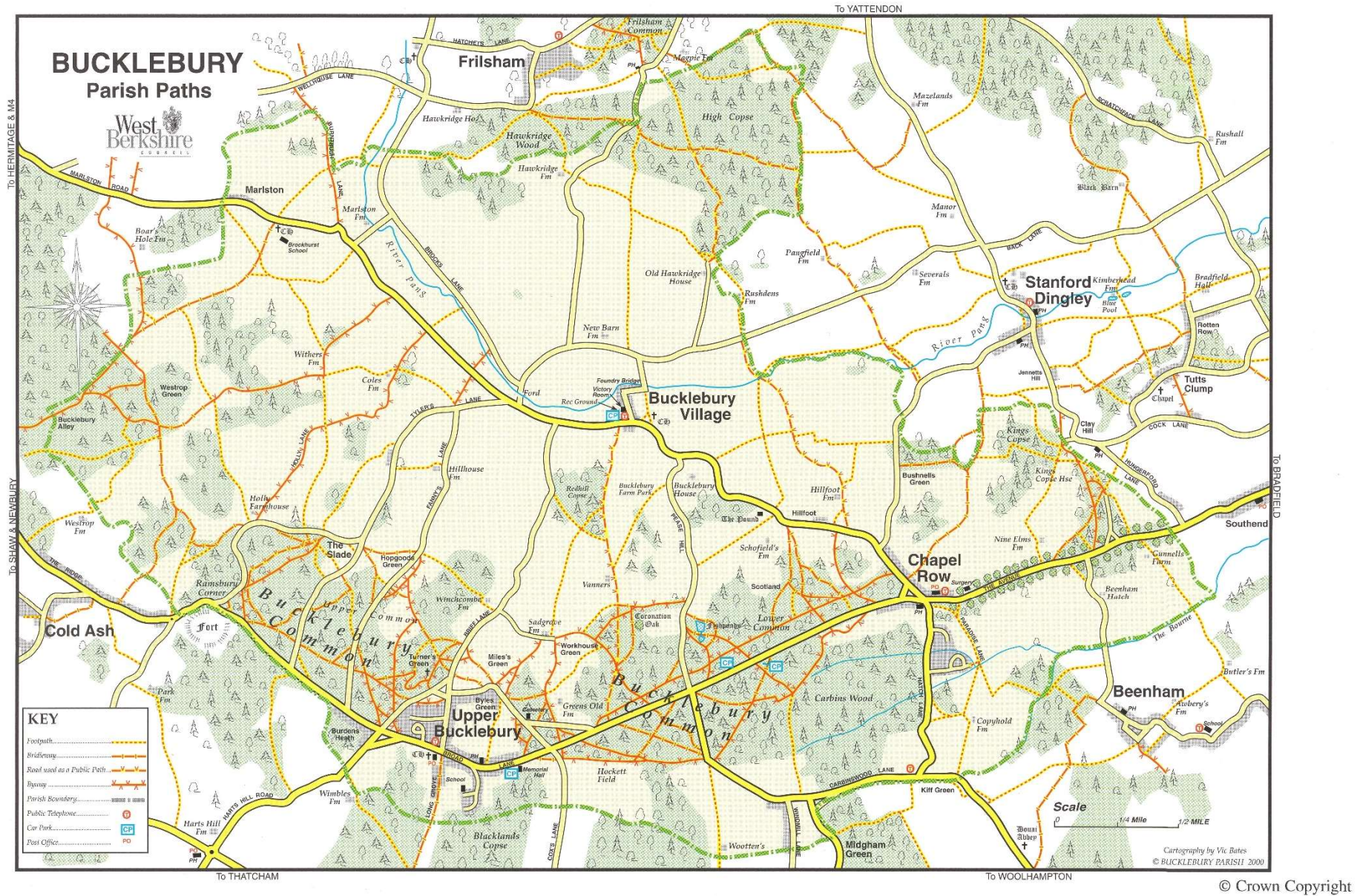


Bucklebury Vision



**A Design Statement for the
Parish of Bucklebury**

The Parish of Bucklebury



.....a peaceful haven in the heart of West Berkshire

Based on Ordnance Survey data ©Crown Copyright 2018, West Berkshire Council 0100024151

The Design Statement

Background

Village, Town and Parish Design Statements (VDS) are intended to provide a context for new development, based on local character and sense of place. Their purpose is to manage change, whether that change is major new development or just cumulative, small-scale additions and alterations. They are not about whether development should take place; that is the job for the Local Plan. They are about how planned development should be carried out, so that it is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the local environment. By describing the qualities and characteristics that people value in their villages and surroundings, local communities can have an input into the planning process on both policy and implementation basis.

Use of the Village Design Statement

The original Bucklebury Vision was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by West Berkshire Council (WBC) on 16th April 2002. This updated VDS will supersede that document. Once adopted by WBC the updated Bucklebury Vision will continue to be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Compliance with the recommendations in this document does not by itself guarantee planning permission as each case is judged on its merits.

This document will complement the guidance contained in the Quality Design – West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document (adopted June 2006). This was produced by WBC to help developers create places of high quality design which are sustainable, secure and accessible to all. It places particular emphasis on understanding context, as a full appreciation of an overall site and surrounding area is essential as a starting point for creating a sense of place.

Contents

Page

Introduction	4
History	5
Community and Population	6
The Economy	6
Landscape and Environment	7
Amenities, Services and Recreation	9
Highways, Communications and Traffic	10
Buildings and Design	11
Planning	13
West Berkshire District local Plan	13
Summary	13
Appendices	14
Appendix 1 (Supplementary Historical Information)	15
Appendix 2 (Supplementary Environmental and Geological information)	19
Appendix 3 (Statistics)	21
MAP 1 (Hamlets, Houses and Roads)	23
MAP 2 (Topography and Nature Conservation)	24

The Parish of Bucklebury is special

.....*we want it to stay that way*

Introduction

The Bucklebury VDS, first published in 2002, has now been factually updated and revised by a Bucklebury Parish Council (BPC) working party to reflect the situation in 2019. Parishioners' comments from the Parish Plan Refresh of 2011 and the subsequent Housing Needs Survey in 2012 form an integral part of this work. Due to the fragmented status of Bucklebury Parish, consisting of 17 small, isolated, separate hamlets, Bucklebury Parish decided that a consolidated Design Statement would provide a more meaningful assessment and a better practical guidance than individual statements.

At the outset of the programme, a small core team set out to establish as full an understanding of the concept of a VDS as possible. This core was expanded with invitations to a wide selection of parishioners with varied background interests. Thereafter the whole community was invited to participate through a series of promotions, including: open meetings, the village fete, the Parish Annual assembly and articles in the Parish newsletters. A questionnaire was issued to each and every household (800) and the resulting opinions analysed as the basis for statements expressed in

Bucklebury Vision. Regular updates of the content and progress were issued through newsletters, and each household was given copies of an extensive summary of the final draft with the invitation to comment.



St Mary the Virgin

This document sets out the Parishioners ambitions.

Its **contents** explain the qualities of the Parish as they are seen today; highlighting those factors that are generally valued and considered worthy of conservation and enhancement.

Its **aim** is to ensure that any **future changes** take into account the wishes and desires of the community with regard to the character and style of development, amenities, services and local needs.

Its **scope** covers all forms and scales of development.

Its Users will include:

- West Berkshire Council.
- The Parish Council, as a guide to the future wishes of the community.
- Householders and individual members of the Parish.
- Planners, developers, builders, architects, designers and engineers.
- Local community groups
- Local businesses

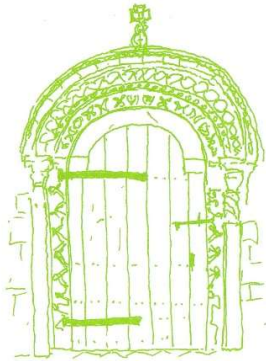
The Overall Picture

The document in its entirety, and the Appendices should be taken as to represent the overall views of all the community. They can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure the future viability of the community is sustained
- To maximise rural conservation and protection from pollution
- To ensure future development avoids 'pattern book' designs
- To ensure new development, alterations and extensions are architecturally in keeping and are sympathetic to the rural and historic environment

History

The earliest recorded reference to Bucklebury relates to the 10th century (956 AD) when King Edwig granted wood from Hawkridge to rebuild Abingdon Abbey. Bucklebury is mentioned in the Domesday Book when it was part of the royal hunting grounds and boasted of two manors. The Romans settled in this area and remains of their dwellings have been found within the Parish.



C11th South door to St Mary the Virgin

Bucklebury village church of St Mary the Virgin dates from the 11th century. It was not until the 12th century that it became part of Reading Abbey possessions by means of an exchange of properties with St Alban's Abbey. Bucklebury provided peace, tranquillity, and a beautiful location for the Abbot to build his house. The fishponds, which were constructed at that time to provide a food source, still exist today.

Following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, the manor was sold to the Winchcombe family in 1540.

It and the surrounding hamlets gradually expanded and prospered under the stewardship of this family. By the 19th century villagers had benefited from the freedom of access to the Common only to see this threatened by the Enclosures Act. John Morton, a tenant farmer and local lay preacher, fought and won the battle with parliament to keep the Common protected from 'Enclosure' and hence it still remains open today to both Commoners and visitors alike.

The cultural heritage has, and continues to have, great influence on the whole Parish. There is a sense of pride amongst the Parishioners of Bucklebury for what has been created over the years.

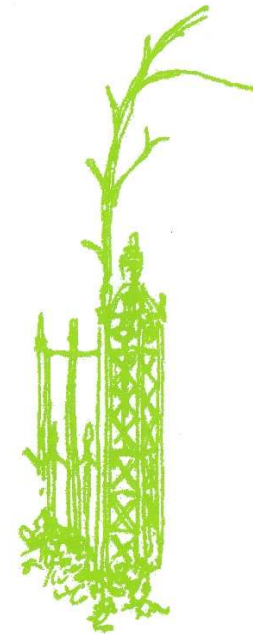
(Supplementary historical comment Appendix 1)



Norman pilaster

Guidelines

1 G 1 The historic environment of the Parish should be conserved and enhanced.



Local foundry ironwork to the church gate



John Morton's Chapel

Community and Population



St Mary's, Marlston C13th church

The present population is around 2350. It is widely spread across the many individual hamlets (Map 1) and has a significant proportion of lifelong residents. The average household size is 2.6.

The local residents highly value the rural nature and natural beauty of the area in which they live and are keen to protect this for future generations to enjoy. At the same time they are concerned that properties are not always available to allow the local younger generations, who wish to remain in the parish, to find appropriate homes of their own.

(Statistical data, Appendix 3).



Roadside Cottages special to Parish, Bucklebury Village

Guidelines

2 G 1 Development should be planned so as to reflect and support the existing built form of the many small communities within the Parish.

2 G 2 Any new housing development should include an appropriate mix of units, in terms of size and tenure, to meet the needs of the community.



Foundry waterwheel Bucklebury Village

The Economy

Bucklebury has throughout its history been chosen as a peaceful haven to escape from the main clamours of town and city life. It has therefore not seen the establishment of any major economy. Farming and associated businesses have provided small scale job opportunities alongside those offered by village shops, schools, pubs and artisan services. This farming sector with 8 to 9 working units, 10 to 15 small holdings, handles cattle, pigs, sheep, dairy, and arable crops has created the balanced rural economy established today. However the bulk of the population relies on work from outside the parish boundaries and will continue to do so. Nevertheless there is a strong desire from residents for the present level of small home-based businesses, and artisan and service sectors to flourish within the limits of the present infrastructure.

(Local services and commercial operations listed Appendix 3)

Guidelines

4 G 1 Where appropriate, plans for small scale farm diversification projects, suitable for a rural location to provide for local employment will be supported.

4 G 2 The role of artisan and home based service sectors in meeting local needs is recognised

4 G 3 Sustainable rural economic development is supported where it complies with the policies of the West Berkshire District Local Plan.

Landscape and Environment

In June 2000 the Government clarified its planning policy with regard to 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)'. It stated that AONB share the highest status of protection along with National Parks, in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The Parish of Bucklebury, comprising of 2200 hectares, lies wholly within the North Wessex Downs' "**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**". It consists of 3 natural sectors: the North, with the heavily wooded high ground of Hawkridge; the Central lowland strip of the Pang Valley with its chalk stream and water meadows; and the Southern sector of the high ground of Bucklebury Common.



Rural heartland: Bucklebury Farm Park

Bucklebury Common is one of the largest commons in Berkshire and home to a rich variety of wildlife. Bucklebury Common is owned by Bucklebury Estate and various groups work in partnership with the estate to manage the Common. Under an agreement with West Berkshire Council (WBC), Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) look after the car parks, litter bins and remove fly-tipping. They help enforce byelaws, arrange and report to the Common Advisory Committee, fund skips for the community litter

picks; liaise with WBC and the landowner and take action to counter misuse of the common (e.g. 4x4 damage). (Paid for by WBC). Bucklebury Heathland Conservation Group (BHCG - part of West Berkshire Countryside Society) manage 50 hectares of the upper and lower common as lowland heath. It forms one of the largest areas of lowland heath in southern England and is a rare and important habitat internationally. It supports species such as bell heather, nightjar, adder and long leaved sundews. The BHCG holds regular volunteer tasks such as cutting birch and pine to maintain and enhance the important heathland habitats. The conservation work is supported by Natural England under an Environmental Stewardship grant. The River Pang is an internationally rare chalk stream (UK Priority Habitat) supporting wild brown trout.



The Ford

The quality and diversity of wildlife and their habitats within the Parish are highlighted by:

- The heavily wooded areas include deciduous woods classed as '**Ancient Woodland**'
- The Pang river, designated as an EC '**salmonid fishery**' supporting trout populations
- Briff Lane Meadows and Kings Copse, **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**
- Several habitats have **Local Wildlife Site** status, these are sites of County importance, for example, Bucklebury Common, the largest area of common in Berkshire.
- The Avenue, consisting of two rows of oaks on either side of the road, planted in the 16th century when Queen Elizabeth I visited John Winchcombe in his new Manor house, is considered one of the most important group of oaks planted on land permanently open to the public.



The Avenue

The wildlife of the Parish, both plants and animals, is extensive and contains some rare species, many of which are protected by law. Examples of species found include Nightjars, Tawny and Little Owls, Kestrels, Sparrow Hawks, Buzzards and Red Kites. The bigger animals include Fox, Badgers, Muntjac, and Roe Deer. Among the smaller mammals are squirrels (grey), rabbits, and the Yellow Necked Woodmouse.



Deer are a regular sighting

The flora is rich and includes wood anemone, wood sage, honeysuckle, bluebell, tormentil, saxifrage, climbing Corydalis and several species of wild orchid.



The Common is home to many types of fungi

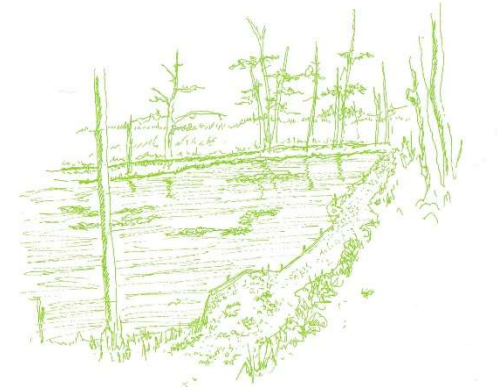
Loss of habitats or habitat change as a result of inappropriate management are one of the most damaging threats facing rare species in Berkshire. These habitats should be safeguarded wherever possible and appropriate advice sought on managing them to conserve the natural diversity of life and to halt the extinction of species diversity not only in Berkshire but also in the UK.

The FWAG Association can provide an advisory service to farmers and landowners on improving wildlife, habitats and landscape in the Pang Valley.

In the rural setting, hedges, trees, and the original flora and fauna of the area should be respected and incorporated into any plans for future development.

(Supplementary environmental and geological information Appendix 2)

(Additional topographic information, Appendix 3)



Monastic Fishponds

Guidelines

3 G 1 Any development should be in keeping with the rural nature of the area and its designation as an AONB

3 G 2 The natural beauty of the landscape, visual quality and amenity of the area should be conserved and enhanced.

3 G 3 The biodiversity of the parish should be conserved and enhanced.

3 G 4 Existing hedgerows and trees should be retained whenever possible.

3 G 5 New developments should include indigenous planting and landscaping.

3 G 6 The ongoing work of the environmental groups, such as the West Berkshire Countryside Society is recognised and should continue to be supported and encouraged.

Amenities, Services and Recreation

For those who live in Bucklebury the proximity to the open space offered by both the Common and the surrounding woodlands and farmlands provides the inhabitants with excellent opportunities to enjoy walking, horse riding and countryside pursuits. The 40 miles of footpaths and bridleways through the surrounding countryside is an amenity highly valued and appreciated by residents.



Footpaths along Pang Valley

The community is well served with a range of basic and essential amenities including: The Church of England Primary School, a preparatory school, toddler group; Doctor's Surgery with Dispensary, three Church of England churches, one chapel, two pub/restaurants, two cafes, three garages, one general stores with PayPoint, another shop, two community halls, a mobile library. Post Office Outreach service at All Saints Church Upper Bucklebury and a Farm Park with shop.



Examples of Chapel Row businesses

The 41 Bus Service runs three return services a day from Upper Bucklebury and Chapel Row to Thatcham and Theale and one return service to Newbury and Reading a week. The Bucklebury Community Bus runs to Thatcham (<https://buckleburybus.youcanbook.me/>).

The Electricity supply is by overhead distribution lines. Water supply interruptions occur from time to time. Mains sewerage has been extended in some areas, septic tanks are still in use in outlying parts of the parish. Mains gas is available in some parts of the settlement area of Upper Bucklebury. Any new development would have to take into account any necessary extension to basic utilities. High-speed broadband is now available in most parts of the Parish. There are two village halls serving the parish, the Memorial Hall in Upper Bucklebury, and the older Victory Room in Bucklebury Village. The latter is greatly in need of updating and funds are being sought for its improvement. It is next to the only recreation field in the parish which can be used for formal sport, and the ground is regularly used for children's football training and matches.

A second recreation field is the Hockett Field which is unsuitable for formal sports due to its location and soil, and this is used for general outdoor pursuits. Tennis is played on two hard courts at the Memorial Hall, and badminton is played in local school facilities. The Memorial Hall has a play park and BMX track adjacent to it. The Victory Room is also next to a children's playground. Bucklebury Meadows in the centre of Upper Bucklebury is owned by BPC and provides a quiet area for walking. The strong community spirit enables a large selection of societies and organisations to cater for a wide variety of interests in sport, clubs, and community activities. Facilities are thought by residents to be adequate for the present community's needs. There is an expressed interest for improved facilities for young and elderly residents, and additional sporting facilities (indoor and outdoor). However the general feeling in the community is that further formalised sports facilities are better met by nearby towns which have the higher local demand required to produce financial viability for such amenities.

Guidelines

5 G 1 The effects of any new development on essential services and infrastructure should be considered. (water, power, sewerage, schools, etc.)

5 G 2 Opportunities for informal countryside recreation for all sectors of the community should be encouraged.

Highways, Communication and Traffic

The Parish roads have been established over the years for access, service and communication between the numerous hamlets, farms and dwellings. They consist entirely of unclassified roads (**rural roads**), mostly without pavements or kerbstones, upgraded from gravel tracks with only a limited top surface structure. The 14 miles of tarmac lanes - all single carriageway or single track, with few passing places, are generally narrow winding country lanes with hedgerows or soft verge edges, many subject to flooding and only really suitable for local traffic.



Unclassified road

Two roads (9 miles in all) run east/west, one from Thatcham, through the two main Parish centres, Upper Bucklebury and Chapel Row and on to Theale and Reading, and a second from Hermitage to Chapel Row through Marlston and Bucklebury Village. Most of the remaining lanes join these two roads on a north/south axis serving the small and scattered enclaves of houses throughout the area.



The principal road through the Parish: 'The Avenue'



The two principal roads serve two functions: primarily for local movements to and from the Parish and adjoining Parishes (most residents work outside) and secondly they have come to be used as a through road for traffic between Hermitage / Newbury / Thatcham and Pangbourne / Theale / M4 and Reading. The general increase in volume and speed of traffic is of great concern to residents. Whilst 30 mph limits have been introduced through Upper Bucklebury, Chapel Row and Bucklebury Village, some local byways and lanes have been designated as '**Quiet Lanes**'. 'Quiet Lane' designation is for minor rural roads appropriate for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, and other vehicles.

(Road statistics, Appendix 3)



A Quiet Lane Marker

Guidelines

6 G 1 Any development which creates unacceptable levels of traffic would be resisted.

6 G 2 The reduction of vehicular traffic in order to reduce traffic on unclassified roads is supported

6 G 3 Initiatives which make the roads in the Parish safer for all users, such as the 'Village Speed Limits Initiative' and 'The Quiet Lanes Initiative', are supported. Where appropriate other traffic calming methods are also encouraged. Any such measures should be in sympathy with the Parish's rural nature

6 G 4 Where appropriate, the status of the Parish within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty should be acknowledged

6 G 5 Any future road improvements should avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials that would degrade the rural quality of the area

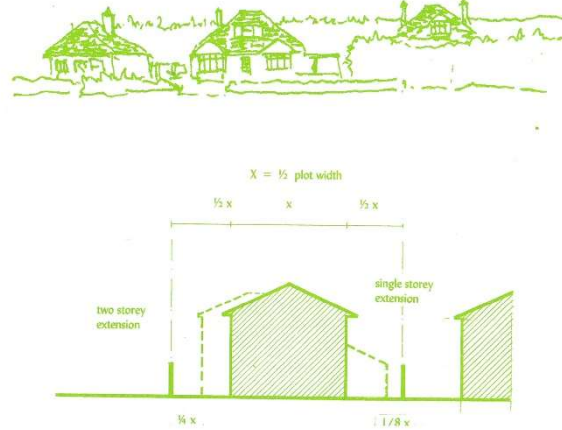
Buildings and Design

The overall housing stock is 874 dwellings, with four main settlements holding 657 homes out of this total (75%). Upper Bucklebury now accounts for around 357 (41%) of these dwellings. In the Parish there are in the region of 110 houses (12.5%) managed by Sovereign Housing Association. There are numerous hamlets (*17 in number – Map 1*) and isolated houses found nestling within woodlands, farmlands and on the Common, which often enjoy rural outlooks. Styles of housing vary considerably with thatched cottages, manorial homes, family houses, with newer properties all blending into the area. A number are listed and are of historical interest. This pattern and diversity, within the numerous individual hamlets, are major attractions for residents of the rural nature of the area.

Part of Bucklebury Village (around the church) is designated a Conservation Area.



Cottages with double pitched dormered windows



Generous spacing between adjacent houses

Individual buildings although of no coherent architectural pattern, nonetheless have a common thread of earthy, traditional materials indigenous to West Berkshire, and are, in some cases, of superb quality and craftsmanship. There is a consistency of comfortable and well accepted roof forms, predominantly clay tiled, double pitched and dormered, which have a timeless quality and which can easily be adapted to new building as well as to extension and improvement.

Building lines are important, to prevent the overpowering of neighbouring properties, particularly with bulky double garage placements.

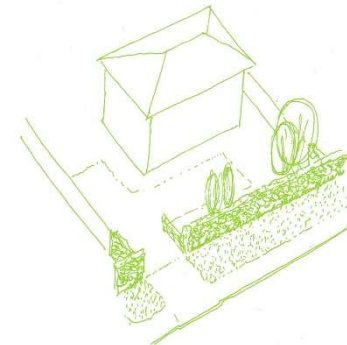
A sense of generous spacing between adjacent buildings prevails.

Elements of good design to blend with local character are:



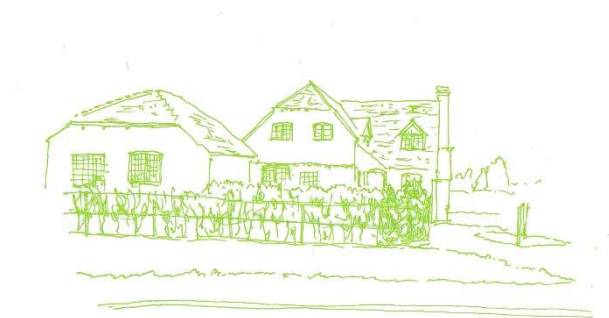
- Hipped gabled roofs to reduce bulk on skyline
- Eaves as low as possible
- Hipped dormer to break up roofline
- Side extensions set back and articulated from main house
- Non dominant Garage frontages
- Porches and small scale elements break up surfaces

Buildings in their setting



- Soft zone to public boundary
- Hedgerows and planting to frontages
- Space around buildings
- Bland car parking areas to frontages avoided

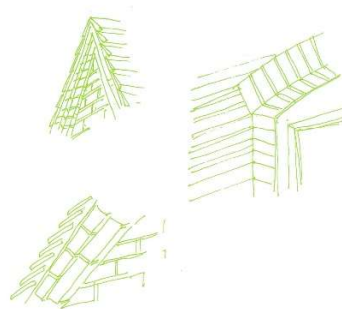
Construction details to enhance traditional rural qualities



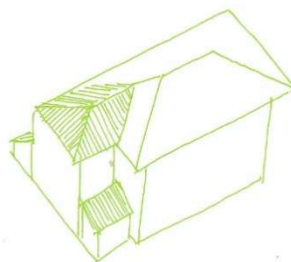
Contemporary Design, traditional detailing, Upper Bucklebury



Low profile cottages



- Corbelled brick corning rather than featureless deep bargeboards
- Clay plain tiling
- Window reveals to full depth of facing course for greater shadow and relief



Extensions to Properties

- Two storey extensions set back from main frontages
- Hipped roofs
- Upper storeys set back from ground floor
- Pitched roofs to small extension

Guidelines

7 G 1 New buildings and extensions should respect the scale, density, style, and general line of existing buildings. Features sought after in new, replacement buildings or extensions, include hipped dormers, low profile chalet styled bungalow conversions.

7 G 2 All materials should be of good quality, sympathetic, and appropriate in colour and form to harmonise with their surroundings. Recommended materials are:

Handmade or similar bricks.

Clay tiles for roofing

Wooden door and window frames

7 G 3 Elements of good design to blend with local character are:

Hipped gabled roofs to reduce bulk on skyline

Eaves as low as possible

Hipped dormer to break up roofline

Side extensions set back and articulated from main house

Non dominant garage frontages

Porches and small scale elements break up surfaces.

Soft zone to public boundary

Hedgerows and planting to frontages

Space around buildings

Bland car parking areas to frontages avoided

7 G 4 Construction details to enhance the traditional rural quality of the Parish

Corbelled brick corning rather than featureless deep barge boards

Clay plain tiling

Window reveals to full depth of facing course for greater shadow and relief

Exposed rafters rather than deep eaves boarding

7 G 5 Where infilling is proposed, over development of the site should be avoided in order to maintain the rural character of the Parish.

Planning

Upper Bucklebury is the only area within the Parish designated in planning terms with a 'settlement boundary'. Over the last 50 years, it has seen the number of properties increase to 357, including 40 houses at Mortons Lane, and 6 in Catherine Place. In the opinion of its residents any additional development on this scale and on one site is likely to extend the community beyond that of the desired rural village community. They want the village to remain predominantly rural.

Guidelines

8 G 1 Any future development should respect the basic settlement pattern of the Parish.

8 G 2 Any proposed housing development should acknowledge the Bucklebury context and avoid 'pattern book' designs.

8 G 3 Any proposed housing development should be of a scale suitable to its immediate environs and should aim to meet local needs.

West Berkshire Local Plan

The current [Local Plan for West Berkshire](#) sets out West Berkshire Council's planning policies up to 2026. The Plan is now being reviewed to cover the period up to 2036.

The local community consider that factors to be highlighted for the Parish include:

- The diversity and separate entities of hamlets and small communities.
- The over- stretched service infrastructure and highways
- The depleted stock of smaller dwellings for older and younger members of the community
- The status of the AONB

Summary

- **Bucklebury is a historic rural community in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**
- **The Parish offers the tranquillity of a countryside rich in biodiversity to all those who live or visit the area.**
- **There are individual communities in many small hamlets which have their own identities.**
- **New houses, extensions / alterations should respect and / or enhance the rural character / style of the Parish.**
- **There is no wish amongst the residents to allow growth to change the character and nature of the community of Bucklebury.**

Bucklebury is special we wish to keep it that way for future generations.



Bucklebury Oak Tree

Appendices

Appendix 1 • Supplementary Historic Information

Appendix 2 • Supplementary Environmental and Geological Information

Appendix 3 • Statistics



Appendix 1 • Supplementary Historic Information

There is some evidence for later prehistoric activity in the form of flint finds and the cropmark of a Bronze Age barrow, and there are some Roman remains and finds, particularly around Bucklebury village. The large size of the parish, the fact that it was also a Domesday Hundred and the suggestion that there might have been a minster here all point to the importance of Bucklebury in the late Saxon period, perhaps as an urban settlement or monastic site. Additionally the 18th-19th century Bucklebury Foundry was in fact an important local industry, providing many iron products across the district.



Foundry grave cross c.19th century in village cemetery

Bucklebury's early history was dominated by the Church until Henry VIII sold the Estate to the Winchcombe family. Many of the local population benefited from this change. The family who bestowed their wealth and influence on the community remained a major influence within the

Parish throughout the period from the mid of the 1500's to the end of the 1700's.

With the improving prosperity due to the Winchcombes others came to the area. New properties were built on the higher grounds of Chapel Row due to the occasional flooding in the Pang Valley.



Village cemetery & chapel



After the death of the last male Winchcombe the ownership of the Manor changed several times during a rather unsettled and turbulent period,

although Bucklebury life was brightened by visits from such characters as Dean Swift, Pope, Parnell and other notables of London society.

The sale of the Estate's land in 1922 concluded this period of change in ownership. It also introduced a new era for part of the remaining 'manorial waste land' whereby, in an agreement with the Bradfield Rural District Council, the Council accepted management responsibility for the Common in return for freedom of access to the area for the general public.

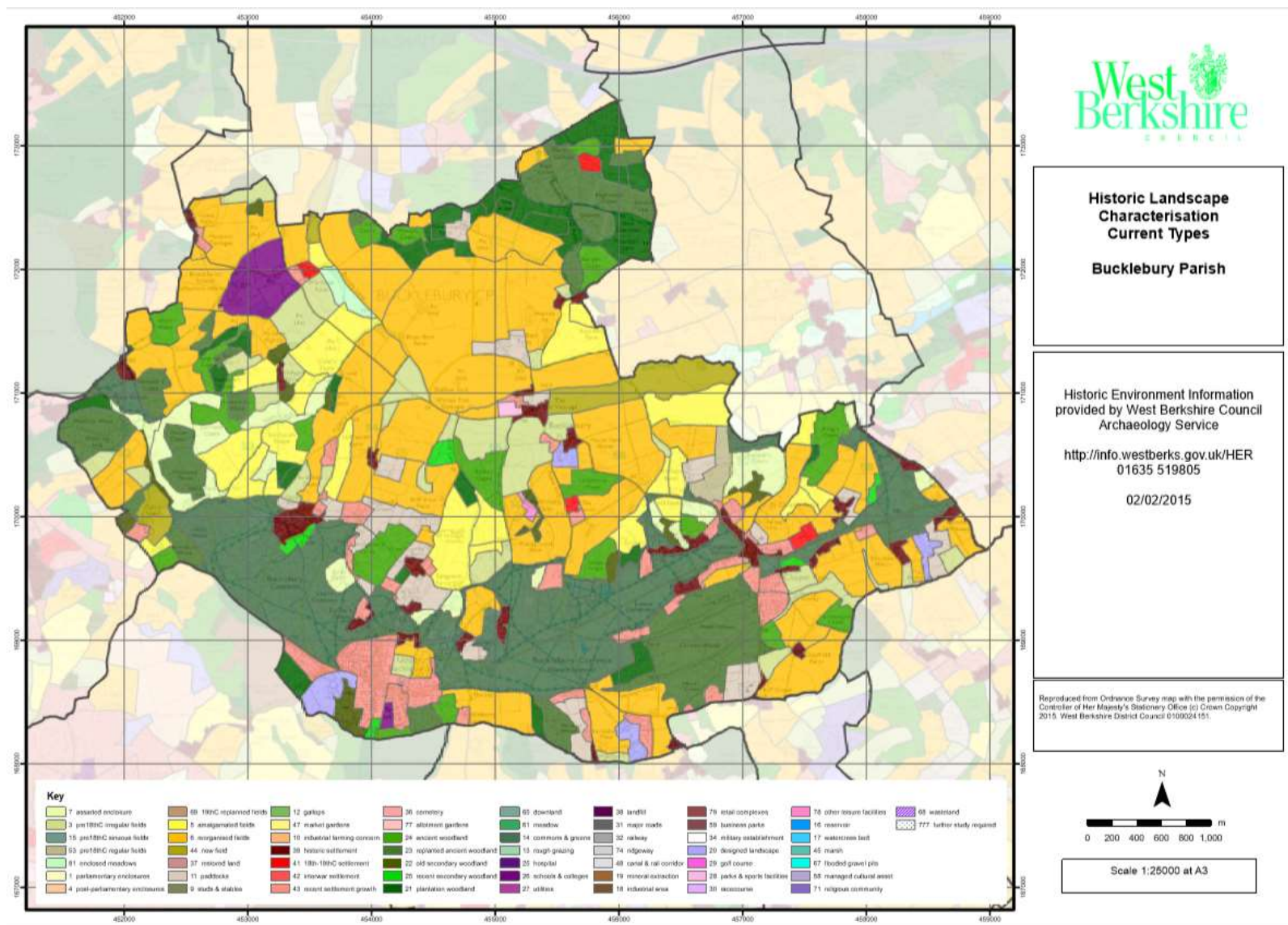


George Lailey, Bowl Turner of Bucklebury

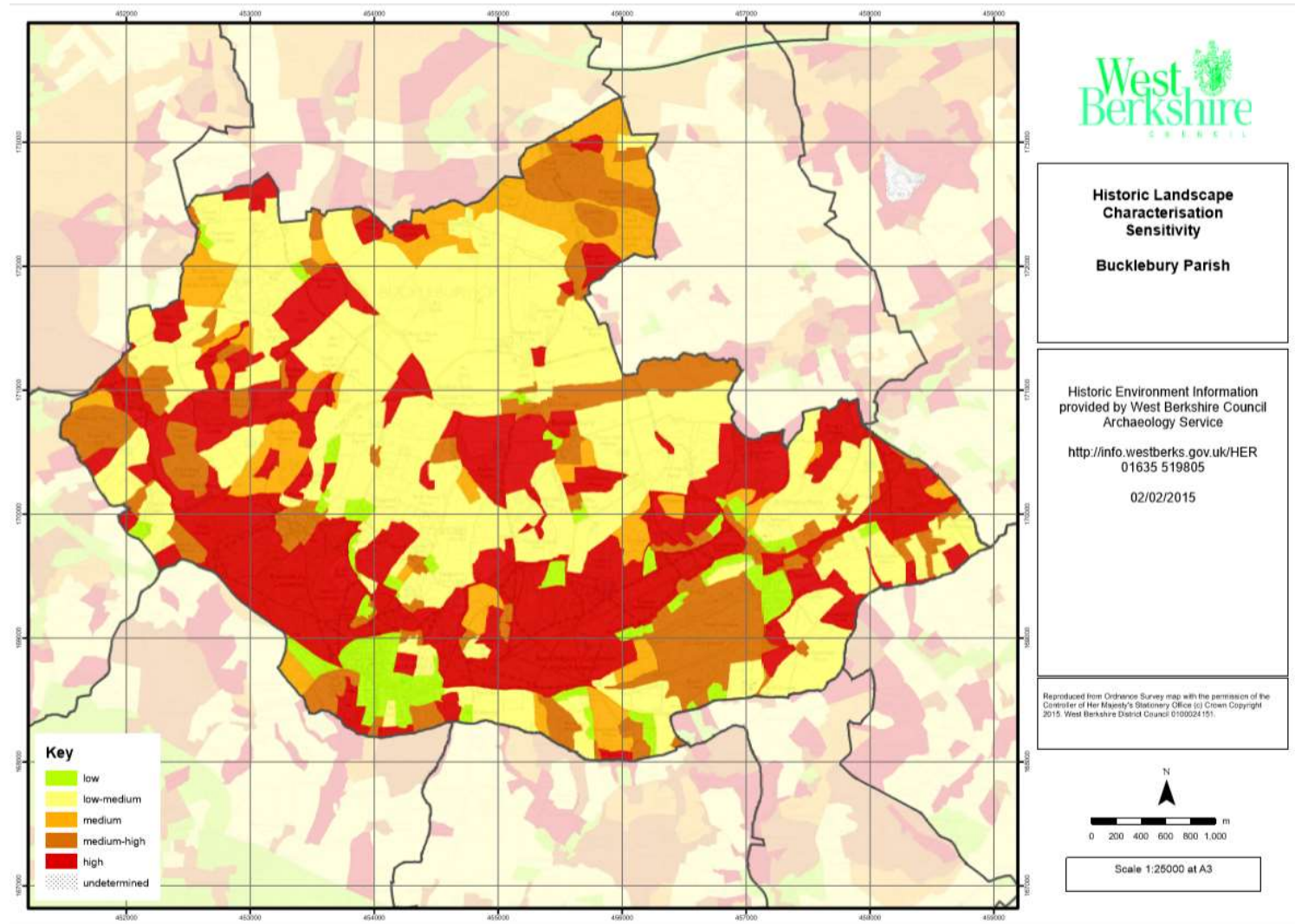
During the Second World War part of this Common land was taken over for military use and was levelled to form a vehicle assembly area. The activity itself brought an influx of people to Bucklebury. Following the end of hostilities, squatters moved into the vacant army units until they were eventually re-housed in newly developed areas of Upper Bucklebury

WBC Archaeology Historic Landscape Characterisation project

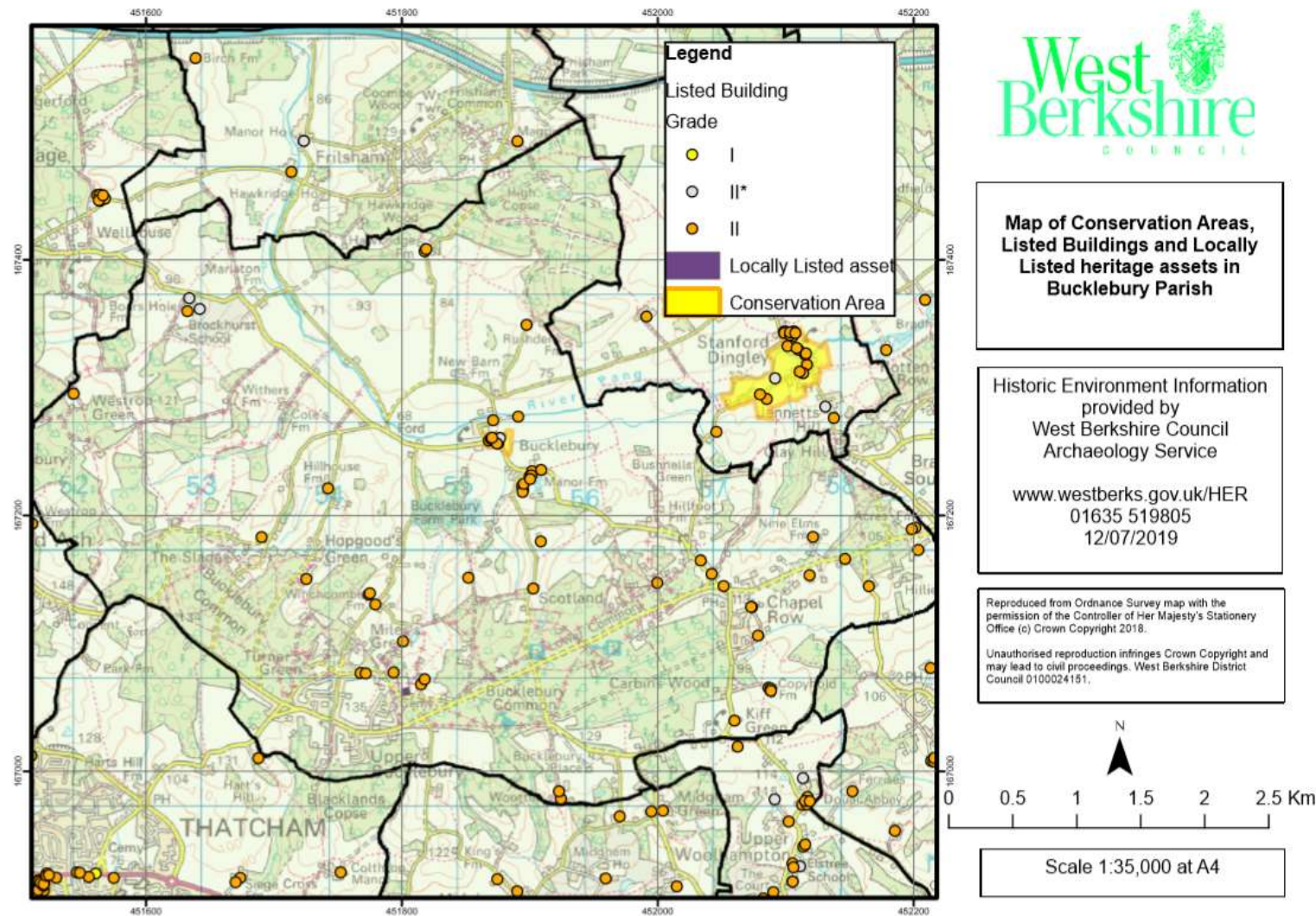
WBC Historic Landscape Characterisation project helps explain recent land-use and also ties in to the distribution of flora and fauna. Bucklebury's character today owes quite a lot to the medieval period or shortly after through the presence of its commons and some early enclosure, though 19th and 20th century land-use changes predominate, ie replanted woodland and the reorganised fields and more recent settlement growth.



The WBC Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) mapping also helps illustrate the settlement patterns (Current HLC types), showing where there are areas of historic and later settlement. There are many small historic cores, some centred on farmsteads but others which were informal common-edge settlement where there are currently no designated Conservation Areas and limited understanding of what historic building stock might survive. The HLC Sensitivity mapping gives a broad-brush categorisation of what places might be important to conserve, and which are likely to be less significant historically, with a 'traffic lights' colour coding of sensitivity to change.



As well as one Conservation Area and 63 Listed Buildings (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>), there is now a Locally Listed Asset, the Mortuary Chapel and surrounding walls, Bucklebury Cemetery, Bucklebury Common. Other sites within the Parish are being considered for local listing. There are nearly 20 unlisted buildings recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) (<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>). The HER also holds records for earthworks such as areas of former field systems and possible ridge and furrow.



Appendix 2 • Supplementary Environmental and Geological Information

Soil Types

The Pang Valley is underlain by a bedrock of chalk covered with a layer of clay. As the ground elevation rises, the underlying soil becomes that of sand and plateau gravels

Landscape

The intimately scaled, flat to undulating plateaux of Hawkridge and Bucklebury Common lie to either side of the Pang Valley with a landscape dominated by woodland, enclosed pasture, remnant heathlands and commons. These are important heathland and woodland habitats. The shallow broad valley of the Pang has a relatively narrow flood plain. Fields of permanent pasture are divided by hedges and poplars or wire fences. Pollarded willows and small blocks of woodland with willows, alders and poplars lie along the river course. To the south of the river there are irregular patterns of arable and pastureland. Further information on the landscape character assessments covering this area can be found on West Berkshire Council's website <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/lca>.

Hydrology

The river Pang rises to the North-West of Bucklebury at Compton on the Berkshire Downs, although the perennial source is the Blue Pool below the Parish at Bradfield.

The Pang is mainly fed from the natural water table in the underlying chalk. However there are several swallow holes within the Parish, which have direct access to the Blue Pool through the chalk substrata. Locating these and protecting them from turbid run off is a problem currently tackled by the Environment Agency. The Pang is classified as a low flow river (due to the impact of abstraction which is now in abeyance) but must have had more water at some time in the past, because there are several sites within Bucklebury at which water wheels have been in operation. The river is crossed by only two bridges and a vehicular ford, with two further foot bridges and two green lane fords. Briff Stream, which has its origins on the Common land in the south, flows north to join the Pang at Bucklebury. Many springs come to the surface in the valley causing wet flushes. These are several ponds in the area, which include monastic fishponds and various natural ponds. The river Bourne rises on Bucklebury Common and flows east to join the Pang east of Bradfield.

Habitat

Bucklebury Common comprises 800 acres, the largest single area of common in Berkshire. The wildlife value offered by this lowland heath, both to plants and animals is recognised and many of the species are protected by law.

The Avenue has two rows of oak trees situated either side of the road. It has been said 'Bucklebury Avenue has no rival in the whole country for its gently curving alignment, remarkable accuracy of planting, and excellent arboricultural methods employed during the early

years of the trees' growth'. The mile and a half long ride on which these trees stand, has soil which is both suitable for big oaks and at the same time provides such good holding that there is no record of a single tree being uprooted by even the strongest storm. The trees are a hybrid between the Sessile and English oak.

Bucklebury is a heavily wooded parish with largely deciduous woods, the woodlands are mostly wet, often with streams running through them. Some of them are classified as 'ancient' and hence have existed since at least 1600 AD, possibly much longer, as prior to this planting of woodland was very uncommon. (A wood present in 1600 was likely to have been there for some time, and may be a remnant of the old wildwood that once covered most of Britain). The age and continuity of this woodland cover has provided a refuge for a greater variety of plants and animals over the centuries, whilst surrounding landscapes changed. These 'ancient' woodlands, rich in wildlife, have undisturbed soil profiles and natural water features, which provide a living record of past woodland management practices. The bluebells in these woods (and others around Berkshire) are amongst the best in Britain (and therefore in the world). The Deer Park is another example of the variety of habitats in the Parish. It consists of a steep sided valley containing approximately 60 acres of permanent pasture and four woodlands of mature alder and ash coppice with hazel understorey.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Briff Lane Meadows largely comprises of unimproved, species rich, neutral to slightly acid grasslands; a nationally rare and declining habitat. Also present are, small stream hedges, belts of deciduous woodlands at field edges, and extensive patches of blackthorn dominated scrub. It has a long history of traditional management, with no application of pesticide or artificial fertilizers, and no ploughing or other disturbance to the turf. On the Grassland areas, plants which occur frequently include widespread species such as, common knapweed *Centura nigra*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, self heal *Prunella vulgaris*. Whilst on the drier sandy areas, Devil's bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, and cowslip *Primula veris*. The common spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza fuschii*, and yellow rattle *Rhinanthus minor* are among the species found on the transitional grassland. The hedges and woodland support a wide range of native trees, shrubs and ground flora largely comprising of unimproved species, rich neutral to slightly acidic grasslands, a nationally rare and declining habitat. Also present are small stream hedges, belts of deciduous woodlands at the field edges and extensive patches of blackthorn dominated scrub, oak, ash, hazel and moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina*.

Kings Copse situated on sloping ground, with soils ranging from dry acid types to wet peaty humus offer an example of a particularly varied habitat. The variation of slopes and soil conditions give rise to a complex intermingling of seven woodland stand types including neutral valley alderwood, wet ash/wych elm, wet ash/maple, acid hazel/oak and birch. Holly, aspen, wild cherry and crack willow are locally frequent, whilst beech, probably of planted origin, occurs in the southerly extremity. The flora is rich ranging from communities with abundant wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, wood sage *Teucrium scorodonia*, honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, and tormentil *Potentilla erecta* on the drier acid soil under oak, birch and hazel to flushed areas with sanicle *Sanicula europaea*, bugle *Ajuga reptans*, figworts *Scrophularia nodosa*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and many more. The fauna of this wood is also interesting; as well as a good range of bird species, grass snakes *Natrix natrix* appear to be locally common.

Please note that no right of access is implied for any of the sites mentioned above



Appendix 3 • Statistics

Population

Age Profile (Source: census of 1991; census of 2011)

Census	1991	2011	
Under 24	745	583	28%
Between 24 to 65	1088	1132	53%
Over 65	304	401	19%
Total	2137	2116	
Growth (Total population 1991 to 2011) Negative 1%			

Electoral roll numbers (Source WBC Electoral Services)

	1986	1988	1990	1991*	1993	1995	1997	1998		2011	2019
Chapel Row (B/1)	646	661	658	607	651	665	685	685	East Ward	691	675
Upper Bucklebury (B/2)	843	868	874	952	970	965	979	1006	West Ward	1106	1074
Bucklebury Alley	315	Taken out of Bucklebury									
Total	1489	1529	1532	1559	1621	1630	1664	1691		1797	1749
* 1991 Boundary changes											

Dwellings (Source: Register of Electors 10th Oct 1997 & WBC Electoral Services data 2017)

Location	1997	2017
Upper Bucklebury	281	357
Chapel Row	149	201
The Slade	29	45
Bucklebury Village	39	38
Other Hamlets	277	283
Total	775	874

Accommodation Tenure	2017
Own outright	44%
Mortgage	35%
Shared ownership	1%
Rent from LA	1%
Social rent	11%
Private rent	7%
Other	1%

Accommodation Type	2017
Detached	62%
Semi-det	26%
Terraced	6%
Flat-built	4%
Flat converted	1%
Flat commercial	1%

Topography

Parish area (approximate)	5500 acres (2182 Hectares Census 2011)
Altitude above sea level	Between 65m and 135m
Utilisation of land (approximate)	
Habitation	200 acres
Common Land	800 acres
Woodlands	700 acres
Farmland	3750 acres

Commercial and Artisan operations

One general convenience store, two public houses, a Farm Park(including a café and shop), an interior design shop, a café, a second hand car seller, a car paint and bodywork shop, Saab specialist garage, livestock and gamebird breeding, garden designing and contracting, architect, painting and decorating, domestic cleaning, catering, building and renovating, roofing, fencing, wood working, farming and woodland management.

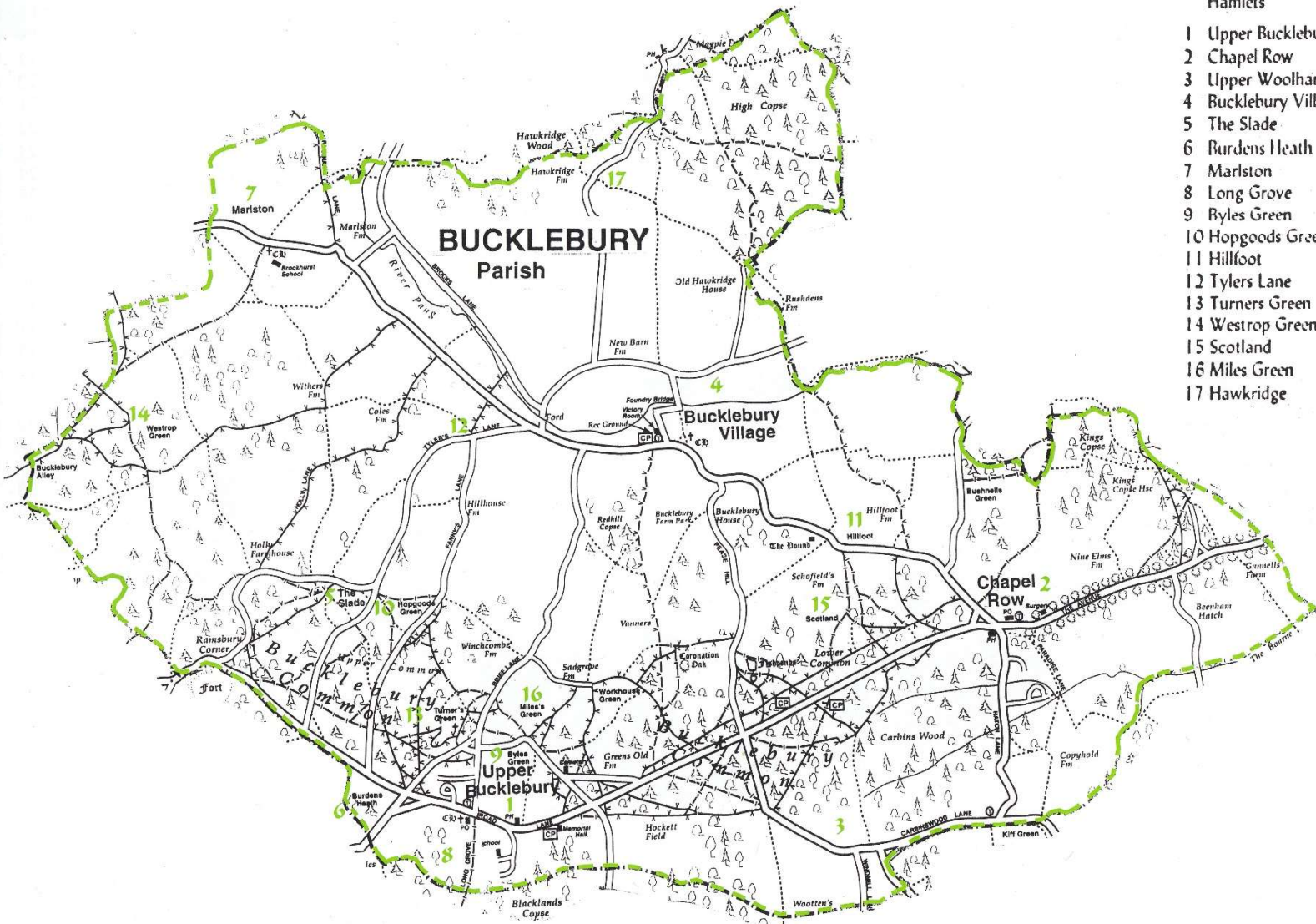
Education

There are preparatory and pre-preparatory schools for boys and girls. Bucklebury CE Primary School currently has 129 pupils taught across five classes. With an annual intake of 18, the school serves both the parish of Bucklebury and families who reside beyond. Approximately 80% of children on roll come from the catchment area. The remaining pupils come largely from the nearby town of Thatcham.

Roads and traffic volumes (Source: WBC Highway Services 2017)

Roads (all unclassified)	23 miles	
Byways, bridleways & Footpaths	40 miles	
Density:	3820 vehicles per day	Broad Lane
	1086 vehicles per day	Bucklebury Village
Bus services:	Up to 3 trips per day	to and from both Thatcham and Theale
	2 trips per week	to and from Newbury or Reading
	School days	to and from Kennet Academy

Map 1



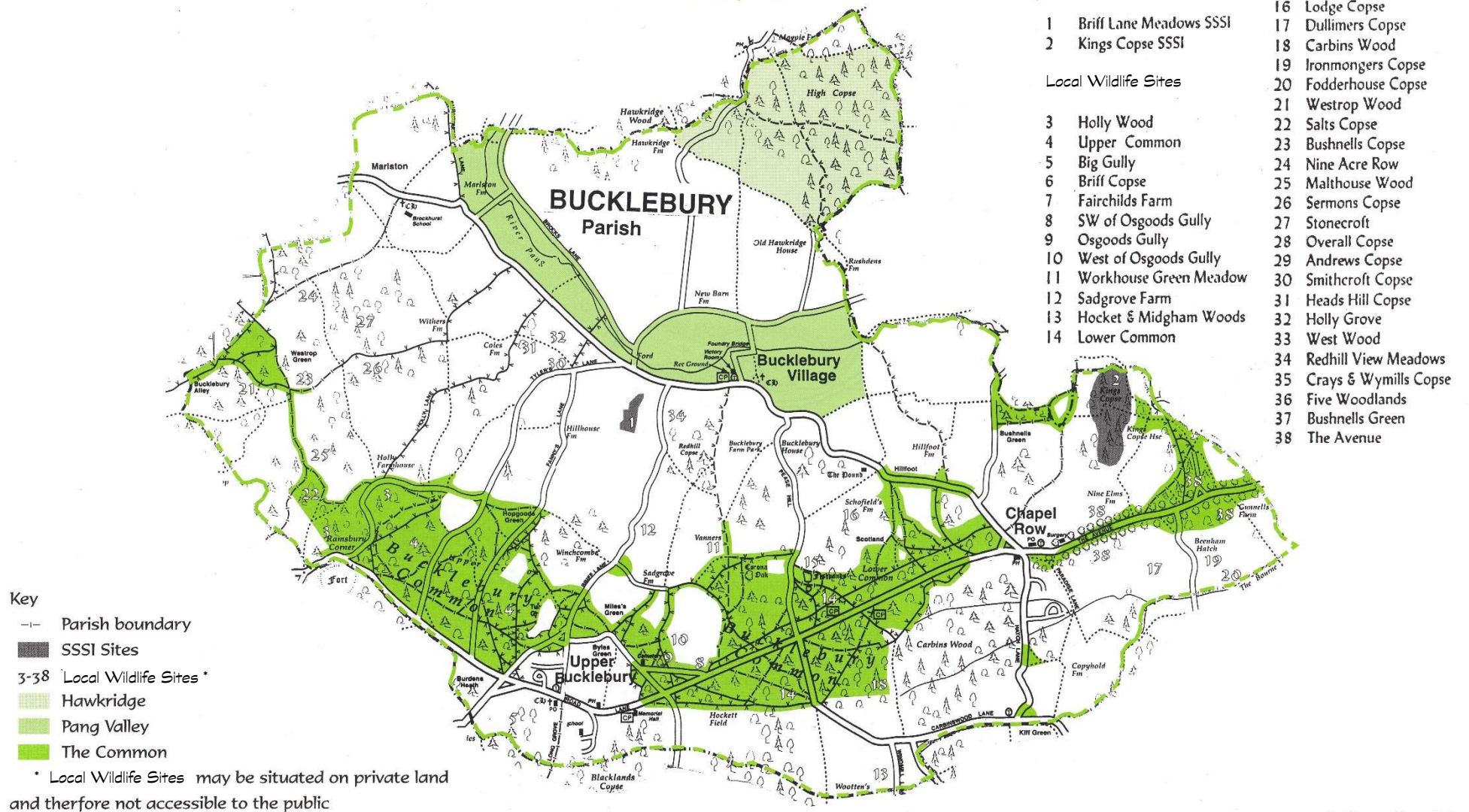
Key	
Hamlets	No. of dwellings
1 Upper Bucklebury	281
2 Chapel Row	149
3 Upper Woolthampton	43
4 Bucklebury Village	39
5 The Slade	29
6 Burdens Heath	25
7 Marlston	23
8 Long Grove	22
9 Byles Green	18
10 Hopgoods Green	18
11 Hillfoot	15
12 Tylers Lane	13
13 Turners Green	13
14 Westrop Green	8
15 Scotland	3
16 Miles Green	3
17 Hawkridge	3

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Bucklebury Parish: Topography and Nature Conservation

Map 2



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Summary

- **Bucklebury is a historic rural community in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**
- **The Parish offers the tranquillity of a countryside rich in biodiversity to all those who live or visit the area.**
- **There are individual communities in many small hamlets which have their own identities.**
- **New houses, extensions/alterations should respect and/or enhance the rural character/style of the Parish.**
- **There is no wish amongst the residents to allow growth to change the character and nature of the community of Bucklebury.**

Acknowledgements

Officers and Councillors of West Berkshire Council

The community of the Parish of Bucklebury

Bucklebury History Group

Bucklebury Parish Council

The Oaks and the Church Parish magazine

This VDS is available on the Bucklebury Parish Council website.
<http://www.buckleburyparish.org/publications/bucklebury-vision>

References

West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (adopted July 2012) part of the West Berkshire Local Plan

West Berkshire Council statistical records and forward projections.

Endorsements

Bucklebury Parish Council fully endorses the forward vision and planning guidance set out in this document.

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**Bucklebury is special
we wish to keep it that way
for future generations.**