

Wickham Bishops



Village Design Statement Association

Village Character - Photo Fun Day
Saturday 28th June 2003

Welcome to the Church Hall

**Thank you for participating in this vital stage of producing Wickham
Bishops Village Design Statement-
The Photographic Survey**

This pack contains the following:

For use AM:

- **Briefing Sheet 1 ~ Introduction, Producing a Village Design Statement**
- **Timetable for today**
- **Briefing Sheet 2 ~ Explaining the Route Priorities section of the day**
- **Briefing Sheet 3 ~Details of the Photographic Survey**
- **Briefing Sheet 4 ~Things to consider when surveying**
- **Two Survey Forms ~For camera 1 and camera 2**

For use PM:

- **Briefing Sheet 5 ~ Details of the Character Assessment**
- **Briefing Sheet 6 ~Planning the next stages**

**Your assigned
Route & Team no is:**

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A community workshop organised by the Wickham Bishops Village Design Statement Association

This workshop is the first step in a project to define locally distinctive design principles for new development, however small, in the village of Wickham Bishops, by preparing a Village Design Statement. We aim to make this an enjoyable and interesting day.

A Village Design Statement describes the physical qualities and characteristics of the village and its surroundings valued by local people. Village communities have a special and unique knowledge and appreciation of local character and distinctiveness in their own village. Village Design Statements can be linked directly to the formal planning system and used to influence planning applications and decisions. In this way they offer an opportunity for local people to enter the planning process at an earlier stage and to make a positive contribution to the design of new development.

Most people who live in the countryside are reluctant to see new development change their environment. Often, they feel that recent buildings have altered the character of their surrounds for the worse. This understandable disappointment with new buildings can lead to a resistance to development in general. But the countryside must change if it is to stay alive – farmers need new buildings, villages need affordable housing for young families, people want to extend and alter their homes.

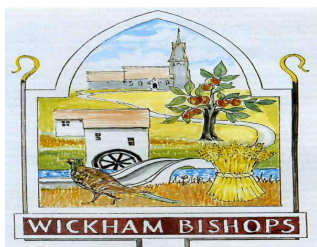
Whatever the scale and type of new development, we believe that two important principles apply:

- New buildings should follow in the traditions of their setting, reflecting the important characteristics that make each locality special and different from other places.
- Standard designs, which could belong in any suburb or industrial estate, are NOT appropriate in the countryside.

These differences of character can be called local diversity. It is easy to think of places that clearly show these contrasts. For example, the thatched roofs of North West Essex villages and the flat open landscape of the Dengie peninsula. The settlement pattern and setting of the villages is also different. Some villages have developed along the contours of hillsides, whereas other ancient settlements have spread along the crossroads of old track-ways and drover's routes. All of our Essex countryside and villages have their own special characteristics, and all new development should work with them to reinforce local diversity, instead of spreading more suburban and standard designs.

Essex planning authorities share these ideas, but they can only give a general indication of local character in their district/borough. Our Village Design Statement will define the distinctive character of Wickham Bishops and can be used to guide all would-be developers, from householders' alterations to large-scale and complex projects. Our Village Design Statement will make it easier for the District Council to insist on new buildings that fit their location and respect the character of Wickham Bishops, and thereby help to defend local diversity across the county.

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TIMETABLE

- 09:45** **Registration and Coffee**
 Exhibition of other Village Design Statements, maps and photographs
- 10:10** **Introduction and outline of the day: The teams, the routes, the rules**
 By Stewart Adkins, Chairman of the VDS Association
- 10:35** **Route Priorities**
 Everyone's opportunity to highlight the key areas that they think should be considered on each route
- 11:00** **The Photographic Survey starts**
- 11:30 to** **First camera will be collected from**
each team's collection point and
12:00 **taken for processing**
- 12:45** **Return to the Village Hall for lunch, when the second camera will be collected**
- 13:45** **Arrange developed photographs with comments,**
and give
 presentation on key findings of team's route
- 15:45** **What next...?**
 The next steps in the VDS production process
 By Stewart Adkins, Chairman of the VDS Association
- 16:15** **Close**

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Village Character - Photo Fun Day

Route Priorities

Each team has been assigned an area to survey and photograph.

However, there may be particular characteristics or areas of concern that you would like to highlight that are *not* on the route *you* have been assigned. This is the opportunity for everyone (working as individuals) to flag and prioritise areas of importance/concern on each of the route maps.

Using post-it notes please write down any particular features (good or bad) you would like included in the photo survey and prioritise these in the order you feel are most important.

Each team will then be asked to include these features in their photographic record.

You have 25 minutes to complete this stage.

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Village Design Statement Association Village Character - Photo Fun Day

Photographic Survey

Each team will be given two disposable cameras and you should spend the next hour and 45 minutes visiting your assigned route, photographing the things that you think capture the essential character of Wickham Bishops, or features you feel detract from it and perhaps should not be considered in future planning decisions.

Use the conclusions drawn from the previous task and include any key features that were highlighted. A collection point for your first camera, at around 11:45 is marked on your map so they can be taken for processing. Please return to the Village Hall with the second used camera at 12:45.

You may find it helpful to allocate to each team member a particular responsibility. A photographer is an obvious role. Someone else could fill in the survey form to record details about your shots. You may also like to note down any issues that you cannot photograph (e.g. those that relate to the more general character of the village rather than being a physical characteristic). If you are a large team you may need to share and/or swap roles during the morning.

The first picture of each film should be of the team members so we can identify the owners of the photographs when they are returned from processing. You will need to take photographs quickly, at least one every two minutes! Don't be concerned about taking too many pictures – just use them all. You should take pictures of anything that strikes you as important. You can make a selection from the pictures later, rather than trying to choose while you are out in the village.

The things that you photograph will cover a wide range of aspects – from the way the village sits in the countryside (which probably means going out of the village), right down to small details like the decorative parts of individual buildings, or the particular colour and texture of the stone or brickwork.

All the following things contribute to the character of the village: -

- Individual buildings and groups of buildings and the way they make up the street scene.
- Open spaces. Large public areas, playing fields, greens and churchyards are important, but so are small spaces between buildings, or private land, such e.g. orchards and gardens.
- Boundaries. The edges of the village. What is it like arriving or leaving the village? In the village itself, how are spaces and buildings contained (egg by wall, fences, planting, or a combination of these)?
- Trees. Do trees matter to the shape of the village?
- If you always drive through the village do you see or miss things about the character of the village?
- Do children have a different view of the character of the village?

REMEMBER...

PLEASE TAKE CARE WHEN CROSSING THE ROADS

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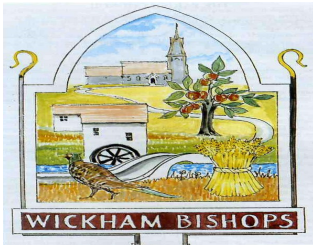


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Village Character - Photo Fun Day Things to consider when surveying

Local Distinctiveness	What aspects contribute to and maintain Wickham Bishops' particular character?
Landscape Setting	Does the Village harmonise with the landscape or are there areas that could be enhanced through further landscape design?
Settlement Edges, Views, Landscape Character	Are there notable views in and/or out of the Village? What buildings or other structures can be seen in the surrounding countryside?
Settlement Pattern	Are there distinctly different areas of the Village? Do they sit comfortably together, and what are their characteristics?
Street Pattern And Highways	What are the characteristics of the local roads; are there pavements and kerbs or grass verges and ditches? What materials have been used for road surfacing? Are there electricity substations and/or overhead cables? Are there bus shelters, street lighting and signs? Are there footpaths and/or bridleways?
Open and Connecting Spaces	What is the character of the various open spaces in the Village, both private and public, such as greens, recreation areas and churchyards? Take note of trees, hedges, walls and fences and the presence or absence of front gardens. Are there any trees that are prominent or important focal points?
Buildings	What types of buildings can be seen and where? Do any particular buildings provide key focal points? Apart from houses, what are the characteristics of the other buildings in the Village?
Building Form	What shape, size and height are the buildings; are they terraced or detached, with flat or pitched roofs, dormer windows, extensions, porches etc? Are the frontages flat, protruding, simple or straight?
Layout	Are the building frontages on the road or set back? What are the plot sizes – do they have front and rear gardens, and provision for car parking?
Artefacts and Street Furniture	Are there peculiarities, unique artefacts or characteristic detailing? What is the street furniture like?
Traffic Management	Is there a problem with road traffic in terms of parking, manoeuvring or speeding?

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Village Character - Photo Fun Day

Preliminary Character Assessment

This afternoon we are going to assemble the material gathered this morning to illustrate the local distinctiveness of Wickham Bishops and what you feel are the most important aspects of the character of the village.

Head up four Velcro Boards with the following: -

- Landscapes and views
- Spaces between buildings
- Buildings
- Other features e.g.: architectural, historical, trees, hedgerows, monuments, paths etc.

Your first film will have been processed and returned. Number each of the photos on the back with your team number and photo number to correspond with the notes taken during the photographic survey. Look through the photographs and sort them according to the first three board headings. The fourth board is for written comments about village characteristics that are not visual or could not be photographed this morning. Include any elements not covered by your photographic survey route.

Do not stick anything down yet.

When the second film arrives, repeat the process and add the photos to the sorted collections. Discuss which images best capture the character of the village (or elements of it if distinct zones have been identified). Arrange the photos so that they illustrate your team's views and feelings about the character of Wickham Bishops placing the most valued features/characteristics nearer to the top of the sheet in the relevant column. Write comments alongside or underneath each photo to explain your selection. You may need more than one board but you don't have to use all the photos.

Use numbered post-it notes (corresponding with photo numbers) to explain the character of each image, or to expand on ideas discussed during the photographic survey. Your final selection and notes will illustrate the character of Wickham Bishops. These are the first shared views of the character of the village and will help to provide the core material for the basis of the character assessment contained in the Village Design Statement.

Share your thoughts with members of other teams.

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Village Character- Photo Fun Day Planning the Next Stages

This workshop has marked the beginning of the preparation of a Village Design Statement for Wickham Bishops. The next stages are as follows: -

- Exhibit conclusions from our Photo Fun Day and inform the content of a questionnaire.
- Circulate the questionnaire to every household and assess the responses.
- Complete the character assessment and investigate planning constraints and opportunities.
- Draw up proposals and circulate for comments.
- Draft the Village Design Statement.
- Seek approval and publish.

A Rural Committee Council for Essex (RCCE) fieldworker, Stella Meesters, has guided us with setting up our VDSA and is helping us with community consultation and participation.

The amount of time the planning officer can devote to a VDS will depend on resources within the local authority, but they will be offered the opportunity to comment on drafts and advise on specific planning aspects of an emerging VDS. The VDS is to be put forward for approval as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the implications and processes for achieving this are being discussed with planners throughout the process to avoid delays or confusion at a later date.

No “outside expert” knows what it is like to live in Wickham Bishops and feel a part of this special community. They rely on us to describe its essential character and which elements are most valued. The production of a VDS therefore rests with us, the “inside experts”, and any amount of time, any level of skill that can be offered will contribute towards this project. A lot of help will be needed to complete the VDS and everyone here today has something to offer. Please complete and return the slip below.

I should like to help with the preparation of the Wickham Bishops Village Design Statement.

Name:.....

Address:.....

Contact Number:.....

Please tick any skills that you can offer:

- Time to distribute and collect information door-to-door**
- Secretarial/Word processing
- Data handling/recording
- Publicity/designing posters/writing articles etc
- Some planning experience/expertise (please give details)

- Some design experience/expertise (please give details)
- Some knowledge of local history/architecture (please give details)
- Financing skills/funding applications
- Organising community event
- Other:

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BRIEFING SHEET 6 – Planning the Next Stages

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SURVEY FORM 1

Camera No. 1 - Collection Point

Route No.

No	Location	Picture Subject	Why Have You Taken It?
1	Exp	Team Shot	For Identification Purposes
2	No		
3	1	Church Hall	Team Shot
4	2		
5	3		
6	4		
7	5		
8	6		
9	7		
10	8		
11	9		
12	10		
13	11		
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22	20		
23	21		
24	22		
25	23		
26	24		

SURVEY FORM 2

Camera No. 2 - Collection Point Village Hall - Route No.