

**Alfrick and Lulsley
Parish Council**

**The
Parish Design
Statement**

First Issued 2009

Revised 2013

Revised 2015

Confirmed by the Council at its meeting on 16/06/2015

Cllr L Randall Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Randall', is positioned below the printed name.

CONTENTS	PAGE
Introduction.....	4
The Parish –a note on its Setting and Character.....	4
Development of the Parish Design Statement.....	7
Conclusions.....	9
Appendix 1 A Survey of the Parish.....	10
Appendix 2 Images of the Parish.....	14
Appendix 3 Questionnaire and results from 2013.....	25
Appendix 4 Housing Needs Report.....	26
Appendix 5 Questionnaire and Summary of Results 2014.....	28
Appendix 6 Schedule of Listed Buildings.....	35

Preface to 2013 issue

The Parish Design Statement for Alfrick & Lulsley Parish Council was originally published in April 2009 and has since guided the Council in planning matters. However, by 2011 several important changes had occurred in the Parish which affected some aspects of the Design Statement which was updated to reflect these changes. The principal changes in the Parish were as follows:

- The designation of Alfrick as a Category 2 settlement has been changed to a Category 3 settlement
- The closure of the village shop and post office and a project to restore the facility on the Village Hall site as a community shop
- The completion of the refurbishment and extension of the Village Hall
- Changes to the bus services serving the Parish

Further changes occurred during the period following this update which are reflected in this 2013 issue, these included the opening of a community based shop, a renewed threat to remove the subsidies on the bus services and an outline planning application for a development of housing on the Chapel Meadow field; this latter has the potential for a major impact on the Parish landscape.

None of the changes have altered the underlying conclusions of the consultations carried out for the original document and a housing needs survey carried out in 2013 served to underline this fact.

Preface to 2015 issue.

Since the previous issue of this document there have been major changes at Government level with the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. This document replaced the existing guidance and with it much of the protection afforded to the rural landscape. This was compounded by Malvern Hills District Council's failure to provide either a 5 year land supply or to have the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) adopted. The result has been a number of inappropriate and unwanted planning applications in the Parish.

The changes also brought in the opportunity for Parish and Town Councils to prepare Neighbourhood Plans which would form part of the local planning framework. The Parish Council examined this approach in detail but rejected it in favour of a revision of the existing Parish Design Statement which expressed the wishes of the residents of the Parish in respect of future developments.

This latest issue of the Parish Design Statement has been extensively re-written to reflect the position at 2015 but the views of the residents remain largely unchanged from those contained in the original 2009 issue.

Introduction.

In the spring of 2006 the Parish Council published a Parish Plan, a document that was jointly prepared by some members of the Parish Council together with volunteers drawn from a wide cross section of the community. Resulting from this a strong head of opinion emerged for producing a further document to provide a framework for planning policies within the Parish.

In April 2006 the Parish Council established a small group of its members to progress this document, entitled The Parish Design Statement. Its development involved wide consultation within the Parish and also with Malvern Hills District Council. The document has since guided the Parish Council in making assessments of planning applications in the knowledge that the conclusions had the overwhelming support of the residents of the Parish.

The setting and character of the parish

Alfrick and Lulsley sits in the northern half of the MHDC area. It is roughly equidistant north of Malvern and west of Worcester and between the A44 and A4103 trunk roads.

The parish is characterised by one large settlement of Alfrick and two settlements of Lulsley and a proportion of Alfrick Pound. Between these main settlements are scattered a large number of individual houses, smallholdings and farms. In one area of the parish, Old Storridge, the original temporary dwellings have been replaced by permanent houses interspersed through a heavily wooded hilly landscape.

Alfrick and Lulsley is a relatively small parish of 266 dwellings and 605 residents. Despite recent developments the population has remained almost unchanged compared with 150 years ago but the size of individual households has halved. The parishes adjoining to the north west are similar in character, being small, rural and with a dispersed population. The parish to the south, Leigh and Bransford, has some rural aspects but includes Leigh Sinton and so is more akin to an urban parish with over 1,200 residents.

Alfrick

Most of the housing in Alfrick has been added since around the 1950's, the greatest concentration of development in the parish over the last 50 years has been in this area. The village is formed around a crossroads and has a mix of privately owned and local authority housing. A development of 8 affordable homes was added in 2006 on Leigh Road at the south eastern entrance to the village. These developments are largely characterised by small clumped groups of housing, in Swan Orchard, Clay Green, Orchard Lea and, most recently, Chapel Meadow with some ribbon development along St Mary's Crescent and Folly Road.

Amenities in the village include a community-run shop with a post office, the Alfrick and Lulsley village hall (also voluntary run) and recreational facilities including a playing field and tennis court.

Lulsley

Lulsley is a smaller and dispersed settlement developed in two ribbons along the road frontages that pass through the village. It includes The Fox and Hounds public house but lacks any other amenities. Again the housing mix is some new development (mainly local authority housing) mixed with older houses and some newly developed dwellings in barn conversions.

Landscape

The landscape in the parish is characterised by a patchwork of arable and grassland fields on undulating land rising steeply to the north and west into the Suckley Hills. It deserves its designation as an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and, further north and west as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The area is relatively heavily wooded and there are three Reserves within the Parish: Knapp & Papermill, Ravenhill Woodland and Crews Hill Nature Reserves. The Worcestershire

Way passes along the western boundary of the Parish and then turns along its southern edge by Old Storridge.

A significant element in the character of the Parish is the extent of woodlands and other belts of trees and hedgerows and these features need not only to be conserved but also, where appropriate, to be enhanced when planning applications are considered.

From much of the Parish there are views towards the Malvern Hills and from the Worcestershire Way are views across Bringsty Common to the Black Mountains. From Lulsley to Brockamin a byway tracks along the Teme Valley skirting derelict hop yards in the river valley and ancient woodland to the west.

The villages tend to nestle in low ground with housing sprinkled between the settlements on higher ground. The agriculturally important history of the Parish is reflected in a number of hamlets where there are, or were, farm steadings. The rationalisation of the farming industry in the 20th century, particularly since the end of World War 2, has resulted in a reduction in the agricultural workforce and consequently a decrease in the need for tied housing. As a result many of these houses are now owned by people who do not work in the Parish.

Listed Buildings

There are, proportionally, a significant number of listed buildings in the Parish. Out of 216 properties in Alfrick, 15 are listed and of 50 in Lulsley, 8 are listed. Other built assets such as the Church, several barns and other features such as milestones and a monument in the churchyard are also listed. A schedule of listed properties is at **Appendix 6**. Clearly any planning determination in respect of these must be sympathetic to their listed status and in full compliance with a listed building consent.

Built Environment

There is no consistent formal structure to the built environment through the parish and even within settlements there is a singular lack of cohesion of building styles, materials and appearance. However several themes can be determined both across and within the four main areas of the parish. These are set out in the Section below headed The Parish Plan - Key Themes.

Other factors defining the parish

Roadways

In the main roadways are largely un-kerbed and bordered by multi-species hedges outside of the settlements. Some footpaths do exist, particularly along the main road in Alfrick but these tend to be limited to one side of the highway. With the exception of name boards at the entrances to the villages and some speed limit signs, the roads remain distinctly rural in their appearance with very little street furniture, signage or traffic calming measures.

Lighting

With the exception of one or two isolated sites, the Parish is devoid of street lighting and the Parish Plan consultation revealed a strong thread of opinion that this situation should continue. The only real light pollution is from private security lighting on buildings and significant discussion of this has occurred in Parish Council meetings.

Open Space

Only Alfrick has a formally defined settlement boundary and so would have identifiable open spaces inside the defined settlement. The majority of open space in the parish exists outside the settlements and is designated as open countryside. Again this largely defines the core character of the parish and development within open countryside should in general be resisted. Much of the countryside

between the settlements is designated as either AGLV or AONB. Much of the farmland and woodland is also committed to environment schemes for the enhancement of landscape and habitat.

Public Rights of Way

The parish is well served with rights of way including footpaths, bridleways and two key byways along Dingle Road to Hill Road and down Sandy Lane. These rights of way are generally well maintained as a result of liaison between the Parish Council and the Worcester County Council rights of way department. Way-marking and gates and styles are generally well maintained facilitating easy use of these important recreational resources.

Access to services

The Parish has a number of amenities and services available to its residents. The Village Hall in Alfrick has been refurbished and extended. There is also a Church in Alfrick and a Public House in Lulsley. The village shop and post office closed in 2011 and the property converted sympathetically into a pair of semi-detached houses. This amenity was replaced after a gap of some 12 months by a community shop based in a porta-cabin located on the village hall car park. It is run by volunteer staff and also provides a Post Office Local service during limited hours. This facility has only a limited life span and a finite planning permission and plans are in progress to provide a permanent shop, but this is dependent on the ability of the volunteers to raise the large sums of money that will be required to fund the project.

Access to nearly all other services currently requires a journey out of the Parish, including the General Medical Practice at the Knightwick Health Centre, dentistry, library facilities and primary and secondary schools.

There is a bus service (Route 423) connecting to Worcester (Monday to Saturday). There are a number of buses during the day but, like many rural bus services, it faces an uncertain future. The once-weekly service to Malvern (425) was withdrawn in 2014.

Access to key services is a major issue for the Parish. Residents are almost exclusively reliant on private transport for access. Consequently any additional residential or commercial development in the Parish would increase traffic on the rural road network and be counter to the overall sustainability agenda.

Development of the Parish Design Statement.

The initial task was to prepare a written survey of the Parish (Appendix 1) supported by a photographic record (Appendix 2). From this a number of conclusions, or key themes, were identified that characterised the Parish. These were set out in the form of a questionnaire (Appendix 3) to which the residents were asked to respond in terms of their support or otherwise for the key themes. There was extensive consultation, culminating in a weekend in the village hall presentation. There was overwhelming support (95% +) for the conclusions derived from the survey. The first issue of the Parish Design Statement was published in 2009 and has since guided the Parish Council, as a statutory consultee, on planning applications within the Parish.

By 2011 a number of changes had occurred (see preface) which required an update of the document and further changes resulted in a second update in 2013.

In 2014 the Parish Council decided to explore the possibility of producing a Neighbourhood Plan to replace the Parish design Statement in order to give more weight to the views of the Parish residents in the planning decision process at District Council level. A group of councillors together with volunteer residents was established to undertake this work. The Neighbourhood Plan was accepted for registration and a large-scale questionnaire exercise conducted over a wide area of subject matter as is required for Neighbourhood Plans. In the Autumn of 2014 the group reviewed the results of the work carried out to that time and considered the likely value of a Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish against the background of the implementation of the NPPF and SWDP.

The conclusion was that though the Neighbourhood Plan route offered some longer term benefits the Parish would be best served by a full update of the existing Parish Design Statement incorporating the material gathered for the Neighbourhood Plan. This conclusion was endorsed at a meeting of the Parish Council and the present document is the result of those decisions.

Key themes in the determination of planning in the parish

The following key themes have been developed in reconciling the views of the residents of the Parish with the need to continue to develop facilities to maintain the life and vibrancy of the local community. Any development should be on terms agreed by the majority of the community.

Five themes emerged during the drafting of this Design Statement and these have been tested in consultation with the local community. A copy of the questionnaire incorporating these themes is appended to this document.

1

The Parish is fundamentally rural and this characteristic should be retained

Development outside of settlement boundaries other than that required for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor leisure or recreation should be resisted

Large clumps of development within the boundaries, or natural limits of the settlements where no formal boundaries are defined, should not be permitted

The natural character of the parish is defined by its dispersed development.

Infill development which seriously undermines this dispersed appearance should not be permitted

Urbanisation of the Parish, through kerbing of roadsides, increased street lighting and proliferation of street furniture should be strictly controlled

Woodland and other belts of trees and hedgerows should be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced by any approved development

Any modification of listed buildings must be sympathetic to their history and compliant with the instructions of the listed buildings officer

The relative tranquillity of the Parish should be conserved

2

The Parish has a mix of housing

This ranges from modest, semi-detached dwellings to the substantial "Court" houses at Alfrick, Lulsley and, just outside the Parish at Hopton. This housing mix gives a reasonably socially diverse population and should be retained

Any replacement of existing property should be limited to the original footprint where practicable and in any event should be congruent with the adjacent buildings in style and scale

Extensions which radically change the size of an original dwelling, taking it into a different market sector and eroding the stock of smaller housing in the Parish, should be subject to particular scrutiny

Any further development in the Parish should be consistent with maintaining the existing diversity of housing provision

3

Any new building, conversion or renovation in the Parish should meet the criteria for sustainable development set out in PPS7 and the Local Development Plan.

These documents have, to some extent, been overtaken by events as the Climate Change agenda has gathered momentum and an acceleration of the sustainability requirements to meet the Government's greenhouse gas reduction targets of 20% by 2020 and 60% by 2050 which have been given legal force since the publication of both PPS7 and the LDP. Parish specific criteria can be overlaid on these overall policy frameworks

Development should take account of accessibility issues to reduce reliance on transport by private car and encourage travelling by public transport, cycling or walking

Development of multiple housing units at any location in the Parish should be accompanied by a travel plan for the Parish that offers genuine sustainable travel choices

Development which results in a significant increase in commercial and private traffic on the Parish's roads should not be permitted

4

Re-use of redundant buildings should be encouraged in accordance with PPS7

Where it is considered that the preservation of architectural integrity of a redundant building is better achieved by non-residential development, then proposals for very small-scale commercial or employment use should be considered in preference, particularly where it can be demonstrated that there would be local employment opportunities created.

Any development of redundant buildings should be sympathetic to their character and environment and avoid "urbanising" their appearance and locality.

Should be permitted as re-use of brownfield land ahead of permitting other development outside of the settlements

5

Further affordable rural housing should only be developed where a full consultation has been carried out with the local community

There has been a proven and verifiable local need demonstrated by a housing needs survey, initiated by the Parish Council with the process remaining under the control of the Council

It can be sited immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary.

It is developed sympathetically to the rural nature of its location, in harmony with character and appearance of the built environment surrounding it.

It remains affordable and can be preserved in perpetuity for local needs.

Local housing need cannot be met in neighbouring Category 1 or 2 settlements.

Conclusions.

This document sets out the views of the residents of this Parish on future developments, these views have been obtained as the result of wide consultation and have remained almost constant from the initial consultation in 2006.

The preservation of the rural aspect and the high quality of the landscape value are high in the list of the wishes of the residents.

Developments, when required, should be on a scale which matches the existing built environment and should respect the natural landscape.

It follows that the current position which has opened the door to predatory developers seeking to build blocks of housing more appropriate to a city centre is the exact opposite of that which the Parish supports and as such will be strongly opposed.

The Parish Council expects the District Council to support this stance.

Appendix 1 the Parish Today and its History

The Parish of Alfrick and Lulsley is located about 8 miles West of Worcester and about 7 miles from Malvern. Of a roughly oval shape it lies in an approximately North-South line, bounded by the River Teme in the North and ends to the South of Old Storridge Common. It is approximately 3.5 miles long by 2.5 miles wide. At the last census (2001) there were some 266 houses in the Parish with a population of just over 600. Alfrick and Lulsley are both designated as category 3 settlements. There are some 20 businesses registered in Alfrick with 6 in Lulsley, mainly characterised as one or two person enterprises.

The Parish comprises gently rolling hills with fields, woodland, streams and deep, wooded dingles. The undulating nature of the land cuts through a variety of soil types giving a pronounced patchwork appearance to the fields. The predominant soil type is heavy clay. Part of the Parish, mainly to the West and South-West, is designated as having AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) status with other areas designated as Open Countryside Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). Additionally, the Parish contains three nature reserves, the Ravenshill Woodland Reserve in Lulsley, the Knapp and Papermill Reserve near Old Storridge and a small reserve near Crews Hill. It is as fine a landscape as will be found anywhere in Worcestershire, appreciated by the many visitors who come to walk the 29.4km of paths and 5.5km of bridleways within the Parish. These rights of way are generally very well maintained as a result of close co-operation between the Parish Council and the Worcestershire County Council Rights of Way Department. The Worcestershire Way long distance path skirts the Western boundary of the Parish.

The main settlement areas within the Parish are Alfrick with Alfrick Pound at the centre, Lulsley to the North and Old Storridge to the South, each different to each other. Additionally, many of the houses, farms etc in the Parish exist as scattered, individual buildings, many hardly visible within the overall landscape. This is a key feature of the Parish where, with the exception of the settlement centres, the landscape is the wholly predominant view with houses blending in to a degree where they do not impinge. From most positions within the Parish the observer would not be aware of the number of houses nearby. Indeed, in the higher parts of the Parish the views are long distance. To the East across the Severn plain the view encompasses much of Worcestershire with Broadway Tower a distant landmark. To the West the Welsh mountains with Hay Bluff and the Brecon Beacons are readily visible.

Access into and within the parish is via small lanes, many narrow with quite a few only capable of single file traffic. This is combined with high hedges and many twists and turns as the lanes follow the old field boundaries. These lanes are occupied by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, ordinary cars, a higher-than-average number of 4X4 vehicles, tractors, combine harvesters, buses, fuel tankers and delivery trucks. It takes care to negotiate these lanes, particularly at some points in the farming year. The lanes would not take any significant increase in traffic without serious congestion. Heavy or persistent rain often results in localised flooding at low points in the lanes especially where they cross the Leigh Brook, making them impassable to normal cars though the larger 4X4's can usually get through.

With the exception of one or two isolated sites there is no street lighting within the Parish. Housing styles within the Parish encompass almost every variety from black and white timbered houses, now over 400 years old, Victorian houses, large Georgian properties, bungalows, minor manor houses and modern 1970's and onwards styles. It cannot be said that the Parish has anything that could be described as a vernacular style but having said that care is needed to ensure that any changes are in keeping with the buildings immediately adjacent. Houses that have been built as single units on plots large enough to provide green screening in the form of trees and hedging which break up the direct view of the house probably represent the ideal within the Parish, particularly if it is a re-development of a pre-existing building. The most intrusive building forms are those that have resulted in larger blocks of uniform style. Of the 216 properties in Alfrick 15 are of listed status, for Lulsley the figures are 8 out of 50 properties.

However, the Parish is not just a collection of houses and landscape views, it is where a community of people live and work. From a former predominantly agricultural base the Parish has evolved to bring in a wide variety of other occupations. Most professions and many trades are represented with a number of small businesses and a significant proportion of people who have chosen to retire within the Parish. The result is a strong community of people with a wide range of skills, many of whom give their time and abilities to the benefit of the Parish.

Most weeks there are events of one form or another, usually centred on the Alfrick village hall, which are strongly supported. There are clubs for different interest and age groups (eg, gardening, Yoga, over 60's, amateur dramatics) with all the news and events in this and neighbouring parishes covered by the locally produced Sphere Magazine.

Although farming and other agricultural businesses are no longer the predominant factor that they once were much of the life of the Parish is still governed by the needs of the countryside and the farming year. Ploughing, the movement of animals, harvesting, ditch clearing, tree felling, fence mending etc set a basic rhythm to the year. Equally traditional is the annual **Alfrick and Lulsley Show**, held on the first Saturday in September. The show is organised and run by a small group of volunteers with many others pressed into service during the event. Started in 1952 it is a traditional village fete and horticultural show with many other events within it to appeal to a wide age and interest range. From small beginnings it has grown to attracting over 3,000 visitors, no small undertaking for such a small community. Profits from the show are distributed to local charities. Once a month there is an organised walk in or close to the Parish led by a local resident. These walks are well supported, attracting up to about 50 people.

The village of **Alfrick** lies at the centre of the Parish. The name of the village is said to derive from the Saxon "Ealdred's Wic" meaning the dwelling or farm of a man called Ealdred. Later, the name appears as "Alferwyke" and "Alfredeswic" until the 15th/16th centuries when, amongst other variants, the modern name of Alfrick emerges. Alfrick is a compact village which nestles in the fold of the hills which means that it is largely screened from most viewpoints. It contains the full range of housing styles described earlier. At the centre of the village is a small village green and war memorial.

There was formerly a post office and shop here but it closed in July 2011 and the premises have since been sympathetically converted into two semi-detached houses. In response to this loss, which had a major impact on the lives of many who depended on the services it provided, the Parish Council investigated the possibility of establishing a community shop to be run by volunteers. This initial work was taken over by a volunteer shop management committee and in 2012 the new shop (shop@Alfrick) opened in an adapted porta-cabin located on the village hall car park. This venture, which required the raising of a considerable sum of money from local residents, has proved very successful and plans are underway for a second, permanent shop premises.

The Church of St. Mary Magdalene of Alfrick and Lulsley. This beautiful, little church stands in an immaculately maintained churchyard on high ground near the centre of Alfrick and is a focal point within the Parish. The church, together with those of the surrounding parishes of Leigh, Bransford and Suckley, now form a single benefice. The oldest part of the church, at the West end, dates back to the 12th Century with later additions in the 13th, 14th and 15th Centuries. The church underwent a major restoration in 1885 when the transept and North vestry were added. The Transept is now known as the Lulsley chapel when, in 1972, the church at Lulsley was closed and various items transferred to the church in Alfrick. In the 19th Century the curate at Alfrick was the Revd Skeffington Dodson, the brother of Charles Dodson, better known by his pen name of Lewis Carroll, author of "Alice in Wonderland". Charles Dodson visited his brother in Alfrick several times and preached in the church.

The **Alfrick and Lulsley Village Hall** is located a short distance from the centre of Alfrick and provides facilities for the various clubs and organisations in the Parish including the Parish Council. It is adjacent to the playing field that is used for football which is also the location for the Annual Village

Show. The Village Hall is run by a committee elected annually who organise events and raise money for the maintenance and improvement of the hall. In 2008, after a long planning process, the committee succeeded in obtaining a Big Lottery Grant for a major refurbishment of the hall. This project was carried out between October 2009 and July 2010 and the hall now offers a very high standard of facilities, among the best in Worcestershire. The hall is now the single most important community facility within the Parish but its continued existence depends upon the ability of the elected committee to manage the hall so that it remains financially viable as there is no public funding.

The main entry into the village is a fairly sudden transition from open countryside to a built up area but this area is very compact; the village comprises housing along four arms of a cross roads, one arm of which is a dead end. Trees and open countryside are visible at all points within the village giving an open aspect. Many houses lie outside of the immediate village boundary and are dotted about in small numbers around the village and mould into the landscape as noted earlier. Apart from the church there are no buildings that could be said to be outstanding but the overall effect is a pleasant environment. The low density of the housing, even in the village centre, undoubtedly contributes to this.

In the past the village contained a Public House (The Swan), a bakery, a basket maker and a blacksmith, all now converted to private houses. A once thriving village school, opened in 1876, fell victim to falling rolls and closed in 1984, also transformed into a private house. The sale of the former school building formed the basis of the Alfrick Educational Trust, a locally run charity benefiting local schools together with individuals in higher education.

From Alfrick a narrow lane runs south to a junction with the Suckley Road, the centre of the small (formerly Hamlet) of **Alfrick Pound**. The majority of the houses are close to this road junction, the remainder are strung out along the road, including the Old School House, now a private residence, which predated the Alfrick village school. Visually, the settlement comprises a cluster of houses and isolated houses set in sloping ground with extensive views across open fields to wooded hills. A former Public House, The Wobbly Wheel, is also now a private house.

To the North of the Parish is **Lulsley**. The road from Alfrick (The Knightwick Road) runs between fields with woods on the higher slopes before entering Lulsley. The village is strung out along this road and in a loop road (Hill Road) with clusters of a few houses/cottages/bungalows/ and now only one farm which continues in this form until the buildings peter out near the Parish boundary. There is no identifiable centre but Lulsley possesses the only Public House in the Parish, The Fox and Hounds. Again, the range of styles and ages of the houses is very large, from the black and white Lulsley Court through to relatively modern bungalows.

Near the Southern end of Lulsley is one of the two Nature Reserves in the Parish, **The Ravenshill Woodland Reserve**, privately owned and covering an area of approximately 50 acres. Lulsley also contains remains of the **Worcester/Bromyard/Leominster Railway** with the old Knightwick Station now a private house. A substantial section of a listed viaduct is visible at Broad Dingle and the bridge abutments still stand on both sides of the road between Lulsley and Knightwick, posing a hazard to the unwary. The railway line had a chequered history being first promoted by Act of Parliament in 1861. Sections of the line were built but it was not until the works were taken over by GWR that the whole line was finally completed in 1897. The railway utilised the existing Worcester to Hereford track, the branch line connecting at a point close to Bransford. Because of the relatively sparse population along the length of the line there was generally little regular traffic, the exception to this being the seasonal influx of hop-pickers from Birmingham and the Black Country. It was, however, important to the Parish and surrounding areas for transporting produce, notably cherries. With the appearance of rural bus services the already sparse passenger traffic was further reduced and the closure of the line became inevitable. The first part to close to normal traffic was the section between Leominster and Bromyard in 1952 with the remainder of the line closing in September 1964.

The River Teme forms the Parish boundary along the northern edge as well as part of the eastern edge. The Teme can rise quickly during periods of local heavy rain causing local flooding. A local landmark at the river's edge is Osebury Rock, a sandstone cliff which is steep and densely wooded. At the southern end of the Parish on steeply rising ground is the settlement of **Old Storridge**, much of it lying within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area is thickly wooded and access is via a single road that terminates in Old Storridge, just before Old Storridge Common. This has long ceased to be common land but is a high point in the Parish with extensive views.

There have been quarries here providing stone for roads and building and timber has been extracted from the area in the past together with some farming, now only Millham and Birchenhall farms remain. The area had small farm cottages for workers and some wooden houses were built for the use of the Cadbury family. Gradually, these various properties were bought up and most transformed into large houses, though a few of the original wooden houses survive. However, the screening provided by the dense trees is so effective that, combined with the steep slopes, these modern houses are scarcely visible in spite of the considerable size of some of them.

Old Storridge overlooks the second nature reserve in the Parish, **The Knapp and Papermill Reserve** managed by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. It was established in its present form in 1971 and encompasses about one mile of the heavily wooded Leigh Brook valley. The Leigh Brook has in the past powered a number of mills within the area, processing corn and clover amongst other things. The brook is normally little more than a stream but, like the River Teme, it rises rapidly during periods of heavy rain. There are records of disastrous flooding in 1852 which did considerable damage to the Bridges Stone Mill, and drowned an old lady at Nightingale Bower at the south end of the reserve. Further damage occurred downstream at Hopton Court and again in Leigh. The story was repeated again in the 2007 floods though with less damage.

This, then, is our Parish as it exists today, perhaps 1,000 years in the making. During that time by luck or foresight the man-made environment has not destroyed the natural beauty of the area, though some developments have lacked the care that the landscape deserves. The landscape and the settlements within it have undoubtedly shaped the character of those who live within its boundaries, giving a community which is self reliant and mutually supportive

Appendix - 2 Images of the Parish

The following images are illustrative of different characteristics of the built environment and landscape that are important to the design of any future development in the Parish.

Softening of development using planting



Retention of traditional features such as oast houses





Both buildings use small dormers to good effect



Preservation of redundant buildings for other uses but developed sympathetically



Diverse development forming an interesting street scene



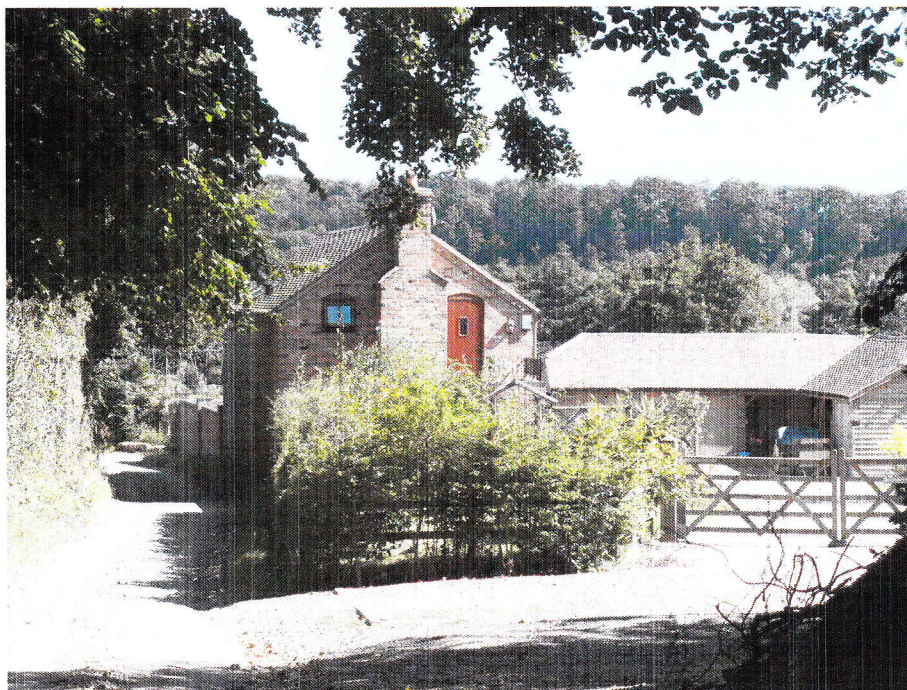
New build can be incorporated provided it can be designed sympathetically and softened using planting



Some developments are out of character and out of scale



Very rural parts of the Parish require particular attention in blending development with location



Roads around the Parish are rural lanes, unsuited to high traffic volumes.



Key facilities must be preserved



The villages nestle into the landscape



It is the spaces between development which define the character as much as the buildings



There are still old buildings worthy of saving



Appendix 3**Alfrick & Lulsley Parish Council****consultation****on****Housing and other developments in the parish****CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE March 2013**

Tick 1 if you strongly agree, 2 if you agree somewhat, 3 to disagree or 4 to strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	Results
HOUSING					
There is a need for more housing in the parish					Strongly agree 2 Agree 21 Disagree 17 Strongly Disagree 8
There is a need for more affordable housing					Strongly agree 6 Agree 22 Disagree 10 Strongly Disagree 13
There is a need for open market housing for families					Strongly agree 1 Agree 5 Disagree 17 Strongly Disagree 17
There is a need for housing specifically for older people					Strongly agree 11 Agree 17 Disagree 11 Strongly Disagree 10
OTHER DEVELOPMENTS					
There is a need for a permanent building and site for the Community Shop					Strongly agree 35 Agree 6 Disagree 8 Strongly Disagree 1
There is a need for a play area					Strongly agree 21 Agree 13 Disagree 13 Strongly Disagree 4
There is a need for allotments					Strongly agree 5 Agree 19 Disagree 20 Strongly Disagree 7
There is a need for small business development					Strongly agree 3 Agree 12 Disagree 17 Strongly Disagree 19

51 responses from 287 sent out.

Not everyone answered all the questions hence the slight variation in the totals.

Appendix 4

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY REPORT

The survey questionnaire was distributed to 290 households. Householders were given 21 days in which to return completed questionnaires. 66 were returned i.e. around 23%.

The purpose of the survey was to assess the need for housing within the next 5 years. It sought information about the following areas of potential need.

1. Households that needed to move within the Parish or neighbouring parishes or elsewhere now or within the next five years.

6 households indicated a need in this category.

2. Those living in a household who would need to set up a separate home within the Parish or neighbouring parishes either now or within the next five years.

4 households indicated a need in this category.

3. Households who have family who live outside the locality who need to move into the locality either now or within the next five years.

No households indicated a need in this category.

There were therefore 56 households who did not foresee a housing need in the next five years.

5. Households needing to move within the locality

Responders fall into two distinct groups – families with young children currently renting property and older people who need to downsize.

Families with young children

These households number 6 and 4 persons respectively. They both rent from a private landlord and need to move within 12 months. They need property with at least 4 bedrooms. They foresee buying on the open market for £450,000 to £550,000. One would consider renting at £1,000 plus per month. One would probably buy in the locality including Martley. The other would prefer Malvern.

Older people needing to downsize

Three of these householders are couples and one is single. Four of these householders are aged 70-79 and three 60-69. All see a need to move within 5 years. All own their homes but one has a mortgage. Their current homes have 3 or 4 beds. 3 are detached and 1 semi-detached. The reasons for moving are that the properties are too large. One cites the garden and another can no longer manage stairs. The housing need is for 2 bed dwellings on one level. All would look to buy on the open market. Two would contemplate buying in the range of £250,000 to £350,000, one in the range of £150,000 to £250,000 and the other does not provide any information.

All would prefer to move within the parish but one is more flexible.

One household requires wheelchair access and needs help with personal care.

6. Those needing to set up a separate household

Only three of those responding yes to this question have provided any detailed information.

All three are currently living in the family home. Two of these potential households consist of one person and the other two persons. Three are aged 20-24 and one 15-19. Two households see a

need within 5 years and the other within 3 years. All would be setting up a separate household for the first time. One needs a 2 bed property and two a one bed property. One intends to buy on the open market in the range of £150,000 to £250,000. Another would also do that but also considers renting at under £500 per month. The third foresees buying through a shared equity arrangement although also considers renting at under £500 per month. All three would want to set up home within the locality.

Conclusions

The principal need appears to be that for small two bed properties on one level for older people and that such need will arise at some time in the next five years. As and when these households vacate their current larger properties, there will be opportunities for families with young children who need more space. If similar levels of need were found to exist in the neighbouring parishes of Suckley and Leigh & Bransford which have 920 households, then around 13 small two bedroom dwellings would be required – around 17 for the three parishes combined.

There appears to be some need in the next five years for those needing to set up separate households. It is unclear whether provision would need to be 'affordable' for rent, for shared equity or simply low cost starter housing available on the open market. There appears to be very little demand for shared equity affordable housing in a village situation in Alfrick as evidenced by the lack of interest in the property recently offered for sale in the village.

There appears to be no demand for households who live outside the locality but would want to move for family reasons closer to households within the locality.

PRT/7/7/2013

Appendix 5.

Parish Plan Update Survey 2014

Section A – Planning, development and protecting our environment.

1. Is there a sufficient quantity of housing in the Parish? Yes (66) No (35)
2. If additional housing was to be built what type of development would you prefer?

One large estate	4
Individual released plots	70
Garden infill development	22
Conversion of existing buildings	66
Brownfield sites	39
Greenfield sites	2
No More	3

3. What type of housing would you like to see in any new development?

Please rank in order of preference	1 Being high	2	3	4	5 Being low
Bungalows	58	19	11	10	5
Flats/apartments	6	5	14	8	48
Larger family homes (4 beds)	8	6	14	20	33
Smaller family homes (2/3 beds)	30	28	24	5	12
Executive homes (5+ beds)	4	3	3	9	59

Do you have any further comments in regards to questions 1 – 3?

.....

.....

4. Is there a need for more accommodation of the following types in the Parish?

	Yes	No	No opinion
Private rented	7	46	32
Housing association rented	25	42	23
Owner occupied	37	35	23
Shared ownership (affordable)	33	35	20
By virtue of employment e.g. agricultural tenancy/restriction	31	26	28
Adapted housing	25	25	31
Sheltered housing	44	28	28

5. Should any development be in keeping with the Parish character/landscape value?
Yes(103) No(2)

6. Should the Parish Plan aim to deliver the following?

	Yes	No
Increased protection of green space	100	3
Enhanced protection of historic, natural features and landscape	102	
Positive management of the varied local wildlife	98	1
Improved flood protection measures	97	9

Other, please specify.....

7. Are there any buildings, places or views which you believe are important to protect?
Please give details below. -

Alfrick Church War Memorial...

8. Do you have any further comments regarding protecting our environment? Please comment below.

.....Protecting the Village Boundary

.....Protecting...the...Greenfields.....

Section B - Business and Economic development.

1. Do you operate a business from the Parish? Yes (11) No (98)

2. If so, what type of business is it? ...Public...House,...Artist,...Plumbing and heating
Business...Consultancy,...Farming,...High-tec...Electronics,...Builder.

.....

3. Is there any support the Parish Council could provide to you and your business?

.....

4. Should the Parish Plan include policies which encourage working from home?
Yes(74) No(8)

5. How could the Parish Plan encourage new businesses to locate to Alfrick and Lulsley?

More purpose built premises	16
Better broadband	93
Improved transport links	38

If you have any further comments with regards to business and economic development please specify.

...Better...Broadband...is...needed...Urgently.

.....

Section C - Transport and Highways

1. Thinking about transport and highways in the Parish what is your opinion on the following?

	1 No change needed	2	3	4	5 Change needed
Does the speed of vehicles need to be restricted through the parish?	34	3	9	6	54
Is the frequency of bus services adequate?	21	5	18	8	47
Is road maintenance an issue? e.g. pot holes, ditches, verges	10	3	17	13	67
Are traffic calming measures required?	55	9	7	4	25
Are the pavements adequately maintained?	38	8	11	4	31
Would you like street lighting in the Parish?	86	1	5		10

Please expand on any issues regarding the above.

NO street lighting of any kind to protect the natural light currently enjoyed.

.....

2. Are speed restrictions needed in the parish? Yes (67) No (30)

3. If yes, where should these be situated and at what speed?

.....

4. Do you own a car/have use of a car on a daily basis? Yes (61) No (4)

5. How many times do you use your car? (please tick)

Several times a day	20	Daily	46	Once a week	1
2 to 4 times a week	38	Once or twice a month		Do not drive	

6. How do you travel to work?

Not in employment	68	Car/motorbike	26	Public transport	3
Cycle	1	Walk		Work from home	16

7. Would you support a car share scheme? Yes(14) No(44)

Section D - Recreation, Leisure and Communications

1. How important do you think the following facilities are to our Parish?

	1 Not Important	2	3	4	5 Highly Important
Church	11	8	15	16	61
The Village Hall	5	2		14	93
The Community Shop	2	5	12	5	87
Post Office	5	4	11	16	79
The Parish Playing Field	3	1	10	30	69
Public Footpaths/Bridleways	4	6	12	21	68
Public Transport	2	7	34	20	47
Tennis Court	15	14	32	25	28

2. Which of the following facilities do you think the Parish Plan should aim to deliver?

Allotments	28	Mains gas	39	Facilities for young people	56
Broadband	102	Leisure and recreational facilities	44		

Please specify any other facilities that you would consider to be important to Parishioners.

.....

3. There are extensive public footpaths and bridleways through the Parish

Do you know where the local footpaths and bridleways are? Yes (101) No (9)

Are they well signposted? Yes (83) No (16)

If no, please can you state where they are

.....

Do footpaths and bridleways need to be improved more? Yes (38) No (51)

4. Do you experience difficulties in using local footpath and bridleways? Yes(36) No(61)

If yes, please give reasons.

Farm animals	13	High stiles	16
Locked gates	11	Barbed wire	7
Mud/water	19	Crops across paths	11
Other users	5	Bushes/nettles	26

5. If you believe that better leisure and recreational facilities (for example green spaces, sports and play areas) are needed, please tell us what they are, and how and where this could be achieved.

Childs Play area Somewhere...for...teenagers...to...

meet.....
.....

6. If you believe facilities for young people need improving, please tell us what they are, and how, and where this could be achieved.

Childs Play Area

.....
.....
...

7. Would you support an increase in the Parish Council Precept (council tax) to improve the following?

	Yes	No
Maintenance of a children's play area if one was installed?	66	34
Maintenance of footpaths?	54	40
Maintenance of the tennis court?	40	56

Any other comments regarding recreation, leisure and communications?

.....

Section E - Sustainable Development

Which of the following ways of producing local renewable energy should the Parish Plan encourage?

Domestic wind turbines powering a single home?	9	Commercial wind turbines powering many homes?	11
Hydropower from local streams/	2	Using land for fuel production e.g. wood biomass?	41
Photovoltaic solar farms to generate electricity?	30	Use of farm slurry to generate energy?	46

Section F - Education

1. Which of the following facilities do you use and how well do you think the Parish is served?

	Do not use	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	Location
Pre-school						
Nursery School	22					
Pre-school/Playgroup	19	1			2	L&B VH
Registered childminders	20					
Parent & Toddler Groups	19		1	1	1	Alfrick VH
Primary School						
Breakfast Clubs	19	1			1	
After school clubs	19	1			1	
Holiday clubs	19	2				

Any further comments relating to question 1?

This reflects the age demographics of the villagers

.....

.....

2. What means of transport do you use to get to these facilities?

Own car	6	Transport provided specifically by the County Council	
Car share with other family		Cycle	
Public transport		Walk	

Any further comments relating to question 2?

.....

.....

3. Which of the following schools do you (or your children) attend, and does transport have to be paid for?

	Attend	Age 11 - 16	Age 16 - 18	Pay for transport?
Dyson Perrins Malvern	1	1		
The Chase Malvern	1	1		
The Chantry Martley				
Queen Elizabeth Bromyard	1	1		
Private School	4	4		

Any further comments relating to question 3?

Section G – Demographics

Please will you complete the following questions? This information will demonstrate that we have gained the views of a cross section of the residents within the Parish?

1. What is your gender?

Male (47) Female (50)

2. Which age group do you belong to?

14-17	2	18-24	2	25-34	1
35-44	5	45-54	13	55-59	6
60-64	21	65-74	31	75-84	28
85+	3				

3. Where in the Parish do you live?

Alfrick	83	Lulsley	18
Alfrick Pound	9	Old Storridge	3

Please use this space below if you have any further comments about anything that has not been covered in the questionnaire.

Appendix 6 Listed Buildings

INDEX	Alfrick CP
3/3	Alfrick Court
3/4	Barn adjoining west wing Of Alfrick Court
3/5	Bewel House
3/6	Catterhall Farmhouse
3/7	Cherry Green
3/1	Church of St Mary Magdalene
4/8	Clay Green Farmhouse
4/19	Cottage adjoining SE of Birchenhall Farmhouse, Old Storridge Common
4/17	Folly Farmhouse, Folly Road
3/18	Hayley Cottage, Green Street
3/14	Milestone at NGR SO 739529, Crew Hill
3/2	Monument 10 yards west of parish church
3/15	Newhouse Farmhouse, Crews Hill
4/9	Outbuildings 4 yards west of Clay Green Farmhouse
3/11	Tan House
3/20	The Dell, Old Storridge Common
4/10	The Mill House, Bridges Stone
3/13	The Old School House, Alfrick Pound
3/12	Upper House
3/16	Yew Tree Cottage, Crews Hill

Appendix 6 Listed Buildings

INDEX	Lulsley CP
1/46	Balls Cottage
1/58	Barn at Upper Court
1/48	Barn west of Charlton House
1/59	Blacks Well No. 2
1/47	Charlton House farmhouse
1/53	Church Cottage
1/54	Cold Place
1/55	Lulsley Court
1/52	Outbuilding 30 yards SE of Charlton House Farmhouse
1/50	Outbuilding & hop kiln at NW of Charlton House Farmhouse
3/56	Pucks Hill, Ravenhills Green
1/49	Stables 35 yards SE of Charlton House Farmhouse
1/51	Stables & cowhouse 22 yards SE of Charlton House Farmhouse
1/57	Upper Court & terrace to NE