



REFERENDUM VERSION OCTOBER 2026

This Neighbourhood Plan for the Parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding has been produced in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulation 2012 and has gone through both a consultation period and been reviewed by an independent examiner in 2026.

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1. Abbreviations

DC	District Council
CCC	Cambridgeshire County Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy (paid when new development occurs)
ECP	Electric Charging Point
GP	General Practice - NHS doctors surgery
GWH	Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
LP	The HDC Local Plan that covers changes from 2011 to 2036
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
MUGA	Multi User Games Area
NHS	National Health Service
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OFGEM	The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
PCP	Public Charging Point
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document

2. Accessibility

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3. Copyright

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4. Summary

- 4.1. This Neighbourhood Plan covers the 3 parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding which border Northamptonshire in the Northern Wolds of Huntingdonshire covering 3,258 hectares, 3 villages , 2 hamlets and approximately 520 people in 260 households¹.
- 4.2. Once approved in a referendum organised by HDC, the NP will form a part of the HDC statutory documentation on what the area wants until 2036.
- 4.3. Across the GWH Neighbourhood the community only has two shops (including an Equestrian centre), a single pub, no schools but does have a wildlife park!
- 4.4. In May 2023, the GWH Neighbourhood was asked to fill in a business and residential survey. 126 households and 20 businesses responded to the request. Along with other documents (notably the HDC Local Plan, the Local Green Spaces report and the GWH Contextual Analysis) and sources, this has formed the basis of the plan.
- 4.5. On many subjects, the residents and businesses want more of the same, i.e. the vision of the GWH NP is to provide a planning framework and policies that will result in small sustainable growth for the local community, ensuring that appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities are provided whilst simultaneously conserving the village and countryside environment.
- 4.6. There will be more demands for electricity (electric vehicles, heating and even cooling) which will put pressure on the National Grid.
- 4.7. The community also wants HDC and CCC to invest in our community in terms of pavements, roads, flood prevention and the public transport system. The needs extend to thirteen aspirations such the need for more events with better communication, which have been highlighted in **green**.
- 4.8. Highlighted in **yellow** the NP incorporates the following 5 policies throughout the document:
 - 4.8.1. Sensitive future development – see 9.9
 - 4.8.2. Utilities – see 10.9
 - 4.8.3. Promote a biodiverse, natural environment – see 12.9
 - 4.8.4. Protect heritage assets – see 13.12.
 - 4.8.5. Protect local green spaces – see 15.12.
- 4.9. Progress on these aspirations will be monitored via the Community Action Plan that will be updated by the Parish Council and the Parish Meetings.
- 4.10. Overall, the NP reflects positively on the future. This is a great, but generally forgotten, area of Huntingdonshire that should be preserved.

¹ The 2021 National Census states 240 whilst HDC states it's 260 (the latter aligns to the 2011 census <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>)

5. Introduction

5.1. Purpose of the Plan

- 5.1.1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new type of Community Led Plan. Communities now have the right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, setting out policies on the development and use of land. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a way for communities to play a greater role in determining the future of their area. A plan period of 2023 to 2036 has been chosen to match the end date of the HDC Local Plan to 2036.
- 5.1.2. Neighbourhood planning is a tool to promote sustainable growth and will not be able to prevent development in an area. Neighbourhood plans can only include proposals for an equal (or greater) amount of growth than is set out in the local authority's development plan and the NPPF.
- 5.1.3. The 3 parishes of Great & Little Gidding, Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding (GWH) covers the following area in the Huntingdonshire Wolds:

Description: The Giddings, Winwick and Hamerton Neighbourhood Plan Area

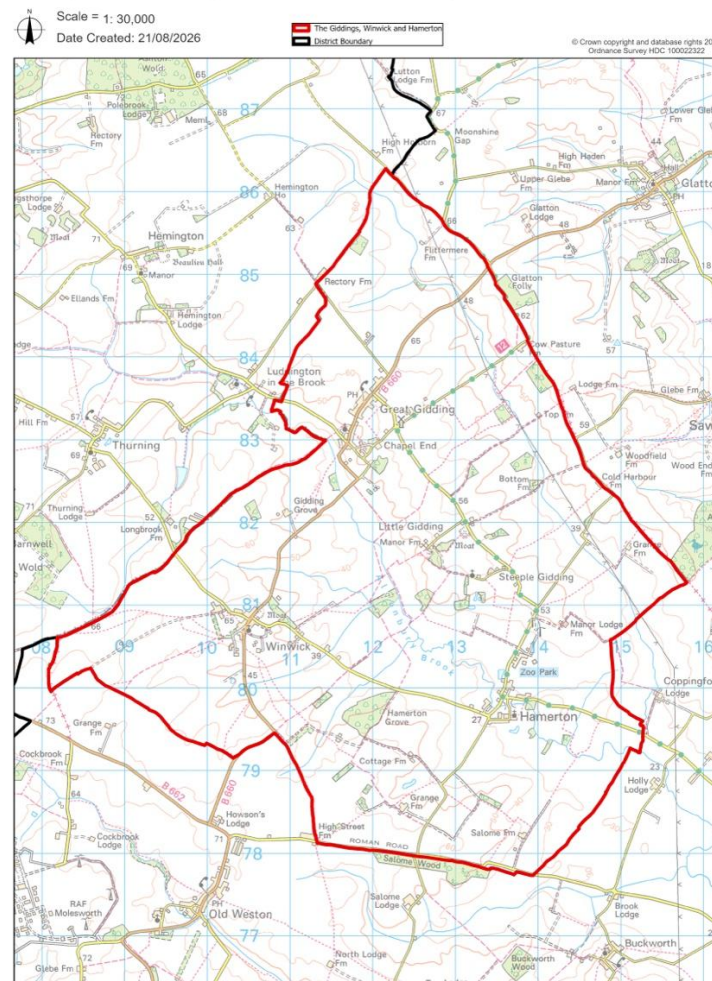


Figure 1: The GWH NP Area shown by the red line

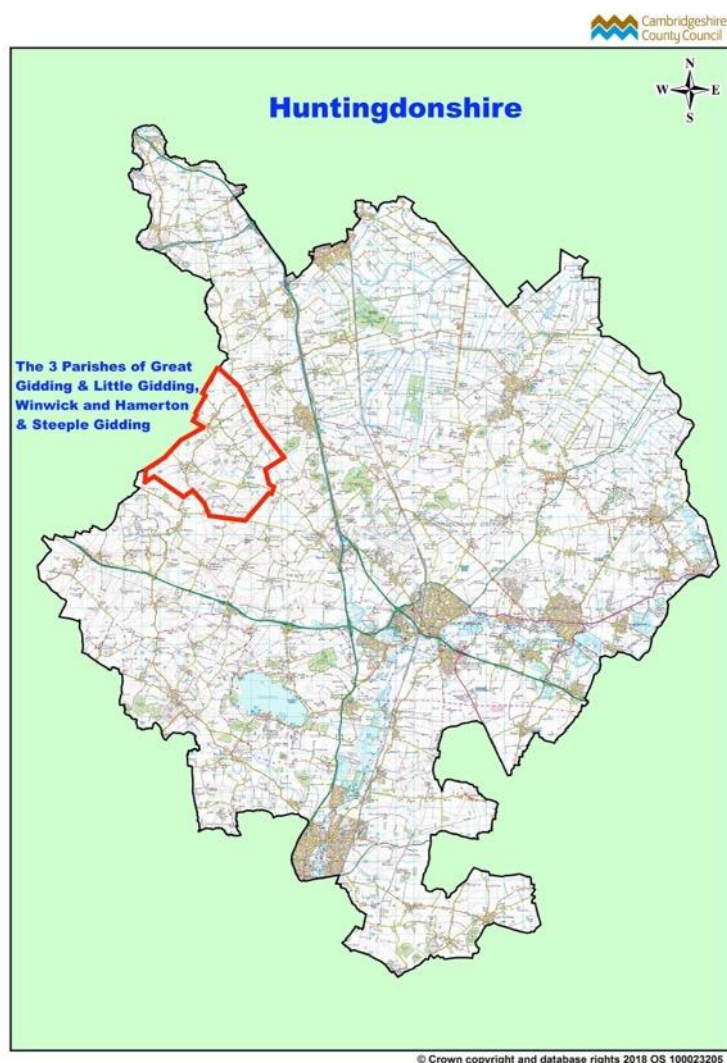
- 5.1.4. The GWH Neighbourhood consider that creating a Neighbourhood Plan is an important right to exercise, and in 2022 the Great and Little Gidding Parish Council² applied for the combined parishes (see Figure 1) to be designated a neighbourhood planning area. HDC approved this application in March 2023. Following the designation and much consultation (including an 8-week period from August / September 2025), the NP Working Group (see appendix for members) has prepared and published this version of the NP to HDC (with the GWH Green Spaces and Contextual Analysis reports).
- 5.1.5. The policies in this Plan take account of HDC's LP³, which came into force in 2019 and covers the period up to 2036. The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long-term future of the GWH Neighbourhood for the time up to 2036.
- 5.1.6. The NP allows all residents to exercise an element of control of the LP's management of planning issues and developments within the community. It is not just for the Parish Council and Parish Meetings but for all residents both current and future. The NP contains a vision for the future of the GWH Neighbourhood and sets out clear recommendations to realise this vision.
- 5.1.7. In order to develop the NP, the working group has developed surveys (checked by a certified Full Member of the Market Research Society to avoid leading questions with unconscious bias) and reviewed numerous documents. It has been prepared with extensive support from the local people, statutory bodies, local businesses and HDC.

5.2. GWH Neighbourhood

- 5.2.1. The GWH Neighbourhood is located in Northern Wolds of the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire, bordering the unitary authority of North Northamptonshire. The nearest towns are Oundle, and Huntingdon, with the city of Peterborough 16 miles away. The A14 runs to the south of GWH, which provides an efficient connection to Birmingham and Cambridge. The A1 lies to the east of the GWH Neighbourhood and provides an effective link to the north and south. Huntingdon and Peterborough are mainline stations providing a regular railway service to London, York and Edinburgh.
- 5.2.2. Figure 2 shows where the GWH Neighbourhood (shown in red) is positioned in relation to the remainder of Huntingdonshire:

² Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding have Parish Meetings rather than a Council.

³ <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/190516-final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf>

Figure 2: GWH within Huntingdonshire

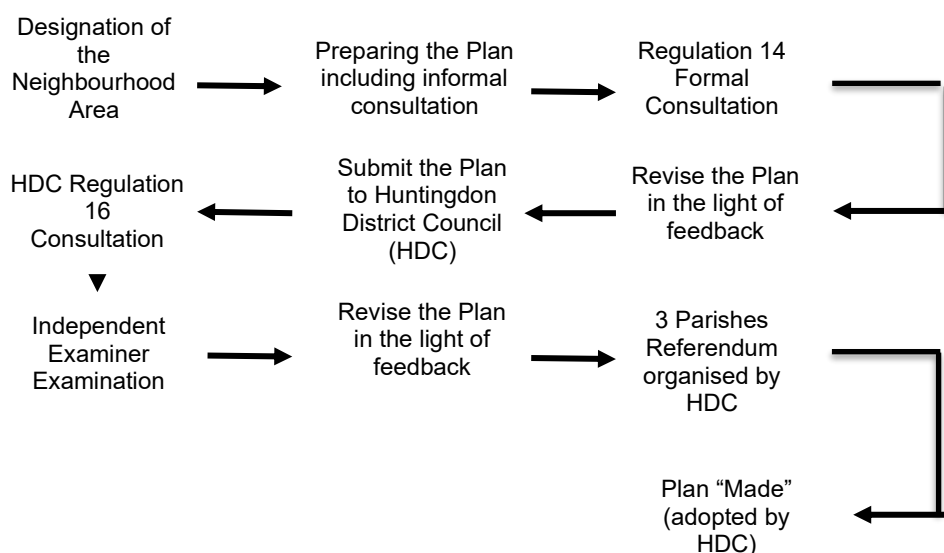
5.3. Preparing the Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document and is about the use and development of land. Neighbourhood planning gives communities more control over the future of their area by giving local people the chance to have their say on what happens where they live. It can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a particular area. Plans can include local priorities, planning policies, proposals for improving an area or providing new facilities or infrastructure and allocation of key sites for development. The NP will be revised following responses from residents, the Regulation 14 and 16 consultations and then passed to an independent examiner.

Neighbourhood Plans have to be prepared following a procedure set by the Government in the 2011 Localism Act, summarised in Figure 3 below.

- 5.3.1. After a series of informal consultations with both interested parties and the local community, the NP will be submitted to HDC for feedback. Once the feedback is agreed and incorporated it will then be sent to an independent examiner who can again give feedback.
- 5.3.2. A GWH Neighbourhood wide referendum will then be organised by HDC, allowing residents to vote on whether to accept the NP.
- 5.3.3. If more than 50% of the votes cast are in favour of the NP, the NP will be “made” i.e., accepted at HDC’s Full Council meeting, and carry full weight in the planning process.

Figure 3: The Neighbourhood Planning Process



5.4. Monitoring the Plan

- 5.4.1. Great Gidding Parish Council and the Parish Meetings (in Hamerton and Winwick), as the ‘Qualifying Body’, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.
- 5.4.2. The Parish Council and two Parish Meetings will actively monitor how the policies and aspirations within the NP are being implemented.
- 5.4.3. This will be summarised in a report produced by the Gidding Parish Council and separate Hamerton and Winwick Parish Meetings annually and published on the Parish Councils websites and discussed at the Parish Meetings.

5.5. Community Action Plan

- 5.5.1. The consultation process has identified a number of issues and potential projects that could not be addressed through the policies in this document but are recorded as Aspirations (in green).

- 5.5.2. The Parish Council and Parish Meetings⁴ will consider how these issues and ideas might be taken forward in partnership with residents and other organisations.

5.6. Basis of the Plan

- 5.6.1. The results of surveys of residents and local businesses in the GWH Neighbourhood conducted in 2023 provides the basis for the policies contained within this Plan.
- 5.6.2. There was a high response rate from over 48% of households.
- 5.6.3. Business questionnaires were sent to all major businesses in the GWH Neighbourhood. Businesses were also invited to complete the questionnaire through the link provided in the Residents Questionnaire.
- 5.6.4. The team have also used data from the LP, National Census⁵, plus Cambridgeshire Insight. Other sources include HDC, OFCom, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the Environment Agency, the estate manager of the major landowner and the Alconbury Flood Group.
- 5.6.5. The conclusions we have come in the NP are based on our May 2023 survey data plus the village meetings that were held in November 2023.



Photo1: Neighbourhood Meeting in Great Gidding Village Hall

- 5.6.6. Informal consultation was sought from HDC during early 2024. This led to changes to the NP but a more involved analysis of the area (which is incorporated in the Local Green Spaces report and the larger Contextual Analysis).
- 5.6.7. In August and September 2025 a large consultation was undertaken. The 3 documents were hosted on the Gidding Website, sent out to 18 organisations and over 50 people who asked for the information. A village hall meeting was also arranged answering any queries and questions.
- 5.6.8. All feedback has been incorporated in the respective documents and they will be sent to HDC as part of the middle step in Figure 3.

I

⁴ Great and Little Gidding have a parish council. Winwick and Hamerton & Steeple Gidding have their own respective parish meeting

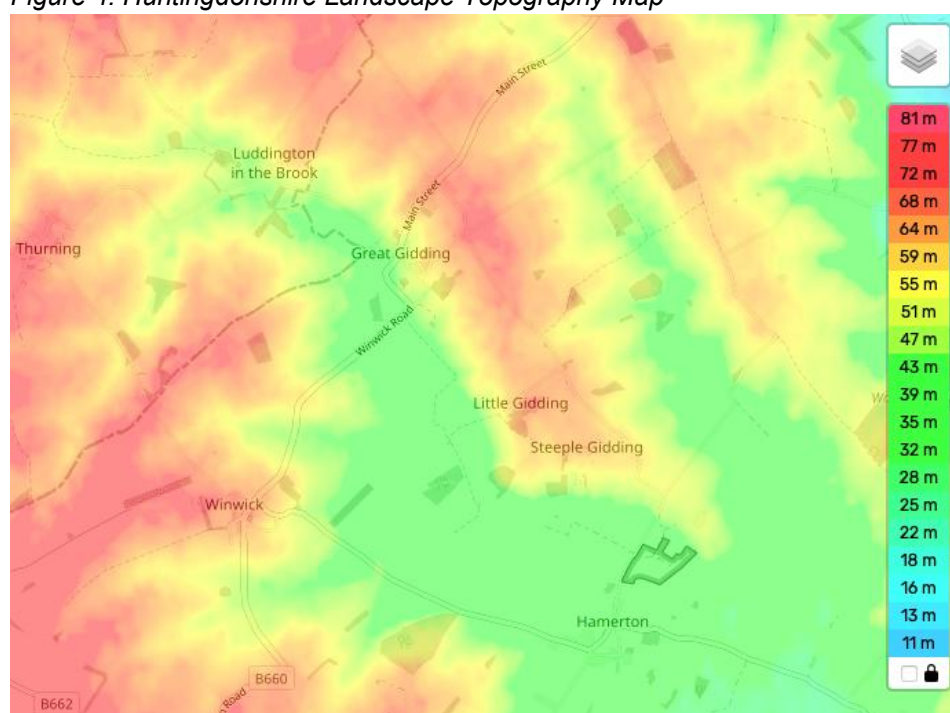
⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw/>

6. Characteristics and history of the area

6.1. Topography

- 6.1.1. As described in Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022⁶, the area has been shaped by both the underlying landform and mediaeval settlement. The area contains the highest land in Huntingdonshire with a distinctive ridged topography formed by streams flowing down from this higher land towards the Fens and Central Claylands.
- 6.1.2. As shown in the topological map below Great / Little / Steeple Gidding all exist on a ridge, whilst Winwick is also 70m above sea level on another ridge (shown in red / orange). By contrast Hamerton, at around 30m above sea level (shown in green), is much lower and therefore prone to flooding.

Figure 4: Huntingdonshire Landscape Topography Map⁷



6.2. Historical context

- 6.2.1. There is evidence from both artefacts and archaeology of Roman farms and villas. Research at Grange Farm, Hamerton, discovered Romano-British pottery dating back to 200 AD, perhaps associated with the Roman potteries known to have existed at what is now Sawtry, some 5 miles away. Occupation of the area may well have occurred during the Neolithic Age or earlier.

⁶ <https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6117/3-chapter-3-landscape-character-areas.pdf>

⁷ <https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/map-p9gmt/Willis/?center=52.42514%2C-0.35414>

- 6.2.2. The names of the parishes are of Anglo-Saxon origin, from the time of their arrival in 500 AD. Gidding is the place of Gydela's people, Hamerton uses both the Anglo-Saxon place descriptors Ham and Tun and Winwick is either Win's people or specialist farm.
- 6.2.3. The area has a long history of farming, with little other industry known, although Winwick and Great Gidding had brickworks in the recent past.
- 6.2.4. Prior to the Norman Conquest, the GWH Neighbourhood was within the area of the forest of Bruneswald, which covered vast swathes of the Midlands from what is now Birmingham to the edge of Fenland and down to Hertfordshire. Settlements were gradually hewn from the forest as a network of small farms and homesteads using the good soil and water supplies.
- 6.2.5. All the parishes are listed in the Domesday Book. Great Gidding (Geddinge), Little Gidding (Gedeling) and Steeple Gidding (Redinges) had a population of about 320. Hamerton (Hambertune) was about 120 and Winwick (Winewyck) slightly smaller at about 100 people. No churches are listed in the Domesday Book, but there is evidence of early places of worship, and the 5 churches in the Neighbourhood begin to be recorded from the 12th to 15th Centuries, with the chapels later. The parishes were clearly based on self-supporting villages between two and three miles apart.



Photo 2: Winwick Church

- 6.2.6. In 1252 Geddinge became Great Gidding and Gedeling became Little Gidding. In 1303 Edward 1 authorised a weekly Wednesday market in Great Gidding, making it a small market town serving the needs of the local area.
- 6.2.7. By the Middle Ages all the villages had moved from the Anglo-Saxon 2 field system to the Norman 3 field system, making better use of the land. Common Land was used for grazing, with households growing food on strips still clearly discernible today because of the ridge and furrow ploughing systems.
- 6.2.8. All the parishes were recorded as having several manor houses, but there is little evidence of them today, apart from in Hamerton where Manor Farm

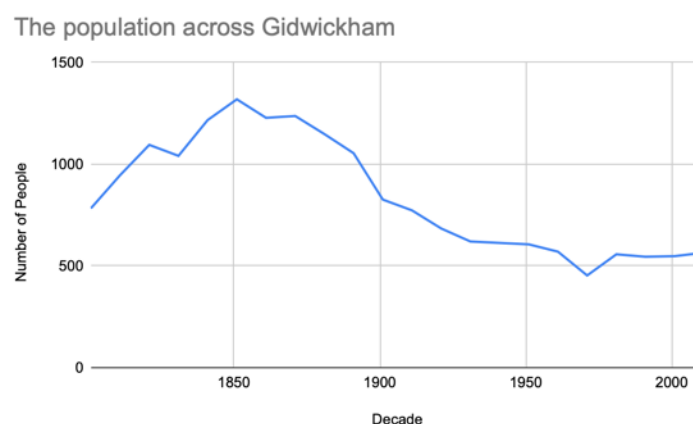
incorporates mediaeval parts, and elsewhere there are some protected sites.

- 6.2.9. Prosperity came to the area with the development of trading routes. The Great North Road and its Roman predecessor saw constant traffic North/South, and the parallel droving routes (Bullock Road and Gibbet Lane) provided by-ways for walking produce and animals (cattle and poultry) to London. Winwick, became an overnight stop over point for travellers with inns providing food, water shelter and meeting other travellers' needs.
- 6.2.10. The population of the area grew steadily throughout the early mediaeval period, although the plagues and Black Death had serious effects. Greater reductions took place with the move away from arable farming to sheep and enclosure of common land. By 1594 all the houses in Little Gidding had become derelict and there were no inhabitants. It was purchased by Nicholas Ferrar in 1620 who restored the village to the extent that Charles 1 visited 3 times, and Nicholas lived there with his family until he died in 1637. His family continued to live there, but the village was plundered by Cromwell's troops in 1646.
- 6.2.11. Great Gidding was less affected by enclosures, which was more gradual, taking until 1869 (one of the latest dates in England) when common grazing rights were extinguished. Winwick also has less evidence of strip farming, though the large number of dew ponds that exist today show that the village was considerably bigger in the past.
- 6.2.12. From the early 1600s there was significant diversification of religion. The Quakers formed in about 1650, and Winwick has a Quaker Burial Site dating from 1670, one of the earliest known. Great Gidding has a Baptist Chapel built in 1790, and a Wesleyan Chapel built in 1839. Winwick also had a Methodist Chapel which became the Village Hall in about 1970. The various Protestant churches were repaired, rebuilt, and strengthened throughout this history, but continue to need even more extensive repairs today.
- 6.2.13. The network of farm tracks linking the settlements probably date back to the early mediaeval period, or earlier, supplemented by footpaths and bridleways that provide access to churches and chapels. The B660 is the major road running from the Bedford area towards Peterborough. The farm tracks were gradually macadamised from the 19th and 20th centuries but remain as narrow twisting routes, often with unofficial passing places.
- 6.2.14. During the 19th Century the villages became less self-sufficient with Great Gidding developing into a service industry for the area. In 1871 the census recorded 3 bakers, 9 blacksmiths, 2 butchers, 4 carpenters, 2 masons and 5 shoemakers just in this village. There was also a windmill, although Winwick also had a mill and bakery.

- 6.2.15. Little Gidding was purchased in a run-down state by William Hopkinson in 1848. He built a new farmhouse and outbuildings, parts of which still exist. On his death in 1865, it was inherited by his nephew, Rev William Hopkinson, vicar of Great Gidding. who created a 'pure' cultural society, lauded in the 1881 historical novel *John Inglesant* by Joseph Henry Stonehouse.
- 6.2.16. Much of the housing stock was originally wood framed thatched cottages. Major fires in Great Gidding (1861) and Winwick (c1910) destroyed large numbers which have been replaced with dwellings using locally produced yellow or salmon pink bricks with red pantile roofs. Although local limestone was available, there are few stone houses, but stone dressings and sills are more common. In Hamerton thatched cottages survived into the 1970s, before being condemned as not fit for habitation.
- 6.2.17. Houses were originally heated by open fires, which eventually changed to wood burners and oil-fired boilers. A few houses have been converted to, or been built with, Air Source Heat Pumps. Although 2 National Grid Gas Pipelines pass through the Neighbourhood (built late 1990s) there is no mains gas. Electrification took place in the late 1950s, and mains sewage schemes appeared (where possible) in the early 20th century.
- 6.2.18. Little Gidding continued as a cultural centre, being visited by T S Eliot, one of whose *Four Quartets* is titled *Little Gidding* (1942). In July 1946, the Friends of Little Gidding was formed, raising funds for the maintenance of the Church.
- 6.2.19. In the early 1970s, a commune (Community of Christ the Sower) took over at Little Gidding, and gradually transformed the outbuildings into dwellings. Although self-sufficient, it gradually reduced in size, and in and by the late 1990s was transformed into the Little Gidding Trust with Manor Farmhouse becoming Ferrar House.
- 6.2.20. Parish schools developed from about 1750. The main village school in the area in Great Gidding opened in 1846, eventually subsumed the other schools in the area, but closed in 2023. The school in Hamerton took over the schoolchildren of Little and Steeple Gidding in 1945 and closed in 1963. Winwick had a School House which closed around 1960. Hamerton built a Village Hall in 1902 and Great Gidding also has a Village Hall from the 1950s. Winwick's Village Hall was converted from a Methodist Chapel in the 1970s.
- 6.2.21. Formal inns existed in all the main villages from at least as early as 1753; small pubs probably existed throughout the mediaeval period. Today only the Fox and Hounds in Great Gidding continues to trade. Post Offices were opened in the early 20th century, but the last one in Great Gidding was replaced by a mobile van in the early 21st century. Similarly, shops closed in the 20th century, apart from the small convenience store which continues in Great Gidding.

- 6.2.22. Hamerton has the major tourist attraction of the Neighbourhood, the Zoo. Opened in 1990, the zoo attracts visitors from a wide area and successfully breeds endangered species. The roaring of the big cats makes for a slightly surreal experience linking the plains of Africa to the edge of Fenland.
- 6.2.23. The parishes were part of Huntingdonshire for many centuries, except for Winwick, which until 1895 was divided between Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, but then all became part of Huntingdonshire. From 1965 the villages were in the administrative county of Huntingdon and Peterborough. Since 1974 they have been part of Cambridgeshire.
- 6.2.24. The Neighbourhood remains a peaceful and lovely place to live. Whilst the age of the inhabitants has risen and numbers reduced over the years, a considerable proportion commute to work, work from home or engage in farming.
- 6.2.25. As shown in Figure, 5 based on the National Census (*2021 figures are provisional) the population since 1801 has declined from the peak in 1850 to just over 500 people.

Figure 5: Population Decline since 1850



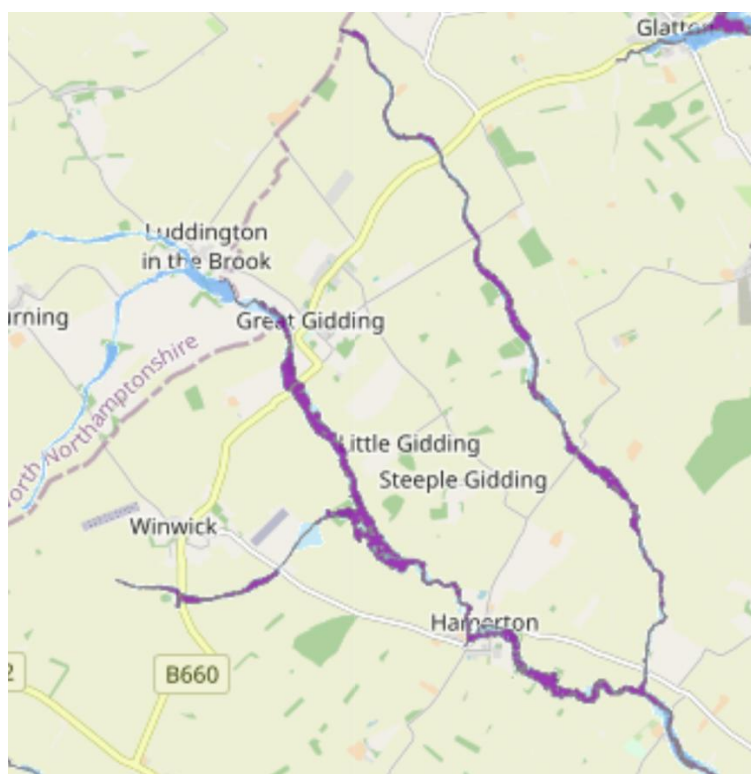
6.3. Agricultural Land

- 6.3.1. The ridges are generally used for arable (crops) farming and have a relatively open feel with big fields, long views and few hedgerow trees. There are however some sheep and cattle kept in the area. In contrast, the valleys have a higher proportion of land in pastoral (livestock) use and have smaller field sizes and less views. Alconbury Brook is quite narrow, with its route identifiable by a line of trees along the bank.
- 6.3.2. The area is primarily grade 3 (shown below in green) agricultural land with a small portion of better grade 2 (shown in blue) in the below map. The main arable crops are wheat and oats, although linseed, oil seed rape and borage are also to be found. Due to new environment policies various bird seed mixes are also to be found as well as legumes to improve the soil.

Figure 6: Quality of agricultural land

6.4. Flood risk

- 6.4.1. A high risk of flooding in the area is primarily concentrated around Hamerton. The Alconbury Brook catchment is relatively ‘flashy’ in comparison to the wider River Great Ouse catchment, meaning that it reacts quickly to rainfall and flooding can be rapid. See Chapter 17 for more details although Figure 7 shows the areas at risk in purple.

Figure 7: Flood risk⁸

⁸ <https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/flooding/strategic-flood-risk-assessment/>

6.5. Dark skies / light encroachment

- 6.5.1. The GWH Neighbourhood has very little light encroachment.
- 6.5.2. The notable exception is the streetlights on Main Street in Great Gidding (shown by the yellow patch in Figure 8).
- 6.5.3. All other village in the GWH Neighbourhood do not have streetlights.

Figure 8: Dark Skies⁹



⁹ <https://geo.nls.uk/maps/light-pollution/index.html#/ol3>

7. Summary of the current situation

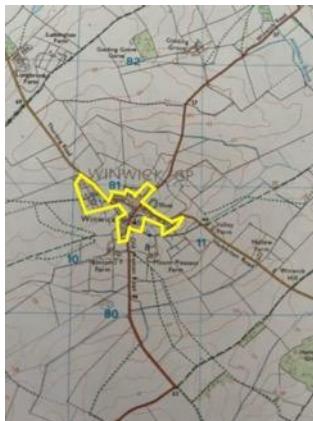
The following 31 points primarily came out of the Residential and Business Surveys (greater detail can be found in [Appendix A](#)) but also the Local Green Space Report and the GWH contextual analysis:

- 7.1. The gently rolling landscape has remained fundamentally unchanged for a great many years despite the proximity of intense development beyond, notably Sawtry and Peterborough. The development pattern, mediaeval villages linked by lanes outlining ridge and furrow marked fields, is a product of ancient rural traditions and economy. Modern agriculture and modest rural development have, largely, been successfully accommodated within the existing matrix.
- 7.2. The residents of the NP area enjoy the peace and agricultural rhythm of life and are resistant to inappropriate change. They share an enchantment with their place but enjoy the proximity of larger settlements nearby e.g. Oundle. The area has an older demographic profile than either Huntingdonshire or nationally and the biggest response to the employment question was retired.
- 7.3. There are approximately 520 people in 260 houses across the area, mostly within the 5 GWH settlement, the area of which are shown below in yellow. Great Gidding is by far the biggest village with 126 houses, whilst Hamerton and Winwick both have 35, whilst Little and Steeple Gidding are small hamlets. More details (and bigger maps) on the characteristics and how they have evolved can be found in the accompanying, but separate, document GWH Contextual Analysis document.

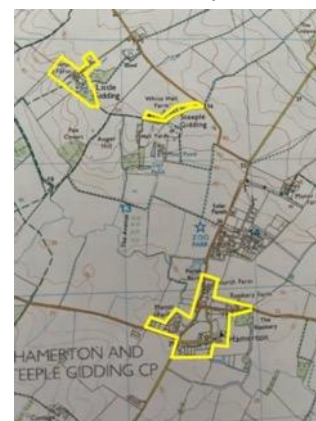
Figure 9: The 5 villages
Great Gidding



Winwick



Hamerton, Little/Steeple Gidding



- 7.4. Most people moved to GWH because of either the type of housing available, the country lifestyle or due to work. Nearly 65% of the households in the area have lived here for over 10 years and 45% have been here for more than 20 years which is reflected in the older population profile when compared to the rest of Huntingdonshire or England & Wales (based on the 2021 Census): see appendix A (19.1) for more details on this.

- 7.5. 48% of employed people work from home (more than England at 31.5% or Huntingdonshire at 34.9%) some or all of the time.
- 7.6. Whilst the internet is relatively good, some outlier properties do not have it at all and there is a lack of speed (over 100mbs) that towns such as Huntingdon benefit from. The mobile phone coverage is generally viewed as average or worse. EE currently offers the best service, with no operator yet offering 5G.
- 7.7. Few of the roads inside villages have footpaths: pedestrians share the limited space with cyclists, motorists, and delivery trucks. Even where footpaths exist, they are often narrow, in disrepair and without dropped kerbs.
- 7.8. GWH Neighbourhood inhabitants are hugely dependent on cars for transport. According to the survey most households had two or more cars (the average across the area is 1.9). The vehicles are mostly fossil fuel powered (123 Petrol, 99 Diesel, 12 Electric/Hybrid).
- 7.9. The age of the housing stock means that a minority of cars are garaged overnight, with the majority parked on drives. Narrow roads means that few are parked on the roadside. In Great Gidding some are parked on roads, primarily on B660.
- 7.10. Houses in the area are on average larger and more detached than the Huntingdon or national average with the most common type having 4 double bedrooms and detached.
- 7.11. The area is very safe with a very low amount of recorded crime over the last 5 years. Compared to the national crime rate, the NP area's crime rate is at 60% ie a lot lower¹⁰.
- 7.12. Over 50% of houses are heated by oil with various other sources of heating such as gas and wood burners but none being that dominant. See Appendix A 19.4.8 for more details.
- 7.13. The electrical supply occasionally (once a month) fails momentarily. Most of the network is via overhead cables as shown in Figure 9:

¹⁰ [Source Plumplot](#)

- 7.14. On the left the high voltage (11Kw) in shown in red, low voltage in amber and source 33Kw cable from Wood Walton substation to Brington¹¹ in green (bottom right). On the right¹², the diagram from UK Powernetworks shows that the GWH area in red which indicates it is more than 5% over capacity and therefore more likely to suffer from power cuts.

Figure 10 - UK Power overhead cables and overdemand



- 7.15. According to the 2021 National Census:

- 83.7% of people in GWH rated their health as very good or good. By comparison Huntingdonshire was 83.6% and England was 82.2%.
- 13.9% of people in GWH are registered disabled. Huntingdonshire was 16.4% and England was 17.3%.

- 7.16. In terms of GP practices, over 70% of the population go to Wellside surgery at Sawtry whilst more than 20% go to Alconbury.
- 7.17. There was some development in Great Gidding in the 1970's notably Dells Close and along Chapel End and the eastern end of the village but since then the GWH Neighbourhood has primarily seen single one-off developments.
- 7.18. Since 2011 a further 16 houses have been added (or are in the process of being completed) to the housing stock i.e. 6.5%. These 16 new houses have generally been unique, detached and had a range of bedrooms from 2 to 5.
- 7.19. The prime open spaces within the 5 villages are both in Great Gidding, notably the Recreation Ground and Jubilee Wood.
- 7.20. In terms of public transport, the GWH Neighbourhood is relatively isolated, bounded by the A1 to the East, the A14 to the South and the Northamptonshire border to the

¹¹ <https://ukpowernetworks.opendatasoft.com/pages/network-infrastructure-usage-map/>

¹²

https://ukpowernetworks.opendatasoft.com/explore/dataset/ukpn_primary_postcode_area/custom/

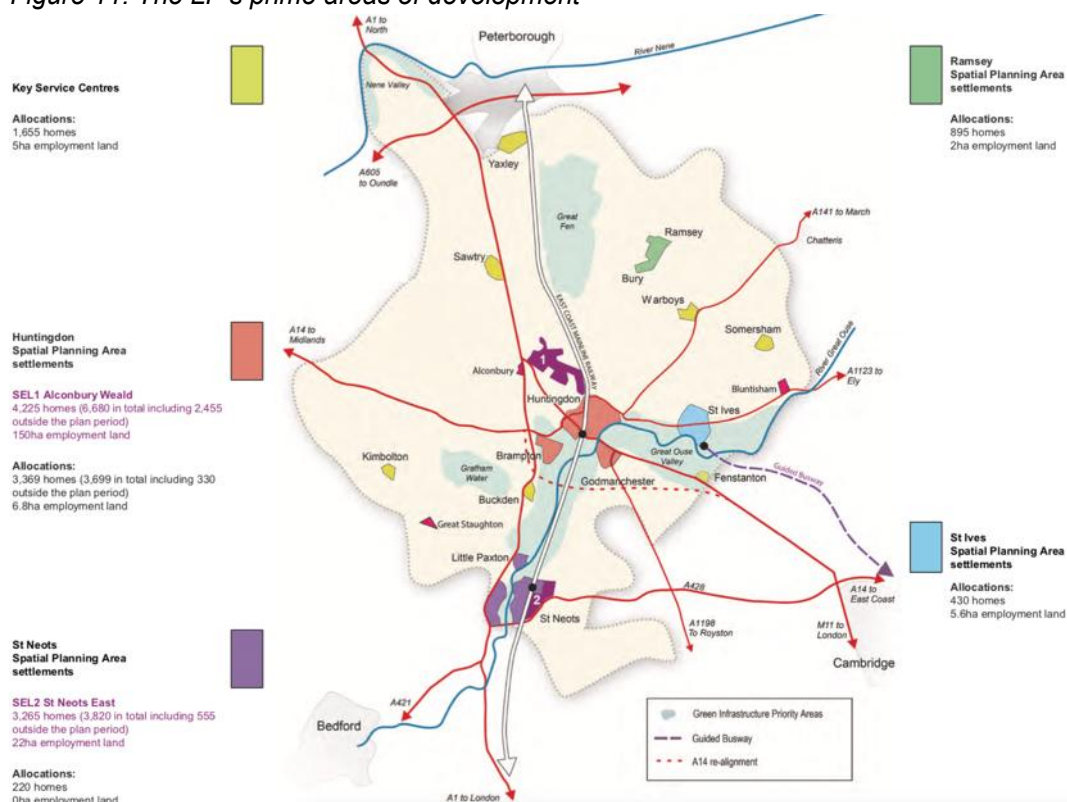
West. The links across these boundaries are poor. There are no public transport facilities to areas further afield e.g. to the nearest town, Oundle or Peterborough.

- 7.21. The only bus route through the Neighbourhood is the once a day 401 to Huntingdon. The time that can be spent in Huntingdon is only 2 hours, which restricts potential appointments and is barely adequate for shopping. There are no direct links to Oundle, Peterborough or even Sawtry.
- 7.22. Only 11 respondents, almost all over 60, had used the Ting on-demand bus service with varying success. Just under 50% found it excellent, though limited, the rest found it poor, difficult, or impossible to book, with worries about the return journey.
- 7.23. Footpaths and bridleways are very important and well used by all age groups.
- 7.24. Public footpaths also caused concern, as there are few between villages, and gaps in the network where paths can only be accessed by walking on the roads.
- 7.25. Community activities (fetes, clubs etc) have not yet returned to pre-covid levels.
- 7.26. The businesses in the area (who participated) are a spread of manual and professional services. Almost all are micro sized, operating with 1-5 people and more than half work from home/farm. The majority do not plan to expand. Constraints in ease of operation are an issue for all businesses including the 40% who plan to expand in the GWH Neighbourhood.
- 7.27. Three main constraints to business growth were slow planning permission, poor broadband/mobile reception, and poor local/transport infrastructure.
- 7.28. Residents are keen to encourage more local jobs and more local businesses – from artisan crafts to local produce / goods to services such as dry cleaning, florists, and coffee shops. Currently 75% of the businesses are servicing customers who are over 50 miles away.
- 7.29. All children go by car to school in Alconbury, Brington, Folksworth, Kimbolton, Oundle and Peterborough. There is school bus to Sawtry.
- 7.30. Great Gidding Playing Fields are a key green space for the children, as is Jubilee Wood but generally there is little to do for this age group.
- 7.31. Hamerton Zoo Park, attracting visitors all year round, especially in the summer months, including coach parties from schools as well as family groups, but these mainly come from outside the area.
- 7.32. The other significant location that creates a tourist pull, albeit on a much smaller scale, is the hamlet of Little Gidding, with historical links over different centuries. Ferrar House hosts day visitors and overnight conferences and Duke of Edinburgh Award Camping Groups, and in the past, a large international TS Elliott Festival.

8. Summary of the Local Plan policy context

- 8.1. The Government sets out the structure for planning the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In the Section 3 of the NPPF it requires that each local planning authority should prepare a Local Plan (LP) for its area.
- 8.2. Huntingdonshire's (HDC) Local Plan¹³ to 2036 sets out the Council's approach to securing sustainable development from 2011 to 2036 in order to meet identified needs, which is covered by a strategy statement and 38 planning policies and supporting text. It envisages provision will be made for at least 20,100 new homes (both market and affordable), and 14,400 additional jobs¹⁴. This will be concentrated in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities. As shown by the key diagram below this focuses on Alconbury Weald, Buckden, Fenstanton, Huntingdon, Kimbolton, Ramsey, St Ives, St Neots, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley

Figure 11: The LP's prime areas of development



- 8.4. It should be noted that the LP will be reviewed every 5 years and the policies updated where necessary.
- 8.5. Whilst the LP is very important to the GWH Neighbourhood because we are within the boundaries of HDC, it also borders North Northamptonshire District Council. The villages of Luddington In The Brook, Thurning and Litton (all in North Northamptonshire) are intertwined with those of Great Gidding and Winwick. As such decisions in one District can impact the other, such as a planned bio-digester just inside North Northamptonshire. Wider afield policies across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire County Council can also impact GWH. Therefore, there is an aspiration for greater communication and cooperation across different authorities.
- 8.6. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 1 - WORK CLOSELY WITH HDC**

The GWH Neighbourhood supports HDC's need for wider consultation with other entities and key parties (such as councils, MPs and unity authorities) especially when infrastructure decisions are being considered. This NP seeks to:

1. Encourage HDC and North Northants DC to work together whenever a development impacts both communities across the county boundary.
2. Support Cambridge and Peterborough County Councils, plus neighbouring villages, to develop integrated solutions for planning, transport, roads, and utilities.
3. As mentioned in Section 7, develop practical bus routes to not only Huntingdon but also to Oundle, Peterborough and Sawtry.
4. Ensure any developments in adjoining communities do not degrade the services received in this Neighbourhood.
5. Improve services and supply from utility companies so that this rural Neighbourhood can comply with Government's sustainability requirements.

9. Small scale residential development

- 9.1. As stated in the LP, HDC aims to increase the number of households by 20,100 (or 28%) between 2011 and 2036. The vast majority of these will be in the settlements highlighted in Section 8 Figure 11. There is, however, scope for additional houses in small settlements in line with the planning policies highlighted in Appendix C. Such developments need to be sympathetic to the local area and on a small scale, as mentioned in the HDC Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document¹⁵.
- 9.2. In the 2011 Census there were 244 households across the GWH Neighbourhood. Over the last 11 years a further 16 houses¹⁶ have been added (or are in the process of being completed) to the housing stock i.e. a 6.5% increase. The largest single development was 3 houses on a brownfield site in the centre of Winwick.
- 9.3. In 2023 several houses were approved in terms of planning permission. In Great Gidding there are 13, whilst in Hamerton a further 5 are approved. This will bring the growth from 2011 to 2036 to 14%. Based on a small settlement target of 20% growth, this equates to 15 more houses to be built until 2036 in the GWH Neighbourhood's to support the targets in the HDC LP.
- 9.4. The GWH Neighbourhood agrees with the stated aims of LP9 in the LP i.e. the community would be against any large-scale residential estate development of more than 10 houses because it would be utterly out of keeping with the area (as outlined in the GWH Contextual Analysis):
 - 9.4.1. In response to the residential survey, 40% of respondents stated that they favoured in-filling between existing houses on land not used.
 - 9.4.2. The idea of cul-du-sac developments was rejected by 70% of respondents.
 - 9.4.3. A further 26% were only in favour if it was on a very limited scale of 12 houses or less.
- 9.5. The biggest need for housing in the residential survey was energy efficient low-cost starter homes: 69% stated there was much or some need for these types of houses.
- 9.6. There is very limited desire for residential care homes (10% said much need), shared accommodation (1% much need) or shared ownership (4% much need).
- 9.7. All parishes within the GWH Neighbourhood want a conservation zone (58% Hamerton, 62% Winwick), complete with guidelines (57% Great Gidding).
- 9.8. The people in the GWH Neighbourhood cherish the unspoilt, quiet nature of the area. Our settlements should remain small rural places within an agriculture-based countryside. The NP supports LP11 Design Context in terms of our settlements can

¹⁵ <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf>

¹⁶ 8 in Great Gidding and 8 in Winwick.

be seen as having an aspect out to (and from) the surrounding countryside and another from within. Both are distinctive and often linked through long views over open spaces.

9.9. **GWH NP POLICY 1 - SENSITIVE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

The GWH Neighbourhood believes that all new development proposals should be sensitive to the existing Neighbourhood appearance where the building survey of the villages points to predominately unique individual houses. This NP requires that new developments should demonstrate that:

1. The size and layout of proposed developments enhance the village to which they are attached avoiding the introduction of incongruous and / or intrusive elements into the important views shown in Figure 15, in so far as they relate to land within the Neighbourhood Plan.
2. With reference to built form, scale, proportions, details and materials, new developments should reflect and respect the existing character and identity of the villages as set out in the GWH Neighbourhood Plan – Village Contextual analysis. The GWH Village Contextual Analysis provides several surveys with information on existing structures as a guide to proposed new developments
3. Demonstrate that they complement the best of local design responding positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from its surroundings to help to produce a high-quality development.
4. Consider the relationship of buildings to each other and the public space to be as important as the design of the buildings themselves.
5. Demonstrate how it will enhance/complement the appearance, form and layout of existing buildings in the Neighbourhood.
6. Demonstrate how the Neighbourhood would be enhanced in terms of appropriate design, build quality and spatial relationships with existing buildings and landscape.
7. If it includes affordable housing, ensure it is fully integrated and indistinguishable from the rest of the development's market housing in terms of all aspects such as the density, garden size, the arrangement of parking, the quality of landscaping, details and materials.
8. All new residential units would be expected to have direct access to an area of private amenity space which is designed to be of a shape, size and location allowing effective and practical use of the space by residents. Garden sizes should reflect those within the existing villages where appropriate.
9. New residential units should reflect the size and nature of existing properties in the parishes, which are predominantly medium to large detached houses.

10. The Green Agenda

- 10.1. The main implication from the responses in the Residential Survey is how to maintain the status quo i.e. keeping the rural nature of the GWH Neighbourhood, whilst dealing with the concerns about the environment and impact of global warming such as more extreme weather.
- 10.2. The potential solutions, such as more electric vehicles, and radical changes to energy supply for heating will require much thought and planning and considerable work on the built environment. There will be particular pressure on the electricity grid in the GWH Neighbourhood. Community heating schemes supported by CCC may be one solution.
- 10.3. Whilst certain residents may have the space and money for private charging points for their electric vehicles, many will not. HDC needs to consider the introduction of public charging points.
- 10.4. The bus service needs to be improved to be a credible alternative to use of the private car and go to the major local towns including Oundle in Northamptonshire and Peterborough rather than just Huntingdon.
- 10.5. It is recognised that technology may hold the key to mitigating the effects of humans. Often the countryside lags behind with advances in technology due to remoteness and sparsity of population. In our society where innovation relies on commercial enterprises that have profit as the no.1 priority, developments are often easier in areas of higher population density.
- 10.6. As a predominantly agricultural area, changes in farming practices will be important. They are already taking place with AI technology, and this will continue the trend for larger machinery and fewer workers, but new, targeted practices could improve the environment for wildlife, which has been in severe decline due to the use of insecticides, herbicides and pesticides.
- 10.7. The Alconbury Flood Group is also promoting the use by farmers of deep rooted crops / vegetation to promote water absorption by the soil (and therefore reduce run-off).
- 10.8. The responses from the survey would suggest that the population of the area, which is about half of what it was in the 19th century, will remain quite low due to the lack of jobs and the desire to restrict house building to infilling.
- 10.9. **GWH NP POLICY 2 – UTILITIES**
 Power, water and telecom supplies are currently stretched with existing residents and businesses. This NP requires that new developments should demonstrate that:
 1. They can demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity for power, water drainage and wastewater before any new development commences.

Developers should undertake pre-planning engagement at the earliest opportunity with Anglian Water and the [CCC](#).

2. If upgrades are necessary, the proposal will need to include a plan for delivery, agreed with the relevant agency, including phasing of development where necessary.
 3. As set out in the [Surface Water Planning Guidance](#)¹⁷ the rate of surface water discharge from any new development on previously developed land shall not exceed the existing run off rate.
 4. All homes and businesses are capable of being served by super-fast broadband through the integration of appropriate measures such as open access ducting to industry standards¹⁸.
- 10.10. The MHCLG has commenced public consultation on the review of the Water Efficiency Standard(s). This includes an option to revise the standard from 125 litres per person per day to 105 and in areas of stress 100.
- 10.11. Anglian Water has supplied more information on their strategy in their WRMP report¹⁹ (where GWH is in the area called Ruthamford North). It should also be noted that Anglian Water prefer nature based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

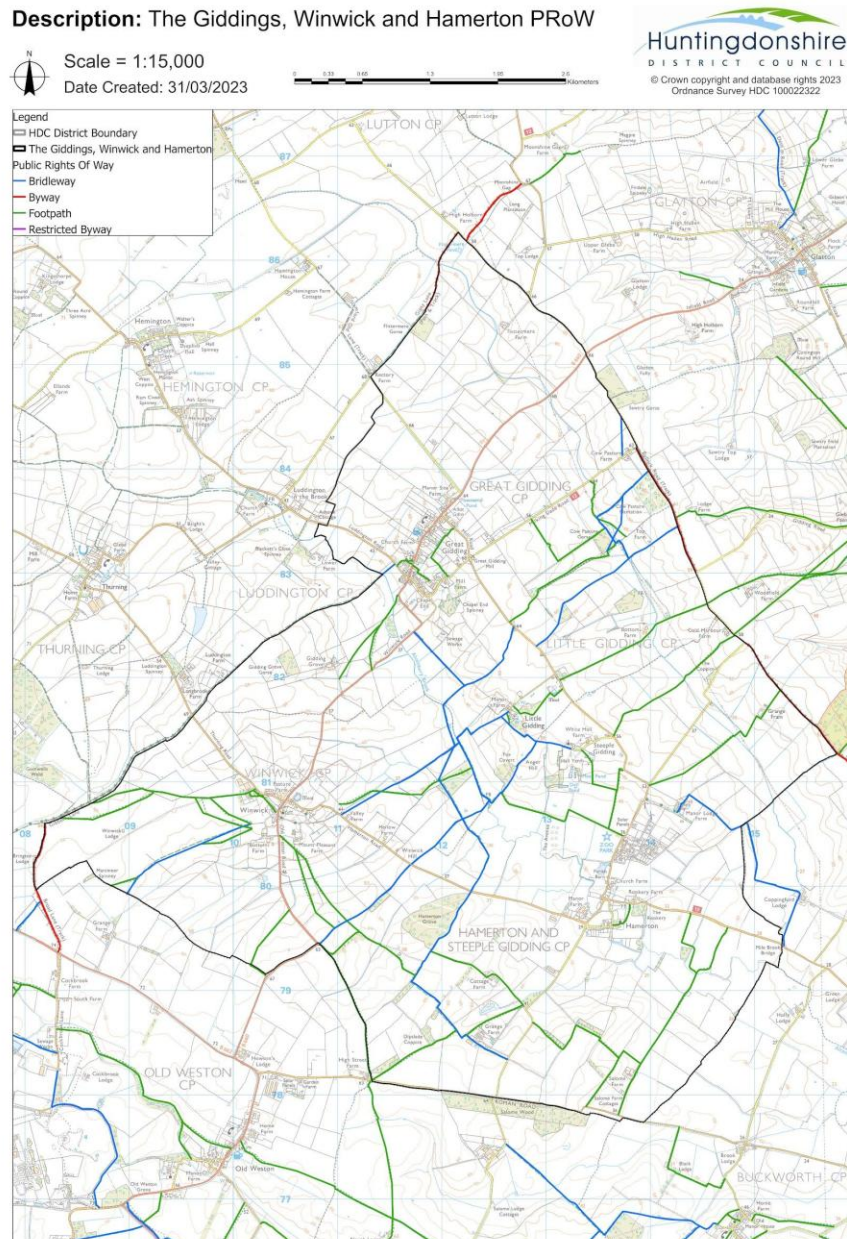
¹⁷ <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/household/about-us/wrmp/revised-draft-wrmp24-main-report-v2.pdf>

¹⁸ In the UK, broadband ducting standards are heavily governed by Openreach installation guides to ensure that telecommunications pathways are future-proofed and safely separated from other underground utilities. These standardized pathways prevent redundant digging and simplify network upgrades – for more details see <https://www.powerandcables.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Cable-Laying-A-Cable-Duct-Laying-Guide-From-BT-Openreach.pdf>

11. Transport and exercise

This NP supports the improvement of active travel options to improve health and wellbeing as well as promoting environmentally friendly activities. However, there are several issues which need to be addressed.

Figure 12 Bridleways and Footpaths in the GWH Neighbourhood



- 11.1. The HDC Footpath map for the GWH Neighbourhood shows that there are a considerable number of cross-country footpaths in the Neighbourhood, but that they form a very broken network, with many coming to a dead end, with others only linked by public roads which in many cases lack verges for safe walking or riding. The King's Escape footpath from Steeple Gidding towards Coppingford Lodge, used by

King Charles I after the Battle of Naseby in 1646 is a good example of this problem. Many walkers and riders use field edges with the passive connivance of local farmers to complete walks.

- 11.2. There are no safe cycle routes in the GWH Neighbourhood. Even in the villages, there are very few areas where young children can cycle safely. Although some of the bridle paths provide cycle transit paths, they are also used by scramble type motorcycles which leave deep ruts dangerous to horses, cyclists, and walkers alike.
- 11.3. Within the villages there are very few pavements for pedestrians; only Great Gidding and Winwick have a proportion of their roads with a pavement.
- 11.4. In many places, visiting neighbours or accessing facilities can only be achieved by walking on the roadway in places where there is limited grass verges. Residents walking with children, pushchairs, dogs or horses, or users of mobility scooters, are in danger from fast moving traffic, especially where there are bends, blind spots and poor light or a low sun. Residents entering and exiting their property are also in danger.
- 11.5. Existing pavements are generally narrow, in disrepair, with uneven surfaces, substandard repairs, and lack dropped kerbs, making them particularly difficult to use by those with limited mobility.
- 11.6. Where cross-country footpaths exist, stiles are often not dog-friendly, and crossing them involves lifting animals over them. They are also impassable on horseback. Gates and bridges are in a poor state of repair, with repairs often taking many months to be implemented.
 - 11.6.1. Residents want cross-country footpaths and bridle paths linked up and extended to provide safe cross-country routes between the villages, adjoining neighbourhoods and isolated areas of the GWH Neighbourhood such as Winwick Hill.
 - 11.6.2. Maintenance of existing cross-country footpaths should be improved, and repairs implemented more speedily. Stiles should be replaced with gates that meet the needs of dog-walkers and horse-riders.
 - 11.6.3. Residents wanted pavements to be implemented where spaces and verges exist to provide safe access routes in villages alongside road traffic. This is a particular problem in Hamerton. Where space is insufficient, pedestrian painted lanes could be instigated with suitable warning signs for road users.
 - 11.6.4. Maintenance of existing pavements should be improved to ensure that they are safe for all pedestrians to use.
- 11.7. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 2 - IMPROVE TRANSPORT AND SAFETY**

The GWH Neighbourhood recognises that as a rural community it is dependent on connection to the wider society. This NP seeks to:

1. Promote the widespread understanding that our road and path network is a shared space for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians.
2. Implement speed reduction measures such as chicanes, speed awareness camera and passing places.
3. Have more white lines, pedestrian signs and mirrors (on blind bends) to improve safety.
4. Encourage CCC to repair potholes and disintegrating roads quicker.

11.8. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 3 - IMPROVE PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Encourage CCC to extend and link footpaths and bridleways to allow for greater choice and safety of non-motorised travel in the GWH area.

1. Replace stiles with kissing gates (or similar) to improve access for the less able.
2. Refresh and put up more sign posts for footpaths and bridleways.

11.9. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 4 – BETTER PAVEMENTS**

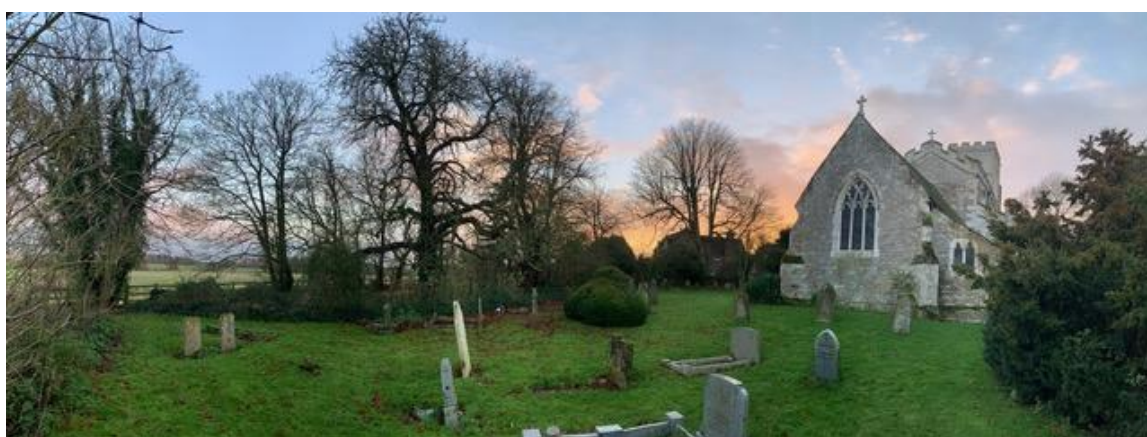
The current pavements are in a poor state of repair and a danger to mobility scooters and prams. There is also no circuit of pavements around any of the villages. The aspiration is for CCC to:

1. Resurface and widen existing pavements and put in more dropped curbs.
2. Put in a circular pavement around the main villages to encourage exercise and improve safety.

12. The Natural Environment

- 12.1. The Giddings and Winwick within the GWH Neighbourhood are some of the highest villages in Cambridgeshire. The Mediaeval population of rural Huntingdonshire was considerable.
- 12.2. Within the landscape there remain many features from the Mediaeval period, including deserted villages, green lanes, churches, castles, bridges, numerous moats, manors and ridge and furrow.
- 12.3. The majority of these features are now only visible as earthworks, but some, such as green lanes, churches and bridges remain in use.

Photo 6: Steeple Gidding church



The vast majority of Scheduled Monuments within the district are from the Mediaeval period.

- 12.4. Most of the GWH Neighbourhood is still rural and contains substantial areas of farmland which contributes significantly to the character of the Parishes and the setting of the villages.
- 12.5. The GWH Neighbourhood is rich in biodiversity due to their rural setting, plentiful green space, and diverse wildlife habitats. There was extremely strong feedback from the residential surveys (97% wanted to maintain open green spaces, 87% wanted enhanced protection of the landscape) that people want to preserve this environment.
- 12.6. This NP actively encourages the provision of additional benefits for biodiversity which contribute to future-proofing the natural environment at a landscape scale and contributing to mitigating climate change, while ensuring existing important sites, habitats and priority species²⁰ such as the European (brown) hare, the Song thrush, the Yellowhammer and the Common Starling are protected, maintained, and enhanced.

²⁰ See the UK Biodiversity Action Plan <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap/> for details

- 12.7. The NP actively promote the “conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species”.
- 12.8. Natural England’s biodiversity net gain study (Vivid Economics, June 2018) considered the impacts on the economics and viability of development and concluded that a biodiversity net gain requirement was not expected to effect the financial viability of housing developments in scenarios incorporating up to 20% biodiversity net gain.

12.9. **GWH NP POLICY 3 - PROMOTE A BIODIVERSE, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

In-line with LP 30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, the GWH Neighbourhood believes that the restoration of redundant land and habitats is key to sustainability and an attractive and healthy landscape. This NP requires that new developments should:

1. Incorporate a 10% net gain in local biodiversity and a richer natural environment. Net gain at a level of 20% will be supported and encouraged.
2. If a loss of natural habitats is unavoidable, include mitigation and reinstatement within the Neighbourhood area in the first instance before looking to the wider HDC area and then the CCC area.

Greater guidance for developers on this policy can be found in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority²¹.

12.10. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 5 – PLANT MORE TREES**

There are too many trees that are dying either due to diseases such as Ash Die Back or old age. HDC in the 1990's offered small trees to residents to plant. The Parishes will investigate into similar schemes that could be implemented within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

12.11. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 6 – ORGANISE LITTER PICKING EVENTS**

From the survey one of the most popular events was organised litter picking to reduce the amount of litter within villages and the road verges. The Parish Council / Parish Meetings are asked to organise such events in the Autumn.

²¹

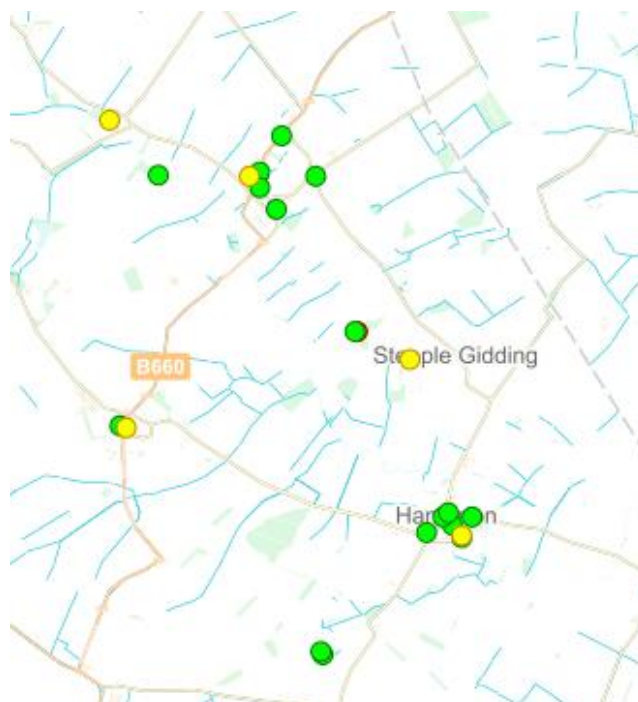
https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lnrs/consultation/supporting_documents/Local%20Nature%20Recovery%20Strategy%20for%20Cambridgeshire%20and%20Peterborough%20Part%202.pdf

13. Heritage asset

- 13.1. Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:
 - 13.1.1. Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
 - 13.1.2. Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional
- 13.2. As HDC state in their LP key assets that contribute to the distinct identity of Huntingdonshire that are a priority for conservation and enhancement include:
 - 13.2.1. listed buildings with a wider visual and economic benefit;
 - 13.2.2. registered parks and gardens;
 - 13.2.3. listed churches;
 - 13.2.4. historic built form including distinctive street patterns and traditional building materials, whether it is part of designated conservation areas or not;
 - 13.2.5. historic landscape features, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and the many ancient and semi-natural woodlands;
 - 13.2.6. the heritage associated with significant historic figures with a local connection
- 13.3. As LP34 states great weight and importance is given to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. The statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so
- 13.4. The three parishes contain 25 listed buildings or sites (shown in Figure 13 and listed in table A) considered to be worthwhile preserving for their historical and architectural significance. Six churches are listed with Little Giddings Church of St John the Evangelist rated highest at Grade 1. Several private dwellings are listed, as is the Fox and Hounds Public House in Great Gidding.

Figure 13: The Location of heritage sites

Listed (green) and scheduled areas (yellow) in the GWH Neighbourhood



- 13.5. Most interestingly there are several unusual listings including a Hovel, a Barn, a Bridge, the Tomb of Nicholas Ferrar and Hamerton's Church Yard Cross. There are also five areas of land including a mediaeval moat, two deserted villages and parkland that are identified, although nothing remains of any structures, only indentations in the land.
- 13.6. For such a small rural area this is quite a significant number of heritage assets (see 9.8) and whilst the private listed buildings are generally well maintained, the public buildings are in danger of deteriorating.

Photo 3: The Grade 2 Elm Cottage at Hamerton



- 13.7. These buildings, such as the churches were originally financed and constructed by the lord of the manor or by communities who used them regularly. Today the users are very few in number and the churches, being very old structures, require a lot of maintenance. These buildings and the land around them are significant to the scenery and ambience of the villages, so maintaining them and finding constructive uses for them was deemed important to respondents.

Table A Heritage Assets²² within Gidwickham

Village	Listed Assets	Designation	Listing ID
Great Gidding	33 Chapel End	2	1330512
Great Gidding	Tower Mill	2	1130106
Great Gidding	Fox and Hounds Public House	2	1222762
Great Gidding	Crown Cottage	2	1130105
Great Gidding	Parish Church of St Michael	2*	1130104
Great Gidding	Baptist Chapel	2	1222773
Hamerton	Sycamore Cottage	2	1130109
Hamerton	Manor Farm	2	1222827
Hamerton	ChurchYard Cross	2	1130107
Hamerton	Parish Church of All Saints	2	1222799
Hamerton	Elm Cottage	2	1222843
Hamerton	Church Bridge Crossing	2	1130103
Hamerton	Church Bridge Crossing	Scheduling	1006803
Hamerton	Rookery Farmhouse Park and Garden	2	1130110
Hamerton	Barn south of Grange Farmhouse	2	1222855
Hamerton	Hovel south of Grange farmhouse	2	1130111
Little Gidding	Chest Tomb of Nicholas Ferrar	2	1267524
Little Gidding	Parish Church of St John the Evangelist	1	1130115
Little Gidding	Deserted village (site of)	Scheduling	1006814
Steeple Gidding	Deserted village (site of)	Scheduling	1006818
Steeple Gidding	Parish Church of St Andrew's	2	1130118
Winwick	Moated site & shrunken mediaeval village	Scheduling	1006805
Winwick	Parish Church of All Saints	2*	1223069
Winwick	Westwood Farmhouse	2	1130517

- 13.8. Our settlements contain a variety of Heritage Assets in the form of archaeology, listed buildings and conservation areas. They are irreplaceable. Their continued use is an imperative caveated by the need to avoid destruction through neglect, carelessness, or an excess of changes.

²² <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

- 13.9. The policy below relates to heritage assets in total including, but not limited to, listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, historic parks and gardens, and non- heritage assets.
- 13.10. It should be noted that there are currently no non-designated heritage assets in Huntingdonshire (although there are in Cambridgeshire) but this aspiration covers the future eventuality when there may be some.
- 13.11. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 7– CLASSIFY NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**
- Proposals affecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets will be judged having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset which may include its setting to its surroundings and the contribution it makes to the character of the local area’
- 13.12. **GWH NP POLICY 4 - PROTECT HERITAGE ASSETS**
- The GWH Neighbourhood believes that Heritage Assets must be protected from inappropriate or disproportionate development. This NP requires that proposals to Heritage Assets:
1. Should demonstrate the significance of the heritage asset including their setting and their relative importance including their architectural, historic and archaeological value.
 2. Should demonstrate that adverse impacts are avoided as far as possible, or if unavoidable how they will be minimised as far as possible
 3. Be retained where reasonably possible. A proposal which would result in the loss of a heritage asset will be required to provide clear and substantial justification.
 4. Be repaired and restored using appropriate materials, respecting the historic form, fabric and special interest that contributes to the significance of the affected heritage asset.
 5. Should demonstrate that any necessary alterations and extensions to a heritage asset reflects the nature, materials, and form of the asset itself
 6. Should be regarded as gifts we pass to the future. Almost all buildings are subject to repair and alteration using appropriate materials and building techniques. However, if a case can be made for the use of modern materials of comparable longevity it could be used, the proposal should demonstrate that proposed materials do not harm the significance of the heritage asset and are fully justified.

14. Community utilities and facilities

- 14.1. The GWH Neighbourhood supports the Government's commitment to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. For guidance this is summarised by CCC using the following 5 sectional diagram:



The GWH Neighbourhood has no piped gas for domestic or commercial heating. It relies on a combination of electricity, oil storage, LPG and wood burning for heating. In the transition away from fossil fuels the difficulties inherent in isolated rural housing should be noted. The demand for electricity will increase due to the installation of air and ground source heat pumps, the transition to electric cars and maybe even air conditioning as temperatures rise. The existing UK Power network is under strain (as shown by the occasional power cuts) and the community concern is that our rural Neighbourhood power supply will be restricted in favour of larger settlements.

The internet will play an increasing role in the village lives and the new opportunities with 5G such as individual health monitoring tools. Overall this will result in more home working, greater use of home deliveries and better computer connectivity

Voice and data coverage is currently poor in the villages and outlying houses and farms. The GWH Neighbourhood is being left behind in terms of mobile phone and data coverage. This needs to be addressed if people / businesses are going to thrive,

14.2. GWH NP ASPIRATION 8 - POSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Power, water, wastewater, drainage and telecom supplies are currently stretched with existing residents and businesses. The GWH Neighbourhood believes that demand for electricity will dramatically increase²³ with the Net Zero transition, plus a robust internet will be essential for future development. This NP requests that there should be:

1. A proven documented capacity headroom for all utilities for any new developments before any new development commences
2. An improved and more reliable power supply, free of interruptions.
3. A reasonable period for replacing fossil fuels in older buildings to allow for technological improvements and reduced costs of transition

²³ OFGEM estimate per household uses approximated 3 times as much gas as electricity
<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/average-gas-and-electricity-usage>

4. If approved by the majority, schemes that provide community energy to the villages in the form of ground sourced heat pumps²⁴ should be supported.
 5. The development of Fibre and ultra-high-speed broadband and 5G networks to support the 5 villages.
 6. Improved connections to outlying households and businesses which currently suffer from a sub-optimal service which is hindering their development.
- 14.3. There are now not many facilities across GWH. The prime facilities consist of:
- 14.3.1. 5 churches, all with graveyards.
 - 14.3.2. 3 village halls in Great Gidding, Hamerton and Winwick.
 - 14.3.3. 1 Baptist Chapel in Great Gidding (being converted to residential use).
 - 14.3.4. 1 local shop in Great Gidding.
 - 14.3.5. 1 Equestrian shop (The Den) in Great Gidding.
 - 14.3.6. 1 pub (the Fox and Hounds) in Great Gidding.

Photo 7: Looking down from the top of Main Street passed the pub



- 14.3.7. Jubilee (communal) Wood and allotments at the top of Great Gidding
 - 14.3.8. The Kings Wood planted at the bottom of Great Gidding.
 - 14.3.9. 1 recreation ground in Great Gidding.
 - 14.3.10. 1 wildlife park (zoo) in Hamerton.
- 14.4. There were provisional plans in Great Gidding for a Multi User Game Area (MUGA) on the recreation ground, although planning lapsed and there was no funding.

²⁴ CCC has supported the development of over 100 boreholes and associated ground source heat pumps to migrate Swafham Prior from oil-based heating

14.5. GWH NP ASPIRATION 9 - SUPPORT COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The GWH Neighbourhood recognises that its population is older than the national average population and surrounding towns. The GWH Neighbourhood clearly attracts a demographic that seeks a quieter settled life. This NP encourages measures that support our elderly by:

1. Resisting the loss of community services and facilities.
2. Encouraging HDC to ensure adequate capacity for our community services are maintained.
3. Ensuring that sufficient medical support services, GPs and hospitals are provided within easy reach.
4. Working to meet the need for quality of life. This includes opportunities for leisure, spiritual engagement, social, education and retail facilities.

14.6. GWH NP ASPIRATION 10 – BETTER RECREATION GROUND APARATUS

The equipment in the Recreation Ground is in need of improvement. This NP encourages the Great Gidding Parish Council to apply for CIL money to create the funding to improve the equipment.

14.7. GWH NP ASPIRATION 11 – BETTER ADVERTISEMENT OF EVENTS/SERVICES

The Parish Councils / Parish Meetings need to consider ways to improve the advertisements of events across the 3 parishes eg via a cross community website, facebook, and easily accessible noticeboards. A regular newsletter would also be useful.

15. Designated Local Green Spaces and View

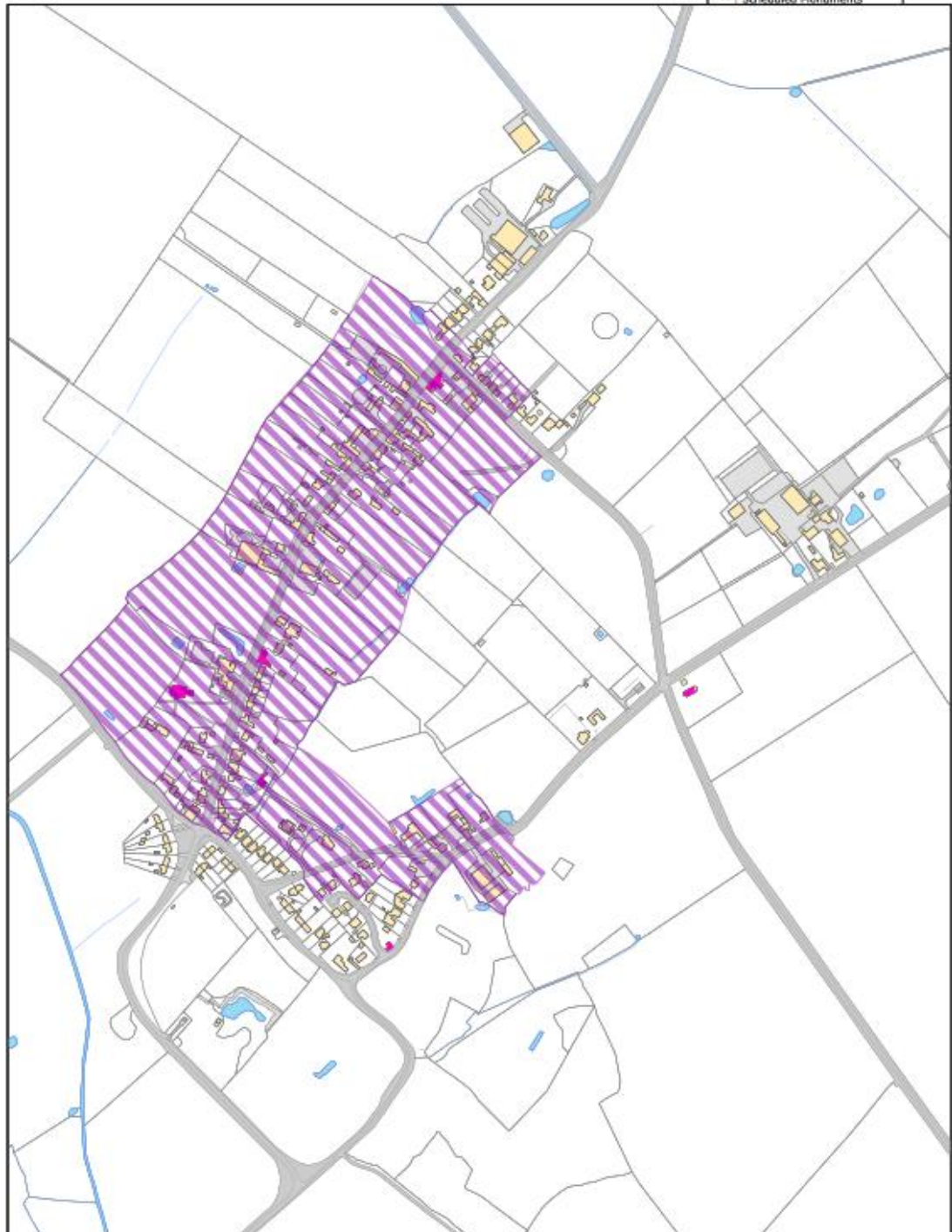
- 15.1. In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection.
- 15.2. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF identifies that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts. That means that, once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances or if the development clearly enhances the Local Green Space
- 15.3. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF states the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
 - 15.3.1. in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - 15.3.2. 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
 - 15.3.3. local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 15.4. The questionnaires in the community consultation emphasised the importance of protecting the environment and implicitly supporting national initiatives such as the Queen's Green Canopy and the Woodland Trust tree planning scheme.
- 15.5. Aside of purely climate change considerations, increased areas of green spaces and woodland will enhance the appearance of the countryside. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF specifies the conditions for the designation of Local Green Spaces which are then protected from development.
- 15.6. NPPF paragraphs 174 and 179 supports measures to protect and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity. HDC's Local Plan policies 30, 31 and 32 aims to avoid adverse impacts resulting in loss of biodiversity and geodiversity
- 15.7. Local Green Spaces may be suitable to accommodate biodiversity enhancement or flood risk attenuation measures where this doesn't undermine the purpose of identifying the site as Local Green Space in the first place.
- 15.8. The "sense of place" and character of GWH is preserved by ensuring that the existing green spaces are protected from development. As part of the NP process, the community was asked to consider if there were any important green open spaces of value in the GWH Neighbourhood. The NP seeks to protect such sites.
- 15.9. Only Great Gidding currently has a conservation zone which is shown in purple shading below in Figure 14.

15.10.

*Figure 14 – Great Gidding Conservation Area***Description: Great Gidding village heritage assets**

Scale = 1:6,000

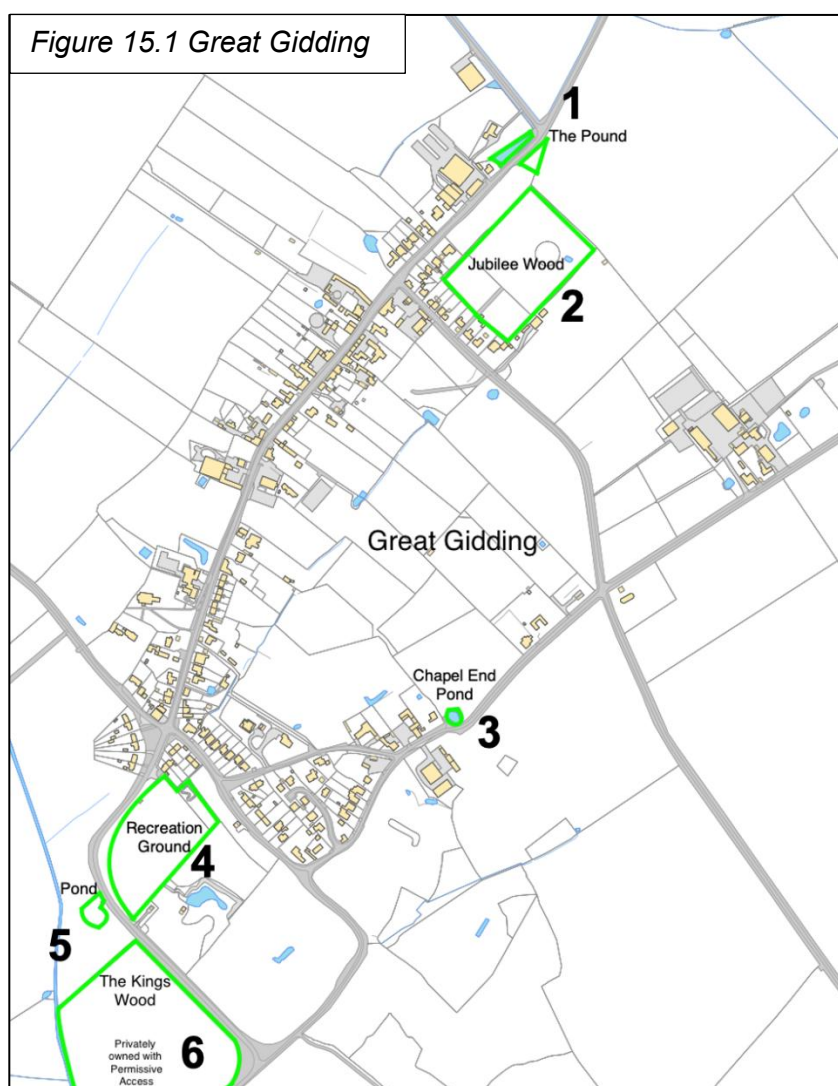
Date Created: 24/05/2024

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Ordnance Survey HDC 150022322

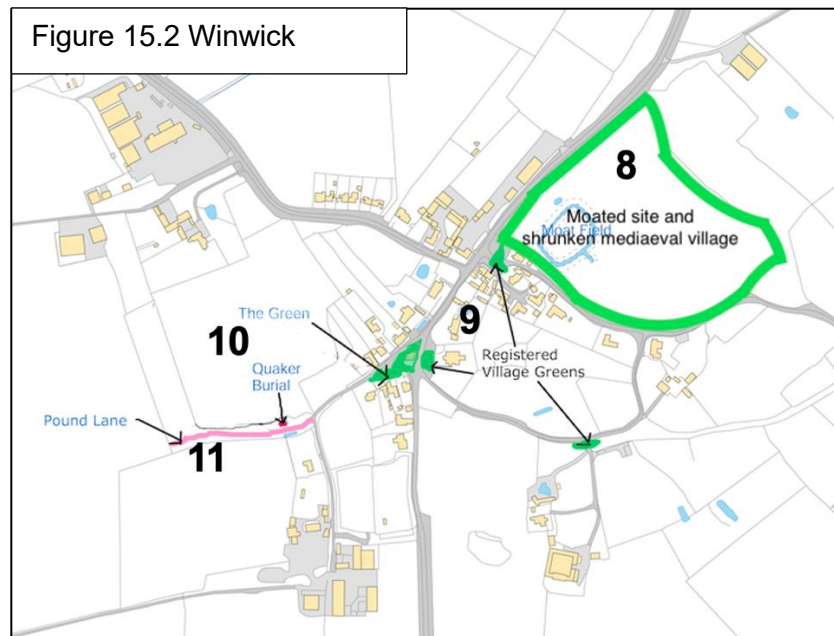
15.11. The GWH Green Spaces report outlines the criteria and areas (the number against the below list references the respective places in the report and on the maps below)

that were considered for protection from insensitive forms of physical development.
Within (ie inside) the villages and hamlets:

- 15.11.1. The 6 churchyards of the 5 churches and the Baptist Chapel due to their historic significance
- 15.11.2. Great Gidding -
 - 15.11.2.1. The Recreation Ground - recreational value (4)
 - 15.11.2.2. Jubilee Wood - recreational value and richness of wildlife (2)
 - 15.11.2.3. The new Kings Wood - richness of wildlife and tranquillity (6)
 - 15.11.2.4. The Pound - richness of wildlife (1)
 - 15.11.2.5. Chapel End Pond - richness of wildlife (3)

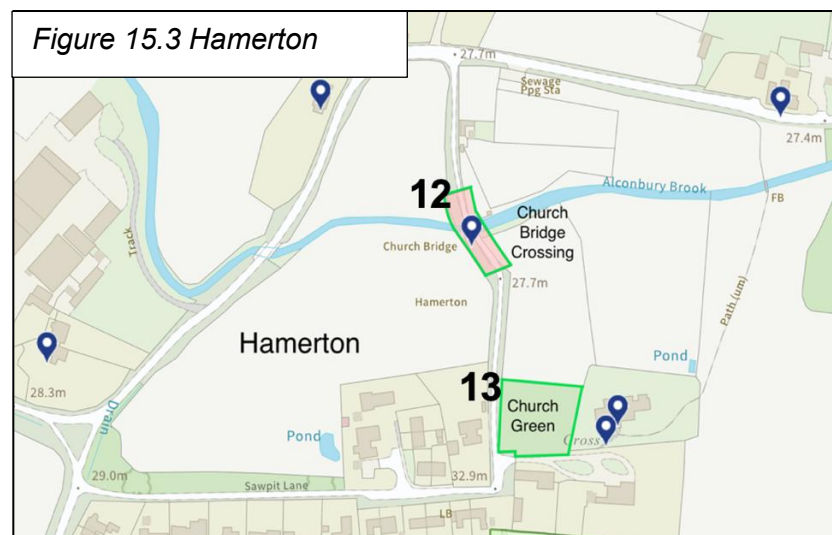


- 15.11.3. Winwick
 - 15.11.3.1. The Quakers Burial Ground - historical significance, (10)
 - 15.11.3.2. Pound Land (11)
 - 15.11.3.3. The Greens (9)



15.11.4. Within Hamerton

15.11.4.1. Outside the church (13)



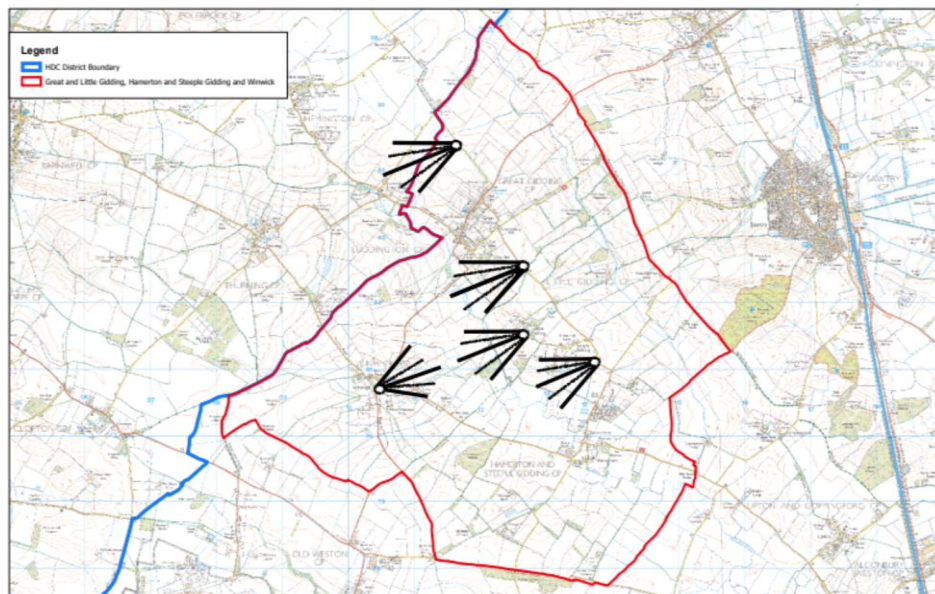
15.12. **GWH NP POLICY 5 - PROTECT LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The GWH Neighbourhood believes that green spaces should be protected in accordance with the NPPF (section 105 to 107) and the LP. This NP requires that:

1. The nine spaces identified in Paragraphs 15.10.2, 15.10.3 and 15.10.4 and mapped as 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11 and 13 in the GWH Local Green Spaces report are designated as Local Green Spaces.
2. Any new proposal affecting the Local Green Spaces or their setting should respect their use, scale, aspect and visual contribution to the settlement.

3. Development proposals on these sites will not be supported unless they are consistent with the National Policy for Green Belts.
- 15.13. There are several superb wide open sky views in the area particularly over the valley of Alconbury Brook (shown below) from either the Little Gidding side of the valley or conversely Winwick.

Figure 16: Important views across GWH



The views

Photo 8: Mill Lane towards Winwick



Photo 9: View towards Hamerton from Steeple Gidding

Photo 10: View from Winwick towards Hamerton



Photo 11: View from Little Gidding towards Winwick



Photo 12: View from Hemington Lodge Road towards Winwick

Photo 13: View from Gypsy Lane towards Luddington in the Brook



15.14. These views need to be protected from such things that spoil the views e.g.:

- 15.14.1. Wind farm developments and individual wind turbine.
- 15.14.2. Large warehouses.
- 15.14.3. Large scale residential development.
- 15.14.4. More electricity pylons.

16. Tourism

- 16.1. In the Residential Survey only 32% of respondents stated they wanted to encourage tourism. The Local Plan however has LP23 which promotes tourism within certain constraints.
- 16.2. The prime tourist destination within the GWH Neighbourhood is Hamerton Zoo/ Wildlife park that has a wide selection of animals and birds.
- 16.3. The area in its rural location, has footpath and bridleway networks and rural lanes, surrounded by major transport roads. It could promote circular and historic walks.
- 16.4. These are enjoyed by comparatively small numbers of visitors either travelling through by car, mainly on road cyclists, and some walkers.
- 16.5. The parishes have not developed an offering as a tourist destination such as the history around Nicholas Ferrar and the Grade 1 Listed Church at Little Gidding.

*Photo 14: The only Grade 1 building in GWH
Parish Church of St John the Evangelist at
Little Gidding*

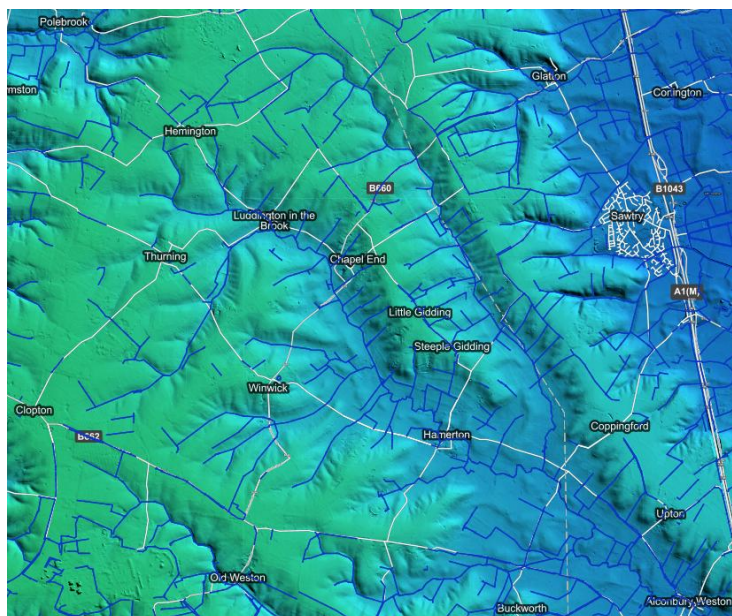


- 16.6. Two businesses on the edges of the area, at Holly Lodge Café and Rectory Farm Kitchen are providing 'go to destinations' for cyclists and walkers and this area provides routes to either / both.
- 16.7. Equally there are no hotels, bed and breakfasts or Airbnbs in the parishes, although there are Airbnb accommodation offers within the A605 / A14 / A1 triangle.
- 16.8. Tourism, with a focus on environmentally sensitive activities, travel and history within the area, could be appropriately developed, opening up potential for small local enterprises.

17. Flood risk and drainage

- 17.1. The Alconbury Brook catchment covers 84km² (see below). The clay soils and rolling valley sides make the Brook very quickly responsive to heavy rain on saturated soils. Climate change is increasing flood risk by increasing the frequency and scale of larger rainfall events (1% rise in global temperature equates to the atmosphere holding 7% more moisture²⁵).

Figure 17: Topography and water courses in GWH Neighbourhood²⁶



- 17.2. Various properties in Hamerton get periodically impacted by flooding due to Alconbury Brook bursting its banks (it is worse in Alconbury). Other people in the community are affected by being cut off from emergency services, schools, doctors' surgery and shops. There have been at least 2 recorded deaths associated with flood water since 1987.
- 17.3. Serious floods have occurred 1987, 1998, 2012, 2016 and 2020 with the Brook flooding many domestic properties (e.g. 1998: 103 homes, 2020: 73 homes). Minor flooding is a frequent winter event with flood water from the Brook causing road closures annually.
- 17.4. The Government²⁷ publishes the following map highlighting flood risk

²⁵ <https://climate.nasa.gov/explore/ask-nasa-climate/3143/steamy-relationships-how-atmospheric-water-vapor-amplifies-earths-greenhouse-effect/#:~:text=For%20every%20degree%20Celsius%20that,to%20the%20laws%20of%20thermo dynamics.&text=Some%20people%20mistakenly%20believe%20water,driver%20of%20Earth%207s%20current%20warming.>

²⁶ www.parish-online.co.uk

²⁷ <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map?easting=511820&northing=283285&map=RiversOrSea>

Figure 18 Flood Risks in the GWH Neighbourhood

- 17.5. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD31 sets out relevant advice regarding allowing future developments to be built in ways that are considerate of flood risk. The [Cambridgeshire County Council's Surface Water Planning Guidance](#) also provides technical guidance for developers. The GWH NP supports the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems including grey water systems.
- 17.6. To alleviate flooding The Alconbury Flood Group²⁸ is also working with Anglian Water & the Environment Agency to reduce the flow of water during deluges by:
- 17.6.1. Offline ponds - fill when water levels rise.
 - 17.6.2. Leaky dams - hold back the initial deluge of water.
 - 17.6.3. Green and grey water capture schemes – reduce run-off.
 - 17.6.4. Meandering stream - replacing straight ditches and reduce speed.
- 17.7. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 12 - IMPROVE FLOOD PREVENTION**

The GWH Neighbourhood supports a robust approach to ensuring that any development reduces flood risk in the Neighbourhood. This NP seeks to implement this by encouraging The Environment Agency, CCC, Anglian Water and the Cambridgeshire Highways Authority ²⁹to:

1. Increase the on-site storage of water, which significantly delays flows into the Alconbury Brook system: trickle dams, swales, off-line ponds, and wetland features in any developments.
2. Follow the Environment Agency standing advice and HDC LP 15 for mitigation measures that reduce the risk of flooding.
3. Regular dredge and clean out of the existing drains and water courses.

²⁸ <https://www.alconburybrookfloodgroup.uk/>

²⁹ See appendix D for Flood Prevention responsibilities

18. Employment, the local economy

- 18.1. According to the 2021 Census fewer people (53.9%) in GWH are economically active than in Huntingdonshire (61.6%) or England (57.4%).
- 18.2. Of those people not employed:
- 18.2.1. 13.1% in GWH have worked in the last 12 months - England is 13.2%.
 - 18.2.2. 71.4% in GWH have not worked in the last 12 months - England 61.1%.
 - 18.2.3. 15.5% in GWH have never worked - England 25.6%.
- 18.3. As the current businesses in the area are almost entirely micro-sized, expanding the number of new companies in the future will require targeted planning and support, including proof of local demand.
- 18.4. Improving the broadband and mobile services, especially in the Giddings and Hamerton, will be essential for certain types of service and technology companies.
- 18.5. The largest business type according to the survey results is agricultural - arable and mixed farming.

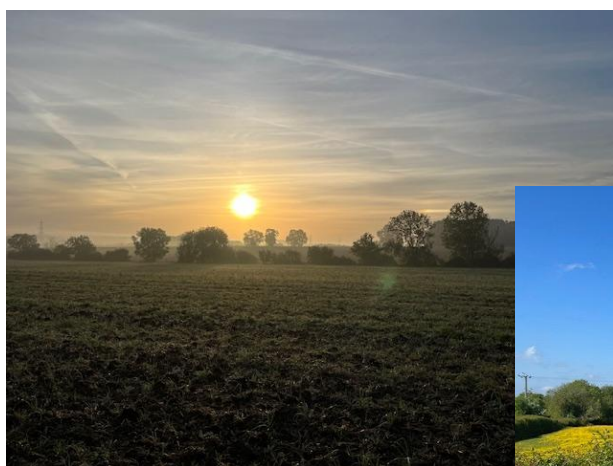


Photo 15: Arable crop near Great Gidding



Photo 16: Cow pasture near Great Gidding from Mill Lane

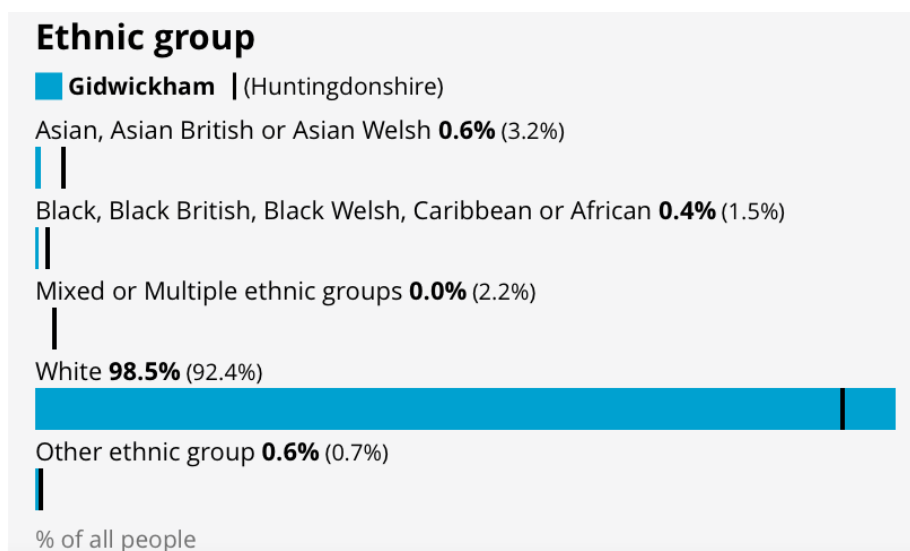
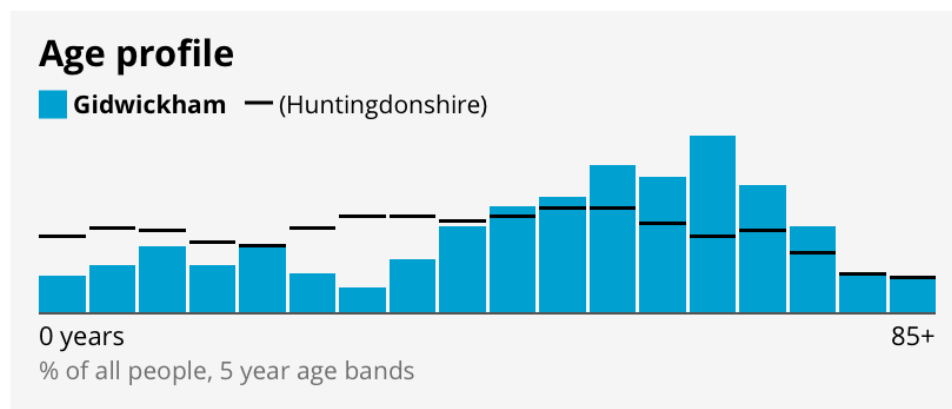
- 18.6. A consultation with these farmers would be a starting point for establishing what type of local farm produce shop could be viable in the GWH Neighbourhood.
- 18.7. In terms of future planning permissions, the replies received indicate a focus for locally sensitive growth with independents rather than large national chains.
- 18.8. **GWH NP ASPIRATION 13 – CREATE A SMALL BUSINESS MEETING ROOM**

The occasional use of meeting room would be useful for small businesses. This NP aspires to create such a facility in the Great Gidding Village Hall.

19. Appendix A - Conclusions from the Surveys

19.1. Our Households

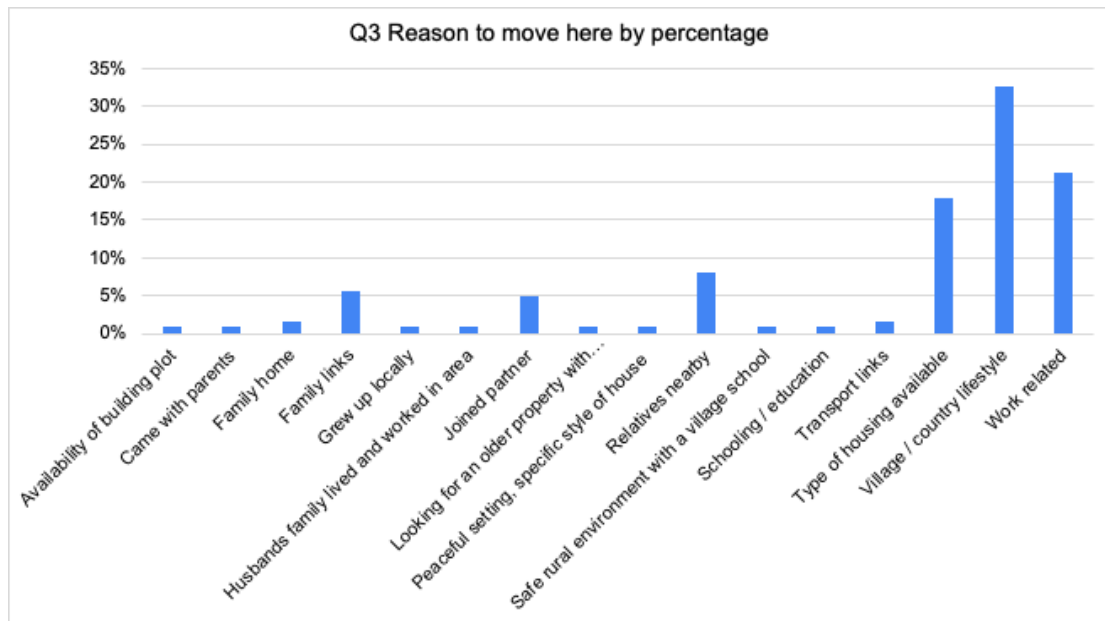
- 19.1.1. When viewing the 2021 National Census³⁰ or the Residential Survey they point to an older and less diverse demographic than the national average. The GWH Neighbourhood compared to Huntingdonshire from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows the following graphs.



19.1.2. Reason for living here

Most people moved to the area because of either the type of housing available, the country lifestyle or it was work related. Family links / relatives nearby also played an influence on why people live in the area, as shown below.

³⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

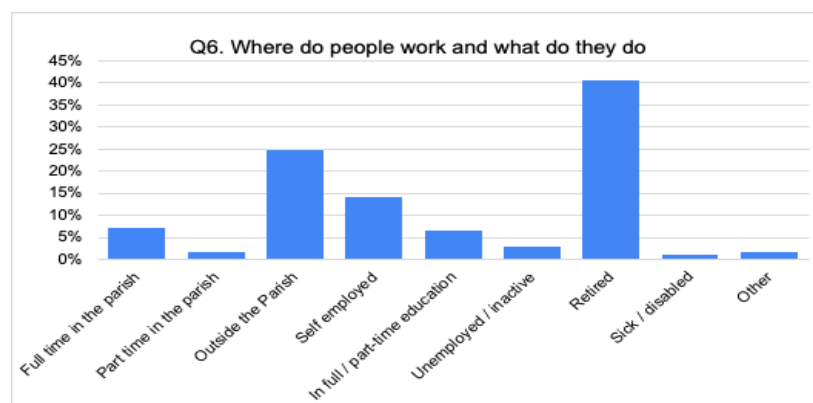


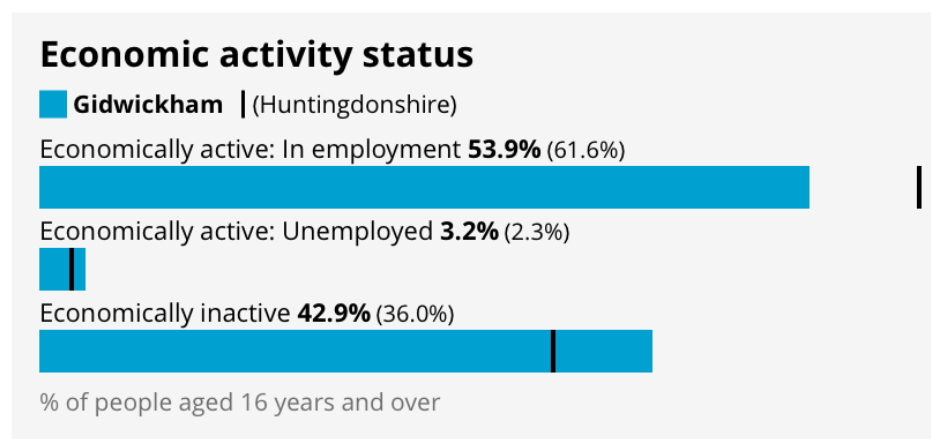
19.1.3. Based on the Residential Survey, whilst there has been churn over the years (the largest single group has been here less than 5 years), there is a central core of long-term residents.

19.1.4. Nearly 65% of the households in the area have lived here for over 10 years and 45% have been residents for more than 20 years i.e. very stable.

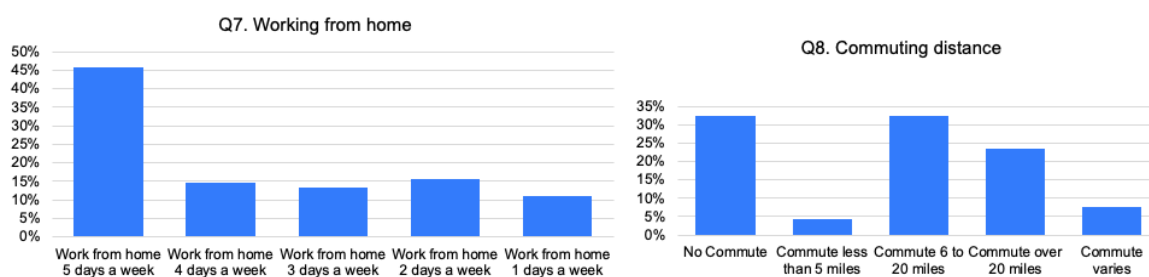


19.1.5. The retired group is the biggest segment in the community:

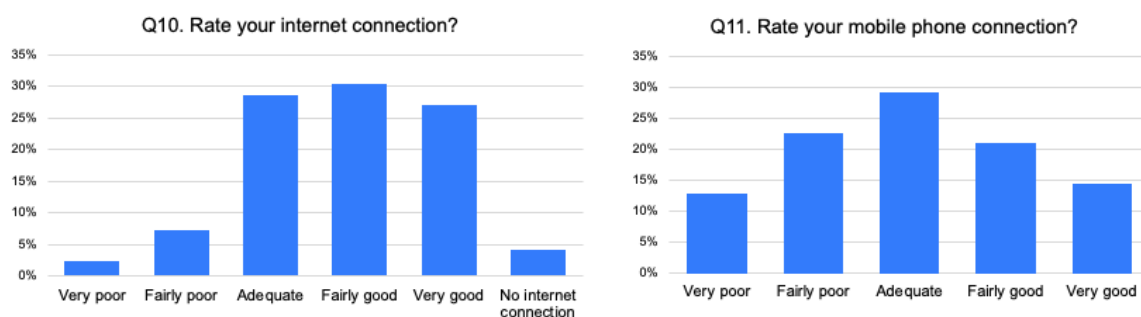




19.1.6. Of the households who have people who do work, as shown below, 46% work from home 5 days a week. Also, the majority of people work within 20 miles of their house. The 2021 Census recorded 47.2% worked from home compared to Huntingdonshire at 34.9%.

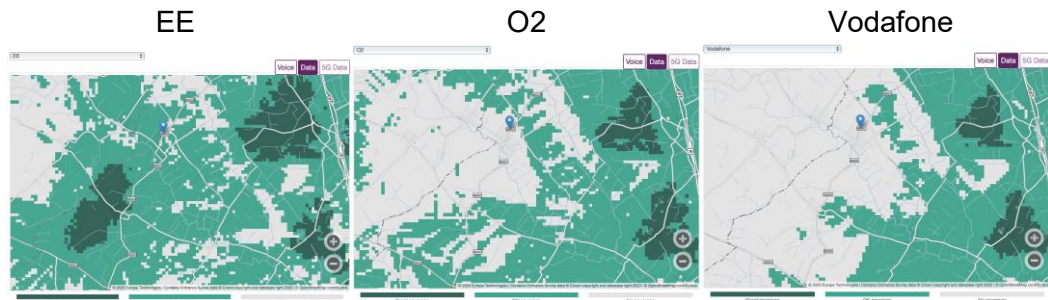


19.1.7. This working profile has been facilitated by the internet. Although the area is very rural, over the last 10 years the internet has become increasingly important for both business and domestic use. The 2 closest exchanges are in Winwick and Sawtry. As shown by the residential survey the internet is rated far better than mobile phone connectivity - the area has no 5G coverage.



19.1.8. Indoor coverage of the mobile phone network³¹ varies greatly by network. The area to the top right in dark green (good) is Sawtry. EE also gives good coverage for parts of Winwick but generally coverage is average to poor.

³¹ <https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/en-gb/mobile-coverage#pc=pe285nu&uprn=100090108007&vw=map>

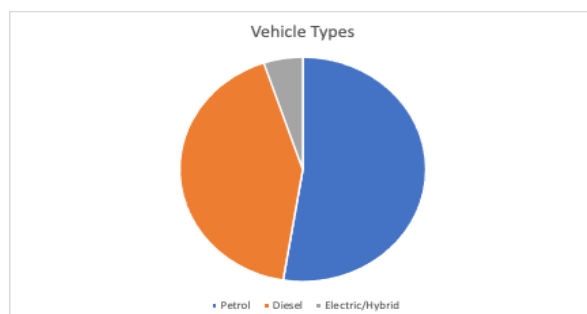


- 19.1.9. As shown below, Winwick has its own Exchange for the 01832 area code and therefore it is not surprising that most respondents in the Winwick residential survey rated their internet speed as very good. Hamerton and the Giddings are less impressed, being further from the Exchange.



19.2. About Your Vehicle

- 19.2.1. The GWH Neighbourhood is hugely dependent on cars for transport. Due to the relatively isolated nature of the area, and lack of amenities and public transport, cars are used by almost every household and adult; only one respondent did not admit to having a car.
- 19.2.2. Most households had two or more cars (the average across the area is 1.9).
- 19.2.3. The vehicles are mostly fossil fuel powered: 123 Petrol (in blue), 99 Diesel (in orange), 12 Electric/Hybrid (in grey).

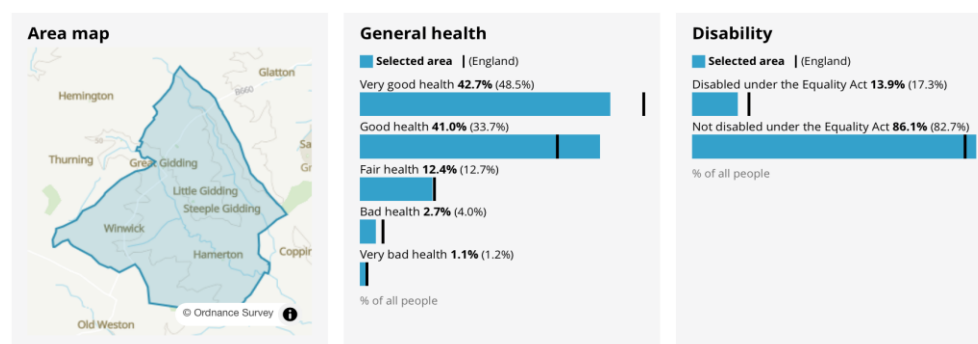


- 19.2.4. Within the Neighbourhood there are a limited number of private Electric Charging Points (ECPs) (10) and no public charging points (PCPs). The nearest public ECPs are low-rate points in the towns of Sawtry, Thrapston and Oundle, 20 minutes' drive away, with higher rated PCPs half an hour away in Huntingdon and Peterborough.
- 19.2.5. The age of the housing stock means that a minority of cars (64) are garaged overnight, with the majority parked on drives. Narrow roads means that few are parked on the roadside (8).

Location	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Garage/Carport	29	15	20	64
Drive	87	25	46	158
Roadside	7	1	0	8
Other	5	1	2	8

19.3. Health and A Healthy Lifestyle

- 19.3.1. As shown by the 2021 census, the residents of Gidwickham rate their health as above average for those who consider themselves in good health and slightly below average for those who view their health as bad. This is encouraging given the higher age demographic of the GWH Neighbourhood.
- 19.3.2. Of the people responding to the survey only two classed themselves as 'permanently sick or disabled.' The 2021 Census below shows that Gidwickham is lower than England and Huntingdonshire as a whole for those who class themselves as 'Disabled under the Equality Act.



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

- 19.3.3. The majority (73%) attend the Wellside Surgery at Sawtry, with a much smaller proportion using Alconbury Surgery and six households using alternatives, including two who attend the Lakeside Surgery in Yaxley.
- 19.3.4. Exercise is obviously key to maintaining good health and the opportunity to exercise in remote villages can be limited. Use of a gym requires a drive

of around twenty minutes. 38% of respondents said that they used the local footpaths on a daily basis.

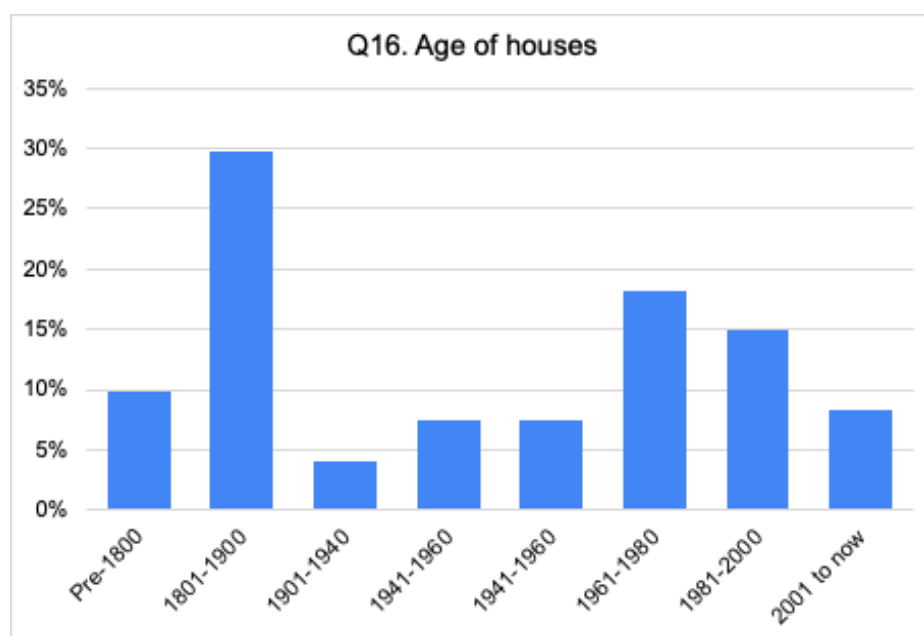
19.4. Our home

19.4.1. Most of the dwellings in the GWH Neighbourhood are owner occupied. The residential survey concluded 89% are owner occupied, with 6% privately rented, 3% social rented and 2% houses provided with the job.

19.4.2. The 2021 National Census similarly concluded owner occupied was higher across the GWH Neighbourhood than [Huntingdonshire](#). The Census stated GWH: had:

- 47.1% owned outright as opposed to 35.9%.
- 25% owned with a mortgage as opposed to 34.4%.
- 11.7% socially rented as opposed to 12.9%.
- 16.2% private rented or living rent free as opposed to 16.8%.

19.4.3. There is a good mixture of ages of the housing stock with many being built between 1801 and 1900. The fewest houses were built between 1901 and 1940, although after 1980 house building has tailed off:

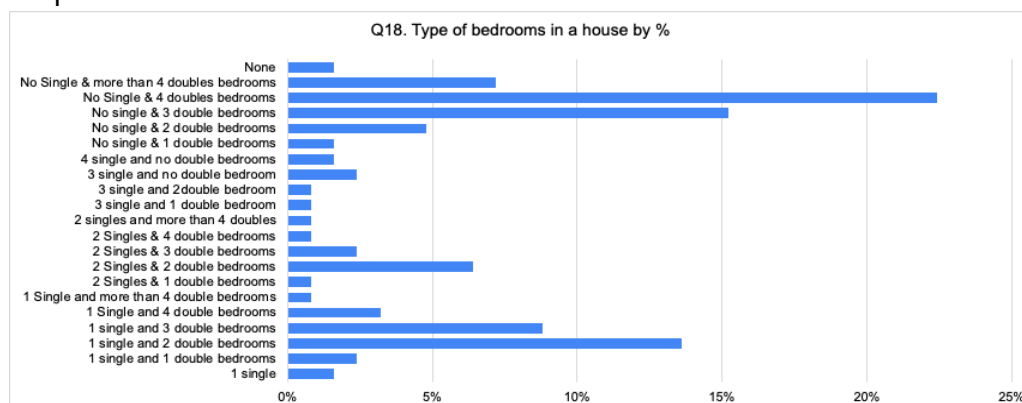


19.4.4. Most responders considered their homes to be well insulated, 57% v 43%.

19.4.5. Across the GWH Neighbourhood most households are occupied by 2 people. There are less people living on their own than the Huntingdonshire average but more couples than is normal for [Huntingdonshire](#):

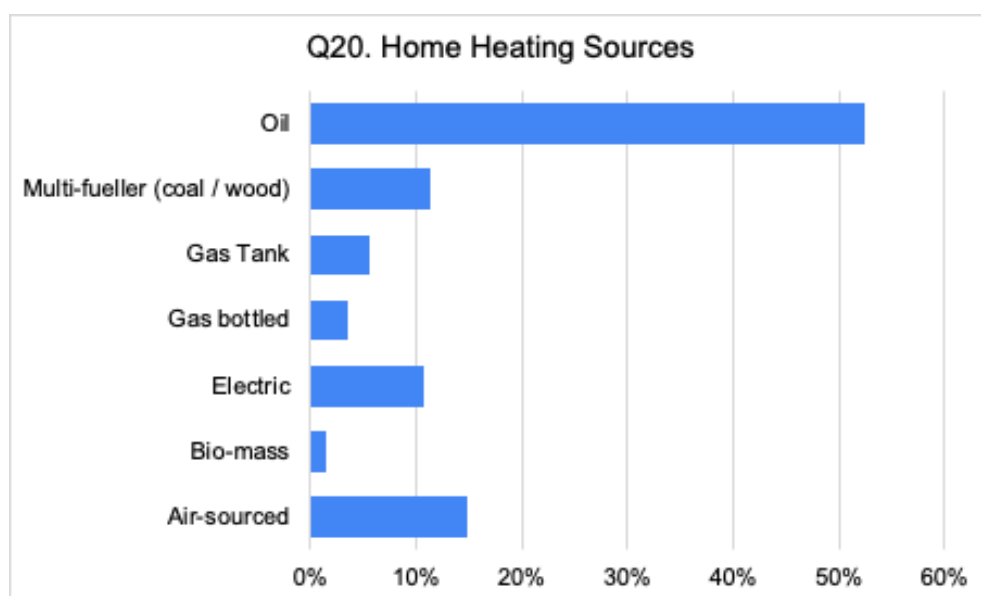
- 1 person in a household 23.8% (28.4%).
- 2 people in a household 50.8% (36.4%).
- 3 people in a household 12.1% (16.0%).
- 4 or more people in a household 13.3% (19.3%).

- 19.4.6. There is a wide spread of the number of bedrooms in the houses although 4 double bedrooms followed by 3 double bedrooms are the two most frequent.



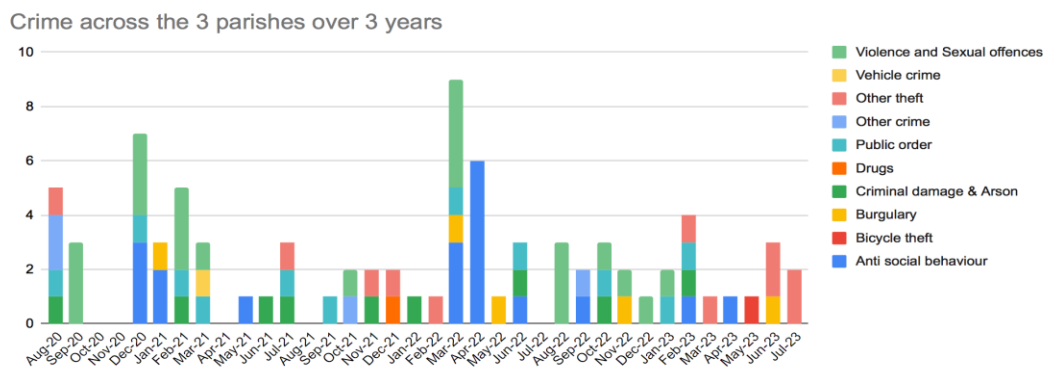
- 19.4.7. The number of homes with an extension or annex is 47% with and 53% without an extension.

- 19.4.8. Most homes are fuelled by oil. These are the 7 fuel types although 41% of respondents stated they had more than one of these i.e., a combination of fuels.



- 19.4.9. There are only 11% of homes with solar panels i.e. 89% without. 55% would consider installing them. Across the 3 parishes only 12 homes are restricted from installing solar panels.
- 19.4.10. All our community feel either very safe or safe, 36% very safe and 64% safe. The incidence of crime is exceptionally low in the parishes as only 5 incidents were reported to the police in the last year. There were very few crimes noted with no one being assaulted and a single and a multiple burglary, a theft of a car, a few thefts from cars or sheds and some fly tipping. One incidence of drug taking and 2 of drunkenness. There were 6 incidents of verbal abuse and one multiple incidences.

Based on the crime map from Cambridgeshire constabulary³² these are the reported crimes over the last 3 years.



19.5. Housing Development

19.5.1. There are currently approximately 260 households³³ across the 3 parishes. It is recognised that new houses will be built across the GWH Neighbourhood over the coming 13 years. 16 houses have been built since 2011 and a number of additional houses are already approved in Great Gidding and Hamerton. During the Residential Survey, the households were asked to give their opinion on what type of development would be acceptable. Over 120 households responded. They were given a series of ideas on how development could take place.

19.5.2. Infilling the existing village or extending along existing roads

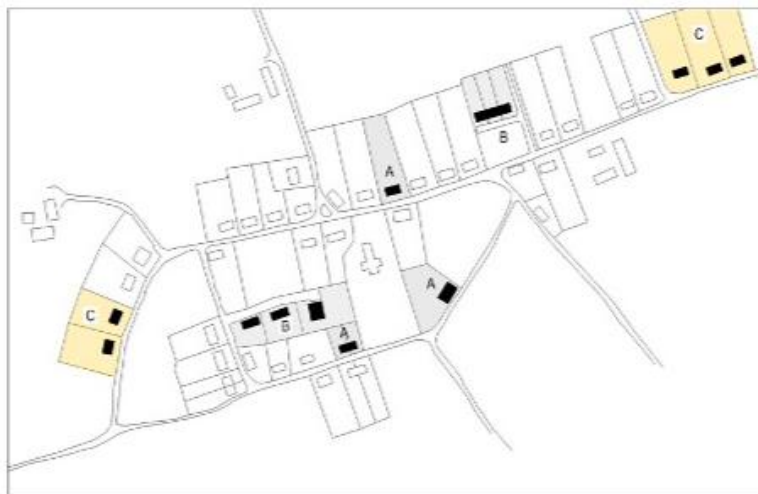
19.5.3. Option A: Represents the infill of individual plots currently vacant and placed within the village curtilage. It appears the least disruptive as it follows the historic pattern, but it is also limited to, generally, individual houses. It offers a low density (again, to match the existing pattern) and is not appropriate for commercial development as much as it is for self-builders, etc. The properties being built tend to be larger and suit families, but the low density suggests the greater expense that is not conducive to family starter homes.

19.5.4. Option B: This form of development is a variation of A) where larger infill plots (such as redundant farms) become available. Housing can be built off short lanes perpendicular to the existing road pattern and several, possibly, smaller houses built in the traditional pattern but taking advantage of deep plots. A further variation of B) could allow for an access in a perpendicular lane but with new houses set away from the existing road to create an open space adjacent to the road. The traditional pattern of development could be copied but set back deeper into a long plot.

³² <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/cambridgeshire-constabulary/huntingdon/?tab=crimemap>

³³ Results from the HDC

- 19.5.5. Option C: This emulates the traditional development pattern but, instead of filling 'empty' sites within the villages, allows the settlement to grow (in a controlled manner) out into the countryside along the roads.



- 19.5.6. The respondents to the survey preferred infilling the existing village as shown below:

Option A	Infilling between the houses on land that is not used? This option may lead to individual houses such as self builds.	40%
Option B	Larger plot infill for instance on redundant farms. Houses are built off short lanes taking advantage of deep plots.	29%
Option C	Expand the village out into the countryside along existing roads in the traditional development pattern.	17%
	Would prefer something else	13%

- 19.5.7. **Option D - Larger scale development options using existing roads**
This is a more ambitious proposal for a full village extension into the surrounding fields. Carefully designed it would emulate the development pattern of the village and could offer the establishment of internal green spaces (Village Green). By concentrating village expansion in a single location, this extension could protect the existing settlement pattern from excessive infilling while being compatible with such changes (types A & B)



- 19.5.8. The general consensus was that this was too intrusive and dramatic. The results of from the Residential Survey were:

Yes I think this is a good solution

15%

It could be a good solution as long as the buildings were well designed

29%

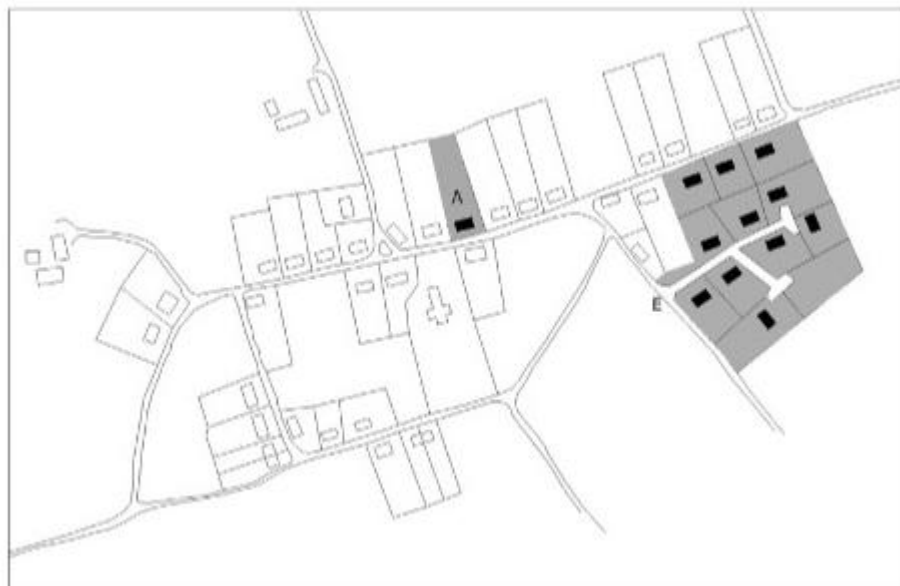
I do not support this type of development because it would change the village too much

56%

19.5.9. **Option D - Larger scale development options - cul-du-sac estate**

This represents a more typical modern village extension. It is positioned on the edge of Gidwickham and away from the existing settlement. By concentrating village expansion in a single location, this extension could protect the existing settlement pattern from excessive infilling while being somewhat compatible with such changes (type A).

- 19.5.10. The layout of the development would be compact, dense, and arranged in a modern pattern of cul-de-sac roads, garaging etc. It does not contribute any shared space with the existing village but is economical to construct and might provide an element of affordable housing.



19.5.11. This was the least popular option across the 3 parishes. Only 4% supported this type of development.

Yes, I think we need to keep up with the way things are done in other villages

4%

Yes, if it is on a limited scale of 12 houses or less

26%

No, having seen how other villages have adopted this.

70%

19.5.12. Further conclusions can be drawn from the residential survey, namely in this very independent contented community:

19.5.12.1. Low-cost starter homes are well supported:

- Owner occupied: 69% said there was some or much need.
- Rented homes: 48% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.2. Efficient homes: 82% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.3. Homes for local people: 68% said there was some or much need.

19.5.12.4. Residential care homes 57% said there was no need.

19.5.12.5. Retirement homes 56% said there was no need.

19.5.12.6. Shared accommodation 82% said there was no need.

19.5.12.7. Shared ownership 59% said there was no need.

19.5.13. In terms of conservation zones:

19.5.13.1. 57% of people supported conservation zone guidelines.

19.5.13.2. 61% want a conservation zone in Hamerton & Steeple Gidding.

19.5.13.3. 67% want a conservation zone in Little Gidding.

19.5.13.4. 64% want a conservation zone in Winwick.

19.6. The natural landscape, built up areas and design

Comments received were consistent throughout the three parishes. There were 3 main issues.

19.6.1. **What do you like about living in this area?**

19.6.1.1. Living within a rural landscape – able to enjoy nature, walks in the countryside with easy access to towns and cities not too far away.

19.6.1.2. Quietness and the benefits of countryside views, open spaces and little traffic.

19.6.1.3. A good community spirit – due to the small size of the villages that offer a friendly and safe environment.

19.6.2. **Protecting the built environment**

The vast majority of respondents supported the measures suggested to protect the built environment (question 35). They also approved the environment proposals in question 36 as the two graphs below show.

19.6.3. **Importance of community items**

19.6.3.1. Although few properties are directly affected by flood water, the flooding of roads does impact a larger number of people that can be cut off or may have to travel further to avoid floodwater and 77% of replies supported flood prevention measures.

19.6.3.2. Only street lighting proved divisive (Q37 in the residential survey) with 49% wanting street lighting and 51% against it. This was very much split by village, with those not having them, not wanting them (except Little Gidding). The rest of the items, the controlling of traffic speeds, cleanliness, safety and the maintenance of footpaths and community spirit were heavily supported.

19.7. Public Transport and Traffic

19.7.1. The Neighbourhood is relatively isolated, bounded by the A1 to the East, the A14 to the South and the Northamptonshire border to the West. The links across these boundaries are poor, there are no public transport facilities to areas further afield. It is possible to arrange a taxi (at high expense) into the area, but more difficult to get one out of the area. As a result, and as noted earlier, the rural population is heavily dependent on

personal cars. Rail services can only be accessed by travelling out of the Neighbourhood.

19.7.2. Bus Service

Getting a bus to Peterborough involves **driving** to Sawtry and picking up the route that runs along the A1. There are no buses to the nearby towns in Northamptonshire such as Oundle or Thrapston, except by travelling via Huntingdon or Peterborough.

19.7.3. The only bus route through the Neighbourhood is the 401. Its route is shown in the picture below.

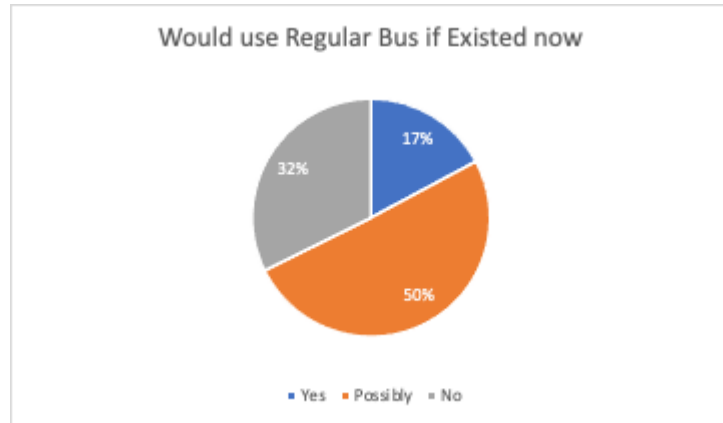


19.7.4. It runs twice daily (Mon-Fri) to the following timetable:

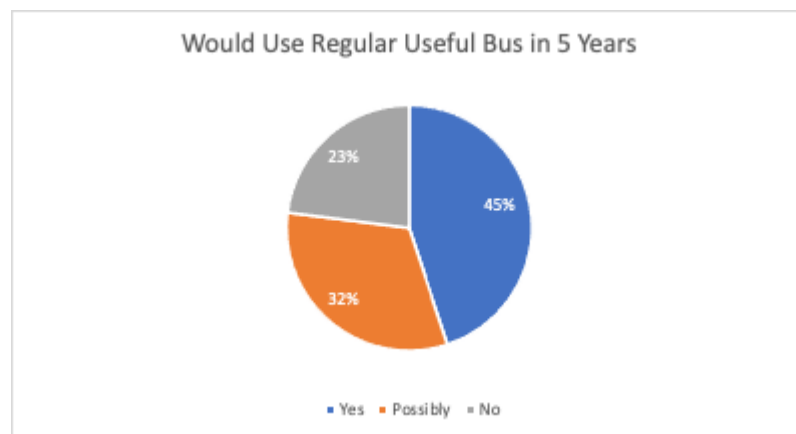
Stop	Time Out	Time Return
Winwick	0940	1323
Gt Gidding	0945	1318
Little Gidding	0947	1316
Steeple Gidding	0948	1315
Hamerton	0952	1311
Huntingdon Bus Station	1030	1230

19.7.5. The time that can be spent in Huntingdon is therefore only 2 hours, which limits potential appointments and is barely adequate for shopping.

19.7.6. Very few residents use the 401 service, though some (17%) would use a bus service now if there was a convenient route.

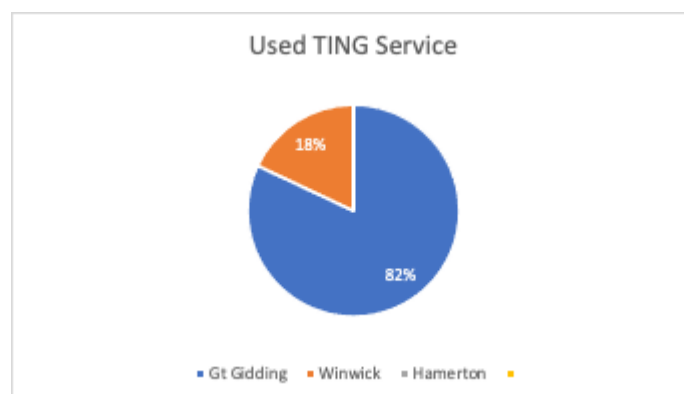


- 19.7.7. An increased number (45%) felt they might use one in 5 years' time, reflecting the ageing populations foreseen needs.



19.7.8. TING

Residents were asked if they had used the trial TING (on demand) service as an alternative to Public Service Buses.

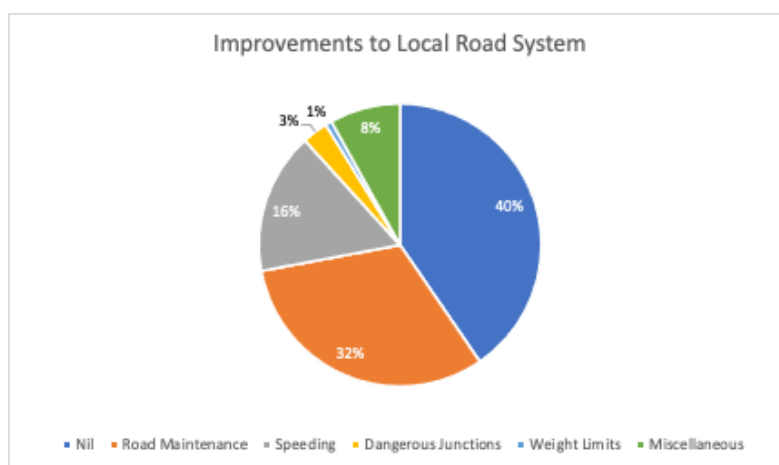


- 19.7.9. Only 11 respondents, almost all over the age of sixty, (9 Gt Gidding, 2 Winwick & 0 Hamerton) had used it with varying success. Just under ½ found it excellent, though limited, the rest found it poor, difficult, or impossible to book, with the worry that it might only be possible to go from the area and impossible to get back.

- 19.7.10. It was not felt to be an acceptable substitute for a proper bus service and needed considerable development to make it usable, including linking across the county border into Northamptonshire.

Suggesting Improvements to Local Road System

- 19.7.11. Residents were asked to suggest improvements to the local road system. Whilst nearly half made no suggestions, the other half expressed concerns which fell into five categories. There was widespread realisation that changing the existing road network to a significant extent was unlikely to be affordable, and that any improvements would be incremental.

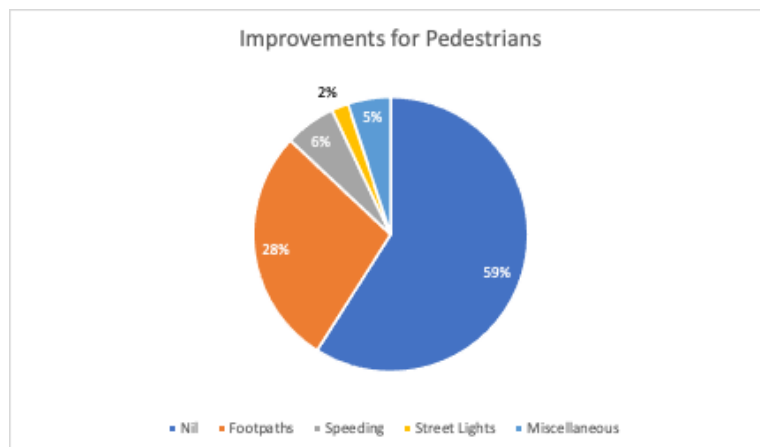


Road Improvement Area	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Nil	37	9	9	55
Road Maintenance	14	14	15	43
Speeding	18	2	2	22
Dangerous Junction	3	0	1	4
Weight Limits	0	0	1	1
Miscellaneous	6	2	3	11

- 19.7.12. The chief stated concern was the poor state of local roads, with multiple potholes causing damage to tyres and suspensions. The second major concern was speeding vehicles, with many residents feeling that excessive speed by transiting vehicles threatened other road users in many areas.
- 19.7.13. Data from speed cameras showed that most vehicles were law-abiding. However, there were daily occurrences of vehicles travelling on the B660 at up to 80mph in villages, particularly during the night.
- 19.7.14. Traffic police vehicles are rarely seen in the Neighbourhood.

19.7.15. Remaining concerns covered a multitude of issues with no clear patterns for improvement.

19.7.16. Residents were also asked to suggest improvements for pedestrians. The majority (78) made no suggestions, but those who did can be split into four areas:



Pedestrian Improvement Area	Gt Gidding	Hamerton	Winwick	Total
Nil	46	15	16	77
Footpaths	22	7	8	37
Speeding	5	2	1	8
Streetlights	0	0	2	2
Miscellaneous	4	0	2	6

19.7.17. The largest stated category was the lack of footpaths in the villages, with small children and walkers felt to be especially vulnerable. Where footpaths exist, mainly in Great Gidding, there was general concern that they were in a poor state of maintenance and lacked dropped kerbs for those of limited mobility or using mobility scooters.

19.7.18. Public footpaths also caused concern, as there are few between villages, and gaps in the network where paths can only be accessed by walking on the road.

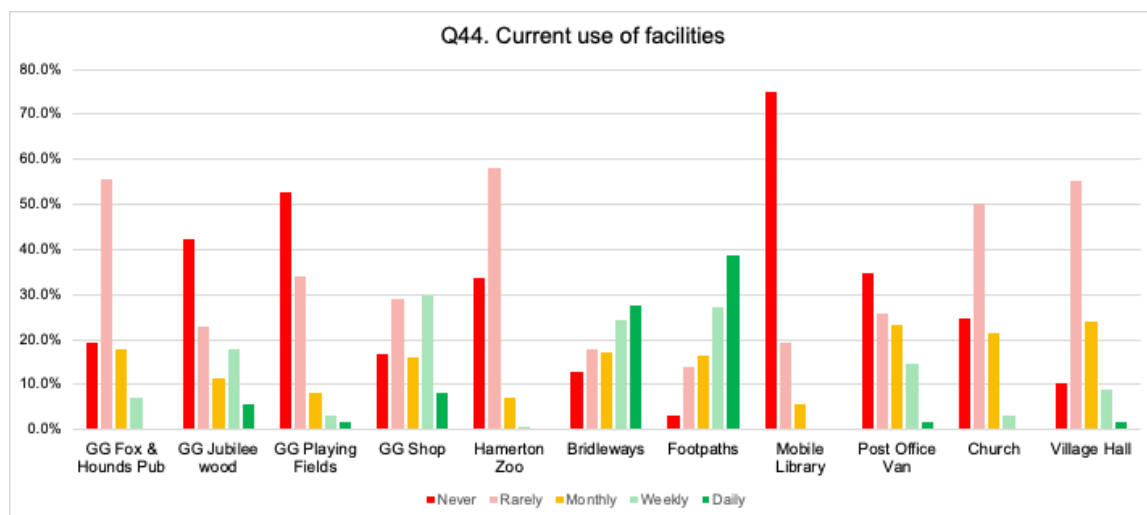
19.7.19. Speeding vehicles was also a major concern to pedestrians who share the road space because of the lack of footpaths. There were no other clear patterns for improvement.

19.7.20. Recommendations

- 19.7.20.1. As the elderly local population ages further, the District and County Public Service providers need to develop services such as more frequent bus services that will link up the villages to the towns.
- 19.7.20.2. Foot-traffic - whilst it would be exceedingly difficult to install pedestrian footpaths in many areas within the Neighbourhood, there are areas where existing grass verges could be converted into paths usable by walkers and mobility scooter users. We need to work with CCC Highways Department to make this happen.
- 19.7.20.3. Speeding - Cambridgeshire Police need to become more active in rural areas to enforce speed limits.
- 19.7.20.4. Road repair - CCC Highways Department needs a more proactive approach to deal with the myriad of road defects and potholes across the rural roads in the Neighbourhood and should investigate possible solutions to improve car and personal safety in general by ensuring that existing footpaths, dropped kerbs, etc are maintained to a safe standard.

19.8. Infrastructure and Amenities

- 19.8.1. Great Gidding is by far the largest village in terms of size and population across the 3 parishes and as such it has more facilities: a corner shop, an equestrian outlet, a pub, a recreation ground and a community wood. None of the other villages have anything similar. It should also be noted that there are no schools across the 3 parishes (after Great Gidding's Primary School closed in June 2023) nor a fixed Post Office (which closed in 2008).
- 19.8.2. People liked the area because of its rural, quiet, friendly, and safe aspect, whilst also within reach of towns.
- 19.8.3. The survey asked people to rate their usage of various facilities across the 3 parishes. As shown by feedback in the graph below from the Survey
 - 19.8.3.1. The bridleways and footpaths are the most popular amenities,
 - 19.8.3.2. The shop at Great Gidding (GG) is frequently used as is the post office van (which 9.30-11 Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday)
 - 19.8.3.3. Jubilee Wood in Great Gidding (GG) and village halls being used moderately,
 - 19.8.3.4. The mobile library is very poorly used.



19.8.4. Feedback in the Survey stated that Jubilee Wood and the Recreation Group in Great Gidding are a valuable resource that should be designated as protected green spaces.

19.8.5. As expected, these are more popular with the residents of Great Gidding than other villages: over 30% of the Great Gidding respondents go to Jubilee Wood every week.

19.8.6. Compared to 20 years ago, exacerbated by Covid-19, social events across the Parishes have fallen off. Winwick has some major events such as fetes a year whilst Hamerton has started to run a breakfast club every other month. Great Gidding's events are more spasmodic.

19.8.7. **Hearing about local events**

Communication across the NP is by various methods. Feedback from the Residential Surveys showed word of mouth was the most effective way to communicate. Hamerton and Winwick both have an extensive email distribution whilst Great / Little Gidding primarily use Whatsapp.

19.8.8. In terms of posters, leaflets, the local paper (the Sawtry Eye), social media and websites results varied by Parish. It seems that the existing Great Gidding website³⁴ is the least effective medium. The Sawtry Eye is not delivered to Hamerton, so it is underrepresented in that parish.



³⁴ <https://www.thegiddings.org.uk>

19.8.9. Posters and leaflets still seem the most effective way to raise awareness.

19.8.10. **Cycling**

The Government is pushing for more walking and cycling in the community as seen by its last paper on the subject in March 2023 entitled [“the Second cycling and walking investment strategy”](#).

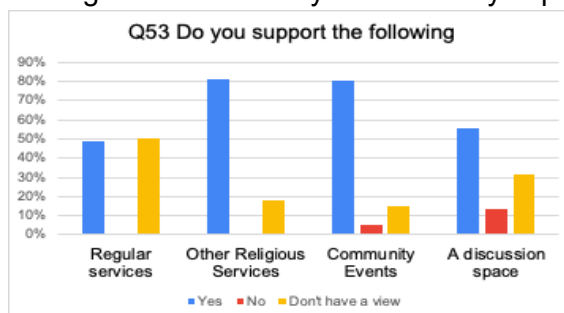
19.8.11. There are no dedicated cycle paths in the area. Government funding included £35m to be spent on the National Cycle Network. The only National Cycle Network route in the parish is the Cycle Route 12 which goes down Milking Slade Lane. This Lane is in a dreadful state of repair (as shown below) and is a sad advert for the state of Huntingdonshire roads and Cambridgeshire’s commitment to cycling³⁵.



Photo Milking Slade Lane Cycle Route 12

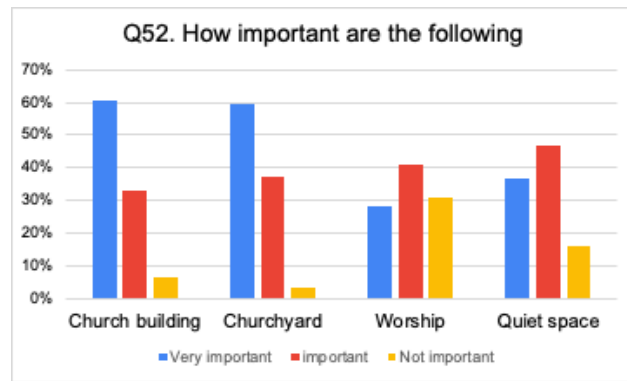
19.8.12. **Church and Churchyards**

Although attendance at the 5 churches and the Baptist Chapel is relatively low (attendance at “regular” services is often less than 10 people) and it is not hugely supported as a place of worship, 61% of respondents stated that the church building and the church yard were very important:



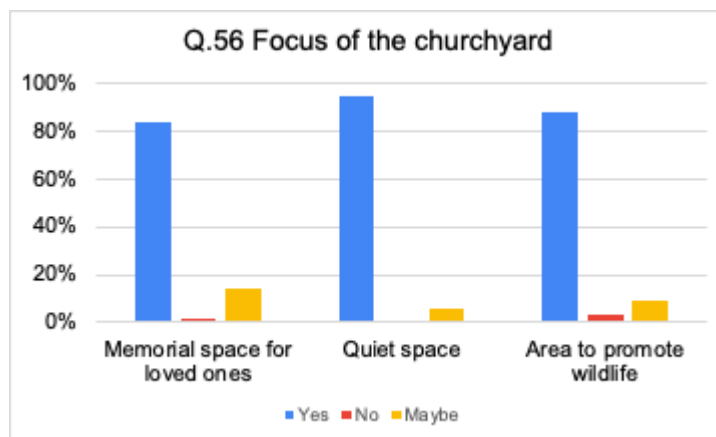
³⁵ It also reflects poorly on Cambridgeshire’s Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which includes the comment:

We very much recognise the importance to residents in smaller villages of being able to walk or cycle to the nearest larger village, market town or Cambridge city in order to access education, public transport and employment as well as leisure and retail destinations. This is a very strong message from both district councils and from villages.



19.8.13. As shown above, the support for other religious services (81%) and community events (80%) is extremely high although regular services were 30% lower at 49%.

19.8.14. Support for the church yard being a Memorial space for loved ones, an area to promote wildlife and quiet space, was over 90%:

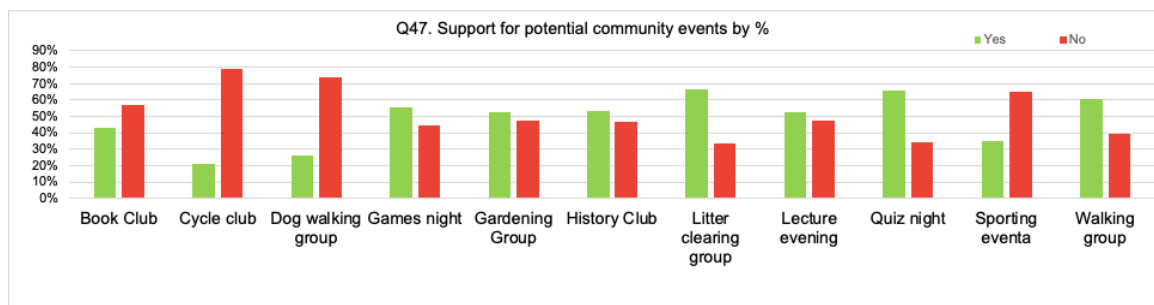


Suggested improvements

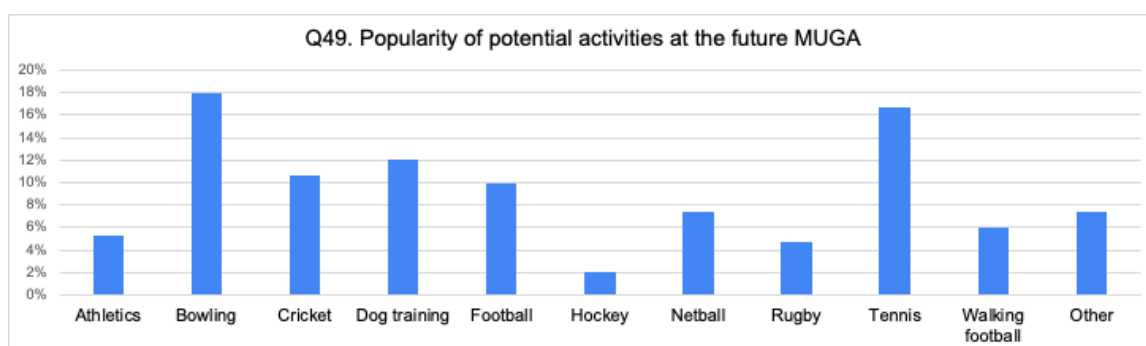
19.8.15. The Survey showed that most people across the 3 parishes like the open spaces, the safety and quietness of the area.

19.8.16. In terms of footpaths all stiles should be replaced with gates to encourage walking.

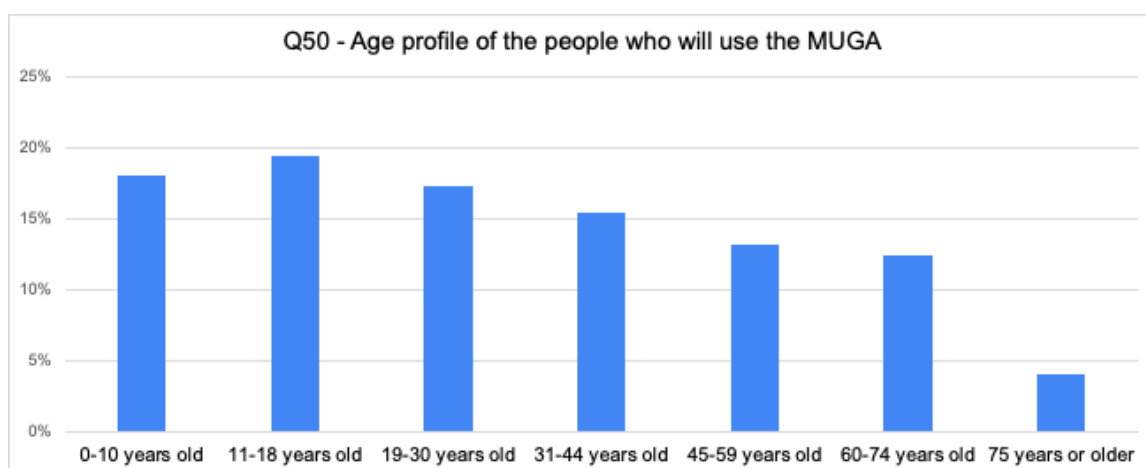
19.8.17. There should be more cross-parish community activities and events. The Survey highlighted 11 potential events:



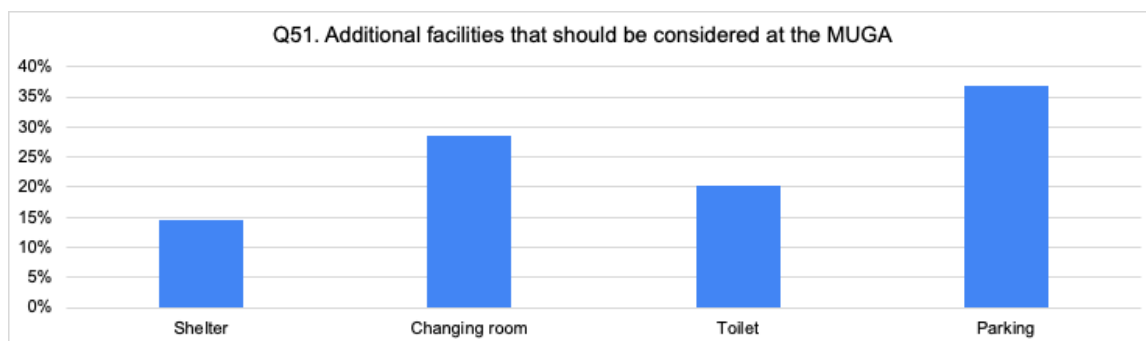
- 19.8.17.1. Clear favourites were a litter cleaning group, a quiz night, and a walking group.
- 19.8.17.2. Least popular were a cycling club, a dog walking group and sporting event.
- 19.8.18. These could start or be hosted at the three existing village halls.
- 19.8.19. The Sawtry Eye coupled with posters / leaflets would advertise these parish events across the area.
- 19.8.20. To improve usage of the churches, heating and toilet facilities could be added along with publicised service / event times. The services could be more modern and include popular hymns.
- 19.8.21. A more significant investment (£80,000) would be the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the Great Gidding Recreation Field. The MUGA was supported by 58% of the respondents (regardless of if they lived in Great Gidding or not).
- 19.8.22. Bowling and tennis were the most popular activities as shown in the graph below:



- 19.8.23. Other activities mentioned included rounders, basketball, and keep-fit classes. A wide age profile would use the MUGA, although like all activities, it will need people with the enthusiasm to organise such activities:



- 19.8.24. 35% of those respondents who responded regarding additional facilities thought that parking would be important especially for those living in the Winwick, Hamerton & Steeple Gidding parishes.



19.9. Business and Employment

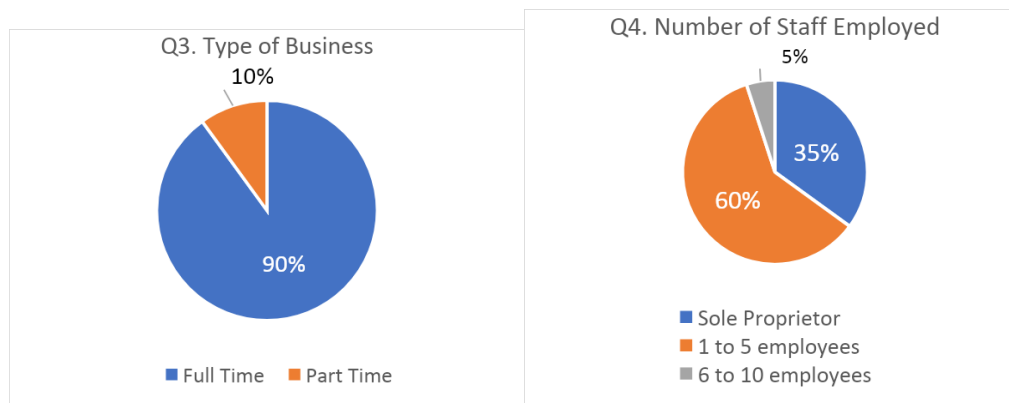
- 19.9.1. A separate Business Survey, of 15 questions including voluntary contact information, was hand distributed to the known businesses within three villages, with a choice of on-line completion or hard copy paper return.
- 19.9.2. 20 completed responses were received. This low number was in line with expectations from 3 villages with an older age profile (nearly 33% over 75 years of age and nearly 60% not working/retired).

Business Category

- 19.9.3. The largest business type (Q1) was Agricultural - arable and mixed farming (40%), followed by Professional, Scientific, and Technical (20%).
- 19.9.4. The remaining businesses (40%) were single business vertical specialists ranging from the sale/hire/repair of construction equipment to internet based professional services to personal face-to-face services such as hairdressing & pet grooming (Q2 – Other).

Type of Business and Number of staff employed

- 19.9.5. Almost all businesses were full time (90%).
- 19.9.6. All businesses, bar one, were micro sized, employing under 5 employees. The majority (60%) employed between 1-5 employees.



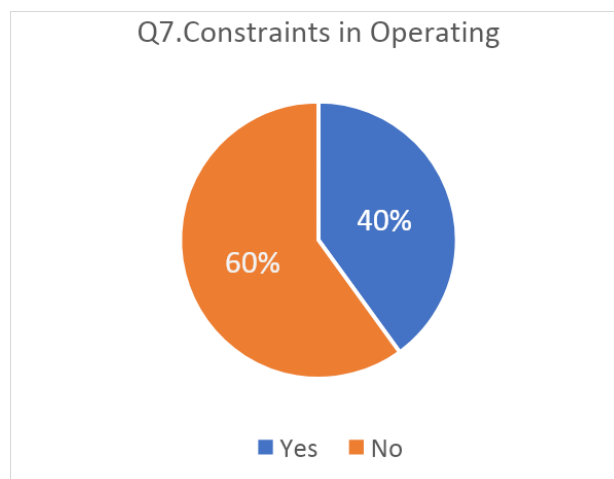
19.9.7. 85% of the businesses employed staff who lived in the parish (Q5).

19.9.8. 55% of the businesses are based at home, either from a home office/workshop or because the business is the farm. A further 25% are based in the parish as they had found suitable premises. The remaining 20% because their business and the parish go hand in hand, for example serving the local community (Q6).

Constraints in Operating Business

19.9.9. A noticeable minority experienced constraints in operating their business (40%), citing three main reasons - slow planning permission, poor broadband/mobile reception, and poor local/transport infrastructure (Q8). Three quarters of those saying 'Yes' to a constraint worked from home/farm.

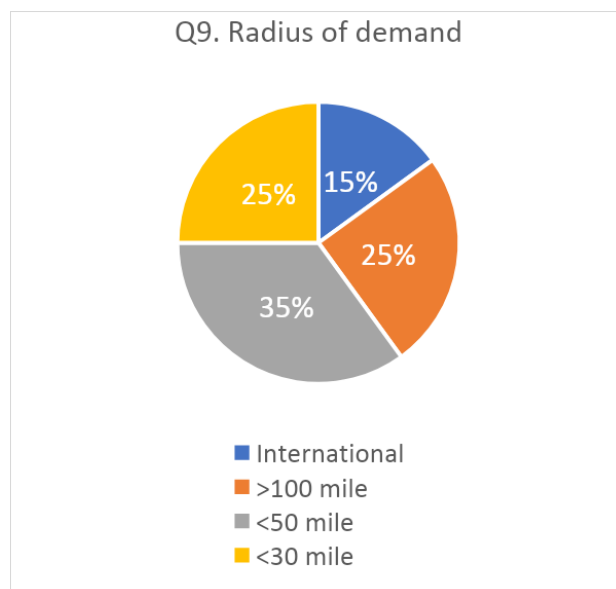
19.9.10. Over half (60%) did not experience any constraints.



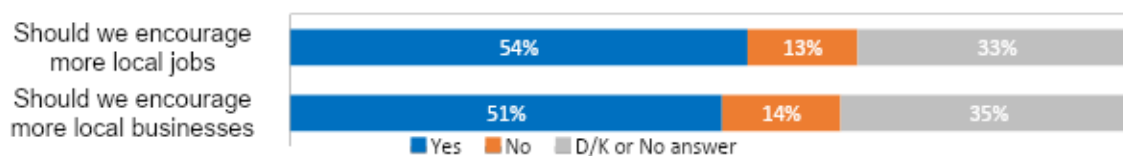
Radius of Demand

19.9.11. Demand is not local; 40% trade with customers over 100 miles away or internationally.

19.9.12. A further 35% see business demand from over 50 miles to 100 miles away. A minority of local businesses (25%) work with customers within 30 miles.



- 19.9.13. In parallel, it is interesting to note that a majority in the Residential Survey (base n=126) expressed an attitude towards encouraging more local jobs (54%) and encouraging more local businesses (51%).



- 19.9.14. Suggestions from those who answered 'Yes' to more local businesses and more local jobs in the Residential Survey (Q57) reflected a local, traditional, touch and feel:

"Local farm produce, locally made goods- perhaps a market (if not permanent building)"; "Local craftsman and tradesman"; "A coffee shop, encouraging Great Gidding to be a destination of choice - for walking or cycling. For example, the Victorian school building becomes a cycle shop and coffee shop". "Cafe, small units for starter businesses, artisans, crafts, exhibition spaces, public access to toilets"; "Bakery"; "Useful services like florists, dry cleaner, ironing, farm shop".

- 19.9.15. Several comments were keen to emphasise locally sensitive growth:

"I would be nervous of the impact on the village and village life, if larger, more corporate organisations entered the arena". "Any business that is not a chain company and serves the locals would be ideal".

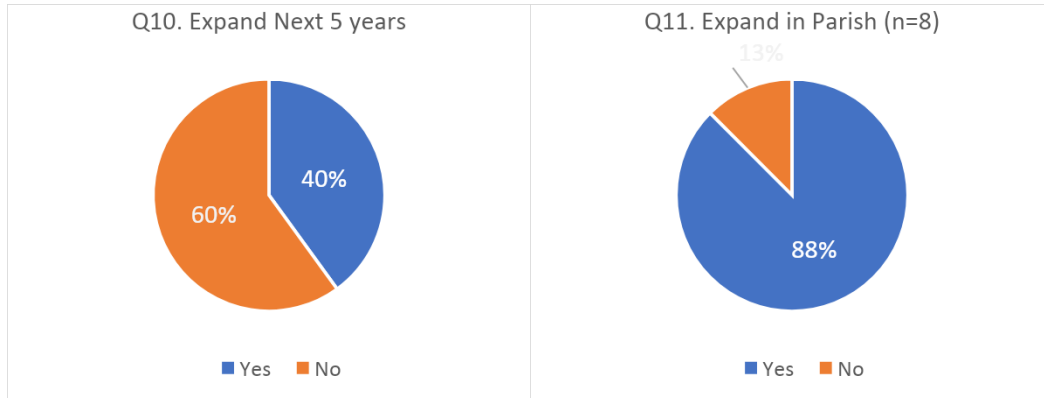
Expansion Plans in next 5 years

- 19.9.16. Less than half of these local businesses replied that they planned to expand their business in the next 5 years (40%). A majority (60%) do not. When prompted on why 'no', some of the main reasons behind why not reflected

a quality of life and work/life balance mentality of the older age profile in this area:

“The business is at a size that suits my work life balance”; “Heading towards Retirement”; “We are in our 80s”.

- 19.9.17. Of those who plan to expand in the next 5 years, nearly all think this will be in the parish (88%).

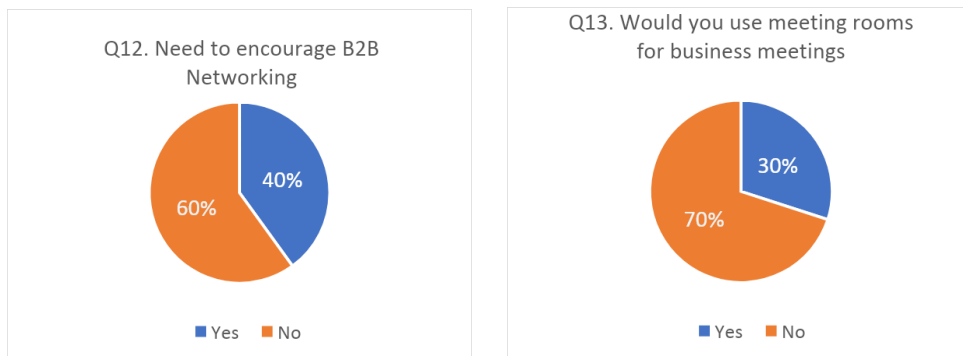


Business Networking and Meeting Rooms

- 19.9.18. Less than half (40%) see a need to encourage business to business networking in the villages and an even lower number (30%) felt they would use available meeting rooms for business meetings.

It should be noted that not all businesses use meeting rooms for networking, one farmer remarked that

“In the farming world, business to business networking is part of the role”.



19.10. People under 18 years old

- 19.10.1. With the shock to the community of the Primary School closing after over 150 years, to write about children and young people across the three communities is tricky as the focus for children under 11 has been closed.
- 19.10.2. And from this the current closure and patterns of what children and young people wish to have in their community or gain from living here is more complex to understand.

19.10.3. We have few children across the communities, but significant numbers of children and young people visit the three villages' areas for a variety of reasons:

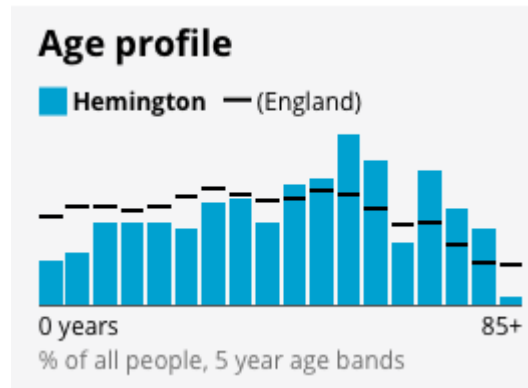
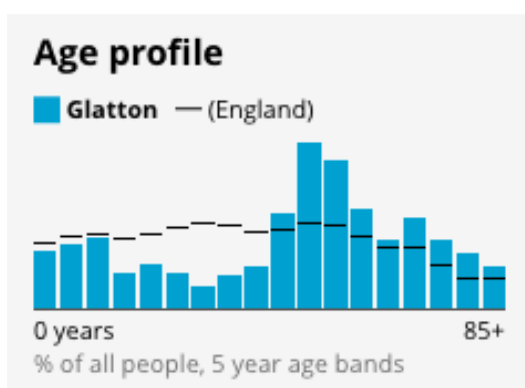
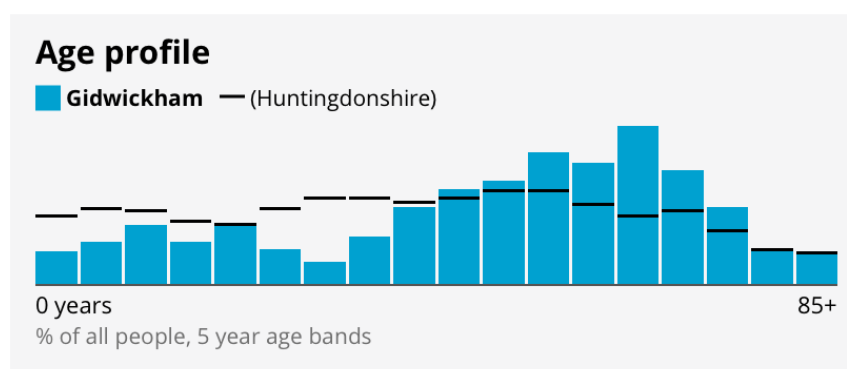
- 19.10.3.1. Thousands of children every year visit Hammerton, with the attraction of the Zoo Park.
 - 19.10.3.2. Several hundred teenagers visit Little Gidding and camp there for one night on their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition.
 - 19.10.3.3. Many others visit Grandparents and relatives in our communities.
 - 19.10.3.4. Some of the local businesses offer employment for young people but this is extremely limited.
- 19.10.4. From the households who responded to the survey only 12 households responded to the question about where they went to school, indicating the lower number of children in the area. And, their response reflects the breadth of schools being used before the school in Great Gidding closed.

School	Number	Transport
Alconbury	2	Car
Brampton	1	Car
Brington	1	Car
Folksworth	2	Car
Kimbolton	3	Car
Oundle	3	Car
Sawtry	1	Bus
Other	5	Car

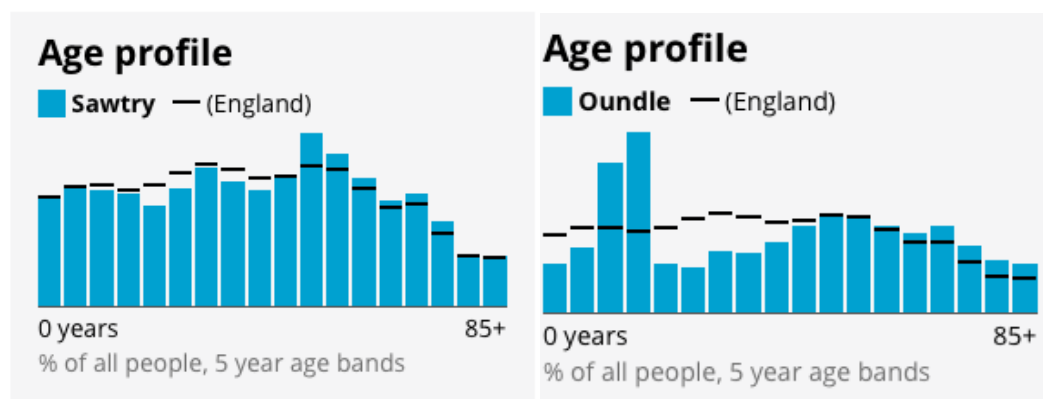
- 19.10.5. Only one household said that their children went to school by bus, and this reinforces other parts of the survey that the GWH Neighbourhood is a car dependent community.
- 19.10.6. There are only a few pre-school age children, and these households were very vocal about the positive attraction that they saw within the village of the Playing field, and also Jubilee Wood, as places that offered things to do and activities. Could the two locations offer more activities to young people, with discovery trails and other activities, hosted on the Great Gidding website and downloadable?
- 19.10.7. From these households and others, the Playing Field deserves a special mention. Even households with no young children saw value in its green space, maybe a grandparent /grandkids factor of usage but all reflected that the equipment needed serving and repair. Some asked for more

equipment and for the wider variety of play equipment, that covered a wider variety of ages.

- 19.10.8. The MUGA received support from this age group, seen as a place where more activity could be provided and where they could invite their friends into the village.
- 19.10.9. The MUGA and play equipment combined with a shop opposite, could create a play venue for children to travel to, but would require some further equipment and as mentioned equipment upgrades, but some spin offs for the shop and use of the field and then into the wood.
- 19.10.10. A Play / Nature / Newt trail journey around a village could be a development focus for Great Gidding for families with young children, bringing them into the village, with walking trails for older children with families between Winwick, Little Gidding, Steeple Gidding and back or development of some excellent mountain bike trail riding on our network of bridleways and smaller roads for teenage riders.
- 19.10.11. The 2021 National Census shows the age profile of Gidwickham, compared to the average in England is skewed to older people:



The age of the community stays below the national and Huntingdon average until 45-50 years old when it exceeds it. This profile is also true of other rural villages in the area such as Glatton and Hemington. Compare this to Sawtry which is almost typical of England or Oundle where the large school impacts the results:



- 19.10.12. The data implies that many people have stayed in the area whilst their children have moved away or moved into this area, after their children have grown up.
- 19.10.13. The pattern of age profile of the community is reflected in national trends statistics, with younger age groups living in more urban areas, and as age increases, a move to the country takes place. This is also reflected in the average property size with most houses being 3 or more bedrooms. It is hard to determine that even if more smaller, two-bedroom properties existed, would it increase younger age groups living in the area? National statistics suggest not.
- 19.10.14. The survey discovered that young people not only travelled away from the area for schools but also their leisure time, in our surrounding larger communities. There are insufficient numbers of children to justify a youth club or youth activities. This might have implications for activities offered on the MUGA proposal.
- 19.10.15. Even if there were a structural change to the housing stock, with more smaller houses, they would probably not be filled by younger people but older single older age adults. To increase the numbers of younger age adults in our villages, a societal change about younger age groups living more rurally would have to occur, which is not indicated in long term national trends. Therefore, the need for youth provision is of a lower priority.

20. HDC Local Plan – A Summary

- 20.1.1. The Local Plan defines Great Gidding, Hamerton and Winwick as Small Settlements. Little and Steeple Gidding are considered hamlets and as such are not referenced.
- 20.1.2. The most important Local Plan policy for the Neighbourhood Plan is LP9

20.2. LP9 Small Settlements

A proposal that is located within a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the:

- 20.2.1. Level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement.
- 20.2.2. Opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.
- 20.2.3. Effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole. A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed through other policies of this plan.
- 20.2.4. The Local Plan makes no allocations for development in Small Settlements. However, the strategy does set out a role for a limited amount of sustainable development in contributing to the social and economic sustainability of Small Settlements and in supporting a thriving rural economy.
- 20.2.5. The potential benefits of promoting some growth within Small Settlements includes helping to create a more balanced and diverse local population.
- 20.2.6. A Small Settlement which offers a range of services such as a shop, village hall, public house and primary school offers far greater opportunities in principle for sustainable development than one with few or no services.
- 20.2.7. All development proposals will be carefully considered in terms of their sustainability.
- 20.2.8. Need to consider their availability, capacity and accessibility. This includes the bus service, walking and cycle ways.
- 20.2.9. Need to consider maintaining the nature of the settlement & preventing adverse landscape and visual impact.

Proposals for development on land well-related to the built-up area will be considered subject to the provisions of the following policies:

20.3. LP10 'The Countryside'

All developments must

- 20.3.1. Seek to use land of lower agricultural value, avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible.
- 20.3.2. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- 20.3.3. Not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

20.4. LP11 'Design Context'

- 20.4.1. A proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic, and built environment, to help create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places.

20.5. LP 19 'Rural Economy'

- 20.5.1. A proposal for the expansion of an established business within its existing operational site will be supported. A proposal for the expansion of an established industrial or rural business on land outside of its existing operational site in the open countryside will be supported where it is demonstrated that:
 - Opportunities to reuse existing buildings have been fully explored; and replacement or new build are only proposed where it can be demonstrated that no suitable reuse opportunities are available;
 - Any opportunities to make more efficient use of land within the existing site boundary are not suitable for the proposed use;
 - It avoids the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) particularly Grade 1 where possible and should use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value; and
 - The scale, character and siting of the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape.

A rural business is one which has a legitimate reason to be located in the countryside, including but not limited to agriculture, horses, horticulture or forestry.

Farm diversification

A proposal for farm diversification will be supported where it is demonstrated that it is complementary and subsidiary to the ongoing agricultural operations of the farm business, and that it meets the criteria above.

20.6. LP22 'Local Services and Community Facilities'

20.6.1. Local services and community facilities include, but are not limited to, shops, public houses, places of worship, cemeteries, health centres, libraries, fuel filling stations and public halls.

20.6.2. A proposal for a new local service or community facility within a built-up area, or the extension of an existing local service or community facility on land immediately adjoining the built-up area, will be supported where it:

- A. Is of a scale to serve local needs;
- B. Comprises up to a maximum of 600m² net internal floorspace for a main town centre use.
- C. Provides for a new service or facility or it retains or enhances an existing service or facility, including through the provision of premises suitable for mixed use or multiple community functions.

Where permitted development rights do not apply a proposal which involves the loss of a local service or community facility will only be supported where:

- D. An equivalent service or community facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve; or
- E. It demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored because either:
 - a. there is insufficient community support for its continuation; or
 - b. reasonable steps have been taken to effectively market the property for its current use without success.

A proposal will not be supported where the proposed loss is within a Key Service Centre, and it would undermine the settlement's role in provision of services.

20.7. LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation'

20.7.1. A proposal for a new or expanded tourism, sport or leisure use in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- It is well-related to a defined settlement unless there are robust operational or sustainability reasons why it needs to be located elsewhere;
- It does not cause harm to, and where appropriate, enhances the ecological, landscape and heritage significance of the proposed location;
- The impact of the scale, character, and location of the development on both its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape are minimised as far as possible;
- Adequate servicing can be provided, including water supply, electricity and for sewage and waste disposal; and
- It will not have an adverse impact on any internationally or nationally designated wildlife site through increased visitor pressure.

20.7.2. Where tourist accommodation is approved appropriate planning conditions will be used to prevent occupation as a person's permanent sole or main residential use.

20.7.3. A proposal for tourist accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites, should be supported by a robust business plan demonstrating that it is viable in the long term.

20.8. **LP 28 'Rural Exceptions Housing'**

20.8.1. A proposal for housing will be supported on a site well-related to a built-up area, as an exception to the requirements of relevant policies, where it can be demonstrated that:

- At least 60% (net) of the site area is for affordable housing for people with a local connections.
- The number, size, type, and tenure of the affordable homes is justified by evidence that they would meet an identified need arising within the settlement or nearby small settlements (as defined in 'Small Settlements') through a local needs survey or other local needs evidence.
- The remainder of the site area is available as open market housing or plots suitable for custom or self-build homes tailored to meet locally generated need.
- The amount of development and location of the proposal is sustainable in terms of:
 - Availability of services and existing infrastructure.
 - Opportunities for users of the proposed development to travel by sustainable modes.

- Effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.
- Mechanisms, including planning conditions / obligations, will be put in place to ensure that the affordable housing is delivered and remains affordable in perpetuity or for the appropriate period as applicable to the form of housing.
- To ensure that market housing and affordable housing elements are delivered concurrently a planning condition will be applied.

20.9. LP33 'Rural Buildings'

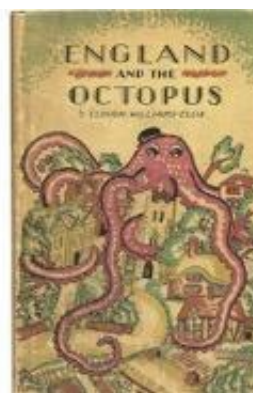
- 20.9.1. A proposal for the conversion of a building in the countryside that would not be dealt with through 'Prior Approval/ Notification' will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
- The building is:
 - i. Redundant or disused.
 - ii. Of permanent and substantial construction.
 - iii. Not in such a state of dereliction or disrepair that significant reconstruction would be required.
 - iv. Structurally capable of being converted for the proposed use.
 - The proposal:
 - i. Would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; and
 - ii. Any extension or alteration would not adversely affect the form, scale, massing, or proportion of the building.
- 20.9.2. A proposal for the replacement of a building in the countryside will be supported where the criteria for the building above are fulfilled and the proposal would lead to a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting. A modest increase in floorspace will be supported.
- 20.9.3. The position of the replacement buildings within the site should be considered comprehensively so that it is located where it would have the least possible adverse impact on the immediate surroundings, the wider landscape, and the amenity of the users of existing buildings nearby.

21. Appendix C: The Planning System

21.1.1. It is said that 'Town Planning' was created in 1947 under the Town and Country Planning Act. This act was, indeed, sweeping in its ambitions and centralising in its wartime origins but it was, in reality, a marker in a long thread of legislation as a result of industrialisation of the United Kingdom in the 19th century.

21.1.2. Until the arrival of industrialisation, the United Kingdom was based on an agricultural economy that, in turn, relied on generations of rural workers based in small settlements throughout the countryside. Market towns were small and functioned as transactional hubs for the rural hinterland. The introduction of the factory system to manufacturing enterprises saw a general exodus from the country into towns. The rural areas became sparsely populated but, with the greater efficiencies of industrialised agriculture, still able to function as food production.

21.1.3. It was soon clear that the towns were becoming intolerable with congestion and overcrowding. Standards of construction were low and the resulting slums unsanitary with the result that from 1848 a series of public health laws were introduced. The first planning legislation in 1909 was the result of concern over basic living standards and the wider campaign for high-quality place making, led by the Garden Cities movement.



21.1.4. However, the planning system was weak and fragmented and could not properly deal with the chronically-poor housing conditions; nor could it deal with expansion of private sector housing which, particularly in London, had begun to sprawl along arterial routes.

21.1.5. The architect of Portmeirion, Clogh Williams Ellis, published a 1928 book titled England and The Octopus. Octopus being London spreading out into the country. On the front was a cartoon of a man leaving his rural home to fight in the Great War to preserve his native soil. He returns in uniform to find his home is now an industrial landscape.

He writes that,

“...having made our town with such careless incompetence, those of us who have the means to be choosers are...now proceeding with the same recklessness to disperse ourselves over the countryside, destroying and dishonouring it with our shoddy but all-to-permanent encampments.”

21.1.6. The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 – steeped in the wartime experience of top-down planning - repealed all previous planning legislation. It contained some of the most drastic provisions ever enacted in Britain affecting the ownership of land and buildings. In effect it took away the liberty of all landowners to develop or use their land as they might wish. The case for effective planning was not just limited to technical planning reports; it was a mainstream part of the wider construction of the welfare state and was featured strongly in the 1942 Beveridge report.

21.1.7. After the 1948 Act, ownership of property carried with it only the right to use it for its existing purpose. Any change of use or material development required permission and the general process of obtaining Planning Permission was born.

Planning Policy had and has four principal aims:

21.1.7.1. Prevent urban sprawl into the countryside - Green belts etc.

21.1.7.2. Improve living conditions (slum clearance and new tower blocks) in towns and cities to counteract sprawl.

21.1.7.3. Protect the rural agricultural economy by restricting rural residential development to New Towns.

21.1.7.4. Protection of Heritage Assets through a centrally administered Listing (Grade 1, 2* and 2), Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks.

21.1.8. From its inception Planning Policy in Britain has been centrally organised to principles generated by the Westminster Government. These principles are implemented by Local Governments by way of their own local policies within their own purpose made Local Plan.

21.1.9. Over the last 76 years the Planning ‘system’ has had to evolve to deal with the detail and complexity of human needs, changing uses and an expanding population. The act of ‘freezing’ land uses in 1947 has made the “change of use” (even if the building was materially unaffected) a matter for control. Whilst this has caused immense difficulties in urban areas the same has affected the countryside in adapting small settlements and isolated structures from the age of agriculture in 1947 to modern needs.

21.1.10. Perhaps because of its over-ambition the 1947 system was operational for just six years before major reform in 1954. Reform has continued until the present day as the fundamental dichotomy of having a centrally planned land use system, implemented at a local level searches for a resolution that is seen to be both fair and have a democratic acceptance.

21.1.11. The latest centralised reform occurred in March 2012 with the Department of Communities and Local Government introducing a National Policy Planning Framework. Known as “The Framework” or “NPPF” it

consolidated a conflicting myriad of supporting policy guidance with the aim of promoting the concept of “Sustainable Development”.

Sustainable development is defined in the NPPF as having 3 objectives:

- 21.1.11.1. *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;*
 - 21.1.11.2. *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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
 - 21.1.11.3. *an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*
- 21.1.12. The NPPF is a long and complex document but clauses affecting the implementation of development policy in rural areas (with a focus on the GWH Neighbourhood Plan) are listed as the following clauses.
- 12.** The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any Neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
- 13.** The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in Neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.
- 18.** Policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic and non-strategic policies, and/or in local or Neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies.
- 28.** Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, Neighbourhoods, or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design

principles, conserving, and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.

29. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct, and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies¹⁸.

30. Once a Neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the Neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

37. Neighbourhood plans must meet certain 'basic conditions' and other legal requirements before they can come into force. These are assessed through an independent examination before the Neighbourhood plan may proceed to referendum.

64. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.

69. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

1. Identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;...

70. Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.

78. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

79. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies

should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

1. There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
2. The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
3. The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
4. The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
5. The design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - a. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - b. would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

84. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

1. The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
2. The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
3. Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
4. The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship.

85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development

is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

112. Within this context, applications for development should:

1. Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
2. Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
3. Create places that are safe, secure, and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
4. Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and,
5. Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible, and convenient locations.

119. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.

120. Planning policies and decisions should:

1. Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
2. Recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
3. Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable 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 assessed, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

127. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.

159. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).

Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

1. Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
2. Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
3. Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
4. Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
5. 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 and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

6. Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

1. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
2. Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
3. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
4. Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay, or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

1. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
2. The wider social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
3. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
4. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

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

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

1. Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
2. Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Planning control is delivered at the local level and this Neighbourhood Plan will be a material factor in that implementation, restrictions, and aspirations.

22. Appendix D – Flooding Responsibility

No one organisation is responsible for flood prevention. CCC is the Lead Local Flood Authority who write several planning documents on the subject. In terms of prevention, CCC is responsible for highway drains whilst a Landowner is responsible for ditches, culvert and piped water courses. Anglian Water is responsible for public surface water, sewers and foul sewers. The Environment Agency is responsible for critical water courses, main rivers and emergency response. Within GWH there are no critical water courses.

23. Appendix E: The Team

The core team that put the Neighbourhood Plan together was:

- Graham Evans (Winwick).
- Iain Ladds (Little Gidding).
- Jan Maciag (Great Gidding).
- Jeff Deighton (Winwick).
- John Clarke (Winwick).
- John Souter (Hamerton & Steeple Gidding).
- Kirsten Zamo (Hamerton & Steeple Gidding).
- Paul Hargrave (Great Gidding).
- Stephen Brown (Great Gidding).

Help and support was greatly received from:

- Great Gidding Parish Council, particularly the Parish Clerk Julie Trollove.
- Huntingdonshire District Council, particularly Frances Schultz.