in accordance with policies DP34 and DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the adopted Design Guide. This should be positive in the planning balance.

- 7.16 An archaeological watching brief may be required by the County Archaeologist during the works, to monitor all groundworks – foundation trenching and ground reduction. This would ascertain the presence and significance of any buried archaeological remains which may be disturbed by the proposed development in accordance with Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan. This is neutral in the planning balance.
- 7.17 It is considered that the removal of the flat roof dormer windows and the flat roof rear extensions should be positive in the planning balance as they currently detract from the character of the cottages. The proposed extensions although adding more mass to the building, are of a high quality design that complements the character of the eastern elevation of the cottages and greatly improves the look of the western elevation.
- 7.18 Although the proposal does not propose any parking spaces, the site is within a sustainable location within the village centre of Cuckfield, close to bus stops that connect to Haywards Heath Railway Station. The additional two flats would be 1 bed and 1 person flats for people in need and over 60 years old. These people are less likely to have a car but if they do, it has been proven that there is enough on-street capacity to accommodate two additional cars. As such it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm in terms of the level of parking or highway safety. This is neutral in the planning balance.
- 7.19 No significant harm would be caused to the amenities of the surrounding residential occupiers through overlooking, loss of light, loss of outlook or noise. In addition, the proposal would result in suitable amenity for future occupiers. This is positive in the planning balance.
- 7.20 The proposal will deliver positive social and economic benefits through the delivery of housing which reflects one of the key objectives of the NPPF and in the short term the proposal would also deliver a number of construction jobs. The Council would also receive a new homes bonus. The proposal would also support the local economy through an increase in residents living within the village centre. This is positive in the planning balance.
- 7.21 To legally proceed with the proposed project, an appropriate bat mitigation licence would be obtained from Natural England before any impactful works commence. Following approval from Natural England, an appropriate bat mitigation strategy would be implemented to meet the licensing tests. No further survey work is required to support this planning application. It is considered that the proposal accords with Policy CNP4 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Paragraph 193 of the NPPF. This is considered to be neutral / positive in the planning balance.
- 7.22 C.T Ecology have provided the BNG Metric which shows the total Biodiversity Net Gain delivered when applying the small sites metric would be 10.07% (habitat units) and 77.25% (hedgerow units). This is positive in the planning balance.

- 7.23 There are no issues in relation to highway safety and drainage and there will be no likely significant effect on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). This will have a neutral impact.
- 7.24 The application is thereby considered to comply with policies DP4, DP5, DP6, DP21, DP26, DP27, DP28, DP34, DP35 and DP38 of the District Plan, policies CNP1, CNP4, CNP7, CNP10 and CNP16 of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide and paragraphs 8, 11, 61, 73, 131, 193, 207, 212 and 216 of the NPPF.
- 7.25 Overall, the planning balance is considered to fall in favour of approving the planning application.
- 7.26 This application is submitted to you for your favourable consideration.

## Appendix A

# **HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY REPORT**

**Cuckfield**

**MID SUSSEX DISTRICT**

**September 2012**

**Action in rural Sussex**

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## 1 Introduction

Action in rural Sussex was asked by Cuckfield Parish Council to carry out a Housing Needs Survey in mid-2012. The aim of the survey was to determine the existing and future housing needs of residents in Cuckfield particularly those on low or modest incomes. This report identifies the affordable and open-market housing that is required by local people in Cuckfield.

*The role of the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) is to provide independent support, advice and information to Parish Councils and community groups concerned about the lack of affordable housing in their rural communities.*

*Action in rural Sussex (AirS) is a registered charity (No.1035401) whose purpose is to improve the quality of life of local communities, particularly for disadvantaged people, and to facilitate the development of thriving, diverse and sustainable communities throughout rural Sussex.*

## 2 The Parish of Cuckfield

The parish of Cuckfield is a civil parish located in the central portion of Mid Sussex District in West Sussex.

It is located approximately 2 miles west of Haywards Heath and close to the main A272 road which connects Haywards Heath to Cowfold and Billingshurst in the West and Maresfield in the East. The village is also 2 miles east of the main London to Brighton A23 road.

The village of Cuckfield possesses a primary school, a secondary school as well as the Parish Church and various other shops and services.

According to the Census, the population of the parish was 3,266 persons in 2001. Please note that data from the 2001 Census has been used in this report as local level data from the 2011 Census will not be available until later on in 2012.

### 2.1 Housing type in Cuckfield

Figure 1 shows that the greatest proportion of properties in the parish are detached (43.15%), with a smaller proportion of semi-detached and terraced properties (40.87%). Flats/maisonettes made up 15.41% of the housing stock in 2001. The 2001 Census data revealed there to be 8 second homes within the parish (0.57%).

**Figure 1 - Housing Type Breakdown**

**Housing Type Breakdown (Census 2001)**

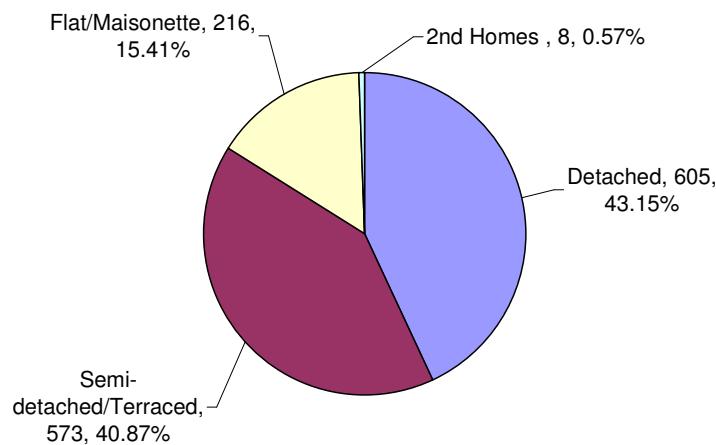


Table 1 shows that there is a slightly higher level of detached properties within Cuckfield compared to the average for the rest of the district, but with a slightly lower level of semi-detached or terraced housing. This table also clearly shows that there are comparable proportions of flats/maisonettes and second homes when compared to the rest of Mid Sussex District.

**Table 1 - Housing Type in Mid Sussex District and Cuckfield Parish**

Housing Type	Mid Sussex District	Cuckfield Parish
Detached	19,648 (36.77%)	605 (43.15%)
Semi-detached / Terraced	25,025 (46.83%)	573 (40.87%)
Flat / Maisonette	8,496 (15.89%)	216 (15.41%)
Second Homes	255 (0.49%)	8 (0.57%)

(Source: Census 2001)

## 2.2 Housing Tenure in Cuckfield

From the 2001 Census data and as seen in Table 2 the predominant tenure in Cuckfield is owner occupation, although with rates lower than in the district as a whole. Cuckfield has comparable rates of rentable housing in the public sector and renting from the private sector when compared with Mid Sussex as a whole.

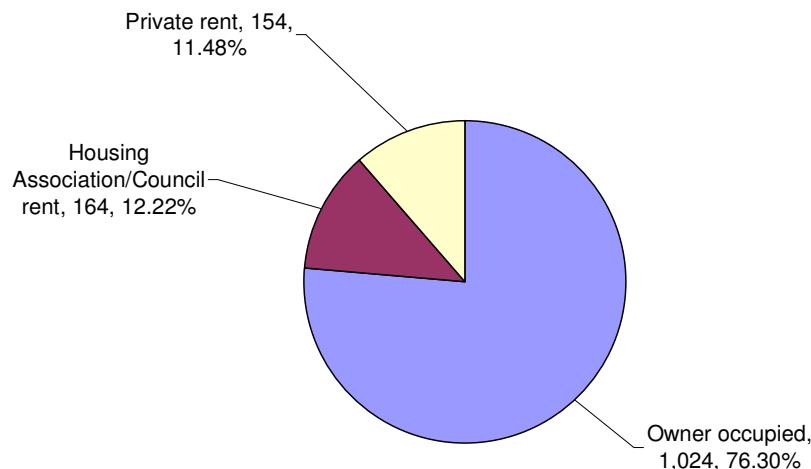
**Table 2 - Housing Tenure in England, Mid Sussex District and Cuckfield Parish**

Tenure	UK	Mid Sussex	Cuckfield
Owner occupied	70%	80%	76%
Housing Association / Council rent	19%	10%	12%
Private rent	10%	10%	12%

(Source: Census 2001)

**Figure 2 – Housing Tenure Breakdown**

**Housing Tenure Breakdown (Census 2001)**



### **3 Survey methodology and response rate**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

The primary mechanism for gauging the level of need for affordable rural housing is via the use of a Housing Needs Survey. This involves surveying all households within the Parish in order to obtain information which can be used to assess scale and nature of the need. Action in rural Sussex worked with Cuckfield Parish Council to agree the method and process by which the Housing Need Survey would be undertaken.

The Housing Needs Survey consists of two main parts:

1. The first part was for all households to complete. It contains questions used to identify those who believe they have a housing need and asks them to provide information to support this.
2. Part 2 of the survey form contains questions used to capture information on specific household circumstances and housing requirements. This section is to be completed by those households who currently are, or expect to be, in need of affordable and appropriate housing.

Please note – Not all of the respondents provided answers to all of the questions, therefore the numbers of respondents for each question will not necessarily match the total number of respondents to the survey. Responses provided to questions in section 1 of the survey may not have been answered along similar lines to those in section 2 of the survey. This may account for differing breakdowns of responses to individual questions and give slightly different numerical results in both sections but overall, the broad indication of need is consistent,

A copy of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix 3. As specialists in Housing Needs Surveys, the questionnaire is in line with other surveys conducted by Action in rural Sussex in Mid Sussex District.

The survey was delivered by post to 1,529 households in the parish. A pre-paid envelope was included for residents to return the survey by the 1st June 2012 to Action in rural Sussex so that the results could be analysed.

#### **3.2 Lifespan of the survey**

The questionnaire asked households about their housing need within the next 2 years; between 2 to 5 years from now and in 5 or more years. Whilst the initial period of housing need such as the next 10 years is likely to be accurate, need beyond this period is likely to be indicative and a further survey at that time would be recommended.

#### **3.3 Response rate**

Overall 1,529 questionnaires were sent out; one to each household in the parish. A total of 449 survey forms were returned, giving the Housing Needs Survey a response rate of 39.37%, which represents a very good response rate to a survey of this type.

From the responses that were received, 415 households identified that they were living in their main home. Those who did not identify that their current residence was their main home (or a second home) were assumed to be living in their main home (31).

The number of respondents analysed for this survey is therefore 446, as the respondents who stated their property was their second home (3) were not required

to fill in the questionnaire and were therefore excluded from the number available for analysis.

## 4 Survey Part 1 – You and Your Household

### 4.1 Second Homes

446 respondents identified the property was their main home. 3 respondents identified the property as a second home and on this basis their forms were excluded.

### 4.2 Description of Current Home

The vast majority of respondents (389) described their homes as a house; 29 respondents lived in a Flat / Maisonette/Apartment/Bed-sit; 9 respondents described their home as a bungalow; 8 respondents were in public sector sheltered or retirement housing, 7 were in public sector sheltered or retirement housing 3 respondents described their home as 'Other', whilst 0 respondents lived in a Caravan/Mobile Home/Temp. structure. 1 respondent did not complete the question.

**Table 3 - Current Property Description**

Description of Current Home	Number of respondents
House	389 (87.22%)
Bungalow	9 (2.02%)
Flat / Maisonette/Apartment/Bedsit	29 (6.50%)
Caravan/Mobile Home/Temp. structure	0 (0.00%)
Sheltered Housing/Retirement Housing (Social Sector)	8 (1.79%)
Sheltered Housing/Retirement Housing (Private Sector)	7 (1.57%)
Other	3 (0.67%)
No response	1 (0.22%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>446</b>

### 4.3 Number of Bedrooms in Current Home

Table 4 highlights that 23 respondents said that they had a bed-sit or one bedroom residence (5.16%), 72 had two bedrooms (16.14%), 171 respondents had three bedrooms (38.34%) and 179 respondents have four or more bedrooms (40.13%). 1 respondent did not complete the question (0.22%).

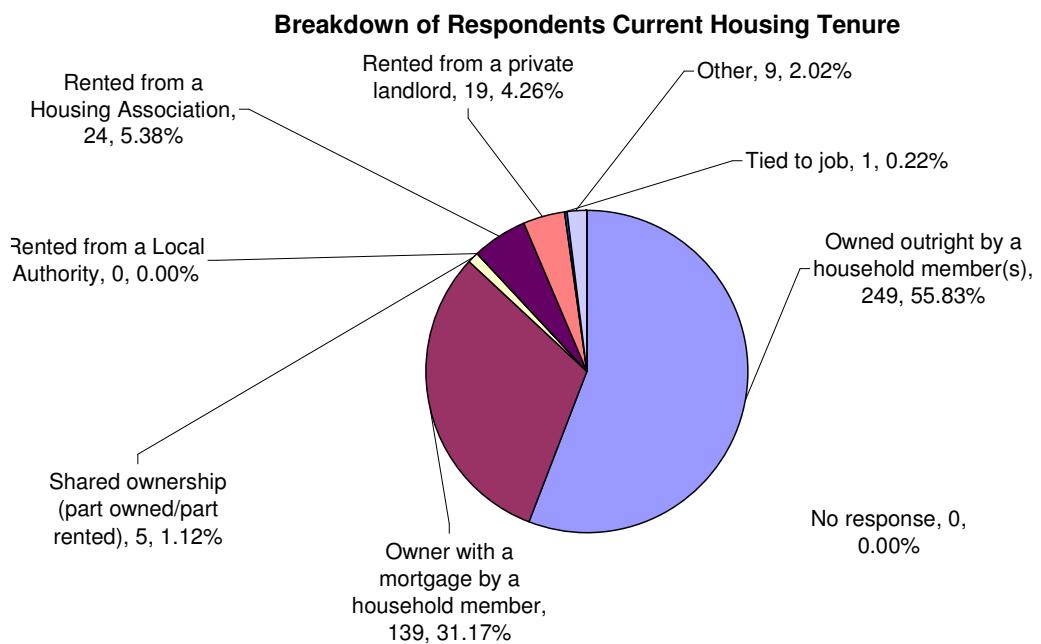
**Table 4 - Number of bedrooms in current property**

Number of bedrooms	Number of respondents
Bed-sit / one bedroom	23 (5.16%)
Two bedrooms	72 (16.14%)
3 bedrooms	171 (38.34%)
4 or more bedrooms	179 (40.13%)
No Response	1 (0.22%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>446</b>

### 4.4 Tenure of Current Home

As seen in Figure 3, the majority of respondents (249) owned their property outright, closely followed by those owning their property with a mortgage (139). 24 respondents are renting from a Housing Association, 19 are renting from a private landlord and 9 respondents described their accommodation as other. 5 respondents are in shared ownership properties and 1 respondent had accommodation tied to a job. No respondents are renting from a local authority. All respondents completed the question.

**Figure 3 - Current Tenure of Home**



In summary from Figure 3,

- Approximately 87% of respondents are owner occupiers
- Approximately 4.3% of respondents rent the property from a private landlord
- Approximately 5.4% of respondents rent from a Housing Association
- Approximately 2% of respondents have accommodation tied to their job
- Approximately 1% of respondents are in shared ownership properties

In comparison with the Census percentages for the Mid Sussex District and Cuckfield Parish in Table 2, respondents to the survey represent a higher proportion of owner occupiers and a lower proportion of households in private and public or housing association rented properties.

#### 4.5 Duration of residence

The greatest number of respondents had lived in the parish for between 3 and 10 years (28.70%), with over half (approximately 60%) of all respondents having lived in the parish for less than 20 years.

**Table 5 - Duration of residence**

Length of residence (years)	Number of respondents
Less than 3	52 (11.66)
3 to 10	128 (28.70)
11 to 20	103 (23.09)
21 to 30	63 (14.13)
31 to 40	55 (12.33)
41 to 50	15 (3.36)
51+	20 (4.48)
No response	10 (2.24)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

#### 4.6 Adaptations

18 respondents (4.04%) said that their current home required adaptations to become suitable for the needs of a household member. 423 respondents (94.84%) said that their home did not require any adaptations. 5 respondents did not complete the question (1.12%).

Of the 18 who identified that their current home required adaptations to become suitable for the needs of a household member, 10 highlighted that they would need financial assistance to undertake such changes.

#### 4.7 Does any family member need to move now or in the next 5 years?

This section outlines the needs identified by respondents in terms of the timeframe within which a household need to move, it also identifies whether these households have a need for affordable, shared ownership or open market housing. It should be noted that respondents were able to highlight a need that could be met by each or any of these categories and they may therefore have expressed their need in one or more categories.

From Table 6, it can be seen that a combined total of 38 respondents said that a household member will need to move in pursuit of affordable housing. 28 said it was needed within 5 years (6.28%) and 10 said they needed to move in 5 or more years (2.24%). 259 respondents identified that no household member would need to move in pursuit of affordable housing (58.07%), whilst 149 participants in the survey provided no response (33.41%).

**Table 6 – Households moving for affordable housing**

<b>Does the household need to move</b>	<b>Number of households</b>
Yes, within 5 years	28 (6.28%)
Yes, in 5 or more years	10 (2.24%)
No	259 (58.07%)
No Response	149 (33.41%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

As shown in Table 7, it can be seen that a combined total of 52 respondents said that a household member will need to move in pursuit of open market housing. 29 said it was needed within 5 years (6.50%) and 23 said they needed to move in 5 or more years (5.16%). 231 respondents identified that no household member would need to move in pursuit of open-market housing (51.79%), whilst 163 participants in the survey provided no response (36.55%).

**Table 7 - Households moving for open market housing**

<b>Does the household need to move</b>	<b>Number of households</b>
Yes, within 5 years	29 (6.50%)
Yes, in 5 or more years	23 (5.16%)
No	231 (51.79%)
No Response	163 (36.55%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

Table 8 shows that 24 respondents said that a household member will need to move in pursuit of shared ownership housing. 19 said it was needed within 5 years (4.26%) and 5 said they needed to move in 5 or more years (1.12%). 240 respondents identified that no household member would need to move in pursuit of open-market housing (53.81%), whilst 182 participants in the survey provided no response (40.81%).

**Table 8 - Households moving for shared ownership**

<b>Does the household need to move</b>	<b>Number of households</b>
Yes, within 5 years	19 (4.26%)
Yes, in 5 or more years	5 (1.12%)
No	240 (53.81%)
No Response	182 (40.81%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

Table 9 shows that only 31 respondents (6.95%) could identify that family members have moved away from the parish in the last 5 years due to difficulties in finding an affordable or other home locally. 328 respondents could not identify a family member that had moved away (73.54%) and 87 provided no response (19.51%).

**Table 9 - Family members that have moved away from the parish in the last 5 years due to difficulties in finding an affordable or other home locally**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Yes	31 (6.95%)
No	328 (73.54%)
No response	87 (19.51%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

## 5 Older Persons Housing

### 5.1 Age of respondents

The greatest number of respondents to the Older Persons Housing section of the survey form, were in the 60 to 69 age range (37.12%).

**Table 10 - Age of respondents**

Age range	Number of respondents
50 to 59	47 (17.80%)
60 to 69	98 (37.12%)
70 to 79	74 (28.03%)
80 to 89	35 (13.26%)
90+	10 (3.79%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>264</b>

### 5.2 Suitability of home

Of those responding to the question of whether their current home was suitable for their circumstances, 270 (60.54%) identified that it was and 20 (4.48%) identified that it was not. 156 respondents did not complete the question (34.98%).

**Table 11 - Suitability of current home**

Response	Number of responses
Yes	270 (60.54%)
No	20 (4.48%)
No response	156 (34.98%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>

The most common single factor identified for those who said that their home was not suitable was that their home was too large (35.48%) – see Table 12. However, respondents tended to identify more than one factor which as to why their home was unsuitable.

**Table 12 - Reasons for lack of current home suitability**

Response	Number of responses
Home too large	11 (35.48%)
Cannot manage garden	8 (25.81%)
Cannot manage stairs/access	8 (25.81%)
Cannot afford repairs/upkeep	4 (12.90%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>

As shown in Table 13, the vast majority of respondents (262) would prefer to remain in their own home (97.04%).

**Table 13 - Preference to remain in own home**

Response	Number of responses
Yes	262 (97.04%)
No	8 (2.96%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>

61 respondents (79.22%) identified that they require assistance in the form of home repairs/assistance/handyman in order to remain in their own home. Only 12 respondents (15.58%) identified a need for adaptations to their home, with 4 (5.19%) identifying equity release as their preferred means of assistance.

**Table 14 - Assistance to remain in own home**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Home repairs/Assistance/Handyman	61 (79.22%)
Adaptations to your home	12 (15.58%)
Equity release	4 (5.19%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>

Only 23 respondents identified a need to move in order to meet their housing needs (8.61%), whilst 244 (91.39%) did not. 179 respondents did not complete the question (40.13%).

**Table 15 - Need to move in order to meet housing needs**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Yes	23 (8.61%)
No	244 (91.39%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>

The information in Table 16 clearly shows that 50% (34) of those respondents expecting to move would like to move to a home which better meets their needs but which is not specially built for older people. Of these, 18 would prefer to move to a house, 12 to a bungalow and 4 to an apartment.

**Table 16 - Accommodation needs for those expecting to move residence**

<b>Response</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Apartment</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Total</b>
A home which better meets your needs but is not specially built for older people.	18 (85.71%)	4 (22.22%)	12 (41.38%)	<b>34 (50.0%)</b>
A home which has been specially designed for older people but does not come with any support services.	1 (4.76%)	4 (22.22%)	5 (17.24%)	<b>10 (14.71%)</b>
A home in a development for older people with some limited support services, also known as sheltered housing.	2 (9.52%)	7 (38.89%)	10 (34.48%)	<b>19 (27.94%)</b>
A home in a development for	0 (0.00%)	3 (16.67%)	2 (6.90%)	<b>5 (7.35%)</b>

older people with a more extensive range of support services (for example, assistance with bathing, meals, access to care staff).				
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 (30.88%)</b>	<b>18 (26.47%)</b>	<b>29 (42.65%)</b>	

A majority of the 35 respondents seeking to move (57.14%) identified that they were most likely to obtain a new home or dwelling by purchasing on the open market.

**Table 17 – Accommodation requirements of those seeking to move**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Affordable Housing	5 (14.29%)
Private Sale	20 (57.14%)
Low Cost Home ownership/shared ownership	2 (5.71%)
A residential or nursing home	3 (8.57%)
Other	5 (14.29%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

## 6 Survey Part 2 – Affordable Housing Needs

There were 85 responses to part 2 of the questionnaire, of these 40 were identified as being in need of affordable housing.

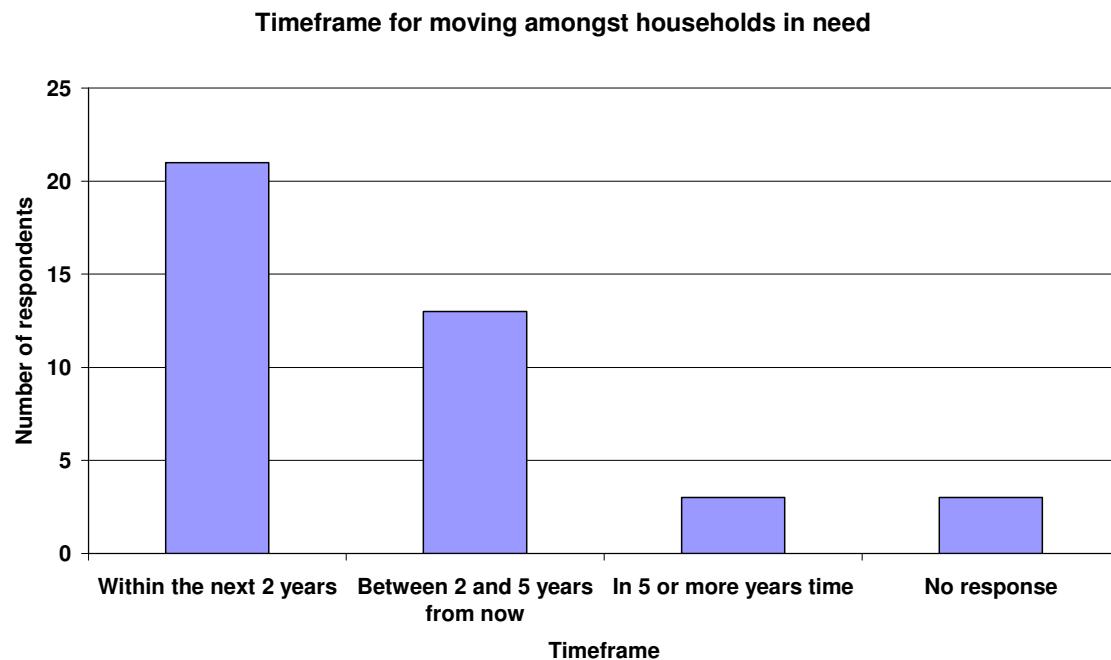
### 6.1 Current place of residence

28 respondents in housing need currently live within the parish (70.00%). Of these, 13 are currently living with their parents, 15 are living as part of another household in the parish. 10 respondents (25.00%) are currently living outside of the parish and 2 respondents did not complete the question (5.00%).

### 6.2 When accommodation is required

21 (52.50%) of the respondents in housing need stated that they would need to move within 2 years, 13 respondents (32.50%) highlighted a need to move between 2 and 5 years from now, whilst 3 (7.50%) respondents made clear that they would need to move in 5 or more years from now. 3 respondents did not provide a response to the question (7.50%).

**Figure 4 - Likely timeframe in which respondents would need to move**



### 6.3 Current tenure of households in need

Of those households identified as being in need: 16 were living with parents, 18 were renting from private landlords, 4 were renting from a housing association and 1 was living in tied accommodation. 1 provided no response to the question.

**Table 18 - Current tenure of households in need**

<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Owned	0 (0.0%)
Part bought/part rented under shared ownership agreement	0 (0.0%)
Rented from a private landlord	18 (45.00%)
Provided with a job (tied)	1 (2.50%)
Renting from a housing association	4 (10.00%)
Living with parents	16 (40.00%)
No response	1 (2.50%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

#### **6.4 Preferred tenure**

12 of the 40 households in need of affordable housing indicated a preference to buy a property on the open market (30.00%), 15 to rent from a Housing Association (37.50%), whilst 10 were seeking a shared-ownership property (25.00%), 1 to rent from a private landlord (2.50%) with 2 respondents not completing the question (5.00%).

#### **6.5 Housing Register**

A total of 11 respondents (27.50%) with a local connection who indicated a housing need are currently on the housing register, with 26 respondents (65.00%) not currently being on the housing register. 3 respondents did not complete the question (7.50%).

#### **6.6 Housing Type**

Just over half of those responding (21) indicated a preference for a house (52.50%), with 13 respondents indicating a preference for a flat/maisonette/apartment (32.50%) and 4 respondents would like to live in a bungalow (10.00%). 2 respondents did not complete the question (5.00%).

#### **6.7 Accommodation requirements**

5 respondents (12.50%) identified a need for ground floor accommodation. 0 respondents identified any other specific accommodation requirements if they were to move home. 35 respondents did not complete the question (87.50%).

#### **6.8 Accessibility and adaptations**

2 respondents (5.00%) identified that their current home had been adapted in order to increase physical accessibility because of the disability of someone currently present in the household. 25 respondents (62.50%) identified that this was not the case, with 13 failing to provide an answer (32.50%).

#### **6.9 Reasons for moving**

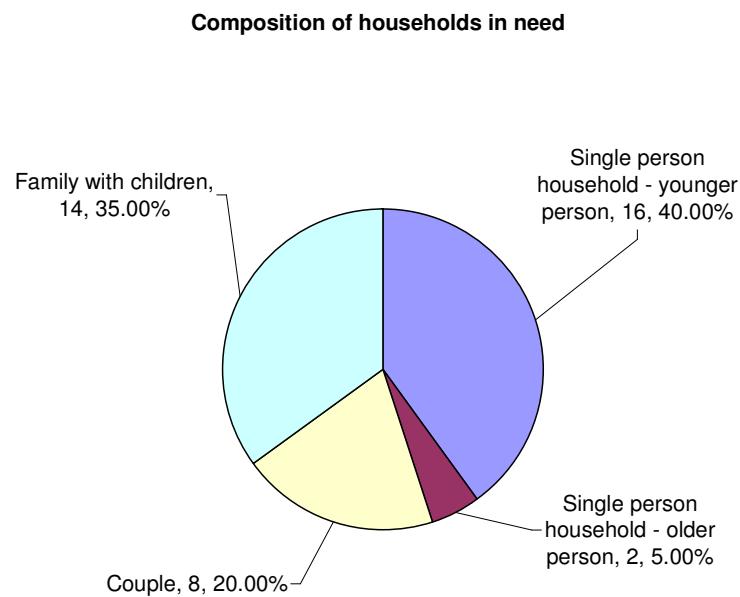
As shown in Table 19, when asked why the household needed to move, 19 respondents said it was to set up an independent home, 3 respondents need a larger home, 3 respondents required a cheaper home, 2 respondents needed a physically adapted home, 2 respondents need to be close to their employer, 1 respondent a more secure home and 1 respondent needs to be closer to their carer. 6 respondents did not complete the question and 3 provided 'other' answers.

**Table 19 - Reasons for needing to move house**

<b>Reason for moving</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Need to set up an independent home	19 (47.50%)
Need a smaller home	0 (0.00%)
Need a larger home	3 (7.50%)
Need a cheaper home	3 (7.50%)
To avoid harassment	0 (0.00%)
Need a more secure home	1 (2.50%)
Need physically-adapted home	2 (5.00%)
Need to change tenure	0 (0.00%)
Need to be closer to carer	1 (2.50%)
Need to be closer to employer	2 (5.00%)
Other	3 (7.50%)
No response	6 (15.00%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

## 6.10 Household composition

The household makeup of the 40 households in housing need with a local connection and who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market are shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5- Composition of households in need**

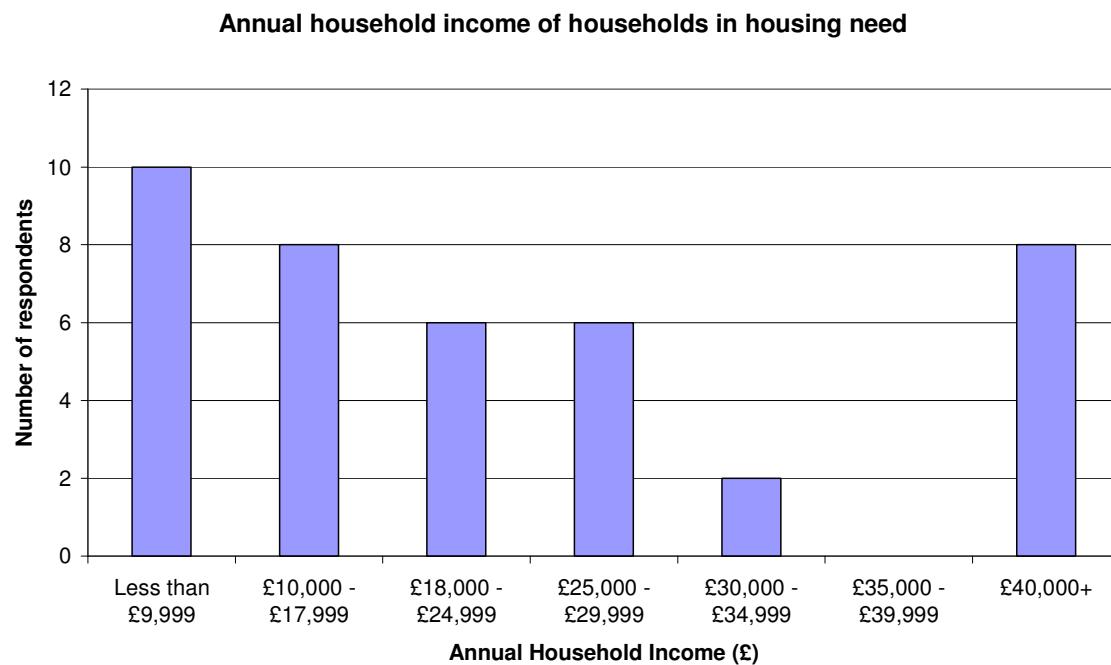
As a percentage the composition of households breaks down as follows:  
 35.00% in housing need falls into the category of families with children  
 20.00% in housing need are couples  
 45.00% in housing need are single person households

## 6.11 Affordability

To enable an accurate calculation of the number of people that are in housing need and cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market, respondents were asked for their gross annual income and the amount of savings they have.

Figure 7 outlines the annual incomes for those in housing need and that have a local connection. Those respondents who have the highest income were still below the figure determined to be able to afford a property in Cuckfield. The most common annual incomes of those in housing need are those between £10,000 and £17,999.

**Figure 6 - Annual Incomes of Households in Housing Need with a local connection**

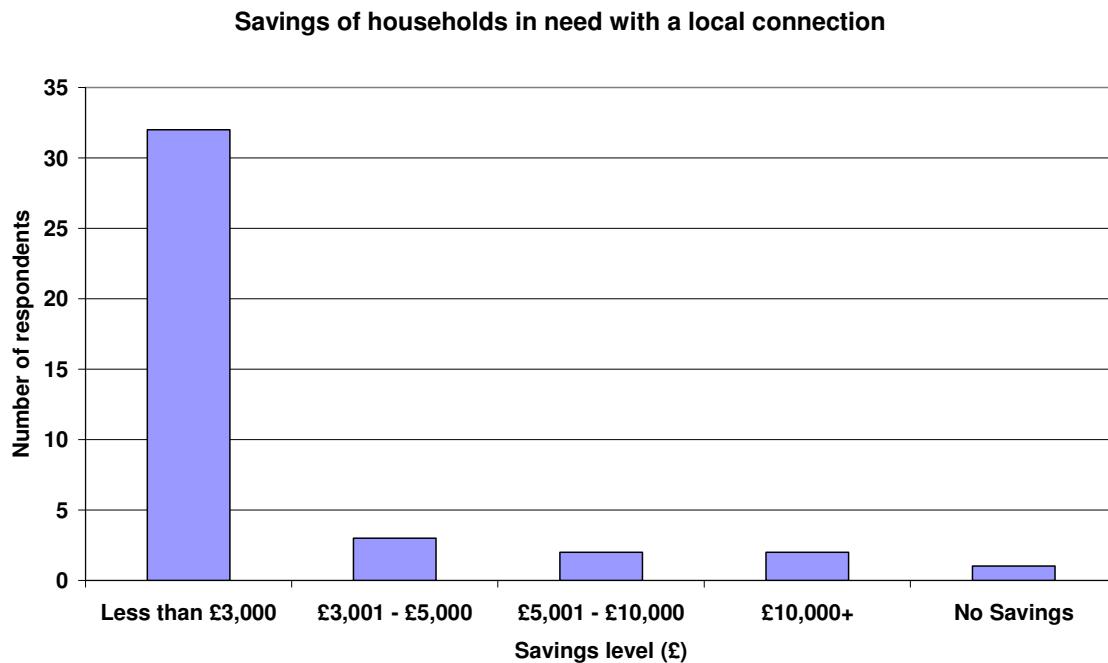


From Figure 6 it can be seen that

- 24 (60.00%) households have an income below £24,999 per annum which is the lowest level income that would be considered for shared ownership housing
- 16 (40.00%) households have an income of over £24,999. Of these 8 households had an income over £40,000. Due to the circumstance and composition of these households none of these 8 households are able to meet their housing needs on the open market.

From Figure 7, it can be seen that 35 households out of the 40 that are in housing need have savings below £5,000. 2 households have savings between £5,000 and £10,000 and 2 households had in excess of £10,000. The remaining household had no savings.

**Figure 7 - Savings of Households in Housing Need with a local connection**



## 6.12 Local Connection

All 40 respondents identified a strong local connection, with 27 (67.50%) currently living in the parish, whilst 5 used to live in the parish (12.50%) and 8 (20.00%) who have relatives living in the parish.

## 6.13 Summary of Need

There are 40 households in housing need who have a local connection and who cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market. 18 are single person households (45.00%), 8 are couples without children (20.00%) and 14 are families with children (35.00%). Further detail is included in Appendix 2.

**Table 20 - Breakdown of households in need**

Household type	Number of respondents
Single person households	18
Couple without children	8
Family with 1 child	5
Family with 2 children	2
Family with 3 children	4
Family with unspecified number of children	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

## 7 Affordability Assessment

### 7.1.1 Average House Prices

Table 21 show the Land Registry's figures for Mid Sussex District from January to March 2012. From these figures the average entry levels have been calculated for purchasing a property in the district. This is calculated on the basis of a 90% mortgage with a 3.5 x gross income lending ratio. From this it can be seen that the lowest income required to purchase an average price flat would be £37,835.

**Table 21 - Average House Prices in Mid Sussex District**

Housing Type	Average Price	Income Required
All Housing	£274,610	£70,614
Detached	£418,737	£107,675
Semi-Detached	£275,532	£70,851
Terraced	£221,979	£57,080
Flat	£147,139	£37,835

Source: Land Registry (2012)

In order to assess the eligibility of respondents for a local needs housing scheme it is necessary to ensure that each has a local connection to the parish and that they are unable to meet their needs on the open market. 40 respondents met the local connection criteria and are unable to fulfil their need for affordable housing on the open market.

A property search on [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk) was also carried out to provide an indication of current prices of properties available in Cuckfield. Table 22 shows the lowest prices for properties on sale in the surrounding area and Table 23 shows the lowest prices for renting in the area.

From this search undertaken in July 2012, an entry level home was £135,000 for a 1 bed flat, £184,995 for a 2 bed apartment through to £325,000 for a 3 bed detached house. On the basis of this search, no households identified as being in need had an income sufficient to purchase or rent a property in Cuckfield.

**Table 22 - Lowest current property prices**

Property Type	Location	Lowest Price	Income Required
1 bed flat	Cuckfield	£135,000	£38,571
2 bed apartment	Cuckfield	£184,995	£52,855
3 bed semi-detached house	Cuckfield	£265,000	£75,714
3 bed terraced house	Cuckfield	£299,950	£85,700
3 bed detached house	Cuckfield	£325,000	£92,857

A variety of properties were available for rent in the property search undertaken using [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk) in July 2012. Table 23 shows the properties available for rent in Cuckfield with the lowest monthly rental cost in a range of different property types. The income required is based on the rental cost not exceeding 25% of a households gross annual income.

**Table 23 - Lowest current property rental prices**

Property Type	Location	Lowest Price	Income required (@25% gross income)
<b>2 bed apartment</b>	Cuckfield	£750	£36,000
<b>2 bed semi-detached house</b>	Cuckfield	£925	£44,400
<b>3 bed terraced house</b>	Cuckfield	£995	£47,760
<b>5 bed semi-detached house</b>	Cuckfield	£1,750	£84,000

## 8 Survey Part 2 – Market Housing Needs

There were 85 responses to part 2 of the questionnaire, of these 19 were identified as being in need of open market housing.

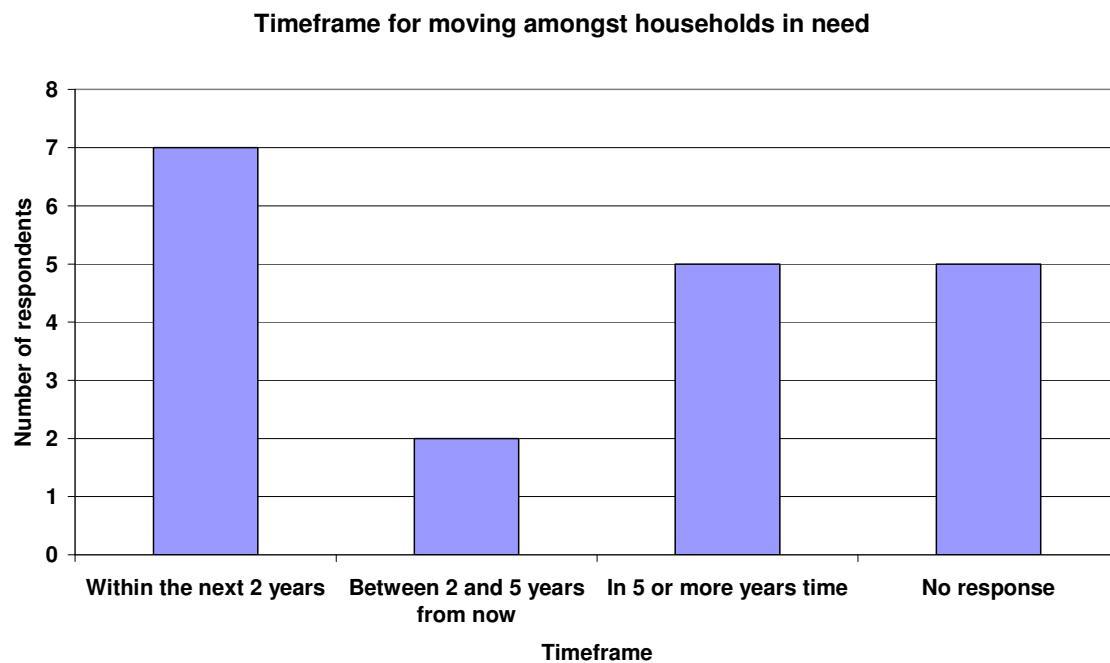
### 8.1 Current place of residence

8 respondents in housing need currently live within the parish (42.11%). 2 respondents (10.53%) are currently living outside the parish. 9 respondents did not complete the question (47.37%).

### 8.2 When accommodation is required

7 (36.84%) respondents in housing need stated that they would need to move within 2 years, 2 respondents (10.53%) highlighted a need to move between 2 and 5 years from now, whilst 5 (26.32%) respondents made clear that they would need to move in 5 or more years from now. 5 respondents did not provide a response to the question (26.32%).

**Figure 8 - Likely timeframe in which respondents would need to move**



### 8.3 Current tenure of households in need

Of those households identified as being in need: 11 were living in accommodation they owned and 1 was renting from a private landlord. 7 provided no response to the question.

**Table 24 - Current tenure of households in need**

Tenure	Number of respondents
Owned	11 (57.89%)
Part bought/part rented under shared ownership agreement	0 (0.00%)
Rented from a private landlord	1 (5.26%)
Provided with a job (tied)	0 (0.00%)
Renting from a housing association	0 (0.00%)
Living with parents	0 (0.00%)
No response	7 (36.84%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

### 8.4 Preferred tenure

10 of the 19 households in need of market housing indicated a preference to buy a property on the open market (52.63%), 1 wished to rent from a Housing Association (5.26%) and 1 wanted to rent from a private landlord (5.26%). 7 respondents did not complete the question (36.84%).

### 8.5 Housing Register

No respondents with a local connection who indicated a housing need are on the housing register. 14 respondents (73.68%) were not on the housing register. 5 respondents did not complete the question (26.32%).

### 8.6 Housing Type

Just under half of those responding (9) indicated a preference for a house, with 2 respondents indicating a preference for a flat/maisonette/apartment, 2 for sheltered accommodation, 1 respondent would like to live in a bungalow and 1 provided an 'other' response. 4 respondents did not complete the question.

### 8.7 Accommodation requirements

2 respondents (10.53%) identified a need for ground floor accommodation. 4 respondents were seeking sheltered housing with support services provided (21.05%). 1 respondent required residential care (5.26%) and 1 gave an 'other' response (5.26%). 11 respondents did not complete the question (57.89%).

### 8.8 Accessibility and adaptations

2 respondents (10.53%) identified that their current home had been adapted in order to increase physical accessibility because of the disability of someone currently present in the household. 13 respondents (68.42%) identified that this was not the case, with 4 failing to provide an answer (21.05%).

### 8.9 Reasons for moving

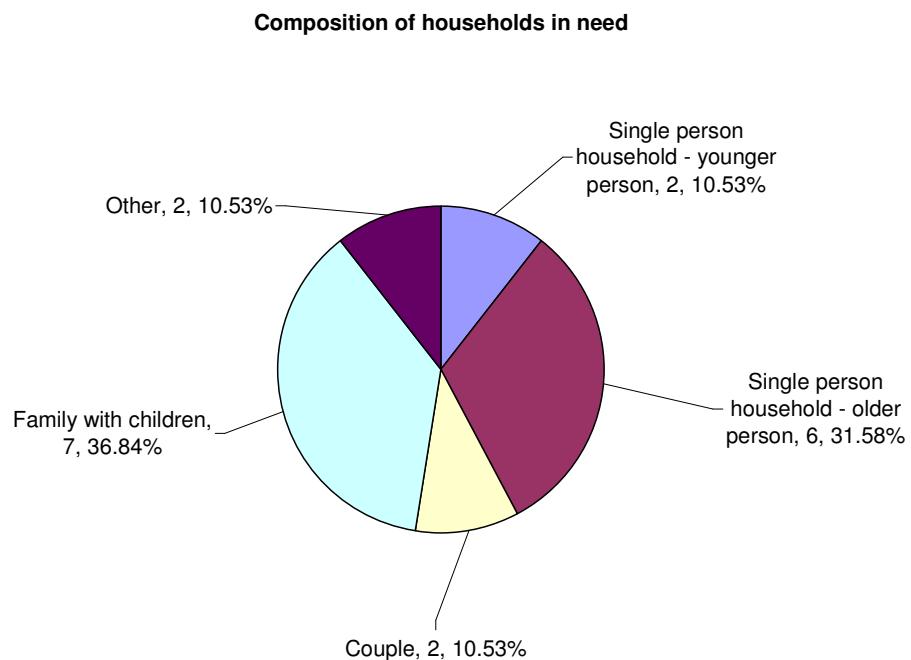
As shown in Table 25, when asked why the household needed to move, 6 respondents needed a larger home, 3 respondents required a smaller home, 2 respondents need to be closer to their carer and 1 respondent said it was to set up an independent home. 2 respondents did not complete the question and 5 respondents provided 'other' answers.

**Table 25 - Reasons for needing to move house**

Reason for moving	Number of respondents
Need to set up an independent home	1 (5.26%)
Need a smaller home	3 (15.79%)
Need a larger home	6 (31.58%)
Need a cheaper home	0 (0.00%)
To avoid harassment	0 (0.00%)
Need a more secure home	0 (0.00%)
Need physically-adapted home	0 (0.00%)
Need to change tenure	0 (0.00%)
Need to be closer to carer	2 (10.53%)
Need to be closer to employer	0 (0.00%)
Other	5 (26.32%)
No response	2 (10.53%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

## 8.10 Household composition

The makeup of the 19 households in need of private housing with a local connection is as follows:

**Figure 9- Composition of households in need**

As a percentage the composition of households breaks down as follows:

36.84% in housing need falls into the category of families with children

10.53% in housing need are couples

42.11% in housing need are single person households

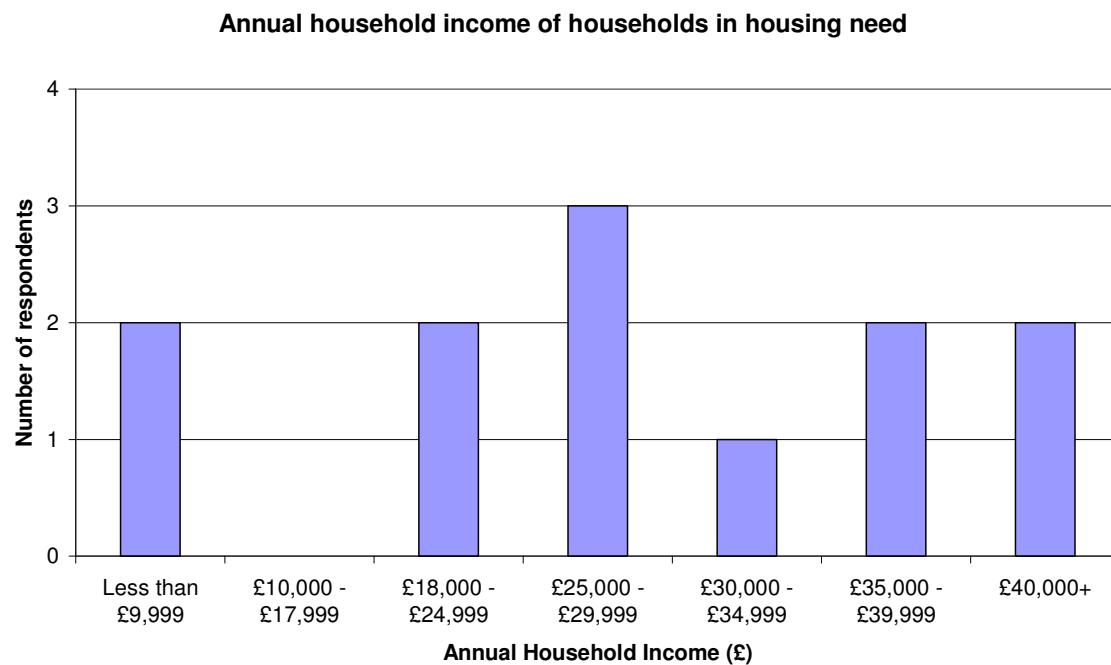
10.53% are 'Other' households (families with unspecified numbers of children)

## 8.11 Affordability

To enable an accurate calculation of the number of people that are in private housing, need respondents were asked for their gross annual income and the amount of savings they have.

Figure 10 outlines the annual incomes for those in housing need and that have a local connection. The most common annual incomes of those in housing need are those on between £25,000 and £29,999 (3) and those on less than £9,999 per annum (2). 7 respondents did not complete this question.

**Figure 10 - Annual Incomes of Households in Housing Need with a local connection**

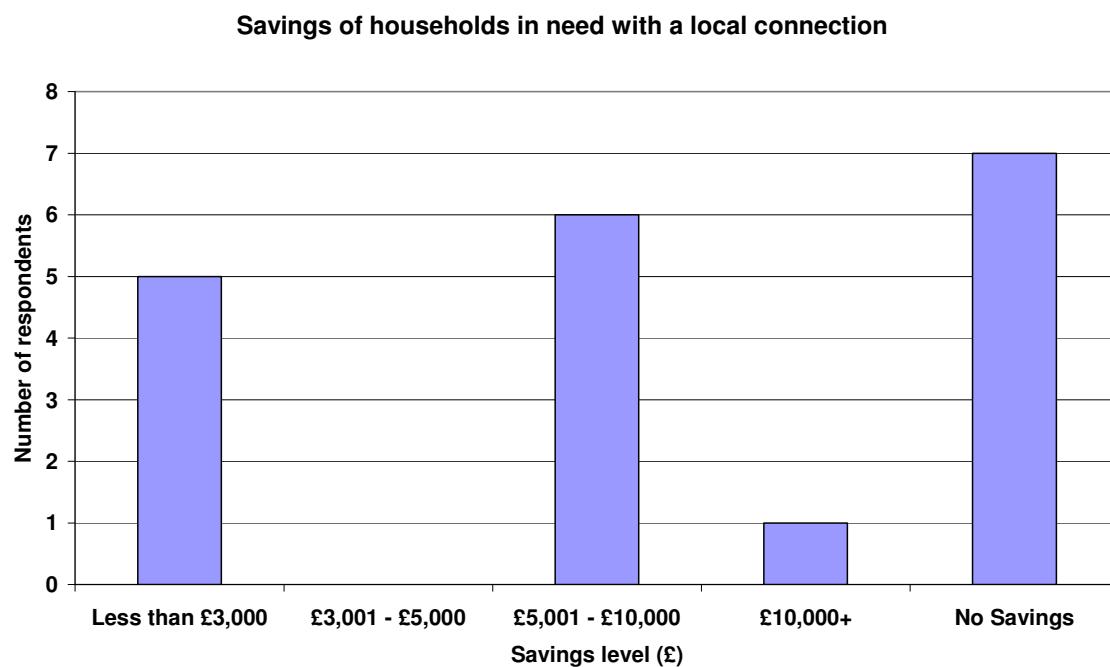


From Figure 10 it can be seen that

- 4 (21.05%) households have an income below £24,999 per annum which is the lowest level income that would be considered for shared ownership housing
- 8 (42.11%) households have an income of over £24,999. Of these, 2 households had an income over £40,000.
- 7 respondents did not provide any information (36.84%).

From Figure 11, it can be seen that 5 households have savings below £5,000. 6 households have savings between £5,000 and £10,000 and 1 household had in excess of £10,000. The remaining 7 households had no savings.

**Figure 11 - Savings of Households in Housing Need with a local connection**



### 8.12 Local Connection

16 respondents identified a strong local connection as 13 (68.42%) were currently living in the parish, 1 used to live in the parish (5.26%) and 1 (5.26%) had relatives living in the parish. 4 respondents did not answer this question (21.05%).

### 8.13 Summary of Need

There are 19 households who have a local connection. Of these 8 are single person households (42.11%), 2 are couples without children (10.53%) and 11 are families with children (57.90%). A significant proportion of the market housing need relates to older people who own their own homes and may be seeking to move to a smaller and/or more suitable property.

Further details are included in Appendix 2.

**Table 26 - Breakdown of households in need**

<b>Household type</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Single person households	8
Couple without children	2
Family with 1 child	2
Family with 2 children	2
Family with 3 children	2
Family with 4 children	1
Other	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>

## 9 Appendix 1 – Covering Letter



# CUCKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The Queen's Hall  
High Street  
Cuckfield  
West Sussex RH17 5EL  
Tel: 01444 451610  
Email:  
cuckfieldpc@btconnect.com

To the Occupier  
May 2011

Dear resident

Cuckfield Parish Council is undertaking a Housing Needs Survey in the Parish which will provide important information for the Neighbourhood Plan we are currently developing. Please find enclosed a questionnaire, which the Parish Council would be grateful if you could take the time to complete.

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR FORM IN THE FREEPOST ENVELOPE  
PROVIDED by;**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012**

The survey is being undertaken by Action in Rural Sussex, which is an independent organisation that works with Parish Councils, District Councils and Housing Associations. The aim of the survey is to find out what, if any, type of housing is needed within the parish and how best it can be provided.

**The information you supply will be treated in the strictest confidence**

The results of the housing survey will be summarised by the Parish Council in the newsletter.

If you have any queries regarding the form, need help filling it in or require a translation please contact Tom Warder, Rural Housing Enabler, Action in Rural Sussex, 212 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2NH.

Telephone: 01273 407302. E-mail: [tom.warder@ruralsussex.org.uk](mailto:tom.warder@ruralsussex.org.uk)

Yours faithfully

| Cuckfield Parish Council

## 10 Appendix 2 - Assessment of need

Year	Market housing need	Affordable housing need
	(Households & Household composition)	
<b>0 – 2 years</b>	2 x single older people (OP) in need of a bungalow 1 x single OP needing to downsize 1 x single OP needing sheltered housing 1 x couple OP needing to downsize 1 x couple OP needing sheltered housing 2 x family with 2 children (F2) in need of a larger home 1 x F1 needing a larger home 1x F3 needing a larger home 1x Family (?) needing to move closer to the school for children	11 x Single 4 x Couples without Children (2= transfer) 2 x F1 1 x xF2 1 x F3 3 x Families with no specified number of children
<b>2 – 5 years</b>	1 x F4 needing to downsize	5 x Single 3 x Couple without Children 1 x F1 1 x F2 3 x F3 (1= transfer)
<b>5+ years</b>	1 x single OP needing SH 1x single OP needing to downsize 1 x single OP needing a nursing home 1 x couple OP needing / downsize 1 x couple OP needing sheltered housing 1x F4 needing a larger home	2 x Single 1 x Couple without Children
<b>No response or no information</b>	1 x single person	1 x F1 1 x F2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>40</b>

**Note:** F1, F2, F3 etc refers to the number of children in a household's family.

Transfer refers to households in existing affordable housing (Housing Association) who need to transfer to a more suitable home e.g.: larger or on the ground floor.

**Parish Housing Needs Survey**  
**For** Cuckfield

**Please use the pre-paid envelope to return this survey to us by Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012**

Is this your main home? Yes, main Home  1 No, second Home  2

**If this is your second home do not complete the rest of the form but please do return it**

---

**Part 1: You and your household (the people of a house collectively)**

1. How would you describe your home:

House	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Bungalow	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Flat/maisonette/apartment/bed-sit	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Caravan/mobile home/temp. structure	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Sheltered/retirement housing (social sector)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Sheltered/retirement housing (private sector)	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

If 'Other', please specify

2. How many bedrooms does your home have?: (Please tick one box only ✓)

One bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Two bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Three bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Four or more bedrooms	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

3. What is the tenure of your home? (Please tick one box only ✓)

Owned outright by a household member(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Owned with mortgage by a household member(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Shared ownership (part owned/part rented)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Rented from a Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Rented from a Housing Association	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Rented from a private landlord	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Tied to job	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

If 'Other', please specify

4. How many years have you and your household lived in this parish?

5. Please complete the table to demonstrate the profile of all those living in this property at present.

	Age	Gender
Person 1		
Other person 2		
Other person 3		
Other person 4		
Other person 5		
Any others please specify		

6. Does your current home need to be adapted to improve its accessibility because of the disability of someone in your household? Yes  1 No  2

If 'yes' would you need financial assistance to undertake this Yes  1 No  2

## **Older Peoples Housing – Please complete this section if you consider yourself an older person**

To help us identify future needs for older peoples accommodation and services in the Parish please tick the appropriate box for each question.

**7. What is your age? 50 – 59 60 – 69 70 – 79 80 – 89 90 + please specify if you wish.....**

**8. Is your current home suitable for your circumstances?**

Yes  No

**9. If not, why not?**

Home too large   
Cannot manage garden   
Cannot manage stairs/access   
Cannot afford repairs/upkeep   
Other

If 'Other', please specify

**10. Would you prefer to remain in your own home?**

Yes  No

**11. If you answered yes to question 10, would any of the following assist?**

Home repairs assistance / handyman   
Adaptations to your home   
Equity release

**12. Do you feel you need to move in order to meet your housing needs?**

Yes  No

**13. If you expect to move, what type of accommodation do you think you will need? (please tick only one box)**

A home which better meets your needs but is not specially built for older people	House <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow <input type="checkbox"/>
A home which has been specially designed for older people but does not come with any support services.	House <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow <input type="checkbox"/>
A home in a development for older people with some limited support services, (for example a community alarm service) also known as sheltered housing.	House <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment <input type="checkbox"/>
A home in a development for older people with a more extensive range of support services (for example assistance with bathing, meals, access to care staff).	House <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow <input type="checkbox"/> Apartment <input type="checkbox"/>
if you expect to move, what tenure of housing would you require –,	affordable <input type="checkbox"/> private sale <input type="checkbox"/> low cost home ownership/shared ownership <input type="checkbox"/>
A residential or nursing home	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)...	

**END of Older Person's Section**

**13. Do you or does anyone you know need to move to an affordable or other home within the parish now or in the coming years? (please tick)**

Housing type	Yes within 5 years	Yes, in 5 or more years	No
Affordable			
Private Sale Market			
Low cost home ownership/shared ownership			

**14. Has anyone you know moved away from the parish in the last 5 years, due to difficulties in finding an affordable or other home locally? Affordable / Other (please state.....)**

Yes  1 No  2

**If you answered 'Yes' to question 13 and these households wish to move back to the parish, please complete part 2 of this form on their behalf.**

**If you are in need of affordable housing and you are looking to remain within the parish then please complete Part 2 of this questionnaire, which collects information on your housing needs.**

**Please be assured that this questionnaire is completely confidential.**

**IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS IN NEED OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
PLEASE GO ON TO COMPLETE PART 2 OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please complete this section if you or someone in you know (who may or may not live in your home) is in need of affordable housing. Please also answer all questions even though you answered some of them in Part 1

**Please indicate on whose behalf you are completing part 2:**

	Relationship to you Eg: Son, Daughter, Friend etc.	age	gender	Is this a member of your own household?	Is this person a *concealed household?	Is this person from another household?
Household 1: you						
Household 2: other						
Household 3: other						

\*A concealed household is a newly forming household, for example mature children or other family members in need of independent accommodation.

If you are in housing need please tick the relevant box. You should tick :

- (H1) if you personally are in housing need
- (H2) if you are referring to another household in need living with you as above
- (H3) a further household either living within or outside of the parish who has a local connection to it

(For local connection details see question 13))

If there are more than 3 households in need then please contact us for another form  
(contact details on page 6).

## **PART 2**

**Please ensure that when you complete part 2 you are referring to all households outlined above and tick all of the boxes that apply in each of the questions 1 – 13 below.**

**1. Where do those requiring accommodation live?**

Together as a household within this parish H1 H2 H3

Within another household in this parish H1 H2 H3

Outside the parish H1 H2 H3

Living with parents H1 H2 H3

**2. When do those requiring accommodation need to move from this household?**

Within the next 2 years H1 H2 H3

Between 2 to 5 years from now H1 H2 H3

In 5 or more years H1 H2 H3

**3. What is the current tenure of the household / households in need?**

Owned (outright / with a mortgage – please specify) H1 H2 H3

Part bought/part rented under shared ownership arrangement H1 H2 H3

Renting from a private landlord H1 H2 H3

Provided with job (e.g. Tied) H1 H2 H3

Renting from a Housing Association H1 H2 H3

Living with parents H1 H2 H3

**4. Which tenure would you / they prefer? (Please tick one only box for each household ✓)**

Renting from Housing Association H1 H2 H3

Shared Ownership\* H1 H2 H3

Buying on the open market H1 H2 H3

Renting from a private landlord H1 H2 H3

*\* Government scheme which enables people to buy a share in a newly built property*

**5. Are you / they on the Local Authority or Housing Association register or waiting list?**

Yes H1 H2 H3

No H1 H2 H3

**6. What type of accommodation would meet your / their needs? (Tick one box only ✓)**

House H1 H2 H3

Bungalow H1 H2 H3

Flat/maisonette/apartment H1 H2 H3

Sheltered H1 H2 H3

Retirement H1 H2 H3

Other H1 H2 H3

If 'Other', please specify

**7. Do any of the households require any of the following?**

Accommodation on the ground floor	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Sheltered housing with support services* provided	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Other housing with support services*	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Residential care provided	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

If 'Other', please specify

*\*Practical support and advice such as warden assisted housing or telecare schemes*

**8. Has your current home been adapted to improve accessibility \* because of the disability of someone in your household?**

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
No	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

*\* Layout and design suitable for any member requiring adapted accommodation, e.g. wheelchair access*

**9. What is your/their main reason for needing to move? (Please tick one box only: each household ✓)**

Need larger home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need smaller home - present home is difficult to manage	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need a more manageable home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to set-up independent home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need adapted home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need cheaper home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to be closer to employer	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to be closer to a carer or dependant, to give or receive support	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to be closer to/have access to public transport	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to avoid harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need secure home	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Need to change tenure	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

If 'Other', please specify

**10. What type of household are you / they? (Please tick all boxes that apply)**

One person household	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Couple	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Older person household	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Family with children – please specify (circle) number of children: 1 2 3 4 5	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Single parent family	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

If 'Other', please specify

**11. As it is important to assess income levels when planning affordable rented or shared ownership schemes, please indicate the current GROSS annual household income of the household(s) in need. Couples should indicate a joint income figure. Please note that this information is confidential and should be estimated for each household.**

**Annual Income:**

Less than £9,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£10,000 - £17,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£18,000 - £24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£25,000 - £29,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£30,000 - £34,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£35,000 - £39,999	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

£40,000 + *please specify approximate amount:* H1.....

: H2.....

: H3.....

**12. Do you / they have savings or other equity which could be used to contribute towards a mortgage? (Please tick all boxes that apply)**

No Savings	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Under £3,000	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£3,001- £5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
£5,001 - £10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

Over £10,000 - *Please specify approximate amount:* H 1.....

: H 2.....

: H 3.....

**13. What is your / their local connection to the parish?**

Used to live in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Relative living in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Work in the parish full time	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Work in the parish part time	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Voluntary work in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3
Currently live in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/> H1 <input type="checkbox"/> H2 <input type="checkbox"/> H3

**14. Any other comments?**

Please use the space below to provide any further information which might help to clarify the information you have provided in this form

**THIS INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE**  
**Your personal details will not be given to any 3<sup>rd</sup> party**

**If this survey shows that there is a need for affordable housing for local people, we may need to get back in contact with you as we work with the Local Authority and Housing Association(s) to deliver the homes needed. Therefore, it would be helpful to us if you include your name and address below:**

Name  
Address

Postcode

Telephone (*incl. national dialling code*)

Email

**Is your household currently on the Local Authority Register?**

(It is vital that you register with the District Housing Register if you wish to be considered for an offer of affordable housing)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. The results of this survey will be available in the coming months, and will help the parish to decide on its future plans.

**Please be assured that this questionnaire is completely confidential.**

**Details of Local Rural Housing Enabler:**

Tom Warder

Action in rural Sussex, Sussex House, 212 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2NH  
01273 407302, tom.warder@ruralsussex.org.uk

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**

**Glossary of Key Terms**

Affordable Housing - lower cost housing for shared ownership or rent, often from a housing association, to meet the needs of people who cannot afford accommodation through the open or low cost market, or subsidised housing.

Concealed Households - a concealed household is a newly forming household, for example mature children or other family members in need of independent accommodation

Housing Association - independent not-for-profit bodies that provide affordable housing for rent and shared ownership for people in housing need

Shared Ownership - government scheme which enables people to part rent/part buy a newly built property

Sheltered Housing - a term covering a wide range of rented housing for the elderly, disabled or other vulnerable people. These schemes are distinct from a nursing home or care home in that the tenants are usually able to look after themselves, are active and are afforded a degree of independence.

Social Housing - housing that is let at low rents and on a secure basis to people in housing need. It is generally provided by councils and not-for-profit organisations such as housing associations.

Support Services - mainly provided by local authorities, housing associations and voluntary sector organisations. They help a wide range of people to live independently in the community, by providing practical support and advice.

## Appendix B

**Subject:** Senior Private Housing Options Officer MSDC Email Correspondence

**From:** Denise Nicholson <[Denise.Nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Denise.Nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk)>

**Date:** 17 October 2025 at 11:21:09 BST

**To:** Terry Bevan <[t.bevan45@btinternet.com](mailto:t.bevan45@btinternet.com)>

**Cc:** Roger Edmonston <[rogeredmonston@btinternet.com](mailto:rogeredmonston@btinternet.com)>, James Cox <[James.Cox@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:James.Cox@midsussex.gov.uk)>, Natasha Campbell <[Natasha.Campbell@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Natasha.Campbell@midsussex.gov.uk)>

**Subject: RE: Meeting Today**

Good morning Terry

It was lovely to meet you both the other day and thank you for sending over the documents. I have spoken with James Cox (cc'd) and he is happy to come and view the units or if you have the architects plans available and can email them to us, he can take a look remotely.

The next available date we can visit would be Tuesday 04-November if that's convenient.

Regarding rent reference levels, we refer to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates which are applicable to Mid Sussex. The LHA sets the maximum level of rent that can be covered by Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. Setting rents above these limits can significantly impact affordability for residents and may affect eligibility for Housing Benefit, leading to rent shortfalls and potential arrears.

1. The current 1 bed LHA rate is £197.92 p/week (£860.00 pcm)
2. The current 2 bed LHA rate is £253.15 p/week (£1,100.00 pcm)

We currently have approximately 130 households in TA (single and families), 8 of which are 55+.

I hope that helps you.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,

Denise Nicholson  
Senior Private Housing Options Officer  
Housing Services  
Mid Sussex District Council

 01444 477248

 07712 546356

 [denise.nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:denise.nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk)

**Working together for a better Mid Sussex**

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**From:** Terry Bevan <[t.bevan45@btinternet.com](mailto:t.bevan45@btinternet.com)>  
**Sent:** 15 October 2025 17:26  
**To:** Denise Nicholson <[denise.nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:denise.nicholson@midsussex.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Roger Edmonston <[rogeredmonston@btinternet.com](mailto:rogeredmonston@btinternet.com)>  
**Subject:** Meeting Today

Dear Denise

We greatly enjoyed meeting yourself and Natasha today.

I am attaching our current resident guidance and application documents. The reference date is 2020 since we have had full occupancy since then but we discussed the situation concerning one flat and the planning application to increase the number of units to 8.

As mentioned we are about to seek changes in qualifying terms

1. Age down to 55 from 60 years
2. Description of territory scope to Mid Sussex geography
3. Context of relationship such that a remote inhabitant with strong local connections could be considered.

It would be very helpful for me if you could confirm the one bed and two bed reference rental levels and that you have a changing remit which extends to at least 100 + homeless people who might qualify for residence based on your recent experience. .

You mentioned before making a visit to Cottage Homes and we would be very happy to arrange this in conjunction with your colleague who assesses suitability of provision.

With best wishes

Terry Bevan

Trustee Treasurer

Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust

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## Appendix C

**The Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust  
Registered Charity No 229475**

***The Cuckfield Cottage Homes:  
A Short History***

***In Celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
1882-2007***



***David Thunder/Trustee***

***Trustees: Revd Nicholas Wetherall (Chairman), Paul Goldfinch (Hon Secretary),  
David Thunder (Hon Treasurer), Jane Crampton, Pam Edgerton,  
Liz Holdridge, Isobel Simmonds***

## **The Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust 2007**

*A Short History for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

### **Introduction**

*As we celebrate 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust, this Short History looks back through the Trustees Minute Books for the period 1882-1975 and offers some snippets from the archives – in celebration of the Homes and for the interest (and occasional amusement) of our readers.*

*The Cottage Homes were founded on 21 May 1881 when the Sergison Trust conveyed Church Field on the west side of the Churchyard to Miss Mary Frances Maberly, daughter of a former Vicar of Cuckfield. She acquired the land for the construction of the line of three cottages we know as The Cuckfield Cottage Homes, and a year later the Homes were ready to receive their first residents. The Homes were officially opened by the Service of Dedication held in Holy Trinity Church on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1882.*

**David Thunder/Trustee**

### **Part A: The 1882-1945 Minute Book**

#### **3 April 1882**

At their first meeting Trustees appointed the first residents to Cottages No. 1 and 2. At this stage in their history the Homes consisted of a terrace of three separate houses, rather than the six flats we know today. In order however to make best use of space, residents were appointed “on this condition to be attached, that they should be willing to receive a lodger should the Trustees desire them so to do”. At the May meeting it was also resolved to “appoint a Collector of Rents at a salary of 5%”. The grounds were completed by the addition of “a small gate leading from the Cottage Homes into the Churchyard” and instructions were given to “make an oak (park paling) fence at the back of the Cottages to separate them from the adjoining property”.

#### **12 July 1882**

The Cuckfield Cottage Homes were formally opened with a service of dedication taken by the Revd Mount at “The Church of the Holy Trinity Cuckfield”.

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Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust  
Registered Charity No. 229475

*Trustees: Revd Nicholas Wetherall (Chairman), Paul Goldfinch (Hon Secretary),  
David Thunder (Hon Treasurer), Jane Crampton, Pam Edgerton,  
Liz Holdridge, Isobel Simmonds*

**3 November 1882**

“It was resolved that Widow Burtenshaw late of Iron Pear Tree and her 2 daughters Sarah Ann and Emily Burtenshaw be appointed to occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cottage, but on the understanding that in the event of their mother’s health failing, the two daughters shall have no claim upon the Trustees to continue as occupants of the said cottage”.

**1 December 1885**

This day the Trust Deed of the Charity was finally formalised establishing The Cuckfield Cottage Homes Trust by the conveyance from Miss Maberly “to the Vicar of Cuckfield and others (the trustees) the property and the related land. Miss Maberly was the first Trustee, with the Vicar *ex officio*.

**21 September 1893**

“It was resolved to lay water from the Mid Sussex Company’s Works, but as no estimate of the expense had been sent to the Trustees, no further steps could be taken”.

**25 October 1895**

It would seem that Widow Burtenshaw had passed on, because the Trustees agreed at this meeting “that the Widow Burtenshaw’s daughters Emily and Sarah should be allowed to live in their mother’s cottage”.

**4 July 1896**

Trustees took the first of many decisions to make best use of all the separate rooms in the Homes. Directions were given “that the rooms on the first floor at Mrs Willetts (No. 1) should be cielered (*Sic*), floored and have a window so as to make habitable and that the tender of E

Norris and Sons execute the work for £9”.

**29 March 1899**

Miss Maberly proposed that “the sum of £3-12-00 be expended on the repairs of the road and pathway leading to the Cottage Homes”. Trustees “proceeded to inspect the fence and gate at the back of the Cottage Homes adjoining the wall of Mr Hounsell’s yard (*Mason’s Cottage*), the boiler in Daughter Burtenshaw’s scullery, the small skylight in Widow Pattenden’s roof and the gate into the churchyard – and directed that the necessary repairs be effected”.

**24 July 1899**

It was agreed that “on the occasion of a vacancy, notices should be posted on the doors of the Churches in the Parish”. It was also agreed that the “Widows Packham, Richardson, and Wynter should each pay a rent of 6d a week”.

**26 April 1901**

Miss Maberly reported that the fence adjoining Hounsell’s garden was out of repair. It was agreed that “if necessary it should be replaced by a brick wall 4 feet high, and then that the pathway by the side of it should be repaired with hard stone siftings. Mr Bevan expressed his anxiety that special care should be taken that this path should not become public”.

“E Burtenshaw having asked that a gas cooking stove should be supplied to her Cottage, it was agreed that arrangements should be made with the Gas Company”.

**21 March 1903**

"It was reported that the Gas Company declined to make the arrangements for a cooking stove suggested at the last meeting".

**22 January 1907**

The Trust Deed was examined "and it was found that Miss Maberly and the Vicar are the only trustees actually appointed, and it was agreed that Mr Waugh be requested to draw up a deed of appointment including the names of Mr Bevan, Miss Louisa Best and Mr Waugh".

This is the first mention of Miss Best, after Miss Maberly the second most important character in this history. She took over from Mr T W Best. Incidentally, the frequency of spinsters names among Trustees in this early history is easily explained: the Deed provided for spinsters to resign on their marriage so as not to be distracted from their duties to their husbands and families.

*Over the next few years little of note is recorded outside of the routine business of repairs and annual accounts*

**2 July 1915**

"No candidate for the vacant room had been found in the Ecclesiastical District". The Vicar was instructed to write to the "Vicar of Staplefield to establish whether any suitable candidate existed in his district of the Parish of Cuckfield". If that did not work, similar approaches were to be made to the Vicar in "the Haywards Heath District of Cuckfield Parish". This is an interesting reminder that Staplefield and St Wilfred's Haywards

Heath are daughter churches of Cuckfield.

**18 February 1916**

"It was stated that there had been for several months a vacancy for another inmate at No. 1, the only occupant at present being Miss E. Burtenshaw".

The Homes were redecorated at a cost of £24-10-00. It was also agreed that "Fire Insurance be raised from £900 to £1200, and also that the buildings should be insured for a similar amount against damage by hostile aircraft".

**17 January 1919**

"It was stated that the Homes had been insured against damage by hostile aircraft for one year only and that the Policy had not been renewed. It is now of course no longer necessary owing to the cessation of hostilities".

**27 June 1919**

Insurance was raised to £1500, which Mr Bevan said, "was not nearly enough owing to the extravagant cost of building". It was also resolved once again "to approach the Gas Company as to the probable cost of supplying gas to the Cottage Homes chiefly for the purposes of cooking".

**12 February 1920**

"Miss Maberly stated that it was not advisable to supply Gas to the Homes". No further discussion or reason is mentioned.

**28 January 1921**

Miss Osborne had "expressed a wish that a small cooking stove should be placed in her room in place of or in front of the open grate and after due

consideration and discussion of ways and means it was left to the Chairman to do what was necessary".

**12 August 1921**

It was noted that "a small cooking stove had been obtained at very reasonable cost for Miss Osborne's room and that it has given great satisfaction". The Trustees considered "how best to increase the cleanliness of the Homes and various suggestions were made".

**4 December 1922**

"The Chairman referred to the death of Miss Maberly which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> October and it was unanimously decided to pass a resolution to be inserted in the Minutes: *That the Trustees hereby express their deep regret at the death of Miss Maberly and their sense of the great loss which the Parish has sustained together with their appreciation of the services of Miss Maberly who had for more than 30 years<sup>1</sup> been a Trustee of the Cottage Homes.* Miss Louisa Best was elected Treasurer in Miss Maberly's place."

**3 August 1923**

Trustees reviewed an "application for the use of the upstairs room in the House which is now occupied by Miss E. Burtenshaw".

**22 February 1924**

"Attention was drawn to the fact that the lower rooms in the top house were practically unoccupied (as Miss Packham had been in the Work House Infirmary for several months and she would not be able to come out)". During her absence her rent had been "paid for by friends". Miss Best was asked to "interview Miss Packham's friends and to ask them to remove her furniture without delay".

**28 May 1925**

The Chairman reported that "the garden had been taken up by the School Managers, and was now under cultivation by the School".

**1 July 1925**

"The Chairman stated that Miss Betsy Pattenden who had been an inmate of the Homes since their erection in 1882 had died on 21 June in the Infirmary". She had been a resident of the Homes for 37 years.

**3 September 1925**

The Trustees began discussion of "certain alterations to make the Cottages more habitable" and requests for estimates were to be sent out.

**19 March 1926**

The debate about improvements continued with the middle cottage the focus of concern: "especially to making a window, and to improvements of the stairs which are

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<sup>1</sup> Miss Maberly had in fact been a Trustee for 41 years at the time of her death

unsuitable for those who are aged and infirm". The Chairman had concluded, "considerable structural alterations were advisable which were not practicable on grounds of expense". To do a proper job would require "funds by public subscription", but it was decided that "owing to the stringent terms of the Trust Deed such a project was inadvisable at the present time". He pleaded however that Trustees should try to find "any way in which the staircase in the middle house could be altered to make it safer for old people".

**3 April 1927**

"The Chairman reported that Miss Emily Burtenshaw who had been an inmate of the Homes since 1882 had been a patient in the Infirmary for the past 6 months and that she would not be able to return to the Homes. It was decided that the Chairman should write to Miss Burtenshaw's brother in Ardingly and ask that her furniture and effects should be removed as convenient". She had been a resident of the Homes for 39 years.

**9 March 1932**

"The middle house rooms on the ground floor were now vacant. Miss Walker asked if she might have the use of the lower rooms instead of living upstairs". After discussion, Trustees decided that "Miss Walker's request could not be granted and that an allowance of 6d a week should be made to her to pay a girl to carry up her water". Discussion turned to the "fumigating and cleaning of the lower rooms".

**22 July 1932**

The deed of Conveyance of 1881 and other legal documents "were handed over for safe custody" to the Bank.

**30 May 1933**

A letter of application had been received from the "occupant of the Clergy House to erect a portable garage which would encroach a short distance upon the ground at the back of the Cottage Homes". Trustees granted the request provided there was agreement "to remove the garage if called upon to do so, and to paying a nominal ground rent".

**18 October 1934**

It was decided finally to install "another hand rail on the staircase" in the middle cottage. It is unclear whether this means a *second* handrail, a *replacement* handrail, or whether it really did take six years to decide how to make that staircase safer.

**16 November 1936**

A letter was read "from the Sanitary Inspector" drawing Trustees attention to the "lack of sanitary dustbins" and "the want of any water to flush the closets". The Water Board had quoted for the supply of "100 feet of piping at 2/6 a yard" and the Trust decided to buy "3 Dustbins 20 inches high".

**29 June 1937**

Trustees noted that "the Dustbins had been purchased" and the requirement for "water supply to the closets had been met".

**12 October 1937**

Five years after her first application, Miss Walker, still languishing in her upper rooms, was finally allowed downstairs into the lower rooms "on

account of her lameness". Trustees anguished over whether "rents of bottom rooms for newcomers could be raised to 1/3d", and Miss Best "undertook to inspect the Deed".

**3 February 1938**

A new stove for cooking was purchased for Mrs Miles at a cost of £3-15-00.

**9 November 1940**

Miss Best (still Treasurer) was authorised to "conclude an insurance policy on the Homes under the proposed Government Compulsory Insurance Scheme on all property against War Risks". This is the last reference in the Minutes to Miss Best.

**21 November 1942**

With Miss Best gone, Mr W E Mitchell was appointed Trustee and Treasurer in her place. Trustees finally increased the rents to 1/3d. The instalment on the War Risks policy fell due "18/- less charity relief of 18/-".

**8 May 1943**

The Dennings (husband and wife) were appointed Trustees. This meeting contains the first reference to the death of Miss Best and to her Will: "a letter was read from Messrs. Waugh Brumell and Bally that the legacy of Miss Best was *not* free from legacy duty". In this one bald reference a difficult few years in the Trust's history opened at this meeting.

**Miss Louisa Best**

*Miss Louisa Best, like Miss Maberly before her, was a long time local benefactor. She had been a Trustee for 35 years, and Treasurer for 20 years, a position she took over on Miss Maberly's death.*

*Miss Best's Will was dated 1 August 1942, and probate was granted on 14 May 1943. Mr Charles Herbert Waugh (a fellow Cottage Homes Trustee who had also served for 35 years) was one of the executors and trustees of her estate. In the Will her brother was the main beneficiary, but she also left her motor car and £100 a year to her chauffeur, a gift of £50 and an annuity of £26 a year to her housekeeper. She left £700 for the Ansty Village Hall Trustees to build a "permanent hall" for the village, and £1,000 for the Vicar of Cuckfield for the purposes of "one or more additional clergy".*

*To the Cottage Homes Trust she left £1,000 for the "erection (subject to the written approval and consent of the Trustees of the Cottage Homes) of two or more cottage homes, adjoining the present ones, such cottages to be erected on one floor only within three years of my death". Consent to the additional cottages had to be given within six months of the death, or the monies would form part of the residuary estate. The terms of her will gave the Trustees a major problem over a number of difficult wartime and post-war years.*

By 1943, with two world wars and the long economic depression of the thirties impacting their short history, the Homes were showing signs of dilapidation. They were falling behind even the basic amenities of the time. The Trustees desperately needed funds for refurbishment, and alterations. The terms of the Best Bequest however limited the Trustees to building the additional cottages on the south side of the existing cottages.

This turned out to be a tough request in the middle of a war. The minutes from the outset of this issue show the Trustees discomfort. Ideally what they would have liked is to be allowed to spend the £1,000 legacy (£900 after legal fees) on modernising the existing Homes. Their tactics were to accept the bequest within six months, but ask if the terms could be varied.

It was 6 May 1946 before the Attorney General gave permission in the circumstances for one home to be built, rather than two. But by 1946, with post-war inflation raging, it was increasingly uncertain whether £900 could build even one additional Home.

In the end, as time dragged on, resolution only came with the Trustees appearing before Mr Justice Vaisey in the Chancery Division of the High Court to explain their failure to have built the extra homes within three years of the death, and for the Judge to rule (if the bequest had failed) how the monies were to be used and by whom.

The judgement of Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 1949 levied the costs of the action against the Trustees. With so little real capital now left there was no chance of building even one house. The Judge therefore ruled that the proceeds could be applied for the "general purposes" of the Cottage Homes – so at a late hour delivering the Trust's first significant injection for modernisation since 1882.

The executor of the Will (Mr Waugh, Miss Best's fellow Trustee of the Homes) appears to have resigned on her death. However, as a long-term friend of the Homes his behaviour was exemplary. Not only did he arrange for the Trust to be loaned the equivalent of the bequest, repayable only if the monies were released from the estate, but when the residue of the bequest was finally received and the loan repaid, he made a donation equal to the legal costs the Trust had incurred. At heart it was as if he knew what Miss Best would have most wanted for the Cottage Homes.

The Louisa Best Charity continued to be listed as a subsidiary charity of the Cottage Homes Trust until the Charity Commissioners removed it from their central register in 1992.

The extracts from the minutes that follow give glimpses of what the Trust went through – the full story is only gleaned from the legal papers that resulted in the court case.

**17 July 1943**

A letter was received from Mr Waugh “acknowledging the receipt of the consent of the Trustees of the Cottage Homes for the erection of two cottages by the trustees of the Will of the late Miss Best in accordance with the terms thereof, and that they (*Mr Waugh's company*) propose to take Counsel's opinion with regard to the terms of the Will, in particular to the gift of the two cottages, and will communicate to us in future”.

**18 September 1943**

“A copy of the opinion of Counsel was read relative to the Estate”. The Secretary was asked to write to Mr Waugh saying that the Trustees “were glad to know that this consent was in order, and that they would like to know what the result of the application of the residual legatees is”.

Trustees wanted to raise rents from 1/3d but “owing to the Rent Restriction Act, the matter was deferred”.

**23 August 1946**

Mr Waugh, a trustee of the Will, “informed Trustees that the Attorney General has, in consequence of the prohibitive cost of building two cottages on the site, agreed to the erection of one cottage”.

The Trustees agreed to put in hand obtaining quotations to be sent to the Best Trustees. Before the work was done, however, water supply “already in use in the lavatories should be laid on to the cottages themselves”.

Various other suggestions were made including: “converting a room in the South Cottage into a bedroom, Electric Light, a covered way from the Cottages to the Lavatories, and the advice of Mr Towse to be obtained in the matter”.

*“The growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs”*

*Middlemarch* George Eliot



**Part B: The 1945-75 Minute Book**

*Between the 1880's and 1945 it is evident that the Homes had changed very little. They still had outside shared toilet facilities, no running water (other than for WC's), brick floors in the kitchens, no electricity, and at least one upstairs flat that gained access through the kitchen of the downstairs flat. The 30 years covered by the second Minute Book document the major changes that occurred to the Homes over that period – and are a fascinating social history of the rapidly improving living standards that occurred post-war.*



**5 October 1946**

Trustees expressed approval of the plans to build an additional cottage - to be erected on the south side of the existing cottages by the £1,000 bequest of the late Miss Best. The plans included laying water supply to the existing Homes, provision of paving to the outside lavatories and introduction of electricity. Permit to effect the works was sought under the post-war building controls.

**29 July 1947**

Final plans were approved with the addition of "the installation of indoor sanitation" for the "modernisation of the cottages". With this element alone expected to cost £840, inflation led the Trustees to abandon the idea of the new cottage. A letter was sought from the Trustee of Miss Best's Estate to ensure they could spend the bequest on improvements to the existing Homes instead.

**5 February 1948**

Miss Best's beneficiary lent the Trust £725 "repayable without interest - and only if and when the same amount became available from the Best Estate". Roof repairs of £200 were urgently needed "in the near future", but could not be afforded. The Trustees were forced to double rents on upstairs rooms to 2/- a week, while downstairs rents went from 1/3 to 2/6 a week.

**5 October 1948**

Tenants of the upstairs flats, it was reported, "had voluntarily increased their rents from 2/- a week to 2/6 since the alterations had so improved their quarters they felt they should pay the same as the lower flats". The costs of the improvements were rising fast

however and were now expected to amount to £1,068-17-6. The urgent roof repairs were deferred to the spring.

**28 February 1950**

Miss Best's bequest of £759-8-4 finally arrived after deduction of nearly £240 legal fees following the Court Case to have the terms of the bequest altered. Trustees repaid the £725 loan from Miss Best's trustee and executor, only to be given a donation from the same source of £300 to help offset the deduction of legal fees. The roof had finally been fixed in 1949, and mercifully had only cost £83-10-09. The Trustees returned to the question of electricity supply, which had been deferred in the meantime on grounds of cost.

**3 October 1950**

Lady Denning (Hon Secretary) reported "she had not asked Mr S Knight to estimate the cost of putting electric light into the Cottages as in Mrs Miles' (*one of the residents*) view the tenants did not want it". Legacy duty of £80 on the Best bequest also came out of the woodwork unexpectedly.

**2 March 1951**

Building Insurance needed to be increased from £2,000 to £4,000.

**11 March 1952**

Building Insurance of £5,000 had finally been put in place. It was pointed out that ground rent of one shilling a year had been outstanding for four years from the occupants of the Clergy House who rented the garage on Cottage Homes' land. Lord Denning pointed out that as that house was now empty the garage

"became the property of Cottage Homes". Steps were taken to let out the allotments in the grounds of the Homes and to seek a new tenant for the garage.

**13 May 1952**

The Clergy House was now occupied and the new residents again took up rental of the garage.

**28 October 1954**

Trustees finally approved "expenditure of £110 plus the General Electricity Company's connection charge for bringing the power to the Cottage Homes".

**16 November 1954**

Trustees heard that "there was little chance of getting the current on till after Christmas, although work was proceeding".

**23 February 1956**

Since the date of the last meeting, electricity had finally been "switched on in January 1955". The final cost of £117-10-00 had been "the gift of the Haywards Heath Soroptimists, and the electricity was most appreciated by all tenants". A report from the Head Master of the village School noted that "senior pupils would no longer require the garden when they moved to the new Senior School".

**1 May 1956**

Trustees agreed "to rent out the allotments in the gardens at 1/- a year each provided surplus produce was made available to the tenants".

**20 October 1961**

Trustees were delighted to hear that "The Forest District Ranger Company under their Captain Miss Barker and Lieutenant Mrs Mitchell had kindly decorated Flat No 2 and the stairwell at a cost to the Trustees of only £18 for materials".

**6 April 1964**

The first Trustee Minutes to be written in biro.

**30 June 1967**

The staircase to flat 2A (first mentioned over 30 years earlier as a source of concern) again became unsafe and it was clear that major internal structural work could no longer be deferred, particularly as access to the staircase was through the kitchen of the downstairs flat. Separate toilet facilities were still needed for both 2 and 2A. Trustees opened discussions therefore to bring proper sanitation for all six flats inside and to provide separate bathrooms for each – together with separate access to each flat. It was clear fund raising would be needed, and rents were increased to £1 a week as a precaution. In the meantime plans and estimates for the work were commissioned.

**12 December 1967**

The maintenance of the garden was becoming an issue. Trustees made application to the Church as part of the recently introduced "Time and Talents Scheme" to see what help might be forthcoming.

**6 April 1868**

Plans for the refurbishment of the Homes were now to hand – but as it was "estimated that the entire project

should cost between £4,000 to £5,000, help would be required from every possible source within the Parish". A new gardening season was approaching and "as no help had been forthcoming from the Time and Talents Scheme, Trustees agreed to approach the Group Scoutmaster".

**23 August 1968**

A scheme of work to cost £5,580 gained planning permission

**29 October 1968**

Trustees were pleased to hear that Cuckfield Urban District Council had approved a £400 improvement grant per flat. This enabled the replacement of the brick floors in the kitchens to be added to the scheme, and application was made to Cuckfield Urban District Council for a 30-year loan of £3,700. Fund raising began in earnest.

**Major Donors: 1968-1971**

<i>The Independent State</i>	£1125
<i>The Donkey Club</i>	£400
<i>Holy Trinity PCC</i>	£400
<i>Private donations</i>	£348
<i>Worthing Traction Rally</i>	£80
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Cuckfield Guides</i>	£22
<i>Infant Welfare Clinic</i>	£20
<i>White Harte Ladies</i>	£16
<i>Sale of Goods</i>	£3

**26 November 1968**

Rents were increased to £2-10-00 per week, building insurance to £20,000.

**24 June 1969**

The UDC loan was finally approved.

**20 March 1970**

Trustees were relieved to hear that “the buildings were now almost complete”. Despairing of ever getting the allotment gardens under control again, the Trustees approved taking down the garage (empty again), “providing a 4 ft. fence and gate along the boundary where the garage was. Boundaries had been cleared out by the gravediggers and 48 new privets were put in at a cost of £1-18-6”. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cuckfield Girl Guides had raised £22 towards the costs of the fence and turf.

**26 January 1971**

Thanks to the fund raising efforts “two further sums of £500 were paid off the loan, £700 prematurely, and only £1,000 was now outstanding”. Trustees noted new Government legislation that said the elderly should be kept warm and resolved that “central heating should be installed throughout the flats” in order to maintain the required temperature of 70 degrees. Fifty- percent grants were available for the purpose, and the cost was likely to be about £1,500.

**20 October 1971**

It was reported that The Cuckfield Urban District Council gave grants of £774 for the heating and £608 towards essential repairs. The Trustees estimates had unfortunately forgotten to include the costs of the erection of the new boiler room needed to house the central heating controls. It was noted that “heating throughout the flats had now been put into action”. The expected cost of gas was £250 per annum.

**11 December 1972**

It was noted that gas had cost more than estimated - £305-35 “owing to excessive heating in the first few weeks after installation”. A further £500 was paid of the loan. Building Insurance was raised to £45,000. An electric mower was purchased to keep the turf that had successfully taken root under control. Warden Park School were “sending three pupils to be of assistance to the tenants painting, chopping wood, hedge cutting and helping in the flats”. Despite a suggestion made by Nesta Turner that Minutes should in future be typed, they continue to be hand written to this day.

**11 February 1974**

Trustees agreed to pay £50 towards the £150 costs of providing paving for the Clergy House forecourt.

**27 August 1975**

By agreement with the tenants the largest of their outside sheds had been made available for the mower. The shed needed to be “cleaned and decorated throughout”. A decision was taken finally to “close the fireplaces”.

**19 March 1976**

It was noted that “all fireplaces were now closed” and “as help was not forthcoming from the Scouts in the matter of restoring the shed for the mower”, £2-50 had been paid to David Foord-Brown for kindly helping out. Outside lights and Yale locks were installed.

*The story does not end here, if our brief look at the history of the Homes does. The work continues as it has over the past 125 years ...*