



**Biddulph**

**Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**February 2020**

**Regulation 16 Draft**

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# Part 1

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# INTRODUCTION

The Town of Biddulph was granted Neighbourhood Plan status on 16 February 2016.

The Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan sets out a series of policies which, once made, will be used to guide development and the preparation of planning applications. The Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, together with the adopted Core Strategy March 2014 and the emerging Local Plan (when the latter is adopted). The policies will be used by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in determining planning applications for all development proposals in the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan area.

The Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan will expire in 2035.

A number of projects have been identified during the development process and these will be detailed in a separate Delivery Plan document for Biddulph Town Council, which will be based on the made Neighbourhood Plan. The Delivery Plan will be monitored on a regular basis and reviewed annually.

The Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan aims to deliver the Vision for Biddulph to 2035, in order to reflect the issues raised by the local community. Biddulph Town Council has committed to ensuring that data is regularly refreshed and that policies and practices mirror the priorities identified by groups and individuals working in the town and the wider community. The Plan was developed by the community, the people who know and love the area, to ensure that the right types of development happen in the right place.



*Biddulph, from Mow Cop*



# VISION AND AIMS

## VISION

The Garden Town of Staffordshire is recognised as such by all who live in, work in or visit our parish. It is seen to have a rich history and positive future where the wellbeing and prosperity of all is nurtured and valued. Development is planned for the benefit of the community; particularly in terms of design, infrastructure, sustainability and green spaces.

## AIMS

1. Protect the rural setting and character, promoting the 'Garden Town of Staffordshire'.
2. Identify all local heritage structures and monuments, understanding their history, our culture and encouraging responsible tourism.
3. Promote the local economy, aiming for prosperity for all.
4. Hold the wellbeing of our community at our core.
5. Understand our housing needs and encourage creative and thoughtful sustainable design.
6. Improve our infrastructure where required.
7. Care for and enhance the natural environment, countryside, Green Belt and open spaces, ensuring that habitats and wildlife thrive.

## POLICY MATRIX

AIMS:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Policies:</b>							
<b>HCT1: Enterprise and Tourism Development</b>	✓	✓	✓				✓
<b>LE1: Albion Mill Conversion</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>LE2: Mills Triangle Policy Area</b>		✓	✓		✓		
<b>CF1: New Community Facilities</b>			✓	✓		✓	
<b>CF2: Existing Community Facilities</b>			✓	✓		✓	
<b>NE1: Natural Environment Features</b>	✓	✓		✓			✓
<b>NE2: Urban Edge</b>	✓						✓
<b>NE3: Local Green Space</b>	✓			✓			✓
<b>NE4: Biddulph Valley Way</b>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
<b>NE5: Protection of Views of Local Importance</b>	✓						
<b>HOU1: Housing</b>			✓	✓	✓		
<b>HOU2: Infill Housing</b>				✓	✓		
<b>INF1: Critical Road Junctions</b>			✓	✓		✓	
<b>INF2: Sustainable Drainage</b>				✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>INF3: Community Infrastructure</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>DES1: Design</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>DES2: Public Realm, Car Parking and Movement</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	

# Part 2

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## CONTEXT AND GENERAL DATA ABOUT THE PARISH

The purpose of this section is to provide background information in relation to Biddulph, but also to provide an honest assessment of the issues and challenges that face the town. This context explains the rationale for the creation of the policies contained in Part 4. A number of maps have been developed throughout the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan. These maps and the methodologies that underpin them, are included at [www.biddulph.co.uk](http://www.biddulph.co.uk) The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group seeks to continuously update, enhance and interpret mapping information and will update this on the website, as appropriate.

### STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Biddulph lies in the north-west corner of the Staffordshire Moorlands District and near to the southern boundary of Cheshire. Prior to the Local Government Act 1972 and the consequent changes in 1974, Biddulph was an independent industrial town serving the surrounding rural area. Due to the topography, transport links developed north to Cheshire and south to Stoke-on-Trent rather than eastwards to connect with the rest of the Staffordshire Moorlands. However, both Leek and Cheadle, the other Staffordshire Moorlands towns, have an industrial/rural heritage providing some unifying similarities in character, even though transport connections between Biddulph and the other two towns remain poor.

The major transport route both north and south is the A527. Congleton is reached first in the northerly direction. Roads can then be taken west to the M6 or north to Macclesfield and Manchester. In the southerly direction, the A527 links up with the A500 and then to the M6 south. Roads east and west are rural in nature and heavy goods vehicles heading for the Staffordshire Moorlands need to take circuitous main road routes. The nearest railway station is Congleton, although Kidsgrove and Stoke-on-Trent are easily accessible and access to Manchester and London is relatively quick. National Cycle Route 55 passes through the town on the track-bed of the old railway line.

Demographically, Staffordshire Moorlands is progressing towards an ageing population. The proportion of over 65's is increasing and the proportion of young people decreasing. The largest age groups are: 40-49, 50-59 and 60-69. There is a high level of employment and the level of category C2 (skilled manual workers) is 4% higher than the national average. Some 70% of workers travel out of Staffordshire Moorlands to work and household income is above average for the area. Benefits claimants are 10% lower than the rest of Staffordshire and 20% lower than the national average. Over 80% of households own their property outright or have a mortgage, whilst 18% rent from social or private landlords. Housing in Biddulph ranges from pre-1919 terraces, an estate built for miners, post 1970 housing estates and rural farmsteads to executive homes.

Biddulph is situated in a valley rising from north to south. The highest part at Mill Hayes, Knypersley is a watershed, where streams flow north to find their way to the Irish Sea and others flow south to the North Sea. To the west of Biddulph the land rises to Congleton Edge and to the east Biddulph Moor. Biddulph Moor is also the name of a village situated on the upland plateau and part of the parish of Biddulph. Other historical villages now incorporated into Biddulph include Brown Lees, Gillow Heath, Knypersley and Bradley Green. Biddulph is a town where the surrounding landscape and green spaces are highly valued. Recent Green Belt reviews in 2015-2017 (see map on page 9) have caused great concern amongst residents and there is a need to balance development alongside the very features that make Biddulph a lovely place to live. The Green Belt, which constrains the town, performs a vital role in both ensuring that the rural nature of this town is preserved with views maintained out into the countryside, and that the town does not sprawl and become part of a wider urban conurbation. The latter is especially important between Biddulph and Biddulph Moor village, the south and eastern edges towards Stoke-on-Trent and along the ridge between Biddulph and Congleton. In the Householder Questionnaire, 93% of respondents stated that it was very important (71%) or important (22%) that any development in Biddulph was designed to fit with the existing environment, heritage and the valley nature of the area.

The surrounding rural areas are generally used for livestock farming or equine activities. Biddulph is known nationally for the Biddulph Grange Garden, the foremost example of a Victorian garden, administered by the National Trust. Biddulph Old Hall has recently been recognised as an Elizabethan building of some importance. There is a strong voluntary sector within the town and the 'Biddulph in Bloom' team have worked on many projects within the town that have enhanced the area and attracted national recognition for excellence. In 2019, Biddulph was awarded a Gold award and was the winner of the Large Town Category in the RHS National 'In Bloom' competition.

The landscape of the Staffordshire Moorlands varies from rugged gritstone outcrops and open moorland at the Roaches, the Cloud and Congleton Edge, to steep sided wooded valleys in the south, the extremes connected together by the valley of the River Churnet. In the east, the underlying rock changes from gritstone to limestone with its characteristic caves and disappearing rivers. In the west, the Biddulph valley rises to Mow Cop and Congleton Edge, the last ridge before the flat Cheshire Plain. Staffordshire Moorlands is noted for the scenic beauty of the landscape, in all its forms.

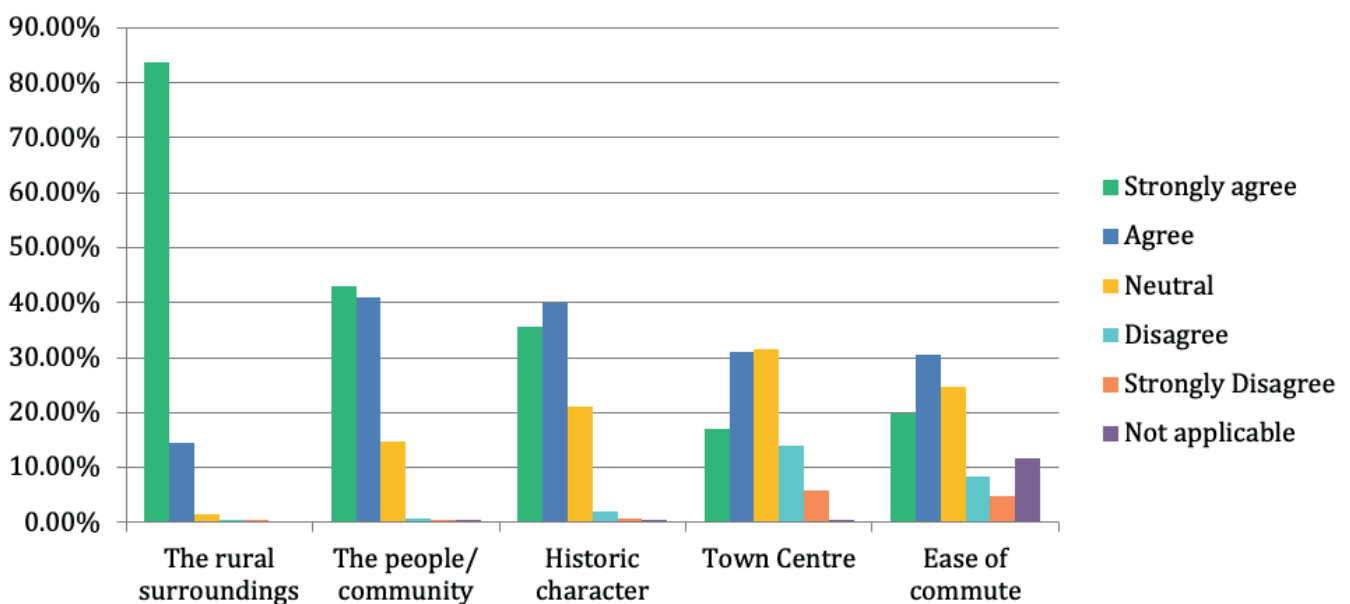
Although there is little evidence today, the Biddulph Valley was a hive of industrial activity in the past. Coal, iron ore, whetstone, sand and stone have all been extracted from the ground. Former industrial and commercial success has left a legacy of two country parks: Biddulph Grange Country Park lies next to the gardens of the same name and Greenway Bank Country Park surrounds Knypersley Reservoir and the Serpentine Lake.

Surveys of local residents have consistently identified that the reason people choose to live in the town is because of the countryside surrounding it.

- In the 2011 Big Biddulph Survey, people were asked what they liked about living in Biddulph. The highest response was being 'Near to the countryside / great views' (27%).
- This was further supported by the Householder Questionnaire carried out in 2017 where 97% of respondents gave clear evidence that the view and links to the countryside are what they most like about living here (83% strongly agree, 14% agree).

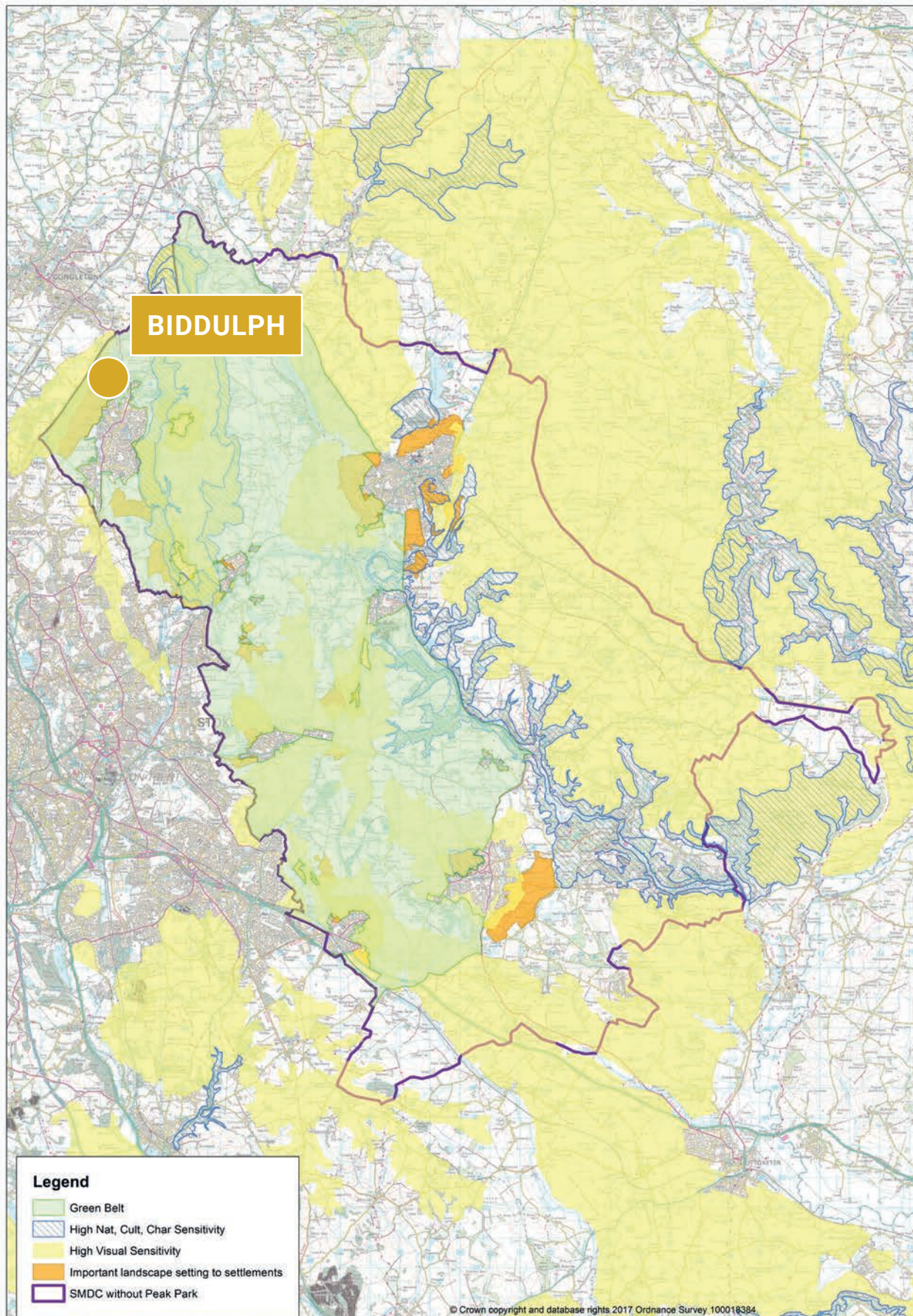
The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan seek to ensure that development in and around the town does not erode this natural asset as it is the main reason people choose to live here.

## What are the things that you like about living in the Neighbourhood Plan area?





Below is a map of the Green Belt within the Staffordshire Moorlands, considered as part of the 2015-17 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Green Belt Review.



SMDC Green Infrastructure Strategy, May 2018



## LAND USE

Land use within Biddulph and the surrounding area has been largely controlled by the geography of the valley. Recent mapping by Staffordshire Ecological Record (see table below) reveals that the two dominant land uses are improved grassland (61%), and built-up areas and gardens. Broadleaved woodland contributes 9% whilst less than 2% is used as arable land. A number of important habitats are also found within the plan area (see map below).

Code	Broad Habitat	Area (ha)	Percentage of parish
GIO	Improved grassland	1,660.6	61.78%
URO	Built up areas and gardens	424.4	15.79%
WBO	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland	245.1	9.12%
CRO	Arable and horticultural	49.5	1.84%
WUO	Undefined Woodland	20.7	0.77%
GAO	Acid grassland	19.1	0.71%
GUO	Undefined Grassland	18.1	0.67%
THO	Tall Herb community	16.8	0.63%
ASO	Standing open water	16.3	0.61%
REO	Inland rock	11.7	0.44%
GNO	Neutral grassland	10.8	0.40%
HEO/GAO	Heathland/Grassland	9.9	0.37%
WBO/MHO	Woodland/Montane habitats	7.6	0.28%
BGO	Bare ground	5.4	0.20%

*Reference: Staffordshire Ecological Record Habitat Map, March 2019*

## BIDDULPH SETTLEMENT HABITAT DESCRIPTION

- Biddulph is a town that lies mainly within the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmlands character area, but it is contained along its northern extent by the Gritstone Uplands which lead to the Gritstone Highland Fringe beyond;
- The town is set within a valley contained by Mow Cop ridge to the west and in the far east by Lask Edge ridge. There is a minor ridge between Biddulph and Lask Edge along which there is a line of rocky outcrops that contain the eastern edge of the important landscape setting to the east of the settlement;
- South East of Biddulph the landscape is characterised by a series of wooded stream valleys with large scale fields with strong hedgeline boundaries and scattered rocky outcrops to higher ground;
- The Staffordshire Way Gritstone Trail follows the Mow Cop ridgeline to the west of the town with connecting footpaths into Biddulph;
- West of the town, strong vegetation along streamlines runs down the slope from the Mow Cop ridgeline with incised lanes. This area of landscape is important to the settlement;
- The Biddulph Inner Relief Road forms a strong edge to the south west of the town the land that falls away steeply from it to the east is part of the landscape setting for the settlement.

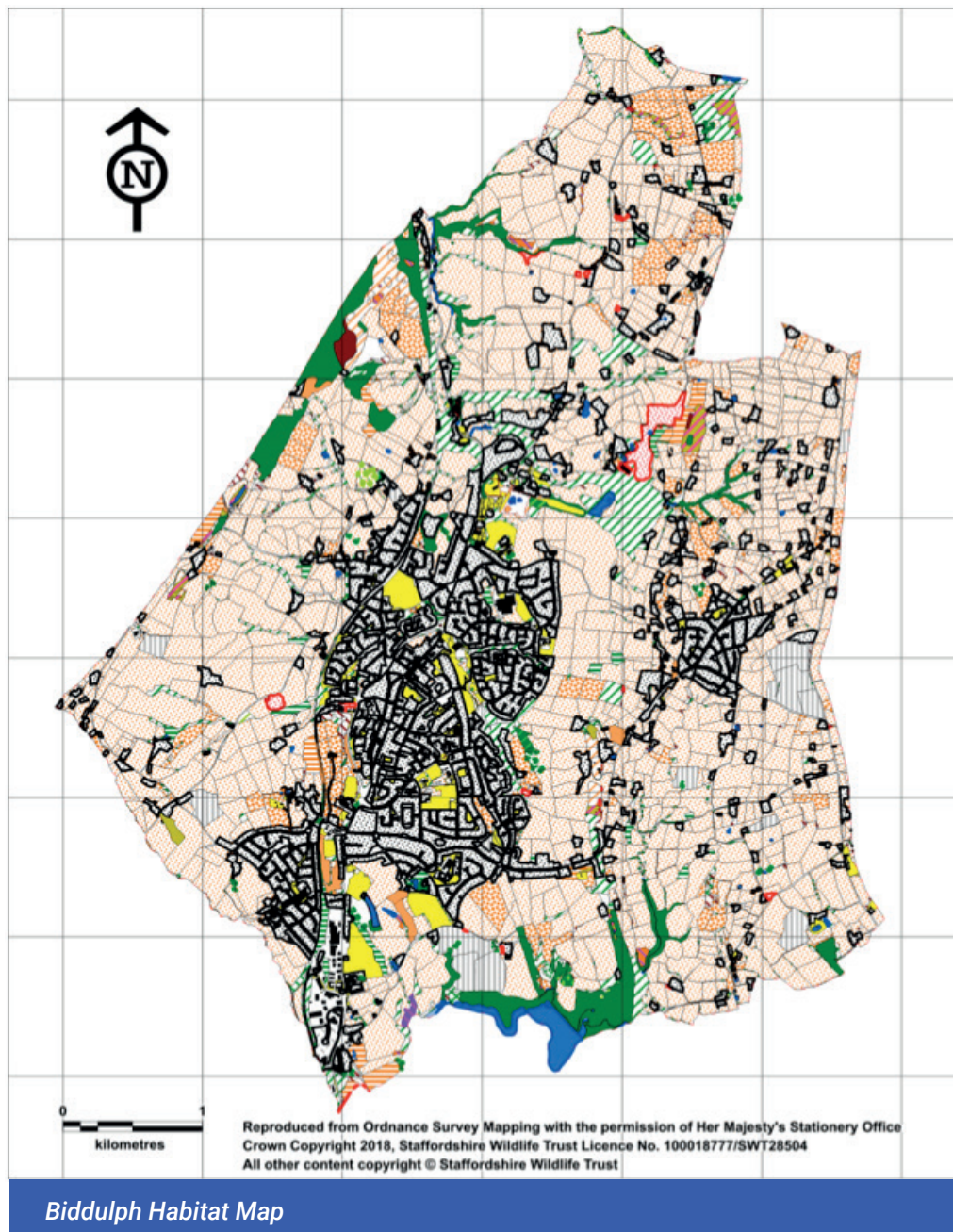


## BIDDULPH MOOR SETTLEMENT HABITAT DESCRIPTION

- Biddulph Moor is a medium sized village that lies between the Gritstone Uplands and the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands character area;
- The townscape is a mixture of stone dwellings with a large number of modern brick dwellings;
- The village is relatively flat but sited high on the Lask Edge and the land rises to a ridge line east of the village;
- The landscape setting is important to the village, particularly where the more open upland, characterised by drystone walls and lack of trees, contrasts with the stronger vegetational pattern along streamlines and the environs of the historic parkland.

## KEY HABITAT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARISH

- Ancient slope and valley farmlands;
- Gritstone Highland Fringe;
- Gritstone Uplands

















# A Key to Colours and Patterns used on SER & SWT Habitat Maps













**Introduction:**

These colours are broadly based on the "Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey" published by Nature Conservancy Council, 1990, now distributed by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Categories marked '\*' are not the same as in the Handbook









**Woodland and scrub categories**

 A1*: Undefined woodland	 A111: Semi-nat. broad-leaved woodland	 A112: Broad-leaved plantation
 A121: Coniferous woodland	 A122: Conifer plantation	 A13*: Mixed woodland
 A2*: Scrub	 A21: Dense/continuous scrub	 A22*: Scattered scrub
 A3*: Scattered trees : over other habitats:	 A3	 A31
	 A32	 Orchards







**Grassland and marsh categories**

 B*: Undefined grassland	 B11: Unimproved Acid gld	 B21: Unimproved Neutral grassland
 B31: Unimp. calc. grassland	 B12: Semi-improved acid gld	 B22: Semi-improved neutral grassland
 B32: Semi-imp calc. grassland	 B4*: Improved grassland	 B5*: Marsh/marshy grassland
 B6*: Poor semi-improved gld	 J12: Amenity grassland	 B4a*: Improved grassland or arable










**Tall herb and fern categories**

 C11: Continuous bracken	 C12*: Scattered bracken	 C3*: Undefined tall herbs
 C31: Tall ruderal herbs	 C32: Non-ruderal tall herbs	 J11*: Arable land
 J13*: Ephemeral/short perennial herbs	 J14: Introduced shrubs	











**Heathland categories**

 D*: Undefined heathland	 D1: Dry dwarf shrub heath	 D2*: Wet dwarf shrub heath
 D3*: Lichen/bryophyte heath	 D5*: Dry heath/acid grassland mosaic	 D6*: Wet heath/acid grassland mosaic


**Wetland categories; mire, swamp and open water**

 E1: Sphagnum bog	 E2: Flush and spring	 E3*: Fen
 E4: Bare peat		
 F1: Swamp	 F21*: Marginal vegetation	 F22: Inundation vegetation
 G*: Open water, both standing (G1) and running (G2) if water body is wide enough		 G2: Running water (linear feature)

**Rock exposures and waste categories**

 I111*: Inland cliff (acid/neutral)	 I121: Scree (acid/neutral)	 I13: Limestone pavement
 I112*: Inland cliff (basic)	 I122: Scree (basic)	 I142: Basic rock exposure
 I14*: Natural rock exposure	 I141: Acid rock exposure	
 I2*: Artificial exposures	 I21*: Quarry [ I22: Spoil 'S'; I23: Mine 'M'; I24: Refuse-tip 'R']	

**Miscellaneous other categories**

 J211*: Intact hedge (sp-rich)	 J221*: Defunct hedge (sp-rich)	 J231*: Hedge with trees (sp-rich)
 J212: Intact hedge (sp-poor)	 J222: Defunct hedge (sp-poor)	 J232: Hedge with trees (sp-poor)
 J24: Fence	 J25: Wall	 J26: Dry ditch
 J27: Boundary removed	 J28: Earth bank	
 J3*: Built-up land	 J32: Industrial	 J36: Buildings
 J34: Caravan site	 J4: Bare ground	 UR0: Houses and gardens (BHT)



# SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

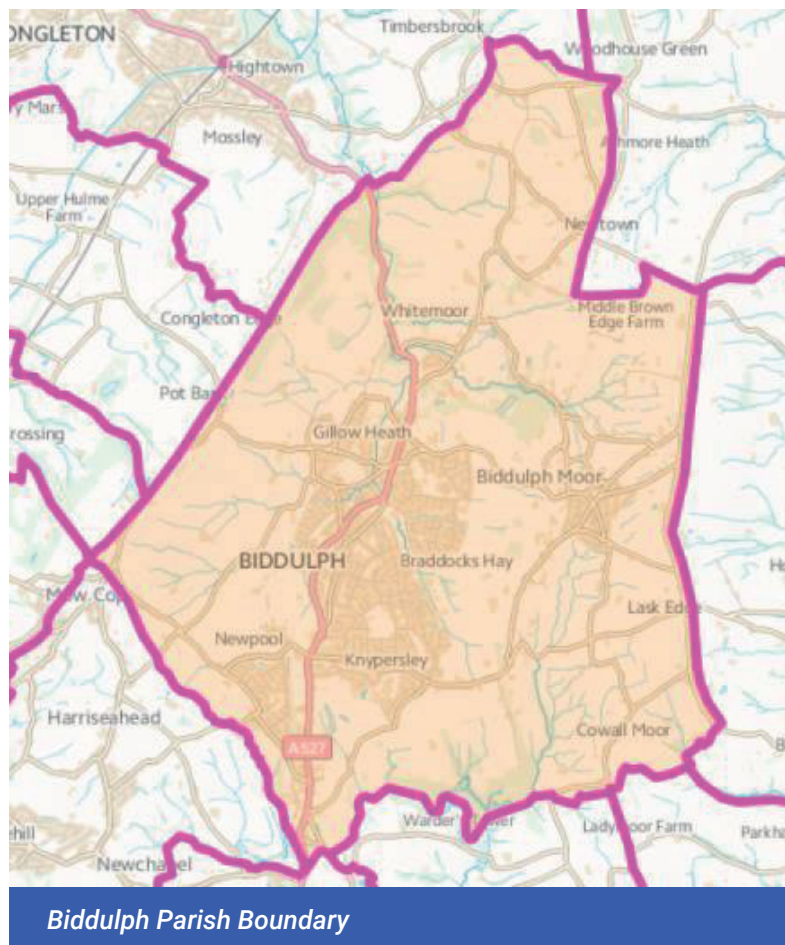
## DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF BIDDULPH

In the Census of 2011, the five wards of Biddulph had a population of 19,892.

Biddulph Town Centre is focused along the central High Street and Tunstall Road. There is a large Sainsbury's in the centre of the town, which is accessible via the Inner Relief Road and attracts customers from a wide area.

There are a range of disused and vacant shops in the town centre. The lack of variety of shops, vacant shops and inactive frontages, lack of accessibility due to one-way streets, lack of legibility and way-finding, has degraded the urban fabric of the Town Centre. This is exacerbated by a lack of night time economy and unattractive urban environment.

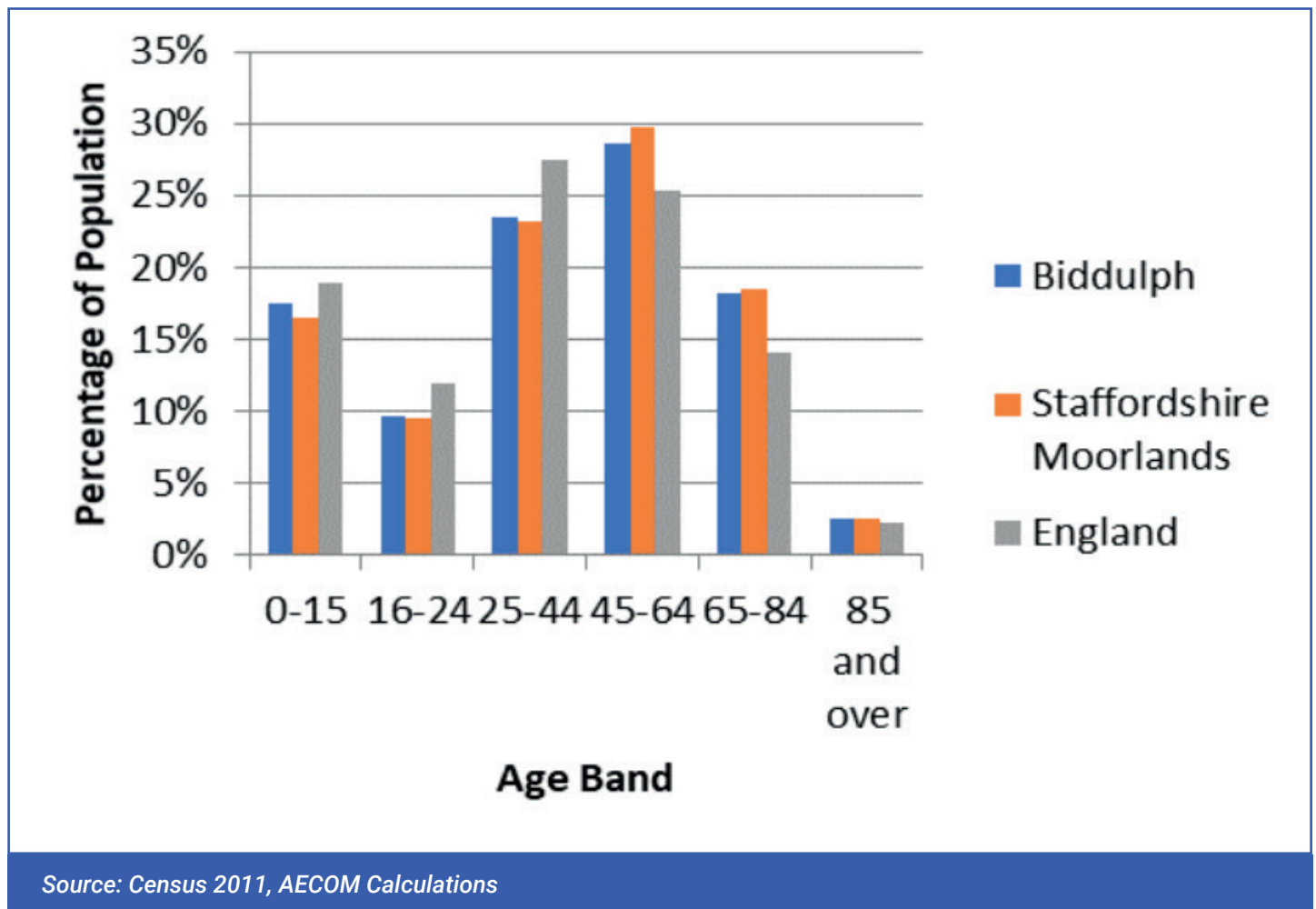
Biddulph is the second largest settlement in the District. It has suffered from economic decline and includes the Biddulph East Ward, an area of high deprivation. The strategic aim in recent years has been to enhance the role of Biddulph as a significant service centre and a garden town, surrounded by a visible rural hinterland.



# POPULATION PROFILE AND INCOMES

## AGE STRUCTURE

Below is presented the age structure of Biddulph at the time of the last census. Together with Staffordshire Moorlands, the structure exhibits a weighting towards a more elderly population, with roughly 18% of residents aged 65 and over. Nevertheless, the combined populations of those aged between 25-44 and 45-64 is around 53% of the population. Heads of household falling into these age categories are most likely to have children, this suggests the largest household type will be families with children. The fact that around 17% of the population are aged between 0-15 supports this finding.



## HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Below is data relating to household composition drawn from Census 2011. The largest single household type is families with children; the combined total of those with children, dependent and non-dependent, comes to 37.1%. It is important to point out however the presence of similarly large minority of childless couples; those families without children, both aged 65+ and younger than 65, amount to 31.8% of all households. Finally, one person households represent 27.2% of the total.

		Biddulph	Staffordshire Moorlands	England
One-person household	Total	27.2%	28.1%	30.2%
	Aged 65 and over	13.3%	13.5%	12.4%
	Other	13.9%	14.6%	17.9%
One family only	Total	68.9%	67.9%	61.8%
	All aged 65 and over	11.4%	11.3%	8.1%
	With no children	20.4%	20.8%	17.6%
	With dependent children	25.5%	24.5%	26.5%
	All children Non-Dependent	11.6%	11.2%	9.6%
Other household types	Total	3.9%	4.0%	8.0%

Source: Census 2011, AECOM Calculations

- The 'all children non-dependent' category should be considered in the context of concealed households. Growth (previously 7.3% in 2001) in this category acts as an indicator of depressed household formation rates as young people are unable to move out of the parental home as a result of a weak supply of suitable affordable accommodation.
- Evidence suggesting the loss of younger households, and depressed household formation rates reinforces key findings, which are:
  - Overall, a loss of households of working age;
  - A substantial loss of dwellings in multiple occupation (a couple and one or more other adults);
  - A modest increase in lone parent households with 1-3 dependent children;
  - A modest decline in family households with 1-3 dependent children;
  - A very substantial increase in couples without children who are aged 65+;
  - A decline of couples under the age of 65 without children; and
  - A substantial increase in one person households.
- It is worth drawing a comparison with the most up-to-date data for the District level, which indicates that affordability has been deteriorating as the housing market recovers. However, the evidence gathered suggests that in Biddulph, properties are relatively affordable compared with dwellings in Staffordshire Moorlands as a whole.

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

It is likely that residents with an income below £25,000 will struggle to afford market rents; this amounts to 3,772 households or 43% (rounded) of all households. Similarly, we can assume that all households whose household income falls below £30,000 will be unable to access market housing for sale. This amounts to 4,591 or 52% (rounded) of all households. This is a crude indicator of affordability given that many prospective purchasers will have access to other sources of finance.

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME AVERAGES

	Area	Base
Mean	£35,071.00	£38,719.87
Median	£29,422.04	£31,591.03
Mode	15 - 20k	10 - 15k
Lower Quartile	£17,255.80	£17,845.10
Upper Quartile	£47,194.53	£52,529.37

*Source: CACI*

- Household income data for Biddulph in 2017 shows the mean (average) household income in Biddulph was £35,071 and the mean house price in the area was £164,633 .

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Area:	Biddulph
Base:	United Kingdom
Year:	2017

	Area Profile	Area %	Base %	Index av=100
0 - 5k	196	2.2%	2.4%	93
5 - 10k	745	8.5%	8.4%	101
10 - 15k	962	10.9%	10.2%	107
15 - 20k	983	11.2%	10.2%	110
20 - 25k	886	10.1%	9.1%	111
25 - 30k	819	9.3%	8.5%	110
30 - 35k	734	8.3%	7.7%	109
35 - 40k	603	6.9%	6.4%	106
40 - 45k	535	6.1%	5.9%	104
45 - 50k	419	4.8%	4.7%	101
50 - 55k	358	4.1%	4.2%	97
55 - 60k	294	3.3%	3.5%	94
60 - 65k	252	2.9%	3.1%	91
65 - 70k	194	2.2%	2.5%	88
70 - 75k	149	1.7%	2.0%	85
75 - 80k	116	1.3%	1.6%	82
80 - 85k	111	1.3%	1.6%	79
85 - 90k	93	1.1%	1.4%	76
90 - 95k	36	0.4%	0.6%	73
95 - 100k	52	0.6%	0.8%	72
100 - 120k	173	2.0%	3.0%	65
120 - 140k	46	0.5%	1.0%	54
140 - 160k	24	0.3%	0.6%	46
160 - 180k	13	0.1%	0.4%	38
180 - 200k	1	0.0%	0.0%	31
200k+	3	0.0%	0.1%	25
<b>Total households</b>	<b>8,796</b>			

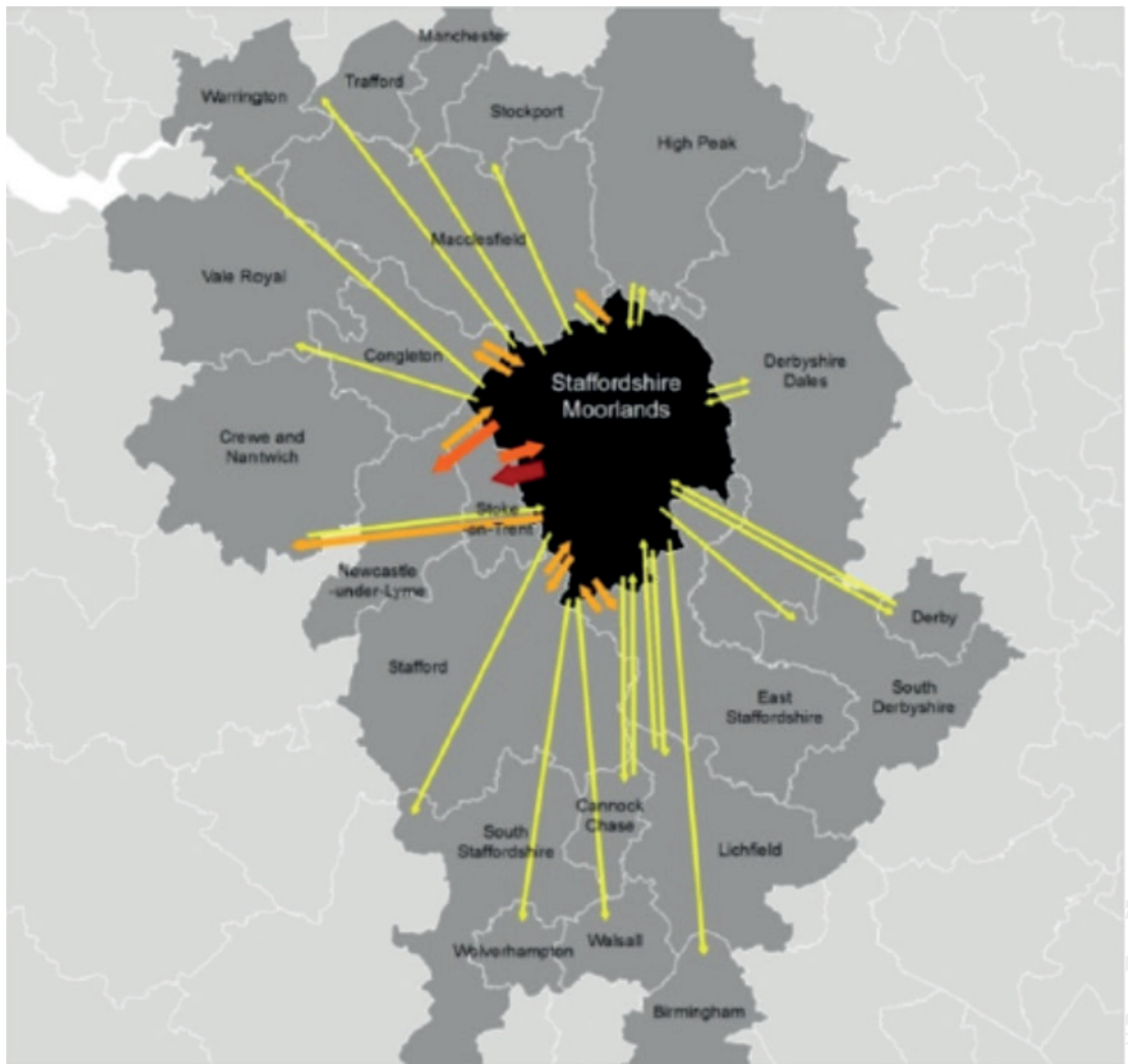
*Source: CACI*

From the evidence gathered, it is clear that a substantial proportion of households are unable to access market housing without financial assistance to ensure eligibility for lending. Those on low incomes, including the majority of first-time buyers, will be unable to find suitable accommodation within the market.



## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

### TRAVEL TO WORK COMMUTING FLOW



Source: Census 2001/NLP Analysis

- Biddulph exists within its own identifiable sub-area; this means it will have particular characteristics that distinguish it from other parts of the District and wider area.
- Biddulph exhibits linkages with a large geographical area, for example, a strong economic dependency on Stoke-on-Trent. Demand for housing will originate from across the sub-region, rather than being contained within the town or indeed the wider District; this will translate into house-price growth as a result of competition for housing from people migrating into the area. Moreover, it must be assumed that some housing need in Biddulph will be satisfied by urbanised areas within the sub-region, for example people choosing to move into towns nearby;

## RESIDENTS WHO ARE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE

### ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN BIDDULPH, 2011

Economic category		Biddulph	Staffordshire Moorlands	England
Economically active	Total	67.4%	69.3%	69.9%
	Employee: Full-time	38.2%	38.1%	38.6%
	Employee: Part-time	14.2%	14.6%	13.7%
	Self-employed	9.2%	11.3%	9.8%
	Unemployed	3.3%	2.8%	4.4%
	Full-time student	2.5%	2.5%	3.4%
Economically Inactive	Total	32.6%	30.7%	30.1%
	Retired	19.6%	19.1%	13.7%
	Student	3.4%	3.3%	5.8%
	Looking after home or family	3.6%	2.9%	4.4%
	Long-term sick or disabled	4.7%	4.1%	4.1%
	Other	1.4%	1.3%	2.2%

Source: AECOM Calculations

From the table above, 67% of residents are economically active. The proportion of people who are retired provides further evidence of the ageing population in Biddulph and across the District. These households are an important part of the population.

The evidence of decline in the economically active population is amplified at the District level through forecasts suggesting the overall loss of working age households. The objective should be to maintain Biddulph as a working as well as retired community, able to sustain the businesses, services and facilities essential to thriving community life. The needs of families should be prioritised, firstly so as to retain a balanced population in future years, but also so as to capitalise on the area's natural appeal to them.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The main priorities for INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES identified in Biddulph are identified as follows:

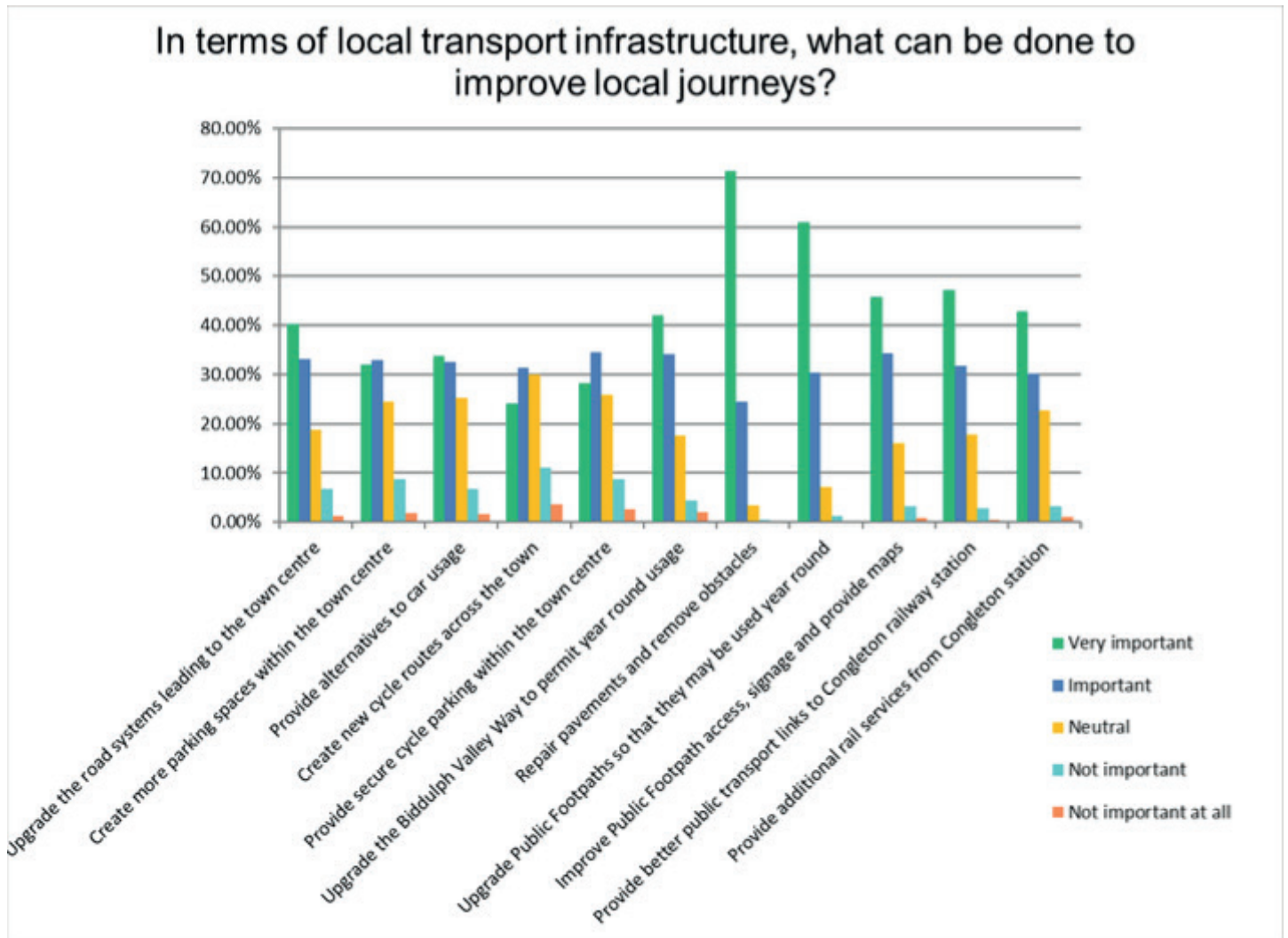
- Improve to highways within Biddulph and improve connectivity to the wider area;
- Increase provision of sustainable transport alternatives to move about the town;
- Improve the public transport offer;
- Support the provision of public services for the town;
- Provide sustainable drainage in anticipation of climate change and to alleviate existing flooding;
- Preserve the existing community facilities and assets within the town;
- Develop infrastructure projects that will enhance and encourage the usage of green spaces within the town.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Following analysis of data collected by agencies, the householder questionnaire and a piece of work commissioned by Biddulph Town Council in relation to a range of Highways issues within the area, a number of observations have been made about actions necessary to improve transport links across Biddulph and to the wider area, which will include improvements to the Town Centre and A527. (Chart over the page).

- 1 Improvements to the A527 corridor will require work to improve traffic flows to both the North and South of the town, facilitated by working with other local authorities.
- 2 Key junctions along the A527 have been identified that will require improvements following the public consultation and traffic surveys, before any new developments can commence.
- 3 Work to improve traffic flows within the Town Centre will need to be prioritised, with consideration given to altering the existing one-way system and possible partial pedestrianisation of the Town Centre, which was supported by 55% of respondents to the Householder Questionnaire.
- 4 Provision of sustainable transport alternatives as part of Community Infrastructure involve the reduction of congestion within the Town Centre and surrounding areas by promoting alternatives to car usage, including improvements to public transport, encouraging cycling, promoting usage of public footpaths and the Biddulph Valley Way.
- 5 Public transport improvements are essential in order to encourage greater usage; currently 52.77% of respondents to the Householder Questionnaire never travel by bus. Such improvements could include: the creation of new routes, provision of bus shelters, introduction of new timetables that integrate with rail timetables and working to improve rail services available to the town from across the wider area (Congleton, Kidsgrove, Stoke); 51% of people stated that they use the train at least monthly.
- 6 Cycling can be encouraged by creating new cycle routes across Biddulph, provision of cycle tracks and cycle racks within the Town Centre and the introduction of cycle lanes where appropriate. In addition, there is an extensive network of historic public footpaths across Biddulph. Residents could be encouraged to increase usage of these by: providing new signage; provision of maps showing the routes; installing more durable all-weather surfaces and clearing any obstructions where necessary.
- 7 The Biddulph Valley Way is an important leisure, tourism, heritage and transport asset for Biddulph. It should be promoted as part of a sustainable transport network for Biddulph following a range of improvements which could include: replacing the surface material with a more durable alternative, provision for new drainage to remove surface water, improvements to access points for the elderly and disabled, new signage and increasing the number of access points to encourage greater usage. Improvements were felt to be important by 76% of respondents to the Householder Questionnaire.

Analysis of Householder Questionnaire data revealed a number of key themes running through the responses in relation to the town centre. These are summarised below and the themes are threaded through the Neighbourhood Plan policies and included in the Non-Planning section of the Neighbourhood Plan (Part 5).





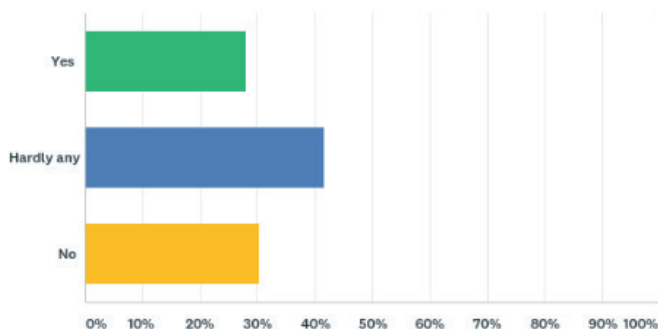


A list of all community facilities within the town is provided in Appendix B. The aim is to give an indication of the buildings, sites and services available.

## CONSIDERATION OF PLAY FACILITIES

Young people across Biddulph, aged from 8-16, were asked about their leisure time and 420 responses were received. The message from young people was that there are not enough opportunities for them to play and hang around in the town.

Q3 In your town, do you think there are enough places to play and hang around? (please tick one)



It is clear from the discussions with young people that the location of play facilities is important. In many cases, they are not able to cross main roads and so ensuring that a range of facilities are in close proximity to their homes is important. As a result, play facilities are identified as a use for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding/ s.106 funding later in the document. The requirements of Biddulph's children are detailed below:

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PLAY QUESTIONNAIRE

Q2 When you go out to play or hang out, what do you like doing? (tick as many as you like)

Answered: 415 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Climbing things	45.06%	187
Running and chasing games	37.83%	157
Exploring	40.72%	169
Making bike/ scooter tracks	23.37%	97
Playing with mud, sand or water	17.59%	73
Chatting and being with my friends	67.23%	279
Playing ball games	44.58%	185
Fishing	10.60%	44
Looking for bugs and stuff	16.39%	68
Spending time with adults	18.31%	76
Building dens	34.22%	142
Making swings	18.80%	78
Dancing	25.06%	104
Going out with my family	38.55%	160
Having a picnic	22.65%	94
Anything else?	27.95%	116
Anything else? (please specify)	4.10%	17
Total Respondents: 415		



## TOURISM & LEISURE

The main priorities identified in relation to Tourism and Leisure are:

- Encourage the development of tourist accommodation (hotels and Bed & Breakfast) in the area;
- Promote the availability of tourist accommodation in the area;
- Attract more staying visitors via improving the quality and range of accommodation stock – in order to extend visitor stays and increase visitor spend;
- Develop, strengthen and promote business tourism and demonstrate its importance and value.

There are a number of features in Biddulph which actively promote tourism in Biddulph, not least of which is Biddulph Grange Gardens.

Managed by the National Trust, over the last few years there has been a marked increase in the number of visitors, particularly on Bank Holiday weekends and during the school holidays. Parking overflows from the car park and on to Grange Road, sometimes causing congestion for local people.

A survey carried out in 2017 in the neighbouring Biddulph Grange Country Park confirmed that people travel to the park for the day, from a wide area.

61% of people who visited the park that day had an ST8 postcode. People also travelled from York, Manchester and Birmingham to visit Biddulph Grange Country Park.



*China in Biddulph Grange Gardens*



*The Fishing Pool in the Biddulph Grange Country Park*



*The Biddulph Grange Country Park Visitor Centre*



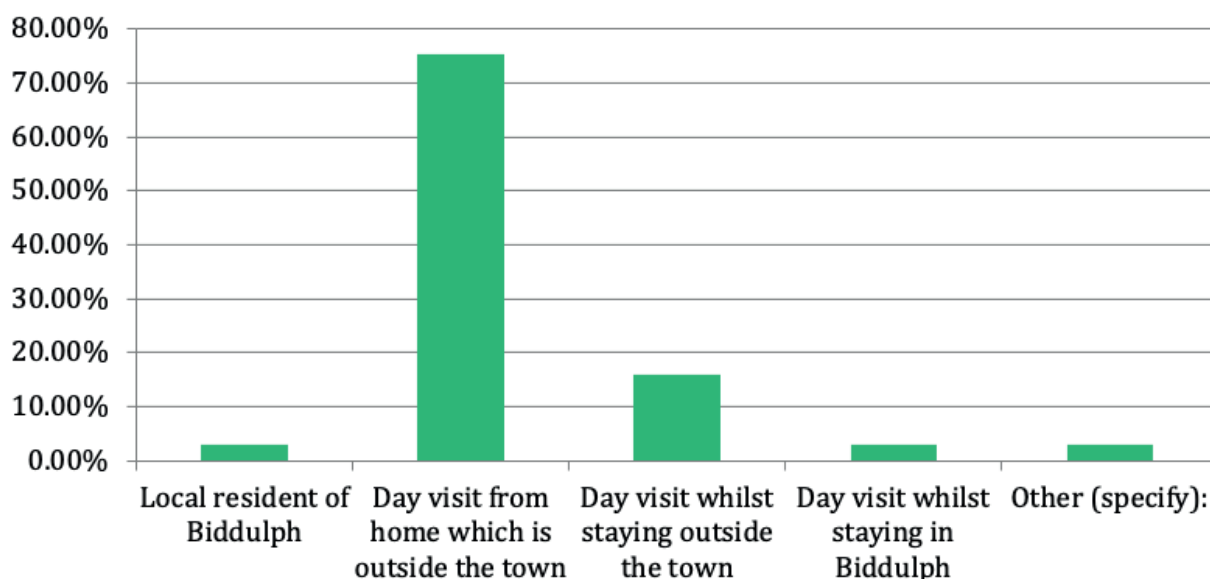


The Biddulph Grange Country Park in winter

Other attractions that bring people to the area include a Public Footpath network of more than 150 paths, linking to the Gritstone Trail, Biddulph Valley Way and the Staffordshire Way and Biddulph Old Hall which, although privately owned holds a number of open days per year. However, visitors tend to travel here to visit one place and go home.

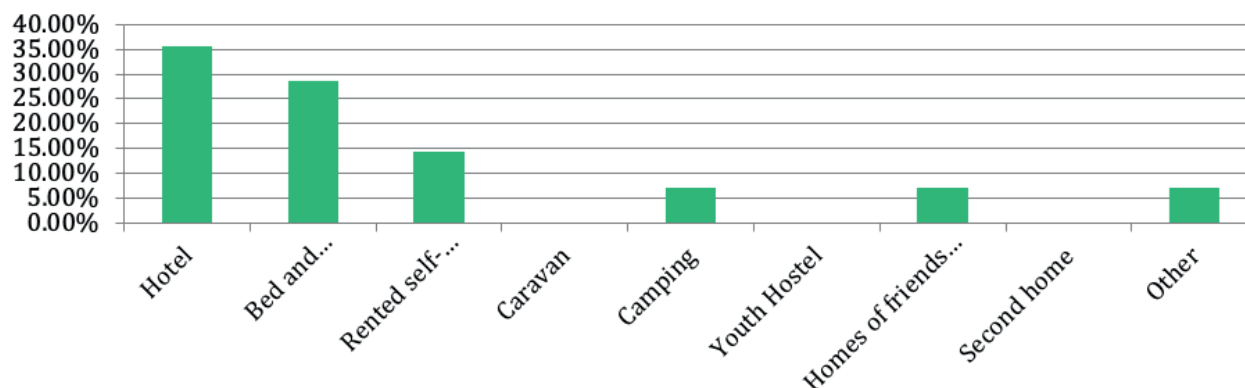
To further encourage tourism in the area it would be helpful if people could stay in the area for a few days and plan an itinerary covering a number of visits and activities. A survey of visitors to the National Trust Biddulph Grange Gardens in Summer 2018 provided a useful snapshot of requirements.

### Which of the following groups would you place yourself in? (please tick)



Whilst tourist accommodation is widely available in nearby Congleton and Leek, there is very little in Biddulph itself.

## If you have not travelled from home, what type of accommodation are you staying in? (please tick)



Those completing the survey stated that Bed and Breakfast and hotel accommodation would be the preferred accommodation types in Biddulph, to support tourism.

## KEY THEMES

In relation to tourism, analysis of the Householder Questionnaire data from 2017 around how the High Street could be developed appear on first sight to be inconclusive.

Would you like to see Biddulph Town promoted as, or including, any of the following:  
(you may select more than one)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Option a) a Tourist Shopping Village?	39.75%	450
Option b) a new shopping centre relocated on the edge of town?	34.28%	388
Option c) a Cultural Centre (cinema, theatre, museum, restaurants, etc.)?	53.00%	600
Option d) None of the above	21.82%	247
Option e) Your answer		305
	<b>ANSWERED</b>	<b>1132</b>

However, analysis of the 305 free text answers provides further clarity; three main themes are identified:

1. The High Street needs to be rejuvenated. Many believe to relocate shops outside of town would be a big mistake. Leek is given many times as a good example and model that Biddulph could follow. Examples to consider include an indoor market (Leek style) with a pedestrianised centre allowing for a regular outdoor market (Leek style). More choice of shops are required with greater variety including gift shops and tea shops. Many refer to the centre as a village or traditional town with character and history and wish it to retain this feel. There is a huge need for a further supermarket with both Lidl and Aldi being strongly suggested. There are emotional pleas to put the heart back in to the centre and give the place a general tidy up. It was suggested that "Shop Front Guidelines" could be generated which set a style and standard to the place. The Master Plan document produced by AECOM explores some of these ideas further.
2. Many specified a need for some cultural provision within the town giving examples of cinemas and theatres. There was some support for provision of a museum. It was also stated that good restaurants and tea shops with outside eating space should also be part of this provision. People felt that, done appropriately, this could encourage Biddulph Grange Garden visitors to continue on into the town.
3. Many were clear that Biddulph warrants promotion as a tourist destination. However, there were also concerns that too many visitors within the centre could spoil the atmosphere and village feel. Clearly a balance is required. To further support this it has been suggested that a hotel service would be required, Travel Lodge was one suggestion given. Key areas given that support Biddulph as a tourist destination were:
  - Proximity to the Peak District, Cheshire and the Potteries.
  - Our own Country Parks (Biddulph and Knypersley) and our footpaths.
    - Biddulph should be promoted generally as an area for outdoor activities.
  - Biddulph Grange Gardens.
  - The Biddulph Valley Way
    - It was suggested that this area particularly lends itself to promotion as a centre for cycling, including race activities, cycling clubs, cycle shops.



# ENVIRONMENT

The main priorities identified in relation to the Natural Environment are:

- Protecting green belt and reducing urban sprawl, including the enhancement of key views into and across the landscape
- Linking, enhancing and protecting green infrastructure (footpath network, Biddulph Valley Way (BVW) local watercourses)
- Enhancing natural assets (designated sites, reducing fragmentation of woodlands)
- Sensitive development, enhancing natural watercourses and reducing flooding (SUDS)
- Identification and surveying of new natural assets leading to new designations, where appropriate.

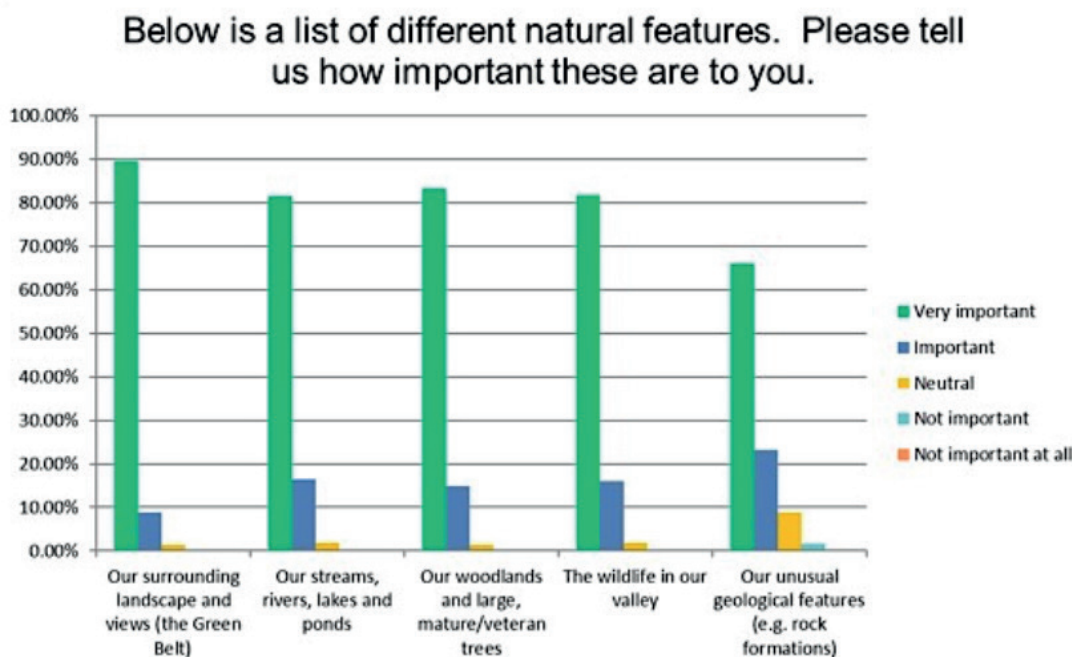
The Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan area has 9 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS - county level importance) and 7 Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS - District importance). It also has 20 sites listed on the Ancient Woodlands Inventory and 3 sites designated of regional importance due to their geology / geomorphology. These sites are fragmented in places.

Existing wildlife corridors (such as the water courses and Biddulph Valley Way) need enhancing to benefit wildlife more fully, and new corridors need identifying and managing to link fragmented areas together. Future development sites need to safeguard and enhance any existing areas of biodiversity identified within the Phase 1 Ecological Surveys, amongst others. Such features include mature and veteran trees, hedgerows, watercourses, habitat mosaics, ponds and wetlands.

## NATURAL FEATURES

### HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE NATURAL FEATURES TO PEOPLE LIVING IN THE AREA?

People living in Biddulph feel very connected to the landscape and value its intricate mosaic of habitats which are both clearly visible and easily accessible via the footpath network. The mix of woodlands, waterways, wildlife and geological features are all found to be important to local people, as is the Green Belt which currently protects them.



As noted in the 'Strategic Context' section at the beginning of the Plan, the Householder Survey carried out in 2017 shows that over 97% of respondents gave clear evidence that they considered the surrounding landscape and views (the Green Belt); the streams, rivers, lakes and ponds; the woodland and mature trees; and the wildlife to be either very important (over 80% in each case) or important. In addition, our unusual geological features were found to be either very important or important by 88% of people (65% very important, 23% important).

## **THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

Development within the plan area is welcomed where it is in keeping with the natural surroundings and seeks to work with the natural contours and features of the landscape, keeping buildings low-rise, especially towards the edges.

Incorporating natural features within the development such as watercourses, hedgerows, mature trees and habitat mosaics (as identified in Phase 1 Ecological Surveys) will lead to good design and high-end developments due to the rural feel of such projects.

Existing green corridors need to be protected, new wildlife corridors need to be identified and managed, and developments need to enhance and create new car-free links between them and the wider services of the town.

The Householder Questionnaire asked 'How important is the balance between development and the natural environment?'

- 93% of respondents stated that it was very important (71%) or important (22%) that any development in Biddulph was designed to fit with the existing environment, heritage and the valley nature of area
- 91% of respondents stated that it was very important (66%) or important (25%) that development included Wildlife corridors to link isolated and possible endangered areas. These could be combined with cycle ways and paths which were also seen as very important or important features of any new development, stated by 91% of respondents (64% very important and 27% important)
- 88% of respondents stated that it was very important (57%) or important (31%) that developments included shared open green spaces.

## **WATERCOURSES WITHIN THE PLAN AREA**

Within the valley, the majority of farmland is broken-up by numerous streams spilling into the Biddulph Brook which threads its way through the valley and out towards Cheshire where it joins the River Dane to the north of the town and thence through the neighbouring town of Congleton and on into the Irish Sea. The local streams are often wooded gullies which provide important corridors for wildlife to move around in safety. In contrast, in the southern end of the valley, the streams (including the Head of the Trent) flow southwards into Knypersley Reservoir and into the River Trent flowing towards the North Sea. The Plan area straddles this important watershed between the rivers flowing to the south (then towards the east) or to the north (and towards the west).

81% of respondents to the Biddulph Householder Questionnaire stated that our streams, rivers, lakes and ponds were very important to them.

## **FLOODING**

Responses to the Biddulph Householder Questionnaire suggest that the majority of issues are connected to the River Dane catchment. In recent years there have been an increased number of severe weather events that have led to flooding within Biddulph.



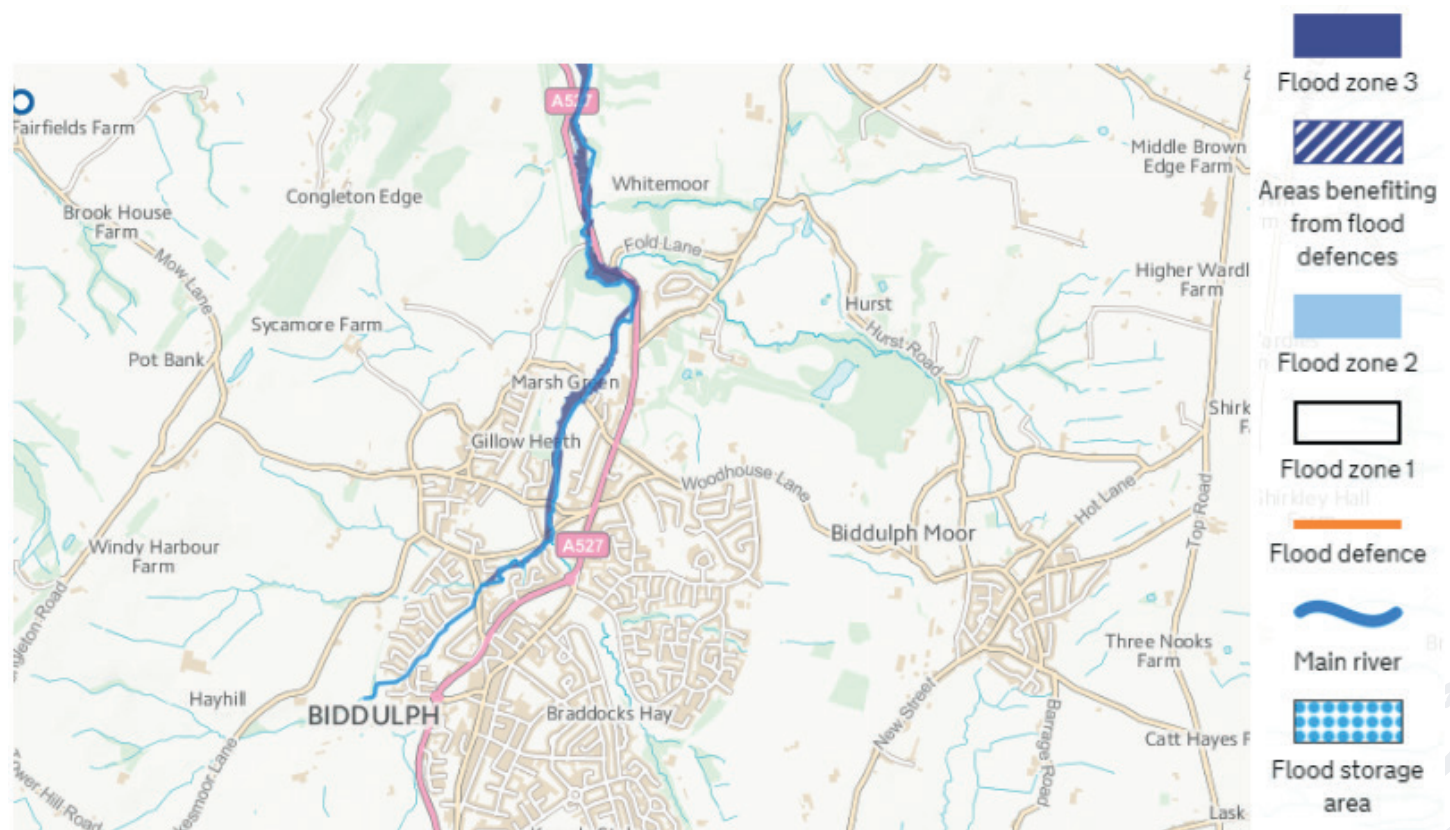
Being situated in a valley which has been shaped by glaciers in the past, the local soil contains a high percentage of clay, which can impede percolation. During times of heavy rainfall, the surrounding fields suffer from poor drainage and this leads to localised flooding.

Two different types of flooding are evident within the valley;

1. That from rising watercourses following heavy rainfall events (River flooding)
2. That from surface runoff from the surrounding fields following heavy rainfall events (Surface water flooding).

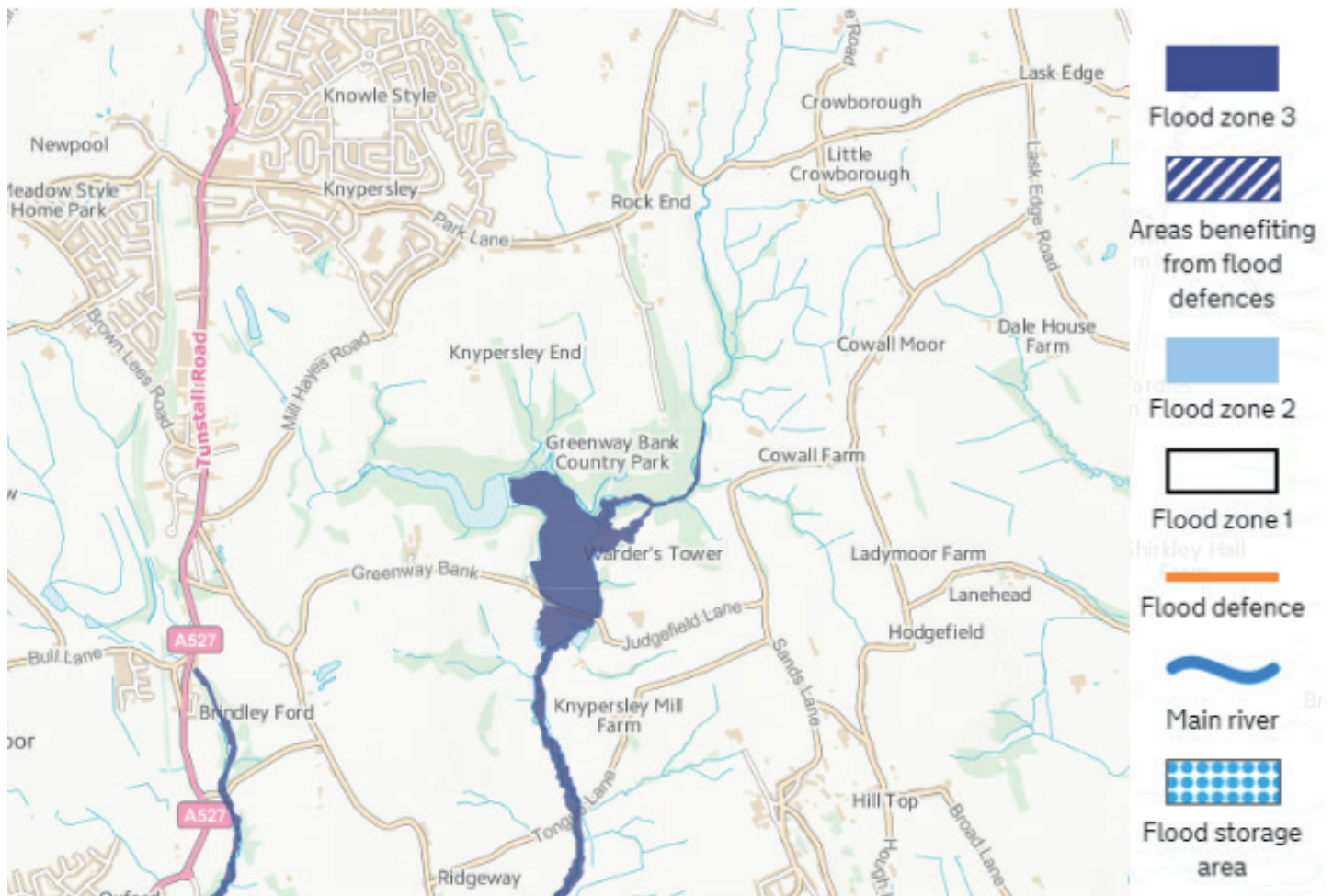
## THE FOLLOWING MAPS INDICATE WHERE THE AREAS MOST AFFECTED ARE FOUND.

### FLOOD ZONE MAP FOR BIDDULPH NORTH – RIVER FLOODING



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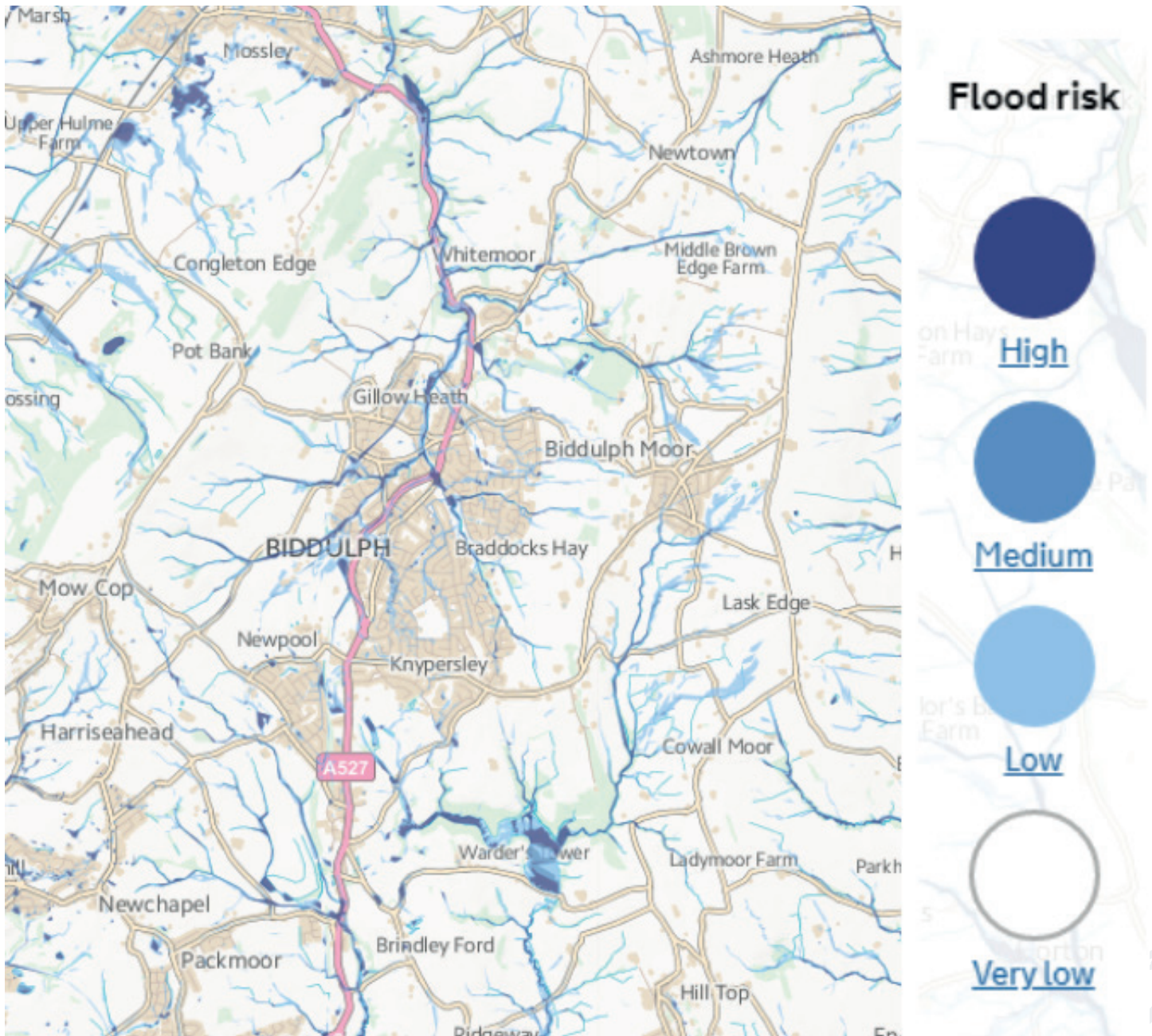
# FLOOD ZONE MAP FOR BIDDULPH SOUTH – RIVER FLOODING



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## FLOOD ZONE MAP FOR BIDDULPH- SURFACE WATER FLOODING



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Historically housing developments have taken place without adequate consideration given to provision of sustainable drainage, which has consequently increased the flooding risk for the town. Particular areas of concerns identified by residents from the Householder Questionnaire included: Mow Lane, Marsh Green Road, Station Road, Thames Drive, Mill Hayes Road, Pool Fold, Whitmore and land to the rear of the Thames Drive estate at Torville Drive and Plover Drive. Presently, any heavy rainfall feeds directly into the Biddulph Brook at the earliest opportunity and this creates flooding risks downstream. Any new developments in Biddulph will have to incorporate sustainable drainage provision as part of the development.

The Householder Questionnaire asked residents for details of any flooding incidents in Biddulph and to forward copies of any pictures that they might have. Respondents made no distinction between blocked drains, surface water and river flooding, therefore, further work will be required to clarify these problems in future and determine sites for flood prevention investment. The respondents clearly identified that blocked grids and watercourses are an issue for Biddulph, with work required in anticipation of a greater frequency of severe weather events in the future.



**EXAMPLES OF FLOODING INCIDENTS IN BIDDULPH INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**



*The Biddulph Brook at Essex Drive*



*Marsh Green Road*



*Collection point for main sewers in Biddulph*

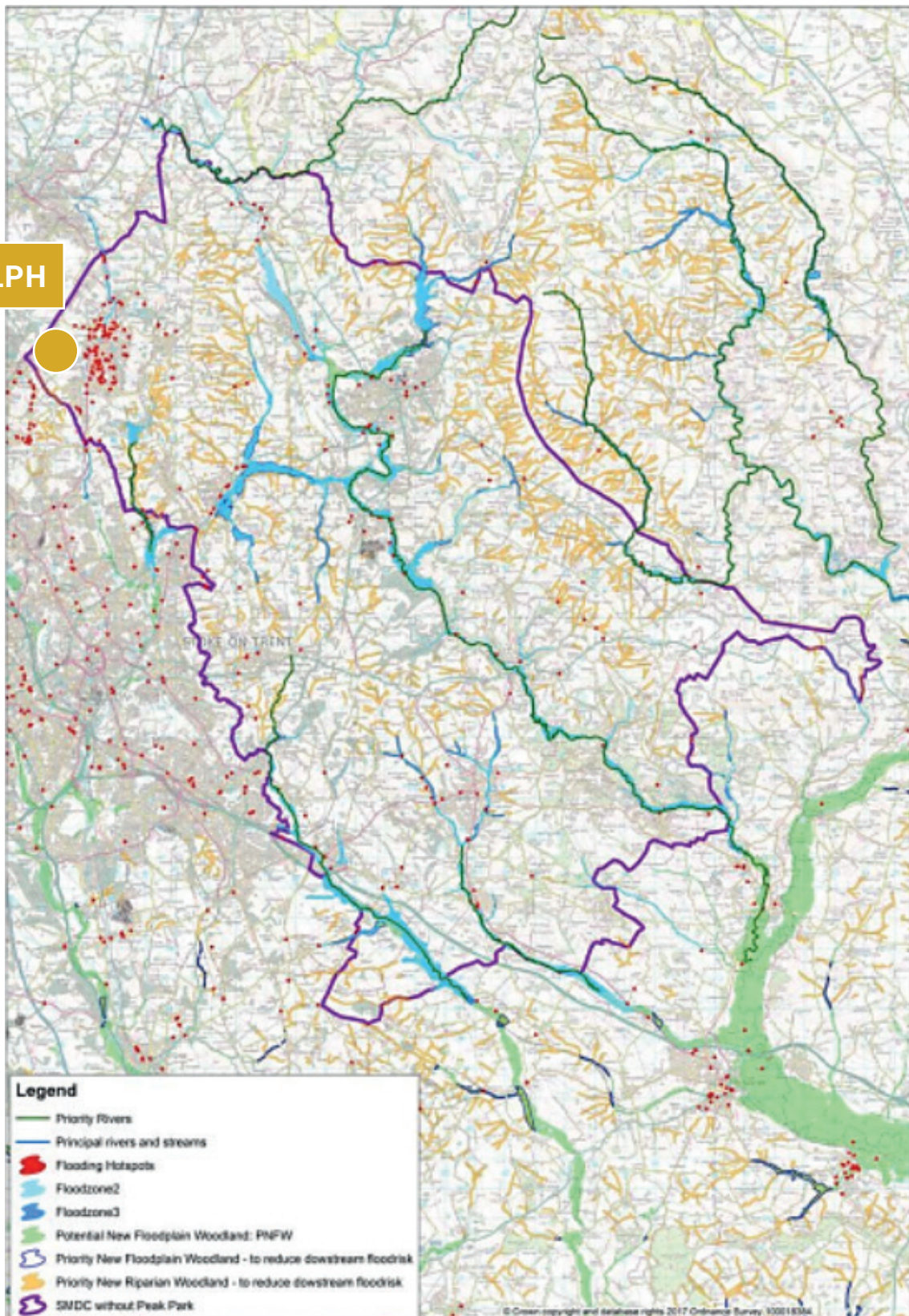


*Surface water run off at the back of the Thames Drive estate, with water flowing off the hills onto Plover Drive in this example*



The Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Green Infrastructure Strategy (May 2018) indicates where flooding hotspots are found across the district. The following map illustrates the severity of flooding within the area of Biddulph, which indicates that this is a greater problem than that shown in the rest of the district.

**BIDDULPH**



*Map A.4 Flood attenuation and water management*

It is to be noted that not all of these sites are close to watercourses, so a combination of rising rivers and surface run-off are likely to be attributable to the pattern of flooding across the plan area. An understanding of the nature of such events is vital so that future development can reduce the risk of flooding.



## **THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS IN REDUCING FLOODING**

Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SDS) covers a wide range of engineering and natural solutions which are designed as part of new developments. They can range from porous pavements (which allow the surface water to percolate through the paving to be sorted temporarily in underground tanks and released slowly into the stream network) to the design of natural swales, leaky dams and ponds to drain and slow down water before entering the water networks.

During periods of heavy rainfall, localised flooding is evident. Changes in weather patterns due to climate change predict an increase in storms and heavy, intense rainfall.

The stream corridors need enhanced natural flood management to slow down rainfall entering both the natural and man-made drainage systems.

New development must take SDS into account and build natural features (swales / ponds) into development schemes to both manage run-off and benefit wildlife.

Tree planting to reduce the speed with which rainwater enters the watercourses should be encouraged in strategic locations.

Respondents to the Biddulph Householder Questionnaire were asked which issues they thought the neighbourhood plan should focus on to make things better in the future. With regards to flooding, 93% stated that it was either very important (69%) or important (24%) that developers fulfil their obligations with regards to managing rainwater, working with local farmers to slow down rainwater entering the watercourses (i.e. natural flood management, planting trees) and planting more trees in the Valley to slow down flood water.

It is vital that SDS schemes are automatically built into future developments within the Biddulph Valley and that developers are creative, allowing natural solutions which also benefit wildlife to be designed within new schemes.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES WITHIN THE TOWN CAN BE FOUND IN THE APPENDICES:**

### **APPENDIX C- COMPOSITE PROTECTED / BAP SPECIES LIST**

### **APPENDIX D- FEATURES OF BIDDULPH VALLEY WAY**

### **APPENDIX E- ENVIRONMENTAL DATA AND MAPPING**

## BIDDULPH NATURE RECOVERY MAP

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect, enhance and link important natural features within the parish landscape. Independent consultants developed a Nature Recovery Map and Wildlife Corridors Map in order to guide this vision (see below).

Biddulph parish is within the Potteries and Churnet Valley National Character Area, and within the Species-Rich Farmland Ecosystem Action Plan in the Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

Many opportunity zones will overlap as some areas have several priorities, and a mixture or mosaic may be appropriate on any given site.

The Nature Recovery Map is based on current knowledge of habitats, surface water flooding, and aerial photography interpretation. Many habitats of potential high value have not yet been assessed or designated therefore the map may need to be updated as and when further survey data is gathered.

The zones and focus areas should guide wildlife conservation actions whether through planning policy and development control, green infrastructure projects or other partnership work. For any particular development or project site, the zone and/ or focus area it falls within provides a steer as to the habitat protection, restoration and creation priorities that should be considered and contributed to.

However, it is important that detailed site investigations to assess suitability of proposals are carried out first to ensure existing sensitive habitats, wildlife and other features such as archaeology are not negatively affected.

It is important to combine biodiversity opportunities with other green infrastructure elements such as landscape, access, recreation and water management to avoid conflict and determine where multiple benefits can be achieved.

A further stage would be to call for sites or contact landowners that would be willing to have habitat and/ or green infrastructure enhancements on their land. Formulating costed green infrastructure projects in key areas would then create a 'bank' of opportunities to receive funding via biodiversity offsetting, Community Infrastructure Levy, section 106 agreements or applying for grant funding.

### **FURTHER DETAIL ON THE NATURE RECOVERY MAP AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE DIFFERENT ZONES CAN BE FOUND IN APPENDIX F.**

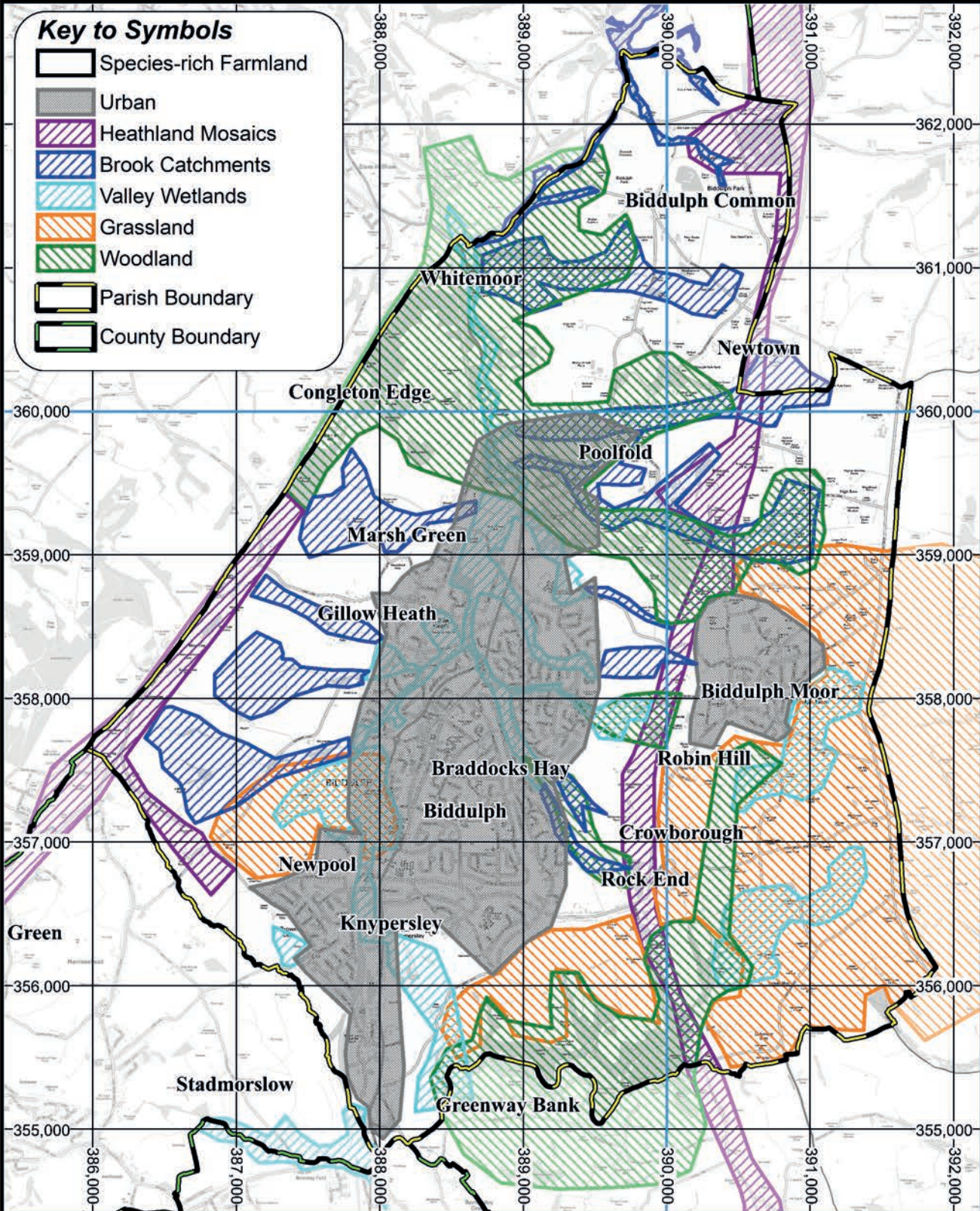




**Staffordshire Wildlife Trust**  
 The Wolsley Centre, Wolsley Bridge,  
 Stafford. ST17 0WT  
 Tel: 01889 880100  
 Email: info@staffs-wildlife.org.uk  
 Registered Charity No. 259558  
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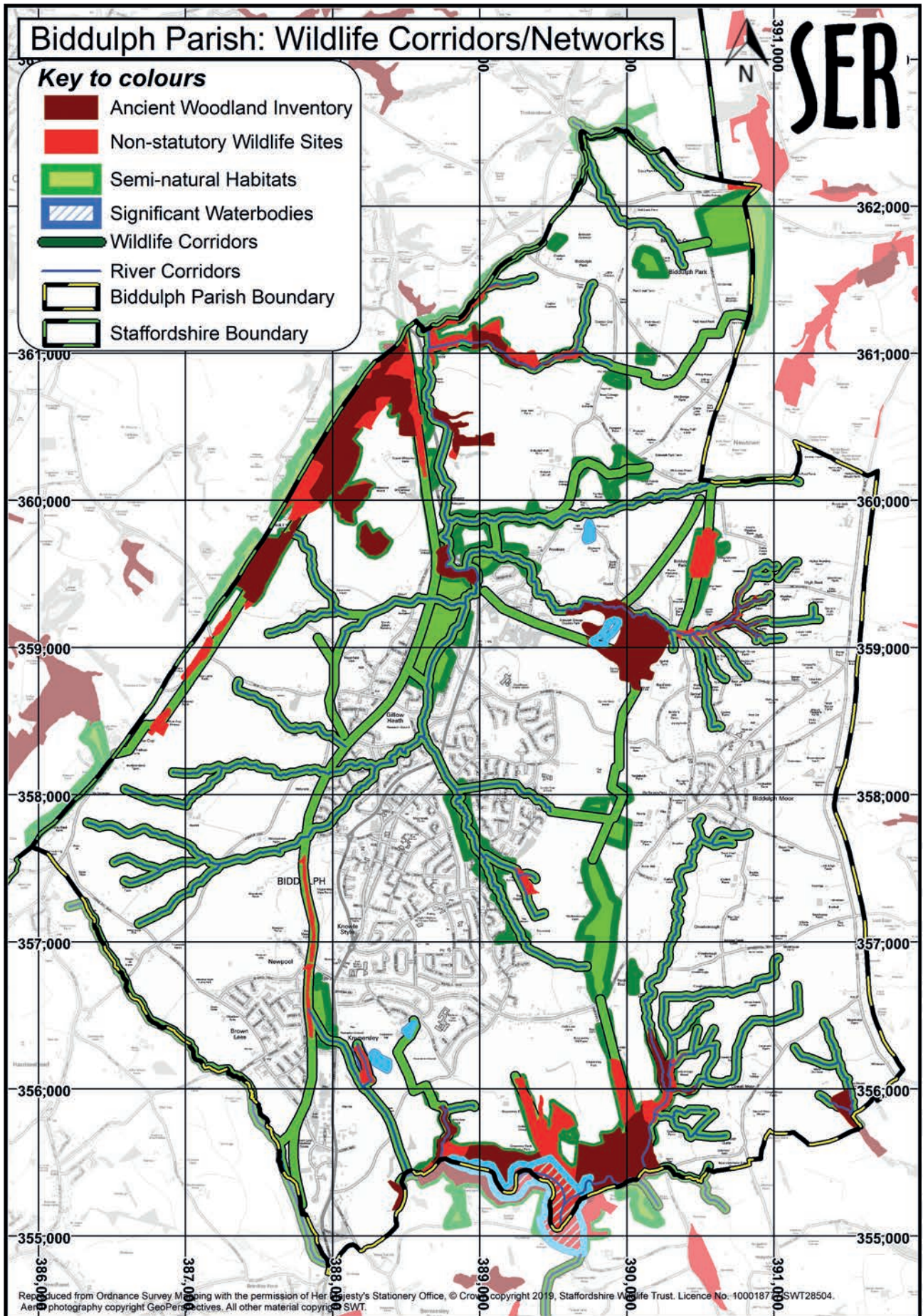
# Biddulph Nature Recovery Network Map 2019



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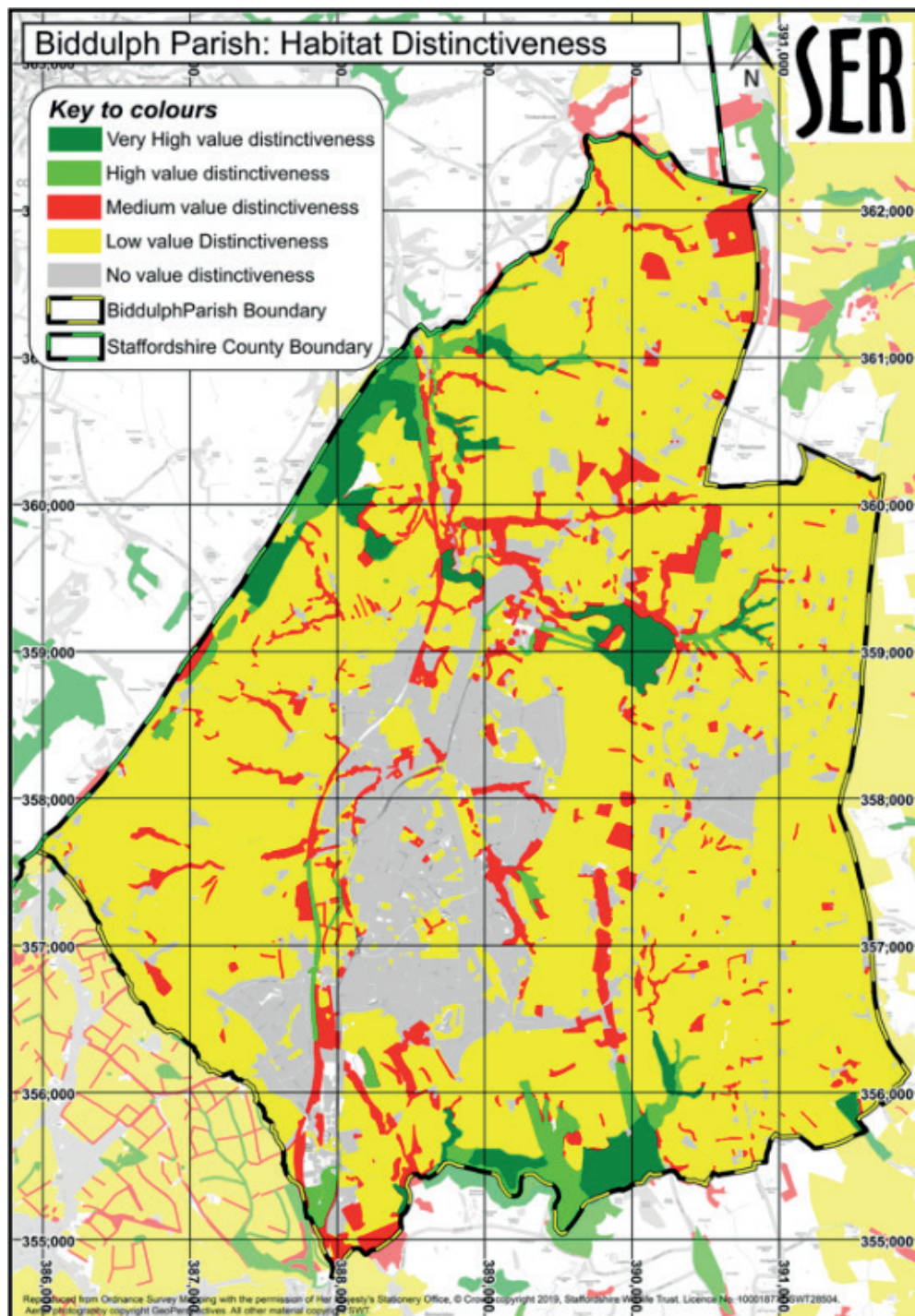
# WILDLIFE CORRIDORS MAP





# HABITAT DISTINCTIVENESS MAP

This Neighbourhood Plan built upon information contained within the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) Green Infrastructure Strategy and brought in external consultants to map ecological networks in more detail. In order to do this effectively, a distinctiveness map was first produced. This provides information on each field within the parish and classifies it in terms of how 'diverse' the field is. 61% of our parish is currently used as improved grassland for agriculture and, apart from the field margins, provides little in terms of biodiversity. This land is classed as low distinctiveness (coloured yellow on the map). The ancient woodlands and country parks are visible as areas coloured green and most of these spaces are designated sites in some form. The red sites are those which show Medium levels of distinctiveness. They are often found alongside streams, in fields which are not maintained for agriculture or along the gritstone edges and indicate that they may contain high levels of biodiversity (mostly unsurveyed). The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group will continue to concentrate our efforts over the coming years on enhancing our knowledge of the 'red' areas on the map with appropriate wildlife surveys.





## HERITAGE

Reference documents "Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Record, Monument Full Report" and a summary document "Monument Full Report Edited" contained in Appendix G.

Biddulph's heritage history is rich and can be traced back to the Bronze Age. Earthworks on Cloud Hill, dating from about 1500BC and a burial ground from that period, known as Bridestones, plus other period of prehistory findings, suggest that Bronze Age Man lived in this area.

The Roman Road from Derby to Stoke-on-Trent probably passed through Biddulph and Moody Street may be of Roman origin. Wares from that imperial period, including pottery, have been found in that vicinity.

After the Romans left, Saxons and Danes arrived, giving life and name to many local places. Late Saxon records not only prove the existence of an established Biddulph community but mention a church destroyed by the Danes in 999AD. The present Church of St Lawrence with its late Norman font complete with circular bowl and ornamentation



Paintings displayed in Biddulph Town Hall, created by local artist Janice Deane.

of interlaced arches may be on that same site.

The place name of Biddulph is also interlaced with a mixture of the Roman and Saxon, being originally Wilfracester.

A Lord of the Manor of Biddulph named Ormis went on a crusade to the Holy Land and is said to have brought back some Saracen prisoners who settled on Biddulph Moor. The reputed dark complexions of some older families in this area is quoted in support of this statement, although there is also a rival story of Colonel Biddulph returning from India in the late 17th century bringing a large company of Indian servants with him. They settled on Biddulph Moor as well.

The Cistercian monk of Abbey Hulton held Biddulph Grange until Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. The Biddulphs stayed loyally catholic, John Biddulph was killed fighting for the King's cause at the Battle of Hopton Heath during the Civil War. Although Biddulph Hall (Biddulph Old Hall) held out against Parliamentary forces for a while, it eventually surrendered to superior gun power and was demolished. John Biddulph's son Francis also fought on the Royalist side, and was captured with the fall of



Chester. After his release, he returned to Rushton, another of the family's houses near Biddulph and engaged an Italian governess called "Singing Kate" on account of her beautiful singing. Unfortunately she brought the plague with her and Francis Biddulph spread it still further whilst riding out in search of a doctor. The victims were buried in pits near Rushton Grange, these are known as "Singing Kate's hole".

Biddulph became a stronghold of Nonconformist feeling, with John Wesley visiting the place a number of times in the early days of his Methodist mission. Biddulph Grange, which had begun its existence as a monastic building was bought in the 19th Century by James Bateman who introduced such exotic features as Chinese and Egyptian gardens, the Wellington Avenue, a yew topiary, box avenue and a picturesque ravine. Latterly it took on a humanitarian aspect when it became an orthopaedic hospital with much of the exotic environment conserved.

Knypersley Hall, reputed to date from the 12th Century, and the mock castle on Mow Cop dating from the 18th Century, have represented various stages in the evolution of Biddulph, which still thrives. The Biddulph Valley (Biddulph Valley Way), where Victoria Colliery was sited is rich in deposits of primary fossil fuel, coal, which since very ancient times has been extensively extracted. Victoria Colliery was near three old collieries, Childerplay, Brown Lees and the Hardmine.

The development of Victoria Colliery owed much to its first owners James Bateman, who acquired the land in 1810 and was then a manufacturer of mine pumping machinery and secondly Robert Heath of Burslem. It was Heath who built up the colliery from 1857 to 1908, the father's work being extended by his son, also named Robert. In the late 19th Century, Heath's joined forces



with Low Moor Iron of Yorkshire and by 1928 had gone into liquidation. The company then became part of a consortium called the Norton and Biddulph Collieries, which kept its name until 1947 when they were nationalised. The coal productivity of Victoria Colliery moved from 90,691 tonnes in 1864 to its peak in 1934 of 322,776 tonnes. The colliery provided the main source of employment from 1860 to 1953. In 1908 it employed some 1,110 men and boys. By 1953 it had a workforce of 1,580 men and boys.

By 1977 the workforce had reduced to 600 men and boys but still had a lasting effect on the economic life of Biddulph. Since the closure of coal mining in the UK during the 1980's engineering continued to be of significance in Biddulph with the establishing of Cowlshaw Walker & Co Ltd. Founded in 1879 by George Cowlshaw, an engineer and Mr Walker with approximately 100 people to manufacture mining machinery such as haulage gear, coal cutters and shaker conveyor driven by compressed air. During the period 1891 to 1935 they made and marketed a Snyers Patent Elastic Clutch or Coupling. Later they designed and patented a Brush Clutch which was manufactured for many years. The plant at Biddulph was considered to be amongst the best equipped for quality engineering having its own extensive machine

shops, fabrication shops and heat treatment ovens. By 1977 the company employed around 400 people and were still modernising and updating their equipment.

Supporting all this industry there were a number of important Toll and Turnpike Roads with all their associated furniture. These included a 2.5 mile toll road linking Biddulph and Congleton. The earliest record of the route as a toll road is 1819, although it has milestone stock of earlier date. The route had two main gates and a fountain built in 1861 at the side of the main road through Biddulph. The fountain was designed for use by travellers along the route. The fountain is set on a rough-faced sandstone wall between two pillars, with a drinking trough for horses set into the wall to the south. There is also a listed early 19th century stone drinking trough on the Tunstall to Bosley turnpike road, to the east of Shepherds Cross, Biddulph.

Biddulph had many mills going back to the 1700s. These included corn, silk, cotton and fustian mills. The water provided by the leat in Biddulph Grange Country Park was used to power 3 mills and 1 forge from the 1700's onwards. Almost immediately after the leat exits the Country Park was the site of the first mill, Stonier's Mill. Records show that this mill was in existence in January 1813 and was mainly used for cotton spinning. It contained 1,248 throstle spindles which were turned by a powerful waterwheel. From here the leat courses through farmland running parallel to Hurst Road until it reaches Hurst Mill, now known as The Mill Cottage. Here it runs into the mill pool which is still in existence. It is thought that this mill dates back to the same period as Stanier's Mill since their water supply arrangements are interdependent. In 1840 this mill was listed as a silk mill. The mill was turned by a waterwheel with power sufficient to turn 250 dozen spindles. Water currently still exits the mill pool at Mill Cottage and continues its original course into the Mill House pool, originally constructed to serve Biddulph Corn Mill. This mill was turned by a waterwheel 10ft in diameter and 2ft 6in wide. It powered up to two pairs of millstones and corn was still being milled there in the early 20th century. The watercourse then leaves the mill pool via a weir and continues its journey through a woodland area, The Clough.

The confluence of the stream from the mill pool and Biddulph Brook is the site of Lea Forge. Although it is indicated that in 1597 Lea Forge was a bloomsmithy (forge), records show that in 1786 it was converted into a flint mill. In the early 1800's it was then converted back to a forge, mainly run as a scrap iron, spade and shovel factory. Then, in 1917 a manufacturing business from Manchester relocated to the forge concentrating solely on the development of Prussian blue for the colour business.



*The Corn Mill, only foundation stones remain*

There were a number of fustian mills in Biddulph, the largest being Albion Mill on Station Road, which opened in the late 19th century. This was run by Frayling Ltd. until the late 1990s. The mill has a plaque dated 1884 on the frontage to Station Road. In 1916 the mill was operated by the United Velvet Cutters' Association. The building has three floors and is about 50ft wide and 200ft long to accommodate the cutting frames. The bottom storey at the front of the building has been replaced in newer brick, while the upper storeys and the sides appear to retain their original brickwork. The longest fustian mill in the district was Reliance Mill, Walley Street. This was one of a group of mills built just prior to the First World War and was used by the army during the Second World War.

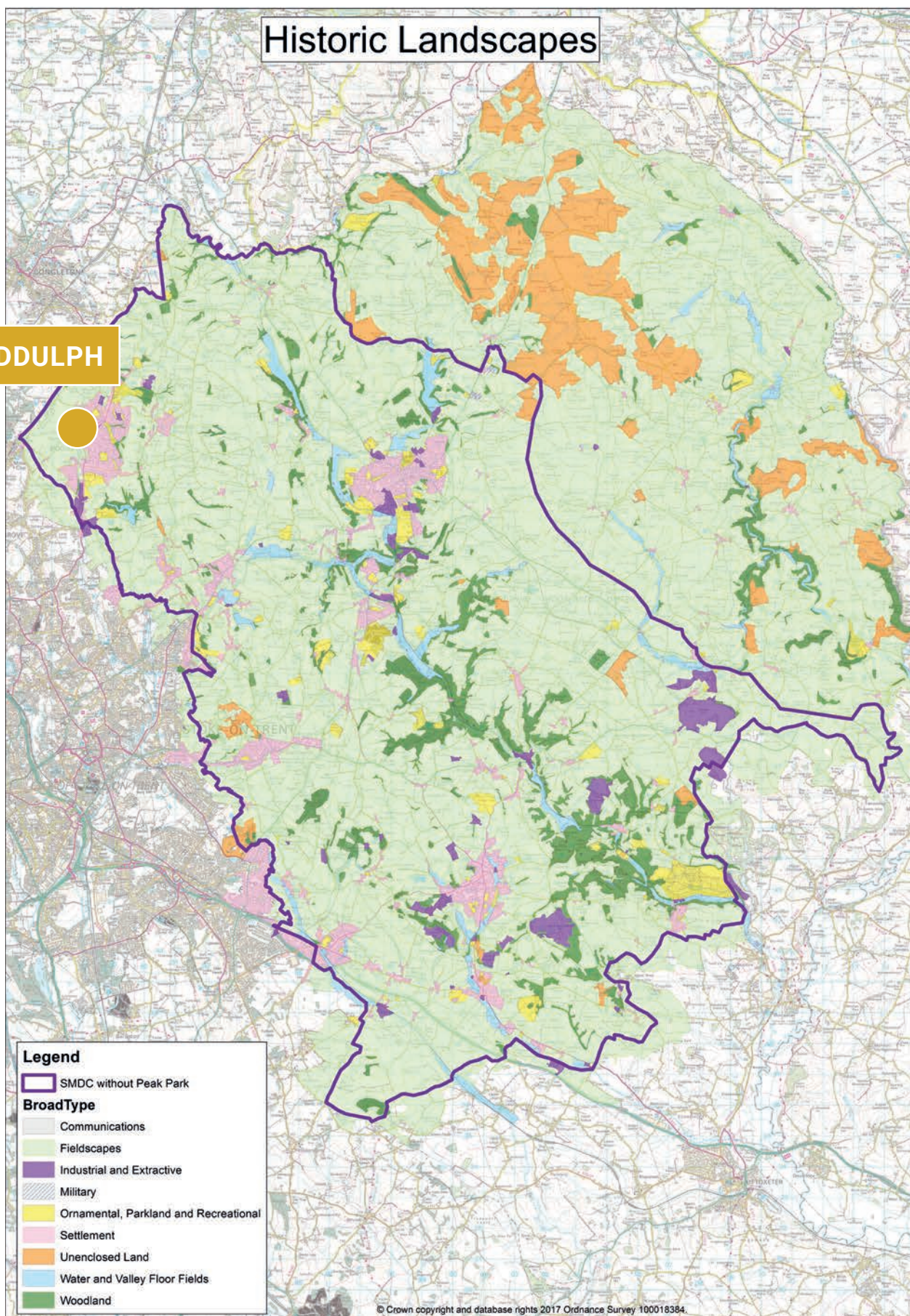
A major employer in the town during the 20th century was Selectus. Selectus Limited was engaged in the manufacture of ribbons, other narrow fabrics and in more recent times, Velcro touch and close fasteners. Registered in October 1929, it was located in Borough High Street, London and was initially involved in manufacturing bias binding, though its associates, Senn & Co LTD were established in Switzerland in 1725. The first Biddulph factory for Selectus was built in 1935. Velcro, a novel nylon fastener was invented in Switzerland in the 1950's and patented throughout the world. In 1956 Selectus Ltd. acquired the sole licence for the UK and Eire. Selectus was one of the biggest employers in Biddulph and extended its factory to accommodate its increasing operations five times. When Selectus moved their workings to China in June 2007, they were the last remnants of the former industrial glory of Biddulph.



## SUMMARY OF THE CATEGORIES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORDS:

<b>BUILDINGS</b>	
Grade I Registered	1
Grade II Registered	2
Listed	6
Others	12
<b>COLLIERIES</b>	
Buildings	2
Mines	14
Shafts	8
Railway lines	2
<b>ENGINEERING FACILITIES</b>	
Iron	1
Glass	1
<b>FARMS</b>	
Buildings	25
Crop marks	2
<b>COUNTRY PARKS</b>	
Grade I Registered	1
Other	2
<b>ROADS</b>	
Turnpike / Toll Roads	2
Listed Road Furniture	2
Other Road Furniture	3
<b>MILLS</b>	
Fustian	2
Silk	1
Corn	1
Ribbon	1
<b>MINERALS</b>	
Quarries	18
Sandpits	6
<b>CHAPEL / CHURCH BUILDINGS</b>	
Listed	3
Other	4
<b>OLD TUNNELS / BRIDGES</b>	
	5

# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC NETWORK FOR STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS MAY 2018

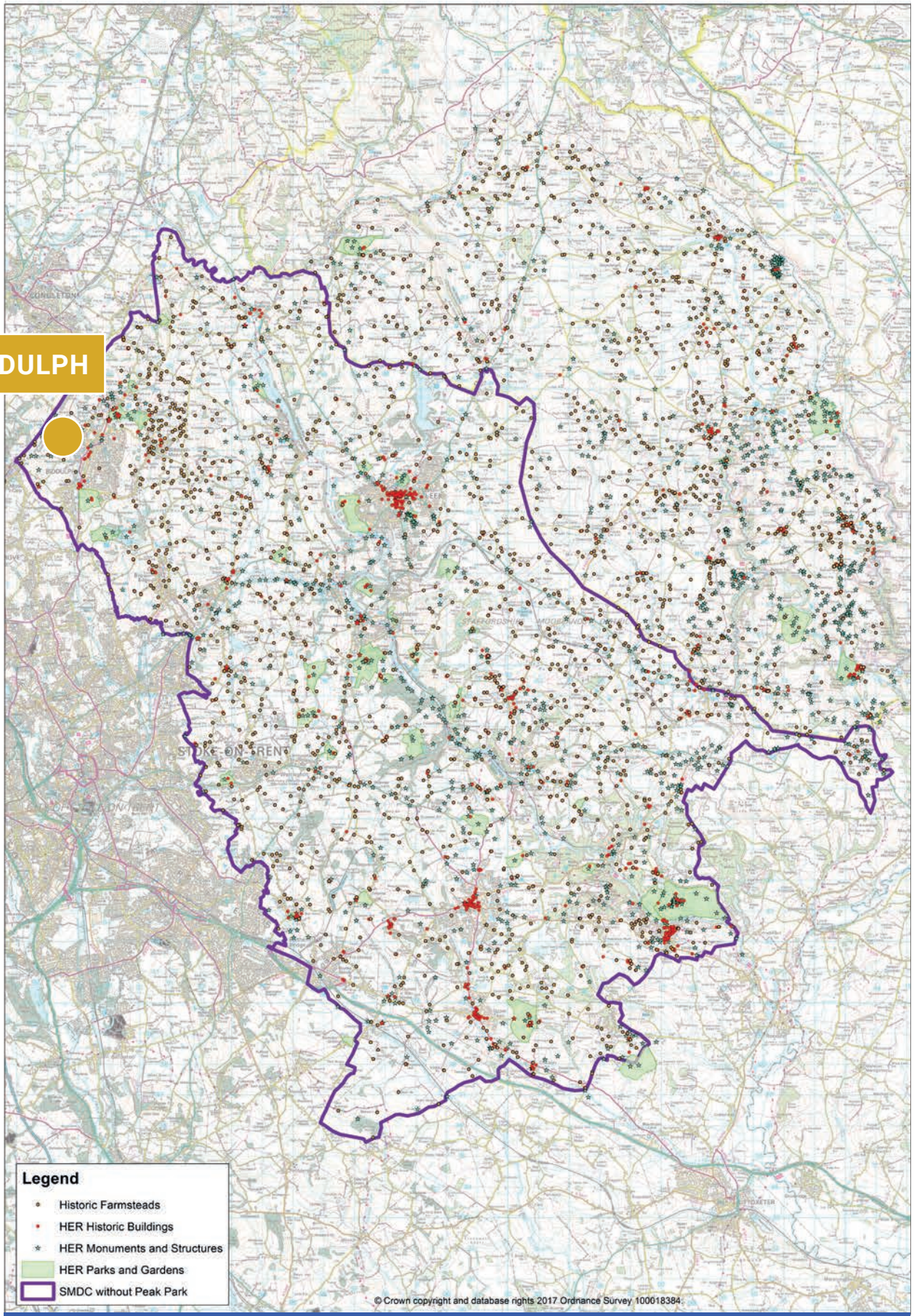


Map A.7 Historic Landscapes



# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC NETWORK FOR STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS MAY 2018

**BIDDULPH**



Map A.7 Historic Landscapes



# Part 3

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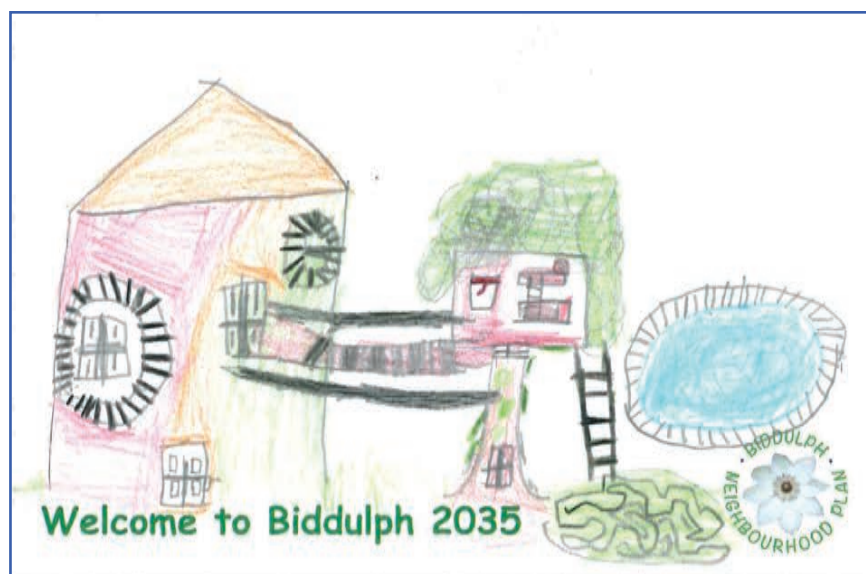
## COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

From the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan development, the Working Group was clear that consultation must be transparent, inclusive, well organised and accessible. The Group must be prepared to answer questions and to genuinely listen to the views of the community. A range of methods of consultation and information sharing were used throughout the development process, including:

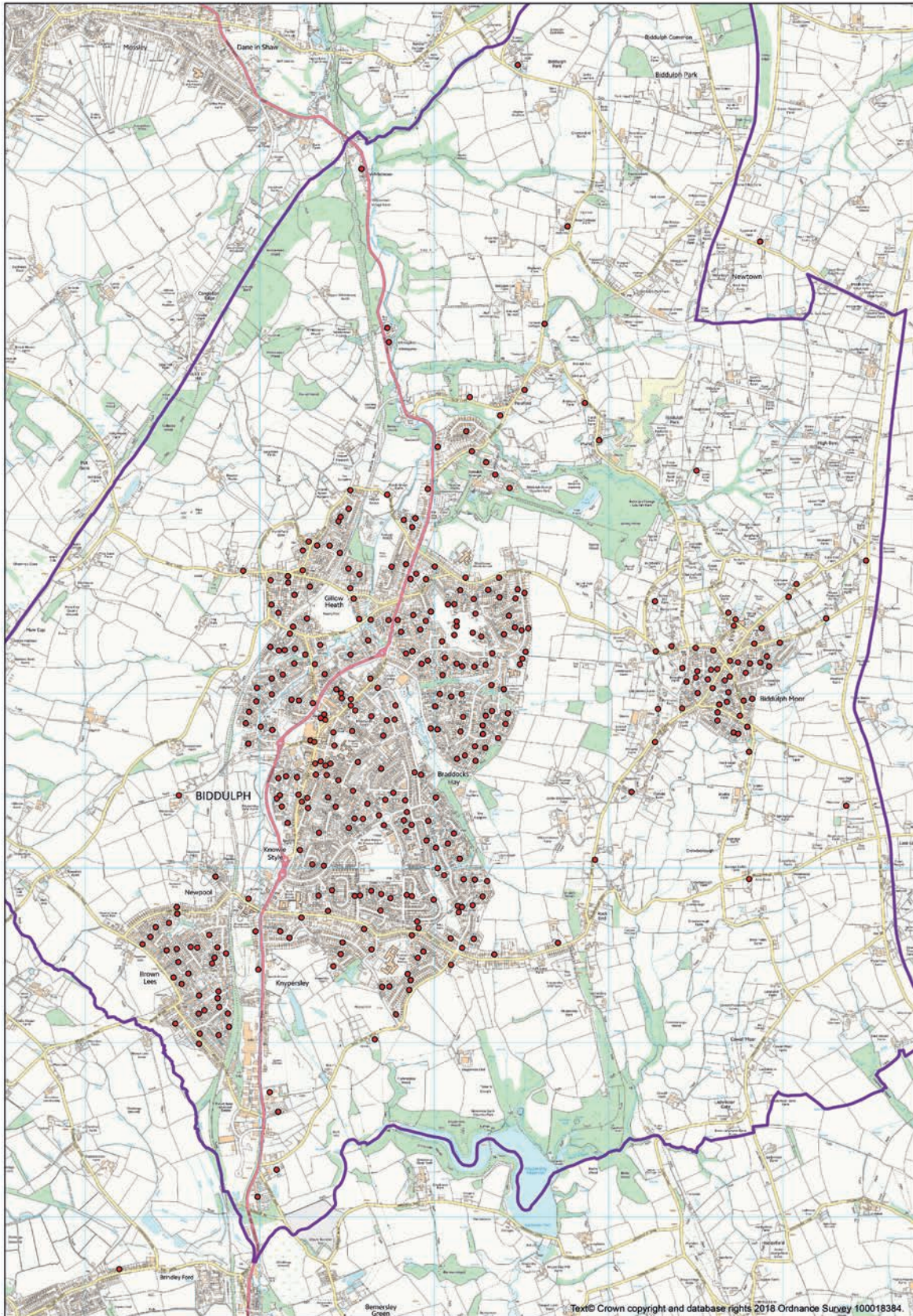
- A Facebook page dedicated to the Neighbourhood Plan, 'MyBiddulph' with boosted posts;
- Articles and advertisements in the Biddulph Chronicle, Biddulph Times and Sentinel newspapers;
- Information included on [www.biddulph.co.uk](http://www.biddulph.co.uk) ;
- Information shared on local radio, with interviews featuring members of the Working Group.
- Information shared at Biddulph Town Council meetings;
- Members of the Working Group held consultation events and attended residents' groups/ forums;
- Posters were displayed in prominent places around the town;
- The School Learners' Forum were engaged in planning and consultation activities;
- A householder survey was delivered to 7,500 homes within the town, with an additional 1,500 surveys available in alternative locations, including Biddulph Library. This was also available online via Survey Monkey;
- Regular contact was made with the Local Planning Authority and support provided, as appropriate;
- Working Group members asked visitors to the Biddulph Grange Gardens to answer an accommodation survey;
- A play survey was complete by 420 young people across eight schools;
- A 'Biddulph 2035' postcard competition took place for school children to contribute towards the vision for the Plan;
- There were stalls at local events, such as the Biddulph Festival Launch Parade.

This Plan has been developed from the views of local people; their engagement has informed every stage of the development of the vision and the policies.

The Householder Questionnaire distributed in November 2017, resulted in over 1200 responses (there were 8500 households at the time of the 2011 census), representing the collective views of homes within the town. Analysis of postcode data suggested that responses represented all five wards, with each dot on the map below accounting for a different postcode.



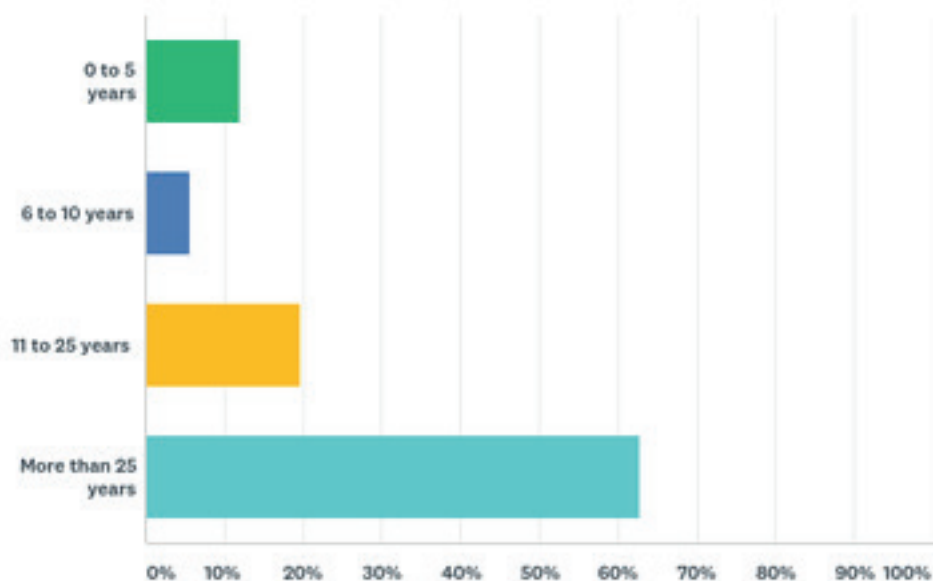




The vast majority of respondents that answered the Householder Questionnaire were long-term residents of the town, which supported the Working Group's view that Biddulph is a town that people choose to move into (or not move out of) to raise families or to settle in later life:



## Q4 How long have you lived in the town?



The strongest theme running through the questionnaire analysis is the importance of the rural positioning of the town and the green spaces that surround it and are within it. Consequently, the protection of these areas is one of the most important concepts within this document.

Q5. What are the things that you like about living in the Neighbourhood Plan area?							
Answer Choices	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not applicable	Total
The rural surroundings	1009	174	19	1	1	0	1204
The people/ community	507	484	174	9	1	3	1178
Historic character	415	464	245	25	8	5	1162
Town Centre	197	359	363	162	68	5	1154
Ease of commute	230	354	287	98	56	136	1161

And also,

Q27. Below is a list of different natural features. Please tell us how important these are to you.						
Answer Choices	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not important at all	Total
Our surrounding landscape and views (the Green Belt)	1064	105	16	2	1	1188
Our streams, rivers, lakes and ponds	968	196	21	1	1	1187
Our woodlands and large, mature/veteran trees	988	176	16	3	2	1185
The wildlife in our valley	970	190	22	3	1	1186
Our unusual geological features (e.g. rock formations)	780	275	105	19	3	1182

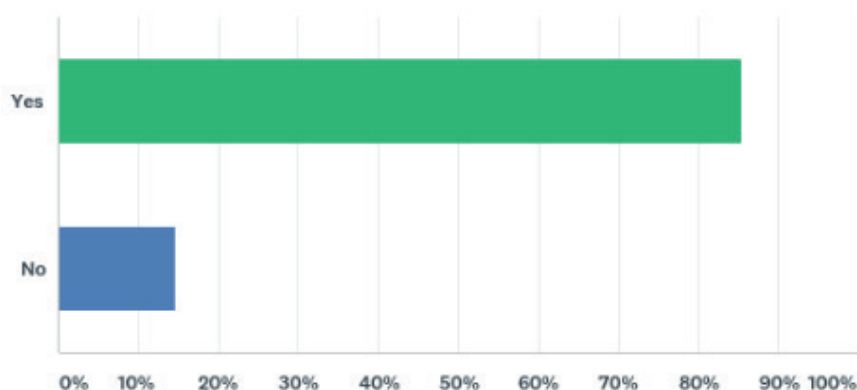


The Working Group noted the importance of Town Centre regeneration as part of the Householder Questionnaire, which prompted the decision to investigate the feasibility of a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). This NDO complements the Neighbourhood Plan and builds on the town centre data that emerged as part of the various consultation exercises that were completed.

Q9. Please tell us how important you think the following are:						
Answer Choices	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not important	Not important at all	Total
Variety of shops (chains and independents)	834	323	36	6	3	1202
Pubs, restaurants, cafes	384	566	193	43	12	1198
Monthly market in the High Street	262	429	342	98	63	1194
Weekly fresh food stalls in the High Street	299	421	330	102	43	1195
Improving the look of High Street premises	686	378	107	23	4	1198
Mixed business and residential developments	278	450	320	88	41	1177
Promote home working with high speed broadband	379	332	316	84	44	1155
Off-street parking	557	465	119	17	13	1171
Maintain local centres (e.g. shops and pubs outside the main town centre)	450	493	182	41	20	1186
Establishing a Biddulph Museum	165	320	438	176	93	1192
Having an event space outside the Town Hall	187	420	404	121	53	1185

The Householder Questionnaire also highlighted the importance of Local Green Space Designations to residents of the town. A number of additional sites (not previously included within the draft Local Plan) were highlighted during this and other consultations, and further Local Green Space sites are included within this document.

### Q31 Are Local Green Space designations important to you?



Throughout the formal consultation stages, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group continued to provide a wide range of opportunities for the community to feedback on the emerging Plan. The Group felt strongly that this would make the Plan robust and truly representative of the views of the community.

# Part 4

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# LOCAL GREEN SPACE DESIGNATION

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

*Paragraph 90 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 states:*

*'The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them'.*

*Biddulph is rural in character and known as the 'Garden Town of Staffordshire' with many green spaces throughout the neighbourhood area. Some of these have significant community value.*

*The criteria for designating Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans is set out in Paragraph 100 of the NPPF 2019:*

- 'a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land'.*





## DESIGNATIONS

The following spaces are designated by the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan as Local Green Space:

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Humber Drive Community Space        | 42 Green space Kingsfield Crescent      |
| 2 The Clough                          | 43 Lawton Crescent                      |
| 4 Greenway Moor Gateway to the Town   | 44 Land Opp Lawton Crescent             |
| 5 Biddulph Bowling Club               | 45 Hawthorn Grove Play Area             |
| 6 Fold Lane Gateway to the Town       | 46 Queens Drive Green                   |
| 7 Well Street allotment               | 47 Church Road roundabout               |
| 8 Hurst Road verge                    | 48 Highfield Place Green Space          |
| 9 VOS 16 Thames Drive Woodland        | 50 Land at end of Healey Avenue         |
| 10 Woodhouse Lane wooded area         | 51 Farnworth Close                      |
| 13 Congleton Road Gateway to the Town | 52 Corner of Craigside                  |
| 14 Ringwork Castle                    | 53 VOS 11 Gillow Heath Rec Ground       |
| 15 Biddulph Grange Country Park       | 54 VOS 13 Dorset Drive West             |
| 16 Biddulph Valley Way                | 55 VOS 14 Dorset Drive East             |
| 17 Eiger Close                        | 56 Halls Road                           |
| 18 Uplands Play Area                  | 57 Gillow Fold Field                    |
| 19 Geneva Way Green Space             | 59 Millennium Gardens                   |
| 20 Behind Oxhey Drive                 | 60 Gillow Heath Station                 |
| 21 Corner of The Uplands              | 61 Paddock Play area                    |
| 22 Torville Drive                     | 62 Craigside Green Areas                |
| 23 Knypersley Cricket Club            | 63 East of Newpool                      |
| 24 Knypersley Sports Ground           | 64 Brown Lees Fun Park                  |
| 25 Knypersley Green Space             | 65 Trent Head Well                      |
| 26 Knypersley Bowling Club            | 66 Hot Scotch Park                      |
| 27 Knypersley Fishing Pool            | 68 Land adj to New Road Meth Church     |
| 28 Green on Conway Road               | 69 Village Green                        |
| 29 Mill Hayes Sports Ground           | 70 Fields Behind Talbot car park        |
| 30 Butterfly Garden                   | 72 Land behind bungalow off Grange Road |
| 31 Mill Hayes Grass Verge             | 74 Pine Trees Congleton Road            |
| 32 Greenway Bank                      | 75 Coracle Grove                        |
| 33 Mill Hayes Fishing Pool            | 76 Brown Lees Village Green             |
| 34 Top Springfield Road               | 77 Brook Street Green Areas             |
| 35 Park Lane Allotments               | 79 Orme Road Grass Verge                |
| 36 Moorland Road Allotment            | 80 Grange Road corner                   |
| 37 Section B VOS 20 St Davids Way     | 85 Gas Works Site                       |
| 38 Shepherd Street Slater Street      | 86 Cherry Tree Lane                     |
| 39 VOS 17 Leisure Centre              | 87 Hazel Grove Green Space              |
| 40 VOS 18 Braddocks Hay               | 88 Stoneyfields Green Space             |
| 41 VOS 19 Church Road playing fields  |   |

Each Local Green Space Designation, including maps and descriptions, can be found in Appendix H demonstrating how each site meets the NPPF criteria.

Two periods of consultation enabled residents, users and landowners the opportunity to comment fully on the proposed sites.

Please note, areas of Biddulph Valley Way are included to strengthen Policy NE4. The entirety of the route is not included as a Local Green Space.

Following further feedback during the Regulation 14 consultation period, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group reconsidered all 75 of the sites above and added or removed information as appropriate, taking into account additional feedback from those that responded. The numbering above relates to the number that was allocated to the site at the start of the consultation process.

# DRAFT POLICIES

## POLICY CONTEXT

Neighbourhood Plans must meet certain “basic conditions”. These will be tested through the independent examination and will be checked by the local planning authority before the plan is able to proceed to the referendum.

The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are that:

- They must have appropriate regard to national policy;
- They must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- They must be in general conformity with strategic local policy; and
- They must be compatible with EU obligations.

In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must be compatible with human rights legislation.

## NATIONAL POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 requires Neighbourhood Plans to set out a positive vision for the future of the local area and planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications. This Neighbourhood Plan has been written having regard to national planning policy and guidance.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development of which this Neighbourhood Plan seeks to positively address:

- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

*These themes are reflected in the following policies, acknowledging the point raised in Paragraph 9 of the NPPF which states that:*

*“These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”*



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

One of the basic conditions for a Neighbourhood Plan is to help achieve sustainable development. A key principle of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined clearly in paragraph 11. This means planning positively identifying opportunities to meet the development needs of the neighbourhood area. Sustainability has social, economic and environmental dimensions, and through the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan we seek to ensure the viability and sustainability of our diverse rural market town.

Growth across the Neighbourhood Area of Biddulph, should not be to the detriment or loss of Green Belt and will be concentrated around the potential development of strategic sites and, appropriate infill. The Neighbourhood Plan strongly promotes the re-use of existing buildings, particularly those in Biddulph Town Centre. This will be augmented by the usual smaller-scale incremental development that is typical of rural market towns.

The NPPF, Paragraph 13 states that in pursuing sustainable development, neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies within the adopted Local Plan. Through the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan we aim to achieve these, ensuring growth is sustainable through policies on:

- Local Heritage, Culture and Tourism;
- Local Economy;
- Infrastructure;
- Community Facilities;
- Natural Environment;
- Housing; and
- Design.

## LOCAL STRATEGIC POLICY

The adopted Local Plan is the Core Strategy Development Plan, Staffordshire Moorlands, adopted in March 2014. The emerging Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Local Plan Document 2016-2031, went to consultation in Spring 2018 and is due to be examined in Spring 2020.

Whilst the basic conditions relate to adopted strategic local policies, we have also taken account of the emerging Staffordshire Moorlands District Local Plan 2016-2031.

The evidence base behind the emerging Local Plan has informed the Neighbourhood Plan. This includes:

- Core Strategy Development Plan, Staffordshire Moorlands, Adopted March 2014;
- Emerging Local Plan 2016-2031, Staffordshire Moorlands;
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, January 2016;
- Strategic Green Infrastructure Network, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, June 2017.

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has worked in close liaison with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council throughout the preparation of the plan to reduce the risk of disparities between the emerging Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

## EU OBLIGATIONS

This Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations and has included an Equalities Impact Assessment within its Basic Conditions Statement. The policies within this plan have been prepared with due care and consideration to ensure they are compatible with EU obligations and the Neighbourhood Plan has been screened by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for SEA. The screening response confirmed:

*“This determination statement is intended to demonstrate that the Biddulph Neighbourhood Development Plan is compatible with certain European Union obligations as required by the basic conditions, namely:*

- *Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment; and*
- *Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).*

*This statement sets out the reasons for the determination that the draft Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to lead to significant environmental effects and therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.*

*In addition, this statement determines that the making of the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have an adverse effect on any European site, both alone and in combination with other plans and projects, and therefore further Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required.*

*Biddulph Town Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council will publish this determination statement in accordance with the regulatory requirements.”*

## POLICIES FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

The policies in the Biddulph Neighbourhood Plan are based on evidence gathered from official statistics and existing publications and reports commissioned for the Plan. Key evidence is listed in the Schedule of Evidence at the end of this plan.

In addition, local surveys, views, comments and ideas expressed by the local community have been taken into account. The consultation process and the responses received from the local community and key stakeholders are summarised in Section 3.

The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver the aspirations and needs of the local community, within the framework of meeting the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The policies are structured as follows:

1. Aims;
2. Rationale/evidence;
3. Policy; and
4. Interpretation.



## POLICY: LOCAL HERITAGE, CULTURE AND TOURISM

Biddulph's tourism is built upon its heritage, culture and natural landscape. The area is host to buildings of national and local significance. However, the distribution of these, their capacity and target audience are varied. As such, the neighbourhood plan through its policies seeks to ensure a robust strategy to protecting, enhancing, supporting and celebrating these assets as a growing leisure and tourism offer.

There are a number of statutory listed buildings and the Biddulph Grange Conservation Area within the neighbourhood area. These assets are connected by footpaths and multi-user routes that help to promote healthy lifestyles, whilst providing access to the Town Centre and wider countryside. Information is provided in the introduction which provides greater detail on the heritage, culture and tourism of Biddulph.

Supporting the Town Centre, heritage assets, viability and vitality of the town is key. The NPPF states in paragraph 85 that planning policies should:

*"promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;"*

The adopted Core Strategy, March 2014 identifies a number of Spatial objectives that support these aims of the Neighbourhood Plan. These include:

"S05. To ensure the long-term vitality and viability of the three market towns of Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle.

S07. To support and enhance the tourism, cultural, recreation and leisure opportunities for the District's residents and visitors.

S08. To promote local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of historic, environmental and cultural assets throughout the District.

S09. To conserve and improve the character and distinctiveness of the countryside and its landscape, heritage, biodiversity and geological resources."

(Pg 44,45, Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy, March 2014)

These Spatial objectives are further supported by the evidence of tourism offer and need in Biddulph by Destination Staffordshire which identified a number of key priorities for the County to support the tourism economy. Two key priorities for the Neighbourhood Area are:

"2. Attract more staying visitors via improving the quality and range of accommodation stock – in order to extend visitor stays and increase visitor spend... 3. Continue to develop, strengthen and promote business tourism and demonstrate its importance and value."

(pg 17, Destination Staffordshire Tourism Review, Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018, April 2015)

The action plan also identified that the number of bed spaces provided in Staffordshire and the City of Stoke-on-Trent (at just c.16,500 bed spaces, compared to 39,000 in Derbyshire) was insufficient and is holding back visitor economy growth in the area.

Non-planning recommendations are included later in this document.



## **HCT 1: ENTERPRISE AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

Within the rural area of the parish, business, enterprise and tourism uses to diversify the rural economy will be supported subject to:

- there being no significant adverse impact on the amenities of
- nearby residential properties;
- the rural landscape; and
- surrounding businesses and uses, including agriculture.

## **INTERPRETATION**

Significant impacts could include noise, vibration, dust, and traffic movements. This is an enabling policy that enables suitable business and enterprise in the rural area.



## POLICY: LOCAL ECONOMY

Biddulph is one of the three key towns in Staffordshire Moorlands, the 'gateway' town to Cheshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The town includes a range of businesses from light industrial to retail, commercial and service sector. Its connectivity to the M6, Cheshire, the Staffordshire Moorlands and city region of Stoke-on-Trent contribute to the diversity of industry.

Community engagement highlighted the aspiration to maintain and support the Town Centre, including promoting the re-use of vacant units and buildings, promoting the re-use of heritage assets and ensuring the suitable future and diversity of this rural garden town. These aims are also echoed in the NPPF which states in paragraph 118 that policies should:

*"promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively."*

The adopted Core Strategy, March 2014 states in the vision that:

*"Our market towns of Leek, Cheadle and Biddulph will remain the focus of the Moorlands. They will be distinctive and unique in terms of their character and the quality and range of shops, services and facilities they provide for both residents and visitors. Their town centres will be welcoming, safe and appealing and will retain their significant historic heritage and distinctiveness which makes them special places, as well as being prosperous and vibrant, catering for the needs of both the town and its hinterland."*

(Pg 41, Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy, March 2014)

Further community engagement highlighted concerns over vacant mills and the opportunity for the Neighbourhood Plan to support their re-development and re-use contributing to the vibrancy of the town centre. These aspirations are shared in the emerging Local Plan, and as such the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are augmented by these policies.

### LE 1: BIDDULPH TOWN CENTRE

**Within the defined town centre (see Appendix I, which is the same area as the emerging Local Plan), in addition to retail development, sustainable new uses to diversify the local offer will be encouraged. This includes:**

- **Business and enterprise space, including co-working space;**
- **Tourism-related uses;**
- **Cultural and entertainment uses such as performance venues; and**
- **Food and drink uses.**

**Residential uses will be considered for upper floors. Ground floor units would not be suitable for residential uses.**

### INTERPRETATION

The policy enables diversification and growth of the town centre and recognises the importance of complementary uses. Some examples of tourism related uses may include holiday accommodation and cycle hire for example at the Biddulph Valley Way.

## **LE 2: ALBION MILL CONVERSION**

**Within the defined area (see Appendix J) the following mixed uses will be supported:**

- **Residential development (above ground floor only);**
- **Business and enterprise space, including co-working space;**
- **Tourism-related uses;**
- **Cultural and entertainment uses such as performance venues;**
- **Limited tourism-related retail as part of a wider mix of uses.**

**This is subject to there being no significant adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

## **INTERPRETATION**

This policy should be applied with policy DSB2 Biddulph Mills in the emerging local plan.





## POLICY: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Neighbourhood Area has a number of community facilities and services (defined as land and buildings which benefit local communities) including Biddulph Town Hall, churches, playing fields, leisure centre and children's playground. The Neighbourhood Area also has a variety of other community facilities and services including primary and secondary schools, shops, post office, GP surgery's and public houses, spread across the neighbourhood area.

The community facilities and services are mostly concentrated in the town centre and are valued both by the wider community and by those in their immediate vicinity. These facilities and services are considered fundamental to maintaining a good quality of life within the neighbourhood area and ensuring that its current level of sustainability is not diminished. It should also be noted that within the wider area there are very limited facilities and services available.

The intention of the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that such facilities and services are safeguarded, enhanced or increased in the future development of the neighbourhood area.

As part of the aspiration to promote healthier lifestyles and well-being within the community the NPPF states in paragraph 91, C that planning policy should:

*“enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”*

Paragraph 92, also identifies that:

“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community;
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”

Considering the needs of the current and future generations of the community through consultation and survey evidence gathered, the following community facilities were identified, which local people think are needed in the neighbourhood area to complement the existing and address future need:

- more outdoor formal spaces such as a sensory garden;
- better use of the NHS building;
- more variety and choice in Biddulph Town's shopping area;
- re-use of the Town Hall and outdoor event space;
- provision of activities and facilities for older people;
- provision of teenager facilities; and
- improved offer in food and restaurants.

## CF 1: NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES

New community facilities will be supported, particularly those that meet an identified need providing there is no significant adverse impact on:

- the amenities of any nearby residential properties;
- road capacity and safety;
- the local environment.

## INTERPRETATION

This is an enabling policy for new community facilities. Such facilities could include medical and other community uses and would be unlikely to include food and retail. The policy seeks to encourage new facilities, particularly those that meet an identified need such as activities and facilities for the elderly.

## CF 2: EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Development proposals that affect existing community facilities in the neighbourhood area will be supported, providing they do not have any significant adverse impact on the community value of the facility. These facilities are:

- Biddulph Town Hall;
- Biddulph Healthcare Centre;
- Biddulph Methodist Church;
- Church Halls;
- Biddulph Youth and Community Zone;
- Knypersley Cricket Club and Sports Club;
- Biddulph Moor Village Hall;
- Biddulph Grange Country Park Visitor Centre;
- Biddulph Valley Leisure Centre;
- Lund House, Well Street;
- Biddulph Library;
- Recreation Ground Changing Facilities;
- Wharf Road 'Mission';
- Wharf Road bus hub;
- Lawton Street Air Training Corps facility;
- Bowling Club community spaces;
- Biddulph Fire Station;
- Sainsbury's Community Room.

Appendix K shows the location of these facilities.

An exception to this is if a similar quality or better facility is provided nearby.

## INTERPRETATION

This is an enabling policy and to ensure that the range of community facilities in the area remains undiminished.

## POLICY: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Biddulph is known as the 'Garden Town of Staffordshire'. This statement acknowledges not only significant heritage assets such as Biddulph Grange and Gardens of national interest and importance but also how the entire neighbourhood area is set within the natural landscape. Predominantly nestled within the valley the main town of Biddulph is characterized by its relationship with the natural environment. Within the wider neighbourhood area smaller settlements are set within the moorlands setting occupying higher ground with panoramic views of the Cheshire Plain and towards the Peak District National Park.

Throughout the community engagement, one of the key characteristics of the neighbourhood area is that people feel 'connected' to the rural landscape and from most parts of the town and settlements enjoy views into the open countryside. This desire to maintain and support the natural environment also identified opportunities to enhance the wildlife diversity and support natural habitats and assets. Through the policies in this plan we seek to achieve these aspirations.

The area is described in Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 64 Profile: Potteries and Churnet Valley as:

"In the east, the landform rises to meet the limestone uplands of the Peak District affording panoramic vistas of a transitional landscape from lowland to upland. In the north, the land rises to the Staffordshire Moorlands, with prominent ridges of Millstone Grit at Mow Cop and Congleton Edge forming a watershed between the River Trent and the River Mersey catchments. These ridges afford unrestricted views westwards across the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA."

(Pg5, National Character Area (NCA): 64 Profile: Potteries and Churnet Valley, 2015)

The NCA also identifies that the neighbourhood area forms one of the five key assets that provide tranquillity, noting in particular Biddulph Moor and the interlocking network of green spaces. In terms of climate regulation, it also notes that Biddulph Moor and around Mow Cop (outside of the neighbourhood area) the carbon-rich peat soils are an important asset, with heathland occurring on the Millstone Grit outcrops, which are free draining mineral soils and seasonally waterlogged. Combined with the pressures of regular flooding events due to significant infrastructure issues on watercourse and water management, the natural environment can play a role in reducing these impacts. As such these assets should be protected and enhanced through the policies of this plan.

Other significant natural assets within the neighbourhood area include the two country parks of Biddulph Grange Country Park and Greenway Bank Country Park, green links including the Biddulph Valley Way and an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways. There are also natural landscape features and assets that are designated.

These important features were mapped within the neighbourhood area to inform the policies of this plan. Furthermore, through the evidence gathered, this can be used to fill the gaps in existing strategic documents that have not recorded the area in detail.

The NPPF also supports the conservation and enhancement of the national environment setting out in paragraph 170 that: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it;
- d) minimising impacts and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;



- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air quality; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”

## **NE 1: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FEATURES**

**New development must preserve or enhance and not harm or degrade the special rural character and ecological and environmental features of the area, including:**

- **Wildlife areas including designated Local Wildlife Sites (see Map – Nature Conservation Sites);**
- **Wildlife corridors / networks, watercourses, ponds and lakes (see Map – Wildlife Corridors / Networks map);**
- **Priority habitats (see Map – Habitat Distinctiveness map);**
- **Other natural habitats (see Map - Habitat Map);**
- **Location of reported Protected Species (see Map – Protected species within Biddulph Parish);**
- **Opportunities to enhance existing or create new habitat links as detailed within the Nature Recovery Network Map (see Map – Nature Recovery Network);**
- **Veteran trees;**
- **Mature trees and hedgerows;**
- **Former mineral extraction sites that have been fully worked and are becoming a natural habitat or have an ecological value or importance.**
- **Complement landscape character**

**These maps are included within the introductory section and appendices. High resolution documents are available online and when applying the policy, reference should be made to these maps.**

## **INTERPRETATION**

The policy includes a general requirement to consider impacts on the natural environment and also highlights elements of the natural environment that are particularly sensitive.

## **NE 2: URBAN EDGE**

**New development on the edge of the Biddulph Town and rural settlements must incorporate sensitively designed boundary treatments and landscaping to create an appropriate transition to the rural environment.**

## **INTERPRETATION**

This policy requires sensitive boundary treatments to create a ‘soft’ transition, such as hedges and planting. Hard boundary treatments, such as concrete and timber close boarded fencing, would not be appropriate.

### **NE 3: LOCAL GREEN SPACE**

**Local Green Spaces must remain as open space and their community value must be maintained or enhanced. Built development must not encroach onto Local Green Spaces. An exception to this may be for small-scale built development, subject to the following:**

- **it is directly related to the community use and/or management of the space;**
- **it does not compromise the open character of the space.**

### **INTERPRETATION**

By protecting community value and open character, the policy precludes most development in Local Green Spaces. A possible exception may be very small-scale development that directly supports the community value of the space, without compromising its open character. The policy also requires impacts on Local Green Space to be considered for adjacent or nearby development proposals. Such impacts could include noise, visual impact, access or blocking of sunlight.

### **NE 4: BIDDULPH VALLEY WAY**

**Development proposals must have no significant adverse impact on the Biddulph Valley Way and its environs and must take opportunities to enhance the route. This includes:**

- **not encroaching into the route;**
- **providing a positive setting in terms of boundary treatments and allowing natural surveillance.**

### **INTERPRETATION**

Development should not turn its back on the Biddulph Valley Way, for example by flanking them with hedges or fencing. It is essential that open surveillance be maintained. It is highly desirable for new development to provide links to existing pedestrian, cycle and bridle routes (see Design Policy DES 2).

## NE 5: PROTECTION OF VIEWS OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE

This policy aims to preserve or enhance significant local views of important buildings, townscape, and skylines within the built and natural environment of Biddulph Town Centre.

The following views and vistas (see below) have been identified as being locally important, visible from the town centre:

1. From the Inner Relief Road towards Mow Cop;
2. From the Inner Relief Road north towards Biddulph Town Centre;
3. Well Street towards Mow Cop;
4. John Street towards the north;
5. Wharf Road towards Mow Cop;
6. Wharf Road roundabout towards Mow Cop;
7. Station Road towards the north;
8. War memorial towards the north;
9. South View towards the west;
10. Between 66 and 68 High Street (currently Wetherspoons and B&M).

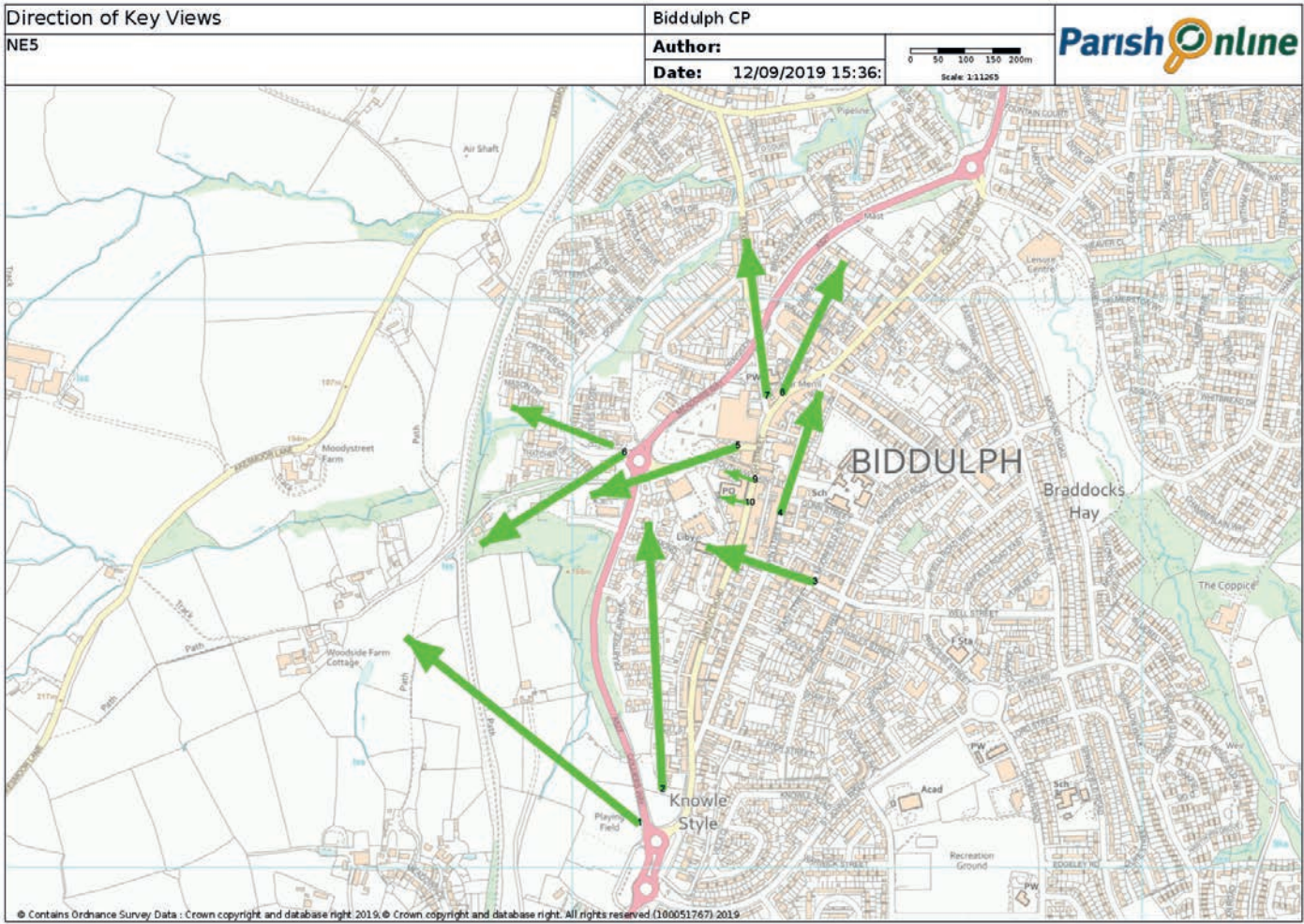
The Design and Access Statement that supports planning applications for developments that may affect these views and vistas must demonstrate how the proposal would preserve or enhance them.

## INTERPRETATION

This policy seeks to protect key views within Biddulph Town Centre and vistas towards the open countryside.







1. Top of the Inner Relief Road to Mow Cop





2. Top of the Inner Relief Road towards Biddulph Town Centre



3. Well Street towards Mow Cop



4. John Street towards the North





5. Wharf Road towards Mow Cop



6. Wharf Road roundabout towards Mow Cop





7. Station Road towards the North



8. War Memorial towards the North



9. South View towards the West





10. Between 66 and 68 High Street

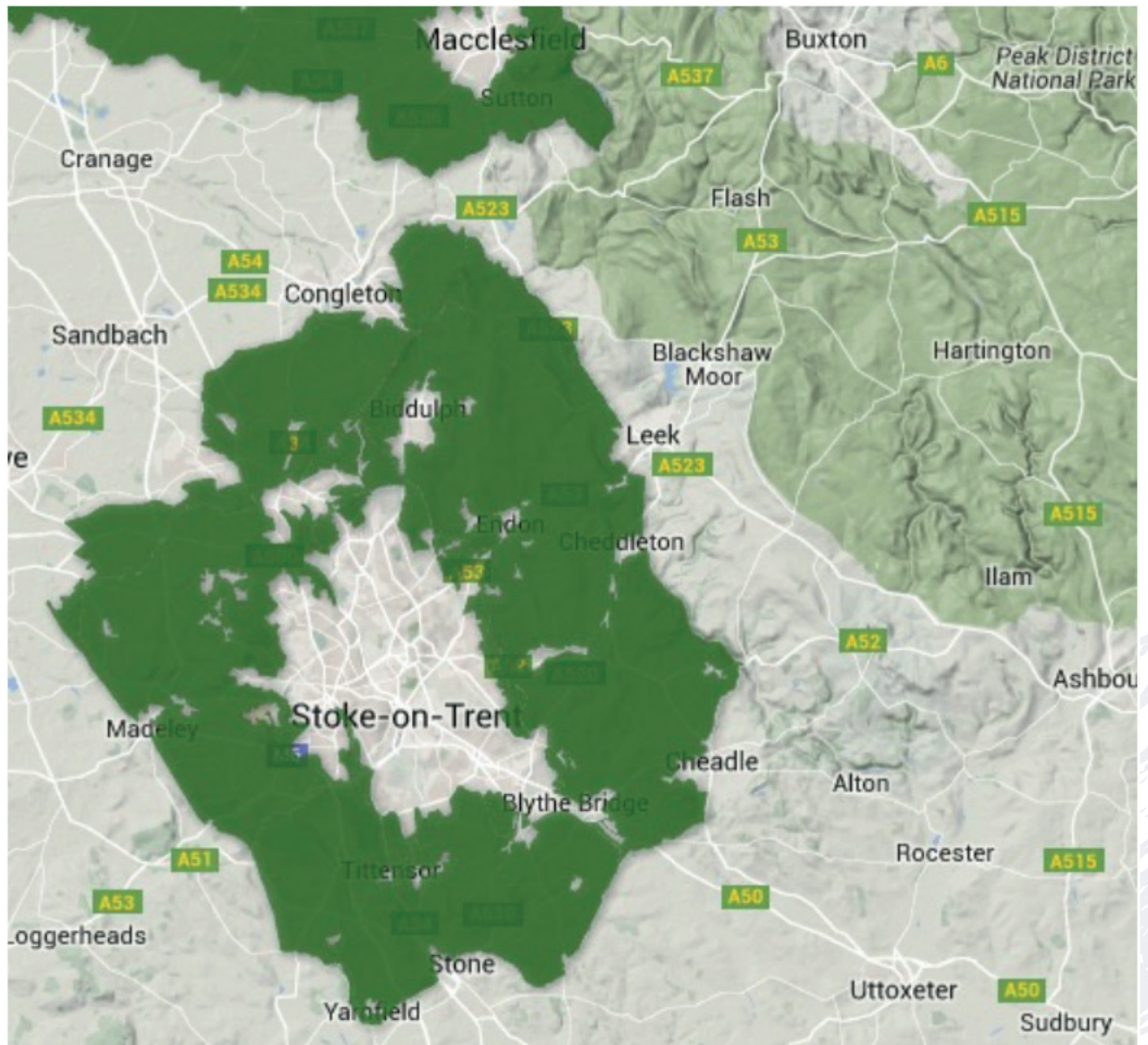


## POLICY: HOUSING

Located to the western fringes of Staffordshire Moorlands, the rural parish of Biddulph 'The Garden Town' consists of the main settlement of Biddulph, and smaller settlements set within the Green Belt and open countryside of Biddulph Moor and Gillow Heath. The growth strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan considers a number of factors that include constraints such as Green Belt, special landscape designations, topography, and infrastructure.

The following map shows the current Green Belt boundary in relation to the Neighbourhood Area:

### GREEN BELT REVIEW STUDY, NOVEMBER 2015



The Housing Needs Assessment April 2018 considered local factors specific to the Neighbourhood Area and the potential impact on demand/need for certain housing types. The following table illustrates these types identified and the rationale for need, furthermore it goes on to highlight how or why these should be addressed through planning policy.



## SUMMARY OF LOCAL FACTORS SPECIFIC TO BIDDULPH WITH A POTENTIAL IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HOUSING TYPE

Factor	Source(s)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Affordable Housing (AH)	SHMA, CACI, Land Registry Price Paid, Estate Agent surveys	<p>The Average (mean) Affordability Ratio (AR) and the Lower Quartile Affordability Ratio (LQAR) for Biddulph were 4.7 and 5.9 in 2017, respectively.</p> <p>This compares with a LQAR for Staffordshire Moorlands of around 7.2 in 2015.</p> <p>This data suggests entry level dwellings are relatively affordable in Biddulph compared with the District generally.</p> <p>Based on properties currently being marketed (January 2018), and taking into account house price data in the SHMA and feedback from local estate agents, an entry-level dwelling is estimated to cost £110,000. At this price point, using CACI data on household income, around 52% of all households estate agents suggests Biddulph remains an attractive place for young people.</p> <p>The Housing Waiting List data provided by SMDC suggests there are 76 households in priority need in the NPA.</p> <p>The SHMA suggests that affordability issues may drive an increase in concealed households and dampen new household formation; data on concealed households and household composition, which indicates an increase in the number of households with non-dependent children over the inter-censual period, provides some evidence of this in Biddulph.</p>	<p>Affordability issues will be exacerbated by the reported increase in house prices in the area in recent years. Moreover, in order to address demographic trends that have seen a decline in those aged between 25 - 44 and a forecast loss of people of working age, it is appropriate for social rented housing to form the majority of affordable homes provided.</p> <p>On the basis of the affordability evidence we have gathered, we would recommend that forms of 'intermediate' AH such as Shared Equity, Discounted Market for Sale Housing (DMSH) as well as rental models such as Affordable Rent should be considered as part of the AH quota within the NA.</p> <p>Biddulph should also seek build to rent (BTR) development, a percentage of which may be 'intermediate rented housing' so as to address the need for affordable market housing for younger age groups.</p> <p>On the basis of the Housing Waiting List, there is no requirement for the NDP to develop an affordable housing policy that specifies what proportion of new build housing should be AH that departs from SMDC's emerging policy H3; it is worth noting however that this data should be used with caution in arriving at an accurate picture of housing need.</p>

Factor	Source(s)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Demand/ need for smaller dwellings	Census	<p>Childless couples and one-person households constitute 31.8% and 27.2% of the population, respectively.</p> <p>Single person households have recorded the greatest proportional uplift at 16.6% over the inter-censal period.</p> <p>The growth of households with non-dependent children points to depressed household formation rates, a finding supported by the small, but statistically significant, presence of concealed households in the area (70 at the time of the last Census).</p>	<p>Policy should address the needs of concealed households through the provision of smaller, affordable market dwellings as well as AH so as to encourage household formation and help stem the decline of the local working age population living in the area.</p> <p>In terms of size of dwellings, the trends identified point towards the need for a mix of smaller dwellings and family sized homes, of 2-5 habitable rooms.</p>
Demograph- ic change	Census, SHMA	<p>The numbers of people aged between 25-44 fell in Biddulph during the inter-censal period by 11.4%; this mirrors projected trends in the District in which the proportion of the population aged under 65 is forecast to fall by some 10.4% between 2011 and 2031.</p> <p>Data from the SHMA suggests that the District will see an increase in lone parent households, elderly couple households, one person-households of all ages and an overall loss of households of working age. Given the similarity in the data between Biddulph and the wider District, these trends are likely to impact on the NPA.</p>	<p>Trends relating to the decline in the population of those falling into younger age brackets raise questions as to the long-term viability of services typically used by younger age groups such as schools. Indirectly it also impacts on a wider range of businesses, given the implicit reduction in the working age population.</p>
Family-sized housing	Census, Estate Agents Survey	<p>Families with children made up the largest group in Biddulph at 37.1% of the population in 2011.</p> <p>Notwithstanding these trends, the area remains an attractive place to live on account of its closeness to centres of employment and its relative affordability. Moreover, families are drawn to the area on account of its high-quality schools.</p>	<p>The evidence of decline in the economically active population is amplified at the District level through forecasts suggesting the overall loss of working age households. The objective should be to maintain Biddulph as a working as well as retired community, able to sustain the businesses, services and facilities essential to thriving community life.</p> <p>The needs of families should be prioritised, firstly so as to retain a balanced population in future years, but also so as to capitalise on the area's natural appeal to them.</p>

Factor	Source(s)	Possible impact on housing needed	Conclusion
Housing for independent living for older people	Census, SHMA	<p>Biddulph shows strong evidence of an ageing population, with that aged 65- 84 having increased by 22.6% and those aged 85+ increasing by 57.3% over the inter-censal period.</p> <p>This chimes with data in the SHMA that forecasts an increase in those aged over 65 by 46% between 2011 and 2031, suggesting these trends are forecast to continue in the NPA over the Plan period.</p>	<p>Considering the findings of age structure and household composition together, there is clear evidence of an ageing population. The impact of this over the medium to long term will be profound, requiring not only additional dwellings suited to the needs of the elderly but also an activist policy that seeks to maintain a balanced demographic in future years.</p> <p>Working from the recommended number of specialist dwellings for each 1000 people aged 75+ put forward by the Housing LIN58 the following provision should be provided over the Plan period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91 additional conventional sheltered housing units;</li> <li>• 182 additional leasehold sheltered housing units;</li> <li>• 30 additional 'enhanced' sheltered units, split 50:50 between those for rent and those for sale;</li> <li>• 15 additional extra care housing units for rent;</li> <li>• 46 additional extra care housing units for sale;</li> <li>• 9 additional specialist dementia care beds.</li> </ul>
Tenure of housing	Census	<p>In 2011, tenure in Biddulph was split 77.4% (owner occupation), 12.2% (social rented) and 9.1% (private rented). It has a significantly higher proportion of social rented housing than the District as a whole.</p> <p>The town retained 18 shared ownership dwellings over the period 2001- 2011 (in contrast with the District, where numbers declined over the same period).</p> <p>During the inter-censal period, in line with District trends, there was a very substantial increase in privately rented dwellings from 359 to 703 dwellings.</p>	<p>Owner occupation has been the dominant trend in tenure; however, as we have seen, this tenure is beyond the means of the vast majority of households; planners should therefore encourage other forms of tenure to come forward, such as shared ownership, starter homes and the private rented sector.</p>



**It is clear from the table that there is a need for:**

- Any affordable homes (AH), provided in the Parish include a mix of shared equity, discounted market for sale housing and affordable rent.
- Housing suitable for independent living for older people.
- Provision of smaller, affordable market dwellings as well as AH so as to encourage household formation and help stem the decline of the local working age population living in the area.
- Need for family sized housing to retain working households.

The promotion of self-build homes should also be considered.

Issues also raised about housing and growth through the neighbourhood plan process included concerns over recent applications being granted permission in the Green Belt and the wider impact of these in terms of the infrastructure deficiencies. Also, the size of infill developments, which have resulted in the over development of plots within Biddulph.

The housing growth policies aim to inform future housing growth to ensure it is supported in sustainable locations and benefits the existing and new communities of the area.

These policies should be read in conjunction with policy H1 in the emerging Local Plan.

## **HOU 1: HOUSING**

**For developments where housing mix or affordability requirements apply, the following must be achieved:**

- **Affordable provision must be provided within the development. If this is not possible, affordable provision should be provided within the neighbourhood area;**
- **Housing must be designed to be tenure-blind.**

**The mix of housing must be based on a current housing needs assessment, to ensure that local need is fully reflected. In particular, housing mix must address identified deficiencies in Biddulph, including:**

- **Housing suitable for independent living for older people (preferably in proximity to a bus stop);**
- **Affordable homes that include shared equity, discounted market for sale housing shared ownership and affordable rent.**

**The following types of housing are particularly welcomed:**

- **Self-build housing;**
- **Innovative design; and**
- **high environmental performance.**

## **INTERPRETATION**

Affordable Homes provision and requirements are set in policy H3 of the emerging Local Plan. As part of the neighbourhood plan review the Housing Needs Assessment will be considered and amended where applicable. This policy encourages self-build.

## **HOU 2: INFILL HOUSING**

**Housing development of small infill sites will be supported within existing residential built frontages, subject to:**

- **The housing being set-back and spaced to complement the existing townscape;**
- **There being no significant detrimental impact on surrounding residential properties;**
- **Avoiding over-development by ensuring that the number of houses relate to the established character of the area.**

## **INTERPRETATION**

Infill housing will normally comprise 1-3 houses, and is unlikely to exceed upper limit of 5. This does not apply to larger sites that are windfall within the town centre. Where sites are in the Green Belt national policy requirements will also be considered in conjunction with this policy.

## POLICY: INFRASTRUCTURE

Biddulph has developed from several smaller settlements known as Biddulph Moor; Biddulph Park; Biddulph; Bradley Green; Brown Lees; Gillow Heath and Knypersley. Whilst some of these smaller settlements remain as such set within the rural landscape others have developed and form the wider area known as Biddulph Town today. As such, this growth has required upgrading and development of the infrastructure. Not only in terms of highways but also community infrastructure of local services including drainage and water management.

Through the community engagement of the Neighbourhood Plan the lack of appropriate or supporting infrastructure was highlighted. The key priorities to be addressed included:

- issues surrounding flooding and water management;
- pinch points in the highway network;
- the current ability or lack of capacity for the current highway network to function before any new development is proposed; and
- Communications, access to super-fast broadband and telecommunications.

Severn Trent responded to this document to note that they encourage that all new development recognises a drainage hierarchy whereby disposal of surface water to the public foul or combined sewerage systems is avoided. Where possible a sustainable discharge should be made to either the ground, watercourse/ditch-course or a surface water sewerage system.

In order to plan positively for the future sustainability of Biddulph it is necessary that any planning application is considered not only in the context of the site but its wider contribution or demand on the existing infrastructure. In section (Part 2) these infrastructure deficiencies are highlighted further.

Policy SS6 Biddulph Area Strategy in the emerging Local Plan does identify opportunity for supporting infrastructure improvements stating that it supports the creation of:

“major mixed-use development opportunities and related infrastructure improvements for the following strategic sites:

- Wharf Road Strategic Development site - mixed-use development including housing, employment, retail and supporting infrastructure will be supported in line with policy DSB1.
- Tunstall Road Strategic Development site - housing and employment will be supported in line with policy DSB3. Developments should secure Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in line with national planning policy and manage surface water discharge rates in accordance with the Sustainable Drainage Systems Non-Statutory Technical Standards (DEFRA, 2015).”

(Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, Submission Version, April 2018).

The emerging Local Plan also identifies that Biddulph is the second largest settlement within the district and the opportunity that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions could also provide financial support to infrastructure improvements that address the issues of cumulative growth. Policy SS12 Planning Obligations and CIL makes clear that:

“Development proposals will be required to provide, or meet the reasonable costs of providing, the on-site and off-site infrastructure, facilities and/or mitigation necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms through the appropriate use of planning obligations and/or conditions.”

(Pg 81, Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, Submission Version, April 2018).

The NPPF, also sets out in paragraph 34 that:

“Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.”

Householders were asked: ‘We are considering Biddulph’s traffic issues in relation to future development, please list any road junctions that you think are heavily congested’.



Knypersley Cross Road	163
Park Lane	75
Roaches School	4
New Pool Road	35
Bridge	7
By Pass	36
Meadows Roundabout	9
St Johns Road	17
Tunstall Road	40
Thames Drive	8
Mill Hayes Road	9
Childerplay Road	7
Congleton Road	128
Woodhouse Lane	91
Smithy Lane	40
Marsh Green	27
Mow Lane	47
Gillow Heath	6
Halls Road	47
Biddulph Arms Junction	37
King Street	61
John Street	30
Well Street	19
Lawton Street	26
High Street	42
South View	39
Wharf Road	32
Sainsbury's Roundabout	46
Grange Road	12
Biddulph Moor	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1518</b>

The numbers represent the number of responses received; the wording uses that used by those completing the form.

The following policies seek to address the concerns and issues raised through community engagement and build upon the strategic policies of the emerging Local Plan.

## INF 1: CRITICAL ROAD JUNCTIONS

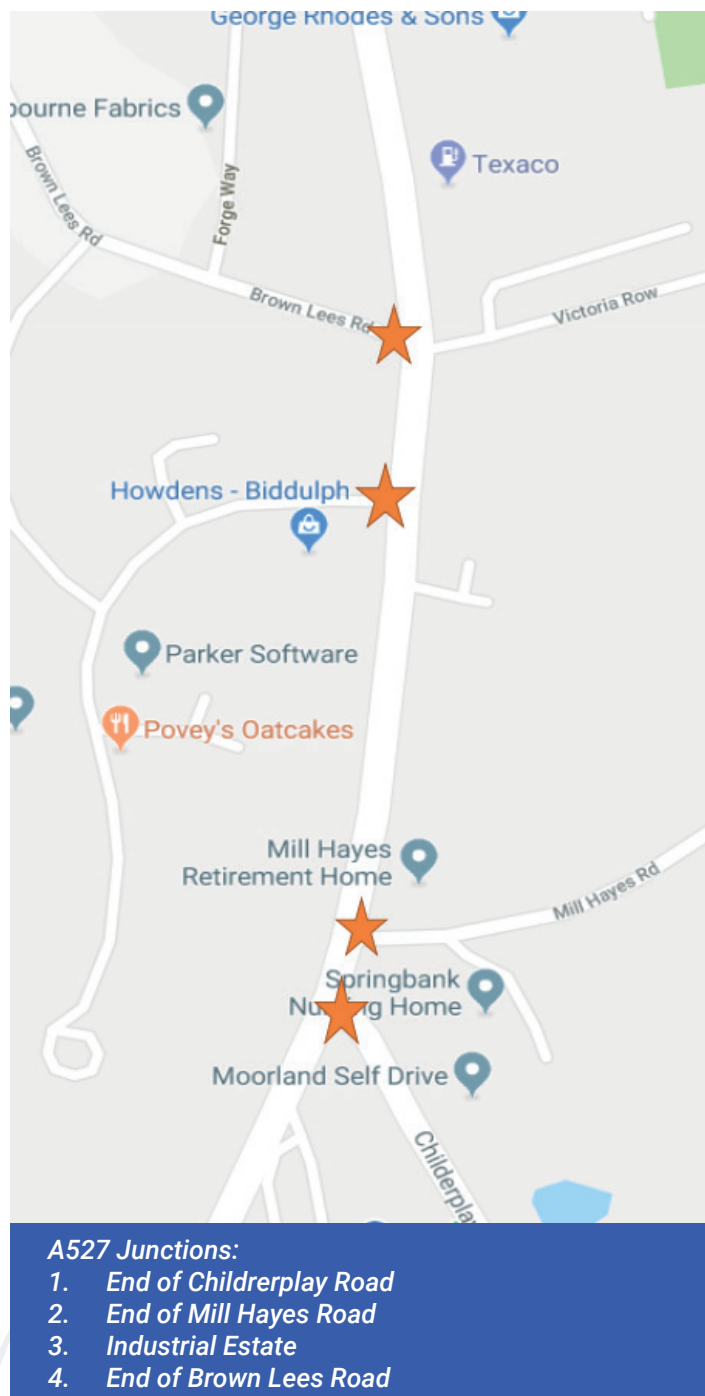
In considering whether development would have and severe adverse impact on road capacity or safety, particular regard should be made to the following congestion pressure points:

- **A527- Newpool Road**
- **A527- Park Lane**
- **A527- Tunstall Road**
- **A527- St Johns Road**

These have been identified through a study commissioned by Biddulph Town Council, which provides recommendations in relation to a range of Highways issues and uses data sourced from Staffordshire County Council.

Residents identified the additional A527 Junctions has having growing congestion issues:

- End of Childrerplay Road
- End of Mill Hayes Road
- Industrial Estate
- End of Brown Lees Road
- Junction of A527 and Childerplay Road;
- Junction of A527 and Mill Hayes Road, industrial estate;
- Junction of A527 and Brown Lees Road;
- Junction of Meadows Way and Wharf Road;
- Junction of Meadows Way and Station Road;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Thames Drive;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Halls Road;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Mow Lane;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Smithy Lane;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Woodhouse Lane;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Marsh Green Road;
- Junction of Congleton Road and Grange Road;
- Junction of New Street and Leek Lane;
- Junction of New Street and Woodhouse Lane;
- Junction of New Street and Rudyard Road; and
- Junction of New Street and Hot Lane.



The impact of development could be demonstrated in the Transport Assessment where this is a requirement or as part of the Design and Access Statement.



Junctions onto Meadows Way:

1. St Johns Road
2. Tunstall Road
3. Wharf Road



Park Lane - Tunstall Road -  
Newpool Road junction / traffic lights



Junctions onto Meadows Way - Station Road

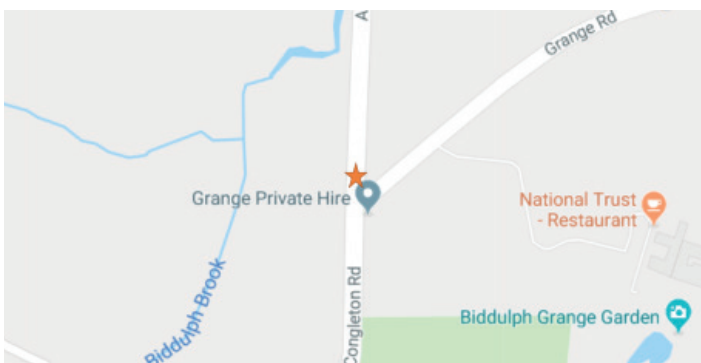




- Congleton Road junctions:**
1. Thames Drive
  2. Halls Road / Mow Lane
  3. Smithy Lane
  4. Woodhouse Lane / Marsh Green Road



- Junctions onto New Street:**
1. Leek Lane
  2. Woodhouse Lane
  3. Rudyard Road / Hot Lane



**Grange Road junction onto Congleton Road**

## INTERPRETATION

The plan outlining the 'Critical Road Junctions' shows all the critical junctions in Biddulph, where there is particular concern over traffic safety and congestion.

Applying this policy will require consideration of the impact of the new development, together with the combined impact of other approved developments.

## **INF 2: SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE**

**Development must have no significant adverse impact in terms of surface water runoff and disposal, including impacts on surrounding sites and environment.**

**Surface water discharge should not exceed the Greenfield runoff rates.**

This includes:

- ensuring hard surfaces are water permeable;
- use of sustainable urban drainage systems, where applicable;
- ensuring that there is sufficient capacity of wastewater infrastructure, or that the development includes other measures for surface water and waste-water disposal.

## **INTERPRETATION**

The approach to surface water drainage should be considered in liaison with the LLFA, the public sewerage undertaker and where appropriate the Environment Agency. Sustainable drainage or water management measures must form an integral part of the design and layout, including utilising balancing ponds and water channels as an open part of the landscape.

Surface water should be discharged in the following order of priority:

- An adequate soakaway or some other form of infiltration system.
- An attenuated discharge to watercourse or other water body.
- An attenuated discharge to public surface water sewer, highway drain or another drainage system.
- An attenuated discharge to public combined sewer.

Applicants wishing to discharge to public sewer will need to submit clear evidence demonstrating why alternative options are not available as part of the determination of their application

Information is available at:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Flood-Risk-Management/Information-for-Planners-and-Developers.aspx>

See also Defra 2015 non-technical standards and Staffordshire Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) SuDS handbook requirements.

## INF 3: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

In considering allocation of CIL or section 106 monies, the following infrastructure priorities should be considered:

- Adequate and proper provision for surface water and foul water management;
- Areas that currently experience flooding.
- Schemes that provide innovative planting and improvements to bio-diversity will be encouraged;
- Provide better linkages to national cycle network, including the Biddulph Valley Way, Route 55;
- Provision of improved access to public transport;
- Provision of new Local Green Spaces, including formal park space;
- Sensory garden;
- Play facilities, including those for older young people;
- Creative space, including entertainment facility and expansion of heritage facilities within the town centre and improvements in public realm.
- Sites and opportunities to enhance areas shown on the Nature Recovery and Wildlife Corridors Map (see Opportunities in Appendix F)
- Improve or enhance the Biddulph Valley Way for the enjoyment of the community and natural habitat value.

In allocating Section 106 financial contributions made against local plan policy requirements, similar priorities are encouraged.

## INTERPRETATION

This policy sets out infrastructure priorities. With reference to the designation of new Local Green Spaces these would be considered for inclusion when reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan.





## POLICY: DESIGN

Biddulph is predominantly set within the Green Belt, set within the rural area of Staffordshire Moorlands. It has a distinctive rural character, comprising of Biddulph town, where the largest concentration of services, facilities, employment and housing are located and smaller rural settlements of Brown Lees, and Biddulph Moor.

The Neighbourhood Area has a number of designations for both the built and natural environment.

To be sustainable, new development needs to be well designed, to complement the existing character and quality of the rural area. New buildings, streets and spaces should be integrated within their setting, both functionally and aesthetically. This is echoed in the responses from the community survey which highlighted key design aspects. 71% of those who responded to the householder survey said that new development should be designed to fit well with the existing environment and 61 % said the scale and height should be in keeping with surrounding buildings. It was not just the design that was important with 64% also agreeing that new development should include footpaths and cycle routes connecting corridors to schools, shops and the town centre.

The NPPF confirms that good design is indivisible from good planning. It recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of people's lives and that it is a core planning principle always to secure good design, particularly where developments are in an isolated location. Neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that:

"The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."

It goes on to acknowledge in paragraph 127 that:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and"

For Biddulph these requirements are interpreted in design policy DES1 and DES2.

## DES 1: DESIGN

New development must complement the local context and be sustainable. Development must:

- complement the existing character and townscape in terms of scale and massing;
- complement the established layout in terms of set-back from the road and spacing around dwellings;
- use high quality, authentic durable materials, to complement the site, character and surrounding context;
- provide sustainable drainage and permeable surfaces in hard landscaped areas;
- provide screened storage space for bins and recycling.

Authentic, distinctive, site-specific architectural solutions will be encouraged, especially innovative designs in terms of building energy performance.

The following types of housing are particularly welcomed:

- Self-build housing;
- Innovative design; and
- high environmental performance.

## INTERPRETATION

Design and access statements submitted with planning applications should make clear how the requirements of this policy have been met. In terms of high-quality materials, the policy would be met by authentic local materials and other durable materials with a high standard of finish and durability.

## DES 2: PUBLIC REALM, CAR PARKING AND MOVEMENT

New development must demonstrate high standards of urban design by:

- providing ease of movement for pedestrian routes and footpaths, including links to local services;
- ensuring flanking buildings in residential areas have active frontages to provide natural surveillance;
- providing a mix of car parking as an integral part of the layout, including garages, covered spaces and driveways, so that vehicles do not dominate the streets and spaces;
- ensuring that the number of parking spaces provided within the curtilage of each dwelling is proportionate to the size of the property;
- improving and enhancing existing footpaths, pedestrian routes, cycle routes and bridleways (and their settings) including the Biddulph Valley Way.

## INTERPRETATION

Applying this policy will require consideration of the impact of the new development, together with the combined impact of other approved developments.

## DETAILS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT ORDER

The Neighbourhood Development Order (the Order) has been prepared by Biddulph Town Council. The Neighbourhood Development Order relates to changes of use of upper floors of commercial properties to business and enterprise space (Use Class B1) and the replacement of shopfronts. The Order grants planning permission for these types of development in Parts 1 and 2, providing it meets the conditions and parameters set out.

The Order is a response to the analysis of outcomes from community engagement and gathering of local evidence and the intention is to support the regeneration and economic development of Biddulph Town Centre. This includes supporting enterprise and improving the environment of the town.

The Order has been prepared against the context of meeting the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

The Order will be monitored during its period of application. If necessary, the Order may be revised and/or remade in the future.



# Part 5



## NON-PLANNING ISSUES

This section does not form part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan and is not subject to independent examination and referendum. Therefore, it includes proposed actions that fall outside the scope of the planning policy:

- Address empty shops through enabling use class policy;
- Pedestrianisation of the Town Centre or a 'Flexible event space' following further consultation;
- Retain visitors from Biddulph Grange, attracting them into the town;
- Promote tourism opportunities;
- Cycling;
- Issues around buses and movement;
- Parking and use of highways;
- Repairs to pavements;
- Capacity of services and amenities and the pressure on these;
- Promote festivals and community events;
- Biddulph Town hosting national events such as cycle tour etc. ;
- Biddulph Valley Way, making it more accessible - removeable bollards and remove the gates
- Overspill car park for Biddulph Grange Gardens;
- Working with utility companies to support 'pop-up' units on short term rents;
- Biddulph Town Hall as a community asset, securing its long-term future and viability;
- Supporting and working in partnership with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) and the Masterplan process to ensure it fully takes account of the Neighbourhood Plan and Neighbourhood Development Order;