Neighbourhood Plan for The Strettons

August 2026

REG 15 Submission

Church Stretton Town Council

Figure 1 - Cover Image:
View From The Hills
(Credit: Geoff Taylor)

Contents

Foreword 4
1. The Neighbourhood Plan 5
1.1 Introduction 5
1.2 Status of the Neighbourhood Plan 5
1.3 The Strettons 6
1.4 Neighbourhood Plan Key Themes 6
2. Background to The Plan 8
2.1 The Area 8
2.2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement 8
2.3 Key Evidence 11
2.4 National Policy Context 12
2.5 Local Policy Context 12
2.6 Meeting the Basic Conditions 15
2.7 Format of Policies 15
3. Sustainable Development 16
3.1 Overview 16
3.2 Economy and Community 18
Policy TS-NP1: Economy, Community and Tourism 18
3.3 Town Centre 20
Policy TS-NP2: Church Stretton Town Centre 20
3.4 Housing 22
Policy TS-NP3: Residential Development 22
4. Environment and Design 26
4.1 Overview 26
4.2 Rural Environment 26
Policy TS-NP4: Rural and Natural Environment 28
4.3 Heritage 33
Policy TS-NP5: Historic Environment 34
4.4 Local Character 36
Policy TS-NP6: Character 37
4.5 Design 40
Policy TS-NP7: Sustainable Design 41
4.6 Movement 44
Policy TS-NP8: Transport and Active Travel 45
5. Local Green Space 48
5.1 Overview 48
5.2 Local Green Space Designations 49
Policy CS-NP9: Local Green Space 49
6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review 52
6.1 Implementation 52
6.2 Monitoring and Review 52
Appendix 1 - Meeting Housing Need in The Strettons 53

Foreword

Our Parish comprises Church Stretton and the surrounding villages and hamlets of Little Stretton, All Stretton, Minton, Hamperley, Botvyle and Marshbrook. Together we make up The Strettons. We are a vibrant community and the balance between the landscape and the built environment is the key to what makes The Strettons such a special place to live and work. We have a strong sense of community, with many residents undertaking volunteering activities.

Preservation of the countryside and maintenance of the environment are residents' top priorities. This has been highlighted time and time again through surveys and community engagement. Residents are also clear about the need for smaller, one and two bedroom homes to help young people onto the housing ladder, and others to downsize.

Reconciling these two priorities has been at the heart of the Neighbourhood Plan strategy. Our research shows sufficient smaller homes can be built utilising brown field (previously developed) sites within the development boundary. These will be sustainable and within easy walking distance of core services and shops enabling a more accessible and connected community. At the same time the strategy has been to protect the countryside which defines The Strettons and helps drive the tourist economy. Consequently, we will strongly resist inappropriate developments in open countryside within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (previously known as Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding National Beauty).

The Neighbourhood Plan will enable this strategy – both now and into the future.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not intended to be a list of actions, nor should it be. Neighbourhood Plans are statutory plans. They are designed to support the development which the community wants and needs whilst simultaneously protecting the surrounding countryside. The Neighbourhood Plan will encourage and support repurposing of brownfield sites and will require new buildings to meet high standards of design and sustainability. It will identify important public green space and provide protection by designating them as Local Green Spaces. It will facilitate improvements to the town centre, support active travel, and provide protections for rural lanes, heritage sites, and the landscape.

In short, the Neighbourhood Plan will protect what makes The Strettons so special whilst promoting improvements and development where it meets our community's needs.

Thank you to everyone in our community who has contributed so far. We commend the Neighbourhood Plan to residents.

Andy Munro and John Luck, Joint Chairs Church Stretton Neighbourhood Plan

1. The Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 Introduction

Sustainable development is at the heart of this Neighbourhood Plan. It is about ensuring that The Strettons is the place where future generations will want to live, work and spend recreational time. This was seen by the local community as a key priority for the plan and the policies within it.

The community recognised and valued the historic environment, local landscape and green spaces. At the same time, they recognised the need to provide housing, support employment and community facilities and maintain a vibrant town centre, amongst many other things.

Put simply it is about ensuring that The Strettons is a place where future generations will want to live and where new development sits comfortably in its surroundings.

The Neighbourhood Plan has the following vision:

Development in 'The Strettons' will be sustainable and focused, meeting the clearly identified needs and aspirations of all sections of our community, a vibrant town centre, housing, employment, tourist and community facilities, while protecting the natural environment, character and heritage of the area.

This Plan includes the planning policies that will guide the location, design and form of development, to complement the distinctive identity of The Strettons.

1.2 Status of the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will form part of the statutory development plan, along with two Shropshire Council documents: ***Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy*** and ***Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev)***. The relevant sections of these Shropshire Council documents are outlined in 2.5.1 and 2.5.2.

Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies of the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be in force from the date it is made until the end of March 2038, which coincides with the period to which housing needs evidence provided by Shropshire Council relates. The Neighbourhood Plan will take housing delivery to more than 200 dwellings within the Parish during the period 2016-2038, so meeting currently evidenced housing need. Appendix 1 shows the journey towards meeting housing need in The Strettons.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with 'excluded matters' including waste, mineral extraction or nationally significant infrastructure.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, Church Stretton Town Council will receive a greater share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (an increase from 15% to 25%) which will be spent across The Strettons.

1.3 The Strettons

With effect from 1st May 2025 the name of the Parish changed to The Strettons, reflecting Shropshire Council electoral boundary changes. Map 1 (Page 8) shows the area covered by the Parish, which is also the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Church Stretton town centre is the central hub of the Parish, with transport links to Shrewsbury, Ludlow and beyond. Where Policies only relate to Church Stretton Town or Church Stretton Town centre, this is made clear.

Church Stretton Town Council covers all communities within The Strettons.

The Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are based on evidence and analysis of local issues and the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement.

1.4 Neighbourhood Plan Key Themes

The following key themes underpin the Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. **Meeting planning aim to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape" (Shropshire Hills National Landscape).**

2. **Ensuring that housing meets the needs of current and future, generations, particularly housing for first time buyers, the elderly and those looking to downsize.**

3. **Supporting the economy of The Strettons, including tourism and a good range of local businesses, creating local jobs and economic opportunities.**

4. **Ensuring the vitality of Church Stretton Town Centre as a thriving market town, at the heart of the community - a place to meet, shop, and enjoy leisure activities.**

5. **Promoting healthy and safe communities in The Strettons, with a range of parks, recreational opportunities, health, care and other community facilities such as the Mayfair Centre and the Wellbeing Centre.**

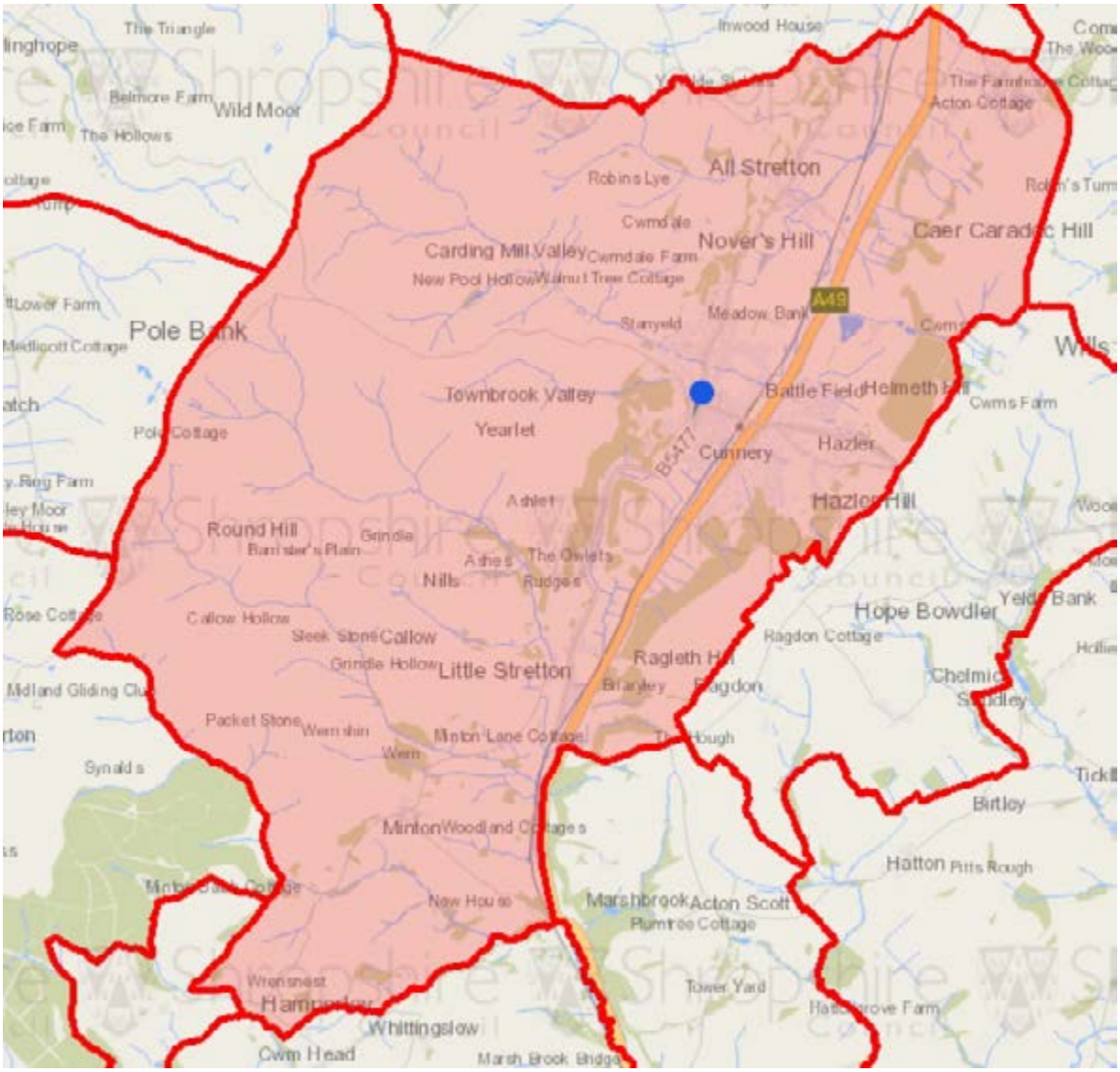
6. **Promoting sustainable transport and active travel, including eco-friendly transportation options to reduce the environmental footprint and improve quality of life for residents and visitors.**

7. **Achieving well-designed development, enhancing the locally distinctive sense of place of The Strettons and creating places where people want to live, work, invest and visit.**

8. **Helping to ensure that development meets the challenges of a changing climate and flooding, including supporting green infrastructure.**

9. **Conserving and enhancing the historic Church Stretton Town Centre, and historic buildings and environments in The Strettons, as part of its distinctive character.**

Map 1: Parish and Neighbourhood Plan Area



Key

Pink Shading = The Strettons Parish/Neighbourhood Plan Area

Blue Pin = Geographical Centre of Church Stretton Town

2. Background to The Plan

2.1 The Area

The Strettons is a largely rural Parish, with the historic market town of Church Stretton at its centre. It has a population of approximately 5,000 and is located in a narrow valley in the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (previously Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The Parish has a railway station, on the Manchester–Cardiff and Heart of Wales lines.

Originally settled in medieval times, the Parish became important as a spa resort in the late 19th century. Today, tourism remains very important within the Parish and is a key employer, with Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) identifying it as one of "the top ten tourist destinations to watch in the world" in 2025. The economy also relies heavily on farming and has a globally important pharmaceutical sector.

The Parish is a popular retirement destination, with 49% of residents aged 65 or over.

2.2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

2.2.1 What was Done

Beginning in 2019, a Community Led Plan initiative took place, including a Household Survey and comprehensive Final Report. The Community Led Plan covered a wide range of issues and included a series of recommendations and actions. The research and evidence collection undertaken as part of the Community Led Plan has proved an invaluable evidence base to inform the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Council commissioned a far-reaching Housing Needs Survey in 2021. The Housing Needs Survey Report was received in November 2022 (updated in 2024) and has also informed the Neighbourhood Plan.

To help prepare the Plan, a Stakeholder Group, Delivery Group and Technical Group were established. A local press and online campaign helped to identify members of the Stakeholder Group. Training in all aspects of Neighbourhood Planning was subsequently provided for all Group members during September and October 2023.

Comprehensive community engagement was undertaken, including:

- Monthly contributions during 2023 by the Mayor to Stretton Focus, The Strettons' community magazine, raising awareness of Neighbourhood Planning and signposting the Community Consultation exercise.
- A competition for school children to design the Neighbourhood Plan logo.
- www.csneighbourhoodplan.com which went live from 17 November 2023.
- A comprehensive, six-page, Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation leaflet was delivered to all addresses within the Neighbourhood Plan area by Royal Mail, week commencing 20 November 2023. The leaflet explained how Neighbourhood Plans work, how residents could contribute their views and dates for Community 'drop in' sessions. Leaflets were also available at Community Hubs, the Library, Town Council Offices and local shops.

- Posters (A3 and A4) outlining the Community Consultation and advising of the Community 'drop in' sessions were widely displayed (community meeting points, community notice boards, shops, bus stops) across the Neighbourhood Plan area, week commencing 20 November 2023.
- Community Messaging and Town Council Facebook publicity, including details of the 'drop in' sessions and links to the Neighbourhood Plan website, week commencing 27 November 2023.
- Two detailed articles about the Community Consultation were published in the December issue of Stretton Focus, publication date 1 December 2023. Around two thirds of households in the Parish purchase Stretton Focus each month.
- Three Community 'drop in' sessions held. Tuesday 5 December 2023, 10.00 -12.00 & 15.30 -19.30 and Saturday 9 December 2023, 10.00 - 13.00.
- A separate 'drop in' session for site owners and developers was planned for Tuesday 5 December 13.00 - 15.00, however these groups advised that they would rather visit the scheduled public sessions.
- Emails and posters sent to schools and youth groups, week commencing 11 December 2023, re-iterating the ongoing Community Consultation and the importance of all sections of the community having the opportunity to contribute their views. School and youth groups were reminded of the Photographic Competition (2 x £50 prizes).

The community engagement exercise ran for five weeks in November and December 2023. To encourage positive engagement from the community, six high-level questions were used (see analysis below).

There were 132 formal written responses to the Consultation questions, six of which were submitted on behalf of organisations.

Visitors to the three 'drop in' sessions totalled 168, generating 369 'post it' notes from attendees, outlining their thoughts and priorities.

2.2.2 Key Issues Raised

During January and February 2024, analysis of the responses took place, and this shaped the themes and policies of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

A summary of the most frequent responses to each of the six high level Community Consultation questions begins overleaf.

Regarding the last Community Consultation question ***What issues do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should cover and why?*** each of the most frequently raised issues is covered in one or more Planning Policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. ***The Housing Needs Survey Report*** (2022, updated 2024) directly influenced Policy TS-NP3: Residential Development.

However, it is important to note that not every issue raised in the other categories can be addressed directly in a Neighbourhood Plan. This is because our Neighbourhood Plan focuses on Planning Policy.

As an example, many of the responses relating to 'Parking and Traffic Issues' covered issues such as disregard for speed limits, disregard for parking restrictions, potholes, A49 traffic lights etc. None of these, although valuable feedback, can be covered by Planning Policy in a Neighbourhood Plan.

In other cases, the issues raised are more appropriately taken up by Church Stretton Town Council, for example the nationwide issue of the 'Lack of Banks and Building Societies'.

There were examples of categories where, while many valid points were made, widely differing opinions existed about the solution. The category of 'Town Centre Road Layout and Traffic System' is the best example of this and, again, this is more appropriately taken up by the Church Stretton Town Council as a separate piece of work.

Where issues have not been included in the Neighbourhood Plan a comprehensive brief has been prepared for Church Stretton Town Council and the Unitary Councillor for The Strettons. They will consider alternative approaches to address the points raised.

Community Consultation Response Summary
(see 2.3 Key Evidence)

What do you like most about The Strettons?
- Natural Environment and Surrounding Landscape
- Sense of Community
- Public Transport (bus and rail)
- Sports and Leisure Facilities
- Shops, Cafes and Pubs

What do you like least about The Strettons?
- Parking and Traffic Issues
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Lack of Banks and Building Societies
- Narrow Pavements in High Street

What are the special qualities of The Strettons as a place to live and work?
- Natural Environment and Surrounding Landscape
- Sense of Community
- Health and Welfare Facilities
- Clubs, Societies and Volunteering
- Transport Links

What issues do you think affect The Strettons (now and in the future)?
- Lack of Smaller and Affordable Housing
- Ensuring Future Development is Appropriate to The Strettons
- Ageing Population
- Declining School Numbers
- Reduced Bus and Train Service

What positive change would you like to see and where?

- Town Centre Road Layout and Traffic System
- Pedestrianisation of High Street and The Square
- Revitalize The Square
- Develop former Crown Carpets Site
- More Smaller and Affordable Housing
- Improve Tourist Facilities

What issues do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should cover and why?

- Protect our Natural Environment and Surrounding Landscape
- Address Lack of Smaller and Affordable Housing
- Link Future Developments to the Housing Needs Survey (2022)
- Clarify where Additional Housing will be Provided
- Retain Existing Development Boundary
- Prioritise Brownfield Sites
- Maintain the Character of The Strettons
- Set/Update Design Standards
- Initiatives to Combat Climate Change - Promote Active Travel, Solar Panels, Heat Pumps, No Hard Landscaping etc
- Better Provision for Tourists, Including a Hotel
- Retain Existing Leisure Facilities
- Better Use of the Market Square

2.3 Key Evidence

A range of evidence has underpinned the Plan, including census data and technical reports relating to the different Policy themes, design, environment, landscape, housing and other matters. Some evidence and analysis has been prepared specifically for this Plan, such as the Local Green Space Analysis Report.

A list of evidence sources and technical reports includes:

UK Census (2021)
Community Led Plan Household Survey Report (2020)
Community Led Plan Final Report (2021)
Housing Needs Survey Report (2022, updated 2024)
Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation Analysis (2024)
Local Green Space Analysis Report (2024)
Church Stretton Design Statement (2007)
All Stretton Design Statement (2017)
Church Stretton Conservation Area Design Guide
Church Stretton Residential Development Checklist (2021)
Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide
Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2023)
National Design Guide (2021)
Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2019 – 2024)
Shropshire Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Report (2019)
Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy (2025)

2.4 National Policy Context

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to legislation and National Policy and Guidance.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) (as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) requires 'relevant authorities', in exercising or performing any function that affect National Landscapes in England, to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape" This is a statutory duty.
The use of the word 'duty' in the legislation means that it is something all 'relevant authorities' must do; it is not discretionary. The duty is considered to be a strengthening of the previous s.85 'duty of regard' and seeks positive outcomes for the natural beauty, in its holistic sense, of our National Landscape areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, updated August 2026) **Chapter 4: Achieving sustainable development** states that the objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and this underpins the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. **Chapter 2: Plan-making** has also informed the Neighbourhood Plan, which promotes development and supports the Local Plan spatial strategy. Collectively, the Neighbourhood Plan policies address the economic, social and environmental objectives for sustainable development.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies to support housing, community facilities and employment, taking account of **Chapter 6: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes, Chapter 7: Building a strong, effective economy, Chapter 12: Making effective use of land,** and also **Chapter 16: Promoting healthy communities.** The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a balanced mix of uses to meet local need.

The Plan places emphasis on pedestrian and cycle travel, having regard to **Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport**. Neighbourhood Plan policies also deal with design and character, having regard to **Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places**, **Chapter 15: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change** and the **National Design Guide (2021)**.

Neighbourhood Plan policies also seek to protect, preserve or enhance the rural and historic environments in response to **Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and Chapter 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.**

2.5 Local Policy Context

2.5.1 Shropshire Local Development Framework 2011

Local strategic policies are contained in the ***Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy***, March 2011.

Church Stretton is included within the category of 'Market Towns and other Key Centres that are District Centres'. The Shropshire Hills National Landscape is mentioned under 'environmental assets'. The Plan states:

'Church Stretton, Bishop's Castle and Cleobury Mortimer will have development that balances environmental constraints with meeting local needs' (page 49).

It is important to note that outside of the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (see Map 2), Shropshire Council considers the rest of the Parish to be 'open countryside' for development purposes.

The following policies are of most relevance to the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy CS1: Strategic Approach
Policy CS3: The Market Towns and Other Key Centres
Policy CS5: Countryside and Green Belt
Policy CS6: Sustainable Design and Development Principles
Policy CS7: Communications and Transport
Policy CS8: Facilities, Services and Infrastructure Provision
Policy CS10: Managed Release of Housing Land
Policy CS11: Type and Affordability of Housing
Policy CS13: Economic Development, Enterprise and Employment
Policy CS15: Town and Rural Centres
Policy CS16: Tourism, Culture and Leisure
Policy CS17: Environmental Networks

2.5.2 Shropshire SAMDev (2006 – 2026)

The Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan was adopted in December 2015.

The following policies are of most relevance to the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan:

MD1 Scale and Distribution of Development
MD2 Sustainable Design
MD3 Delivery of Housing Development
MD4 Managing Employment Development
MD7a Managing Housing Development in the Countryside
MD7b General Management of Development in the Countryside
MD8 Infrastructure Provision
MD11 Tourism Facilities and Visitor Accommodation
MD12 Natural Environment
MD13 Historic Environment

S5: Church Stretton Area

The policies in this Neighbourhood Plan have been drafted to complement the policies in the above Plans. They include more locally specific detail and take account of more recent evidence and the latest versions of the NPPF (August 2026) and Planning Practice Guidance.

In respect of specific SAMDev housing and employment sites –

Two housing sites were allocated:

School Playing Fields (CSTR018)
Battlefield, to the rear of OaksRoad/Alison Road (CSTR019)

CSTR018 was subsequently withdrawn by the developer.

CSTR019 (43 dwellings, with planning permission) was carried forward as an allocated site by Shropshire Council in the now withdrawn Draft Local Plan (2016 – 2038). As CSTR019 has full planning permission, this Neighbourhood Plan assumes that these dwellings will be delivered.

One employment site was allocated:

Springbank Farm (ELR078)

ELR078 was carried forward from SAMDev as an allocated employment site by Shropshire Council in the now withdrawn Draft Local Plan (2016 – 2038). No formal planning application has ever been submitted for site ELR078 and it sits outside the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary. Shropshire Council may or may not wish to retain ELR078 in any future Shropshire Local Plan. As such, ELR078 is shown purely for reference in this Neighbourhood Plan.

2.5.3 Withdrawn Draft Local Plan (2016 – 2038)

The ***withdrawn Draft Local Plan (2016 – 2038)*** included:

Policy S5.1. Development Strategy: Church Stretton Key Centre

This described Church Stretton as: 'providing of around 200 dwellings and around 2 hectares of employment development' for the period 2016-38.

In respect of Neighbourhood Plan housing need, Shropshire Council consider the above figure of 200 to cover The Strettons as a whole.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to accommodate housing growth mainly within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (Map 2, Page 16). **Appendix 1 shows the journey towards meeting housing needs in The Strettons.**

2.6 Meeting the Basic Conditions

The Policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been drafted to achieve the vision and themes set out in Section 1 of this Neighbourhood Plan and to meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements, which are summarised as:

- Must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

- Must have regard to national policy and guidance;
- Must not deliver less housing development;
- must be compatible with EU obligations

Regulations specify an additional basic condition that a plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Sopecies Regulations 2017, which set outr the habitat regulation assesszment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitat sites.

In addition, the plan:
- Must meet requirements of human rights law;
- address climate change and mitigation
- Take account of any Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Sustainable development is interpreted against the context of the NPPF (August 2026) as having economic, social and environmental dimensions. The aim is to ensure that growth meets local needs whilst taking account of the needs of future generations.

This includes taking account of biodiversity, historical context, conservation, minimising emissions through transport, design, location, sustainable life-work patterns and other aspects of sustainability.

The plan enables different kinds of growth for The Strettons as a living place, but also helps to ensure that development is sustainable, meeting the needs of current and future generations. All policies have regard to the national policy and guidance. The policies have also been written to be in general conformity with the strategic policies and spatial strategy of the adopted local plan (SAMDev).

The Plan has been certified by Shropshire Council as satisfying the requirements for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening.

Community and Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken throughout the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process. This has helped to ensure that the policies are underpinned by a good understanding of the needs and views of different parts of the community. In addition, an equalities assessment will be undertaken.

2.7 Format of Policies

The following chapters contain planning policies. There are nine Planning Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. These all start with TS (meaning The Strettons) and are numbered TS-NHP1 to TS-NHP9.

The structure of each of the following chapters is shown below:

Chapter Overview

Policy Rationale (concise justification and key evidence underpinning the policies in the chapter)

The Policy (requirements for development to meet)

Interpretation (notes on how the Policy should be applied)

3. Sustainable Development

3.1 Overview

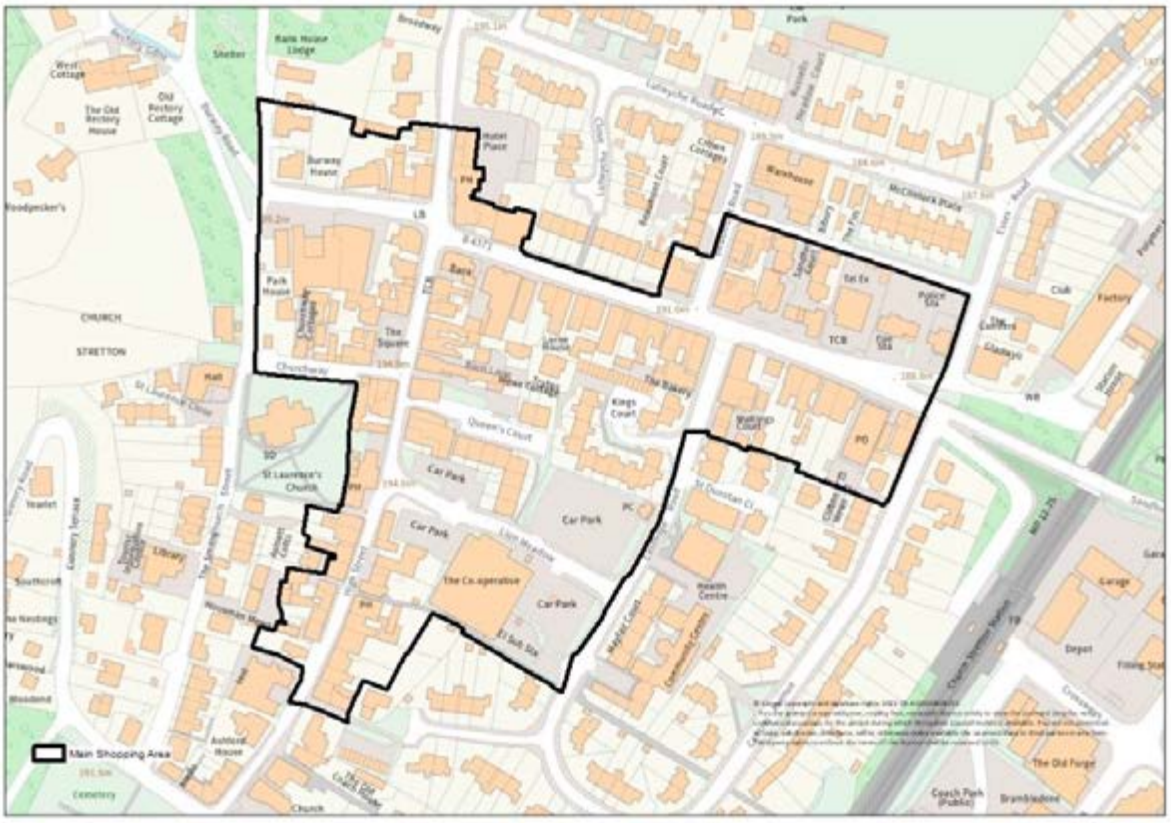
The policies in this chapter deal with sustainable development, including employment, retail, community facilities and other town centre uses. There is a defined Church Stretton Town Development Boundary. Within this is a more focused Town Centre/Retail Area Boundary. These form the basis for the Neighbourhood Plan's approach to growth against a context of climate change and mitigation.

The following maps form a basis for the application of Policies TS-NP1, TS-NP2, and TS-NP3 and defines:

- the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (Source, Shropshire Council);
- the Church Stretton Town Centre/Retail Area Boundary (Source, Shropshire Council);

Map 2: Church Stretton Town Development Boundary

Map 3: Church Stretton Town Centre/Retail Area Boundary



3.2 Economy and Community

Policy Rationale

The Strettons is a vibrant community and is also a popular attraction for visitors. Balancing the needs of these groups is a key aim for this Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address the needs of the community, visitors, local businesses and future generations whilst protecting and enhancing both the built and natural environments.

Evidence highlights a desire to encourage new businesses and improve community facilities. New development should enhance the quality of life for residents and respect the historic character of the Parish. The economy includes a wide range of small businesses.

Tourism is also a significant factor, recognised in the ***Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2024-29*** (December 2023).

Maintaining and expanding the range of economic opportunities within the Parish and local community facilities helps to reduce the need for travel. This is also the case with the continuing diversification of Church Stretton Town Centre, enhancing its vitality and viability.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies seek to focus economic development within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary and Church Stretton Town Centre/Retail Area Boundary, although it also supports agricultural diversification in the wider Parish.

Policy TS-NP1: Economy, Community and Tourism

1. Development to provide, improve or diversify employment and/or community (including health, care and emergency services) facilities or tourist facilities (including museum/information space) or hotels and other visitor accommodation will be supported within the Church Stretton Development Boundary, subject to taking opportunities for enhancement and there being no significant adverse impact on:

a. the amenities of nearby residential properties, including from noise, disturbance, smell, vibration, light impacts, overlooking or other impacts;
b. Church Stretton's historic environments.

2. Development to provide employment or tourist facilities will be supported on brownfield sites and existing employment sites and farm complexes outside of the development boundary, subject to taking opportunities for enhancement and there being no severe adverse impact on:

a. the amenities of nearby residential properties, including from noise, disturbance, smell, vibration, light impacts, overlooking or other impacts;
b. historic environments;
c. the natural environment, including designated landscapes;
d. the character of rural lanes, including narrow widths, raised verges, hedges and tree cover;
e. the character and setting of public footpaths;
f. road capacity and severe congestion.

Interpretation

The Policy actively encourages development that will benefit employment, community and education including uses in classes E (shops), F1 (schools and education) and F2 (local community). These all benefit the economy, help ensure a vibrant and inclusive community for future generations and ensure there are ample facilities and opportunities for both residents and visitors.

Design and infrastructure requirements for employment, community and tourist development are contained in the later policies of this Plan. The Policy should be applied closely with Policy TS-NP2. In considering impacts on the rural and historic environments and character, the Policy should be applied closely with TS-NP4, TCS-NP5 and TS-NP6.

The Policy applies to both new and the improvement of existing employment or community facilities. This would include the sensitive and sustainable development of farm-based tourism including farm diversification and tourist development. These could include small self-catering units, pods, huts and cabins, but considerable care would be required over location, siting and design.

Community facilities include health, care and support services, meeting spaces, indoor leisure facilities, shops, food and drink, entertainment, cultural facilities, education space, sports pitches and spaces that support outdoor recreational activities. Evidence collected as part of community engagement activities show that these are highly valued by the community and the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that these are considered in discussions and decisions around development within the Parish.

Adverse impacts on the historic and natural environments include environmental harm, but also the associated economic harm to the visitor economy from making the area less attractive to tourists and other users. People choose to live, work and visit The Strettons because of the beautiful location, relationship with the Shropshire Hills and character as a market town. Small negative changes can cumulatively significantly impact the area for future generations. The Policy highlights possible negative impacts to ensure that they are given full consideration.

Figure 2: Tourist Information Board, Antiques Centre (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

3.3 Town Centre

Policy Rationale

Church Stretton Town Centre provides a concentration of retail, hospitality, culture and recreation, community facilities and other town centre uses. It serves the local community in and around the Parish and visitors to the area.

Community and stakeholder engagement has highlighted the importance of maintaining a vibrant and accessible town centre for the enjoyment of all, attracting visitors and residents alike. Enhancing public spaces, improving accessibility, and supporting local businesses ensures that the town centre remains a dynamic and appealing destination.

The vitality and viability of the town centre depends on the retail offer, but equally on the diverse non-retail offer. The High Street Task Force (a UK Government initiative launched in 2019) identified priorities for town centre recovery, including attractions, entertainment, non-retail offer and leisure offer. Also of importance are walkability and connectivity, public space, and mixed use.

The historic nature of the town helps create a high-quality environment and positive image, attracting locals and visitors,

The following Policy seeks to support continuing adaptation and diversification of the Town Centre, including by recognising the economic importance of arts and culture.

Policy TS-NP2: Church Stretton Town Centre

1. **Development within the defined Church Stretton Town Centre will be supported where it would maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre as a key facility for the local community and for tourists and visitors.**
2. **The reuse of upper floors, including for residential, employment or community purposes will be supported, subject to:**

a. **there being no conflict with existing ground floor uses or other nearby uses;**
b. **taking opportunities to enhance properties and usages, where there is no conflict with existing ground floor uses or listed buildings or other buildings within the Church Stretton Conservation Area.**

3. **Development will be supported where it comprises the change of use of the main space in High Street (Market Square) from a carpark to a public space for recreation, arts, performance, culture and other civic uses.**
4. **Within the defined Church Stretton Town Centre, shop fronts should be maintained to ground floor street frontage units.**

Interpretation

Map 3 (Page 17) shows Church Stretton Town Centre/Retail Area boundary.

The Policy should be applied closely with Policy TS-NP1. Design and infrastructure requirements for town centre development are contained in the later policies of this Plan. This includes Policy TS-NP6, which includes specific requirements for the Church Stretton Conservation Area. Shop front design is dealt with in Policy TS-NP5.

The Policy would apply in cases where planning permission is required. There is no intention to interfere with permitted development rights, for example those relating to use of upper floors.

Development should contribute to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and could include retail, expansion in the choice and quality of food and drink, personal services, entertainment, performance space, spaces for arts and culture, medical and well-being facilities, hotel and visitor accommodation, recreational uses and various other community facilities.

Figure 3: Market Place (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

3.4 Housing

Policy Rationale

Housing development will be supported within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary, as the most sustainable location for growth, near to existing facilities. This helps to create a mixed use and walkable neighbourhood. The settlement has capacity for growth through brownfield development, infill and some redevelopment.

Affordable Home Exception Sites outside the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary will be supported where strict criteria are met.

The ***Housing Needs Survey 2022 Final Report*** (November 2022, updated February 2024) combines elements of housing survey and housing needs assessment and identifies the need to support newly forming households, affordable home ownership and households to downsize. The survey indicates a need for smaller homes with 1 or 2-bedrooms, in addition to care support and specialised housing for the elderly and those with disabilities.

The housing needs survey shows that housing is an important topic for residents. The Parish is an attractive destination for those seeking to retire and young people and young families. Properties for first time buyers and smaller one- and two-bedroom properties are required.

Residents strongly expressed the view that they did not wish to see development of executive homes.

It is necessary to ensure that residential development meets local need, has good amenities and is also well designed. These issues are addressed in this chapter and later chapters of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The ***Church Stretton Residential Development Checklist*** is designed to assist developers, architects, agents and officers, in considering residential development in The Strettons. It is intended to contribute to a continued high quality of life for the people of The Strettons and the preservation of local character of the built environment, landscape beauty and historic backdrop.

Appendix 1 shows the journey towards meeting housing needs in The Strettons.

Policy TS-NP3: Residential Development

1. Subject to meeting the requirements in Clause 2 of this Policy, residential development will be supported for sites within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary where it comprises:
   a. brownfield sites;
   b. infill development of gaps in existing residential built frontages;
   c. redevelopment, providing it does not involve the demolition of heritage assets;
   d. the sensitive conversion of heritage assets.

2. Support for residential development under Clause 1 is subject to:
   a. there being adequate and safe vehicular access,
   b. there being no significant adverse impact on the amenities of existing residential properties;
   c. Infill development and building in gardens should respect the character and appearance of the locality ensuring both existing and new dwellings have adequate garden space, sufficient for recreation, play, drying washing and other typical garden activities.

3. The mix of residential accommodation should be based on the latest evidence of local need, including:
   a. smaller accommodation (1-2 bedrooms) suitable for first time buyers and people looking to downsize;
   b. sheltered housing or other accommodation suitable for older people, those with limited mobility or those with long-term health conditions.

4. Affordable housing provision should be designed as an integral part of development and should be of similar design and specification to market housing, to be tenure blind.

5. Residential development on small sites outside the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary will be supported where the development comprises,
   a. sites of nine dwellings or less;
   b. predominantly social housing for entry level exception sites;
   c. development is not in an isolated location,
   d. affordable houses are maintained as affordable in perpetuity;

6. All residential development should provide the following amenities:
   a. discreetly located screened storage space for bins and recycling;
   b. secure storage space for cycles and personal vehicles.

Interpretation

This Neighbourhood Plan prioritises residential development within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (See Map 2, Page18). In this strategy, brownfield (previously developed) sites, redevelopment of existing buildings and infill development will all play a part.

Infill development should be interpreted as small-scale sites, clearly within the built form of the settlement, have permanent and substantial buildings on at least two sides and are for a maximum of three dwellings.

In considering whether properties would have adequate garden space, considerations include any established pattern of gardens (as required in Policy TS-NP6) and the need to ensure sufficient space for recreation, play, drying washing and other typical garden activities.

In considering adequate and safe vehicular access, the Policy should be applied closely with Policy TS-NP8.

Residential development sites outside the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary will be supported where the conditions in TS-NP3 Clause 5 are met.

In considering residential development sites outside of the Development Boundary particular regard should be had to Policies TS-NP4 and TS-NP5.

Design and infrastructure requirements for residential development are contained in the later policies of this Plan.

Evidence of housing need could include housing needs assessments or other evidence prepared by the Town Council and/or the Local Planning Authority.

Storage for cycles and other personal vehicles could be provided separately or as part of garage space (if adequately designed and of sufficient size). For apartments, communal storage should be provided.

Figure 4: New Affordable Homes, Lutwyche Road (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

4. Environment and Design

4.1 Overview

TThe policies in this chapter deal with the rural and historic environments, character and design. The rural environment supports wildlife and biodiversity, provides a dramatic setting for the Parish, supports recreation and health, and is also fundamental in attracting visitors and tourism. Good conservation is also good economics. This is also true of the historic environment, which has cultural value, is part of the distinctive local identity and helps to make the Parish more attractive.

Creating a neighbourhood where residents feel safe and have easy access to health resources is paramount. The community's input highlights the need for parks, recreational facilities, and safe walking and cycling paths. The Plan seeks to ensure a community where physical and mental health, as well as safety, are prioritised.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to help achieve sustainable development against the context of climate change and mitigation. Various policies address this setting requirements for design and protection of the natural and historic environments.

4.2 Rural Environment

Policy Rationale

The Strettons is a rural Parish and falls entirely within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape area. The rural parts of the Parish are living and working places, with agriculture being the main land use. These rural areas rely upon the services and facilities located within the town centre, the hinterland of which extends well beyond the Parish boundary.

Various landscape designations, priority habitats and species are present within The Strettons. These include the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, the Long Mynd Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) , Milky Way Class dark sky sites and Local Nature Reserves. As such, there is a high level of landscape and habitat value and sensitivity within the Parish.

A key message from the community consultation was the significant value that local people place on the rural environment and the need to ensure that it is protected and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations.

In addition, Section 85 of the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) (as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023) requires 'relevant authorities', in exercising or performing any function that affect National Landscapes in England, to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape" This is a statutory duty. The use of the word 'duty' in the legislation means that it is something all 'relevant authorities' must do; it is not discretionary. The duty is considered to be a strengthening of the previous s.85 'duty of regard' and seeks positive outcomes for the natural beauty, in its holistic sense, of our National Landscape areas.

Whilst the wild and beautiful hills define the identity of the area, the rural environment encompasses so much more, with the Stretton Valley, its meadows, woods and farms equally valued key parts of the rural environment. Together they provide multiple benefits for people, places and nature.
The value placed on access to the countryside featured highly in the consultation responses. The extensive network of footpaths and characterful rural lanes provide safe and quiet routes through the rural environment. These routes are used and enjoyed by local people and visitors, providing health and well-being benefits. They are also key connections for those living and working in the rural areas where public transport is more limited.

Residents feel strongly that the special character of the Parish is particularly shown by its setting amongst the hills, wholly within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. Views to and from the hills are particularly valued. The ***Shropshire Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Report (2019)*** also known as the 'Gillespies Report' quantifies how landscape character and visual amenity can be harmed through inappropriate development.

The Parish has a rural, tranquil feel. Protection of that special character and scenic beauty is a priority for this Neighbourhood Plan.

Preserving our natural surroundings is vital for biodiversity and the well-being of the community. Community feedback underscores the value placed on access to nature for recreation and tourism. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that seek to protect green spaces, enhance conservation efforts, protect biodiversity and maintain and enhance our natural environment for future generations.

Policy TS-NP4: Rural and Natural Environment

1. Development should cause no significant harm and should take opportunities to enhance the rural and natural environment and landscapes of The Strettons, including consideration of impacts on the following designated landscapes according to their status:
   a. The Shropshire Hills National Landscape;
   b. The Long Mynd Site of Special Scientific Interest;
   c. Rectory Wood and Field Local Nature Reserve;
   d. Coppice Leasowes Local Nature Reserve.
   e. Milky Way Class dark sky sites

2. Development should avoid causing harm and take opportunities to enhance the wildlife, habitats, watercourses and biodiversity of The Strettons, taking into account the principles of the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

3. Development should avoid the loss or harm of mature trees, woodland, ancient woodland and the wider treescape and should:
   a. take steps to protect trees and their roots within or around the site during construction; or
   b. where development would achieve significant benefits and loss of trees is unavoidable, provide replacement trees with a similar level of amenity, within the scheme or nearby, using similar species or other species with high environmental value, appropriate to the context.

4. Development should maintain the separation and open and green landscape settings of Church Stretton, All Stretton, Little Stretton and Minton.

5. Development to create or enhance allotments, orchards and other facilities for local food growing will be supported and the loss of existing local food growing facilities will only be supported where a similar or better facility is provided nearby.

6. Development should cause no significant harm and should take opportunities to enhance views along the valley and views to and from the built area and surrounding landscape.

Interpretation

Development proposals should consider how they may affect the quality and character of the rural environment, including the impact on natural beauty, biodiversity, habitats, culture and heritage, the local economy and tourism, and tranquillity.

Application of the Policy should take account of habitats and species in The Strettons as defined from time to time by DEFRA, but for example may include:

Habitats:

- Good quality semi-improved grassland;
- Lowland dry acid grassland;
- Upland heathland;
- Upland flushes, fens and swamps;
- Ancient and semi-natural woodland;
- Deciduous woodland;
- Woodpasture and parkland BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan);
- Arable field margins;
- Hedgerows;
- Lowland beech and yew woodland;
- Upland mix ashwoods;
- Lowland heath;
- Purple moor grass and rush pastures;
- Reedbeds;
- Lowland meadows;
- Upland hay meadows;
- Rivers;
- Aquifer fed natural fluctuating waterbodies;
- Eutrophic standing waters;
- Ponds.

Species, for example:

- Grayling;
- Hedgehog;
- House sparrow;
- Otter;
- Lapwing;
- Curlew;
- Upland breeding birds areas;
- Great crested newts.

The Shropshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) identifies a further suite of habitats and species for recovering and enhancing biodiversity. This includes 25 individually named species and nine species assemblages that need specific actions or groups of actions beyond those identified under the habitat-based priorities:

Habitat priorities:

- Enhance nature alongside food production;
- Restore, enhance, expand and appropriately manage the hedgerow network;
- Re-naturalise rivers and stabilise flows;
- Restore peatland and wetland mosaics;
- Create, restore and manage ponds, glacial pools and meres;
- Enhance canals for wildlife and people;
- Safeguard and enhance veteran trees;
- Restore and expand nature-rich woodlands;
- Restore and expand nature-rich woody habitats;
- Restore, connect and expand species-rich grasslands across the county;
- Restore, connect and expand heathland sites;
- Increase the area of upland fringe habitat;
- Enhance the wildlife value of open mosaic habitats;
- Bring nature into towns, villages and amenity spaces;
- Reduce invasive non-native species across whole catchments;
- Enable more access to and connection with nature for health and wellbeing.

Species priorities:

- Dormouse;
- Hedgehog;
- Pine marten;
- Water vole;
- Curlew;
- Dipper;
- Nightjar;
- Pied flycatcher;
- Red grouse;
- Swift;
- Wheatear;
- Willow tit;
- Lesser black-backed gull;
- Green-winged orchid;
- Hoverfly;
- Noble chafer;
- Grayling butterfly;
- Scarce blue-tailed damselfly;
- Wall butterfly;
- Scarlet malachite beetle;
- Slender mud snail;
- Grizzled skipper;
- Black darter;
- Lilljeborg's whorl snail;
- Desmoulin's whorl snail.

Species assemblages:

- Deadwood species assemblage;
- Woodland species assemblage;
- Species reliant on arable land;
- River species assemblage;
- Species reliant on bog and other wetland habitats;
- Plants requiring growing from seed for planting out;
- Inland rock and open habitat species assemblage;
- Species reliant on heathland and grassland mosaics, including ffridd;
- Bat species assemblage.

Extensive tree cover in The Strettons is a distinctive feature of the landscape and greatly valued. Both the Church Stretton Town Design Statement (2007) and the Church Stretton Conservation Area Design Guide emphasise the key contribution trees make to character and appearance. The treescape provides important foraging habitat for bats, and bird species such as the common swift, house martin and swallow. Mature trees in the landscape offer roosting provision for bats as well as nesting sites for birds, including the important rookeries that are distributed in The Strettons. In the wider landscape trees play an important role in flood prevention.

The Long Mynd is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a designation for the UK's most important natural areas. These sites are recognized for their rare species, important habitats and unique geological features.

There are four Milky Way class Dark Sky sites within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape – all on the Long Mynd (Carding Mill Valley Car Park, Cross Dyke Car Park at Boiling Well, Pole Cottage and Shooting Box Car Park).

Light pollution can impact nocturnal creatures. Sensitive species, for example bats, owls, and hedgehogs are forced to modify their movement patterns. Daily and seasonal changes enable animals to respond to environmental cues but artificial lighting inhibits this behaviour. Crepuscular mammals (species that move around at dawn and dusk) can also be affected as artificial lighting means they are less likely to move between habitats. This diminishes the benefits of wildlife corridors, a principle in the Shropshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Figure 5: View From Ragleth Hill (Credit: Geoff Taylor)

Figure 6: Greenhill Allotments (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

4.3 Heritage

Policy Rationale

There is evidence of ancient human history in the Parish, still clearly visible today. Of note are the visible remains of prehistoric activity on the uplands either side of the Stretton Gap. This includes heritage assets of national significance, protected as Scheduled Monuments, including several bowl barrows and boundary dykes along the Long Mynd, such the Bowl Barrow on Ashlet Hill which dates to the Bronze Age and the Iron Age hill forts of Bodbury Ring and Caer Caradoc which keep guard on either side of the Stretton Gap.

The strategic importance of the Stretton Gap for communications and economic development is exemplified by the Roman Road (Watling Street), the siting of the Scheduled Monument 'Brockhurst Castle' in the 12th century between Church Stretton and Little Stretton, and the development of Church Stretton as a medieval market town. Castle Hill and the Motte in Minton are medieval scheduled monuments.

Most of the early buildings in Church Stretton town were destroyed by a great fire in 1593, though there are some fine buildings still standing from the time of the re-building. St Laurence's Church is thought to be the oldest building in the town. The Edwardian period saw the town's population grow rapidly and the early 20th-century villas exemplify the rich variety of architecture from that period.

Little Stretton, All Stretton, and other settlements in the Parish have a similarly rich architectural heritage, with timber-framed buildings dating from the late Middle Ages to the 17th century.

Church Stretton Town Centre and its environs are designated as the Church Stretton Conservation Area, and there are also designated Conservation Areas in the smaller settlements of All Stretton, Little Stretton and Minton. There are numerous listed buildings, with some Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II, including churches. Burgage plots are in evidence.

The extensive footpath network throughout the Parish is a tangible historical record of movement from previous centuries, ranging from bridleways, footpaths to the open fields, routes to Church, drovers' routes and coffin paths.

Preserving and enhancing the historic environment of The Strettons is a key priority for this Plan. The historic environment makes The Strettons an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. It is important in attracting tourists and day visitors.

Policy TS-NP5: Historic Environment

1. **Development should preserve and take opportunities to enhance the distinctive heritage of The Strettons, including:**
   a. **surviving archeological remains;**
   b. **rural lanes, including narrow widths, raised verges, hedges and tree cover;**
   c. **surviving ridge and furrow landscapes;**
   d. **historic paths and bridleways.**

2. **The alteration and adaptation of historic buildings to improve their environmental performance will be supported where it would preserve or take opportunities to enhance their significance.**

3. **Historic shopfronts or surviving features from historic shopfronts should be retained and the reinstatement of historic shopfronts to their original state will be supported.**

4. **New shopfronts for listed buildings and buildings in the Church Stretton Conservation Area should be designed using materials to complement the specific building and context.**

Interpretation

Map 4 shows the boundaries of the four Conservation Areas in The Strettons.

In the case of listed buildings and conservation areas, significance should be interpreted against the definitions in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The Policy would support works to enhance environmental performance of historic buildings. This includes works to listed buildings and unlisted buildings in the Conservation Areas. Not all such works would require planning permission and/or listed building consent. The application of the Policy would depend on the specific building and proper analysis of impacts on significance would be essential to accompany any planning or listed building consent applications.

The Policy should be applied closely with Policies TS-NP6 and TS-NP7, which deal with character and design.

Archaeology more generally is dealt with by Local Plan Policy.

Planning applications for shopfronts should include sectional plans, to show the profiles and details of the design. The Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide may be useful in securing compliance with the Policy.

The term 'historic buildings' would include designated heritage assets (listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas) and could include non-designated heritage assets. The policy should be applied according to the significance of the heritage asset.

Map 4: Conservation Areas in The Strettons
Key: green hatching shows conservation areas

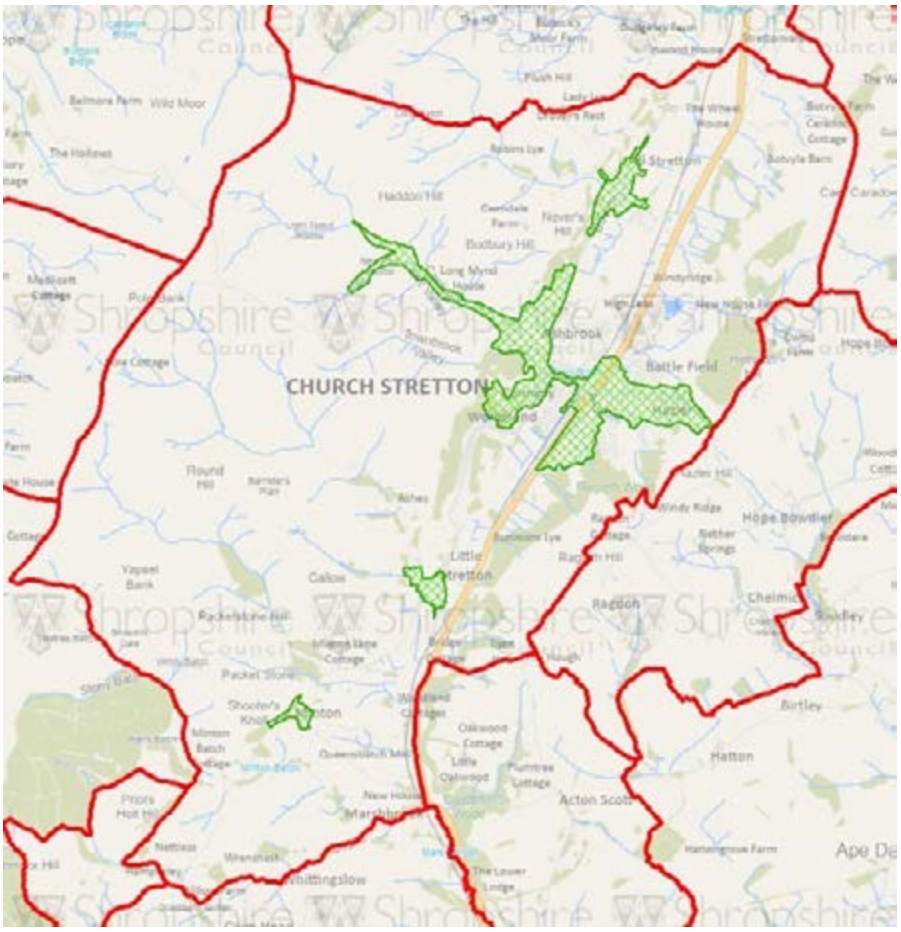


Figure 7: Yew Tree Pool, Rectory Wood (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

4.4 Local Character

Policy Rationale

The heritage of The Strettons is architecturally diverse, including local vernacular buildings and more formal architecture, demonstrating international influences. The historic palette of materials is also very varied and includes timber framed construction and load-bearing masonry buildings.

Various documents have informed the policies in this section, including the ***All Stretton Village Design Statement*** (2017), ***Church Stretton – A Conservation Area Design Guide***, ***Church Stretton Shop Front Design Guide*** and ***Church Stretton Town Design Statement***.

Our heritage as an historic market town is part of a locally distinctive identity. There is community support for the protection, restoration and reuse of historic structures, ensuring they remain integral parts of the neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to preserve or enhance this character.

Quality of place is of key importance in creating and maintaining a place where people want to live, work, visit spend leisure time and invest. ***The National Design Guide*** (2021) describes different aspects of design and states that well-designed places have ten characteristics: context, nature, identity, use, resources, movement, built form, public space, homes and buildings and lifespan.

Policy TS-NP6: Character

1. Development should preserve or enhance the distinctive local character of The Strettons and be designed for the specific site, topography, and surrounding townscape and landscape context, including in terms of:
   a. scale, massing and height;
   b. layout including set-back from the road, building footprints and grouping or spacing of properties;
   c. any pattern of front and rear gardens;
   d. boundary treatments.

2. Development should respond to the architectural quality, diversity and contrasts of the area and innovative, creative and green design solutions will be supported, where they meet other Policy requirements in this Plan.

3. Materials should be durable, with a high standard of finish, and support will be given to the use of:
   a. local and traditional materials, including recycled materials;
   b. modern materials and construction with superior environmental performance and a good standard of finish, to complement the locally distinctive character.

4. Within the Church Stretton Conservation Area, development should preserve and take opportunities to enhance the following key elements of character:
   a. architectural diversity and contrasts based on vernacular buildings and formal architecture;
   b. evidence of burgage plots in the layout and plots on some streets;
   c. townscape character in the Town Centre based on continuous rear of pavement frontages of contrasting building styles, creating a strong sense of enclosure and definition of streets;
   d. townscape and landscape character in residential streets based on patterns of front and rear gardens;
   e. boundary treatments in the form of stone walls and hedges;
   f. street and garden mature trees;
   g. views towards historic landmarks, including church towers and to the surrounding landscape;
   h. some large residential properties in spacious grounds;
   i. predominant heights of 2-3 storeys, though with variations in different streets;
   j. churches as key landmarks and their churchyard settings including graves, monuments, walls and other features.

5. Within the All Stretton, Little Stretton and Minton Conservation Areas, development should preserve or take opportunities to enhance the following key elements of character:
   a. the informal and rural character of the villages;
   b. boundary treatments in the form of stone walls and hedges;
   c. churches as key landmarks and their churchyard or landscape settings including graves, monuments, walls and other features;
   d. mature trees;
   e. rural lanes.

Interpretation

Map 4 (Page 35) shows the boundaries of the four Conservation Areas in The Strettons.

Where design and access or heritage significance statements are required to accompany planning applications, they should explain how the scheme meets the requirements of this and other policies. A variety of building styles sympathetic with and complementary to the older buildings of the town should be used, avoiding over fussy combinations of too many details or generic 'heritage' styles. Inappropriate use of pastiche should be avoided as it would harm the character of the area, which is based on architectural diversity, reflecting changes in styles and construction over time, and including local vernacular buildings and formal architecture (the latter often with European origins).

Walling materials for buildings (to complement local character) would include mellow red bricks, rendering or roughcast, timber, stone and hanging tiles and terracotta details. Roofing materials include contrasting grey or dark roof tiles, natural slate or mellow clay roof tiles. Bright red roofs (or other inappropriate colours) and concrete roof tiles should generally be avoided. Wall and roof colours should be different to provide contrast. Sometimes a combination of traditional and modern materials can provide a distinctive and effective solution. The shape of roofs can provide some variety and interest and the pitch or profile of the roof is an important design consideration. This could include use of living green or brown roofs.

Boundary treatments to complement the historic environment could include trees, hedges and low stone walls.

A good way of responding to context is for groups of houses to be designed and arranged to create variety and the appearance of natural growth, incorporating variation of levels, finishes and styles.

In applying the Policy, the existing topography of The Strettons should be conserved, for example by ensuring that development avoids significant incursions into the hillsides.

The filling of gaps between properties can alter the street scene if gaps are part of the character or the infill is out of proportion with existing houses. Side extensions can have a similar impact and create a terracing effect out of character with the wider street.

In recognition of the importance of the setting of the town, consideration should be given to the visual appearance and impact of any development when viewed from the surrounding hills.

Churches and their churchyard or landscape settings within the Conservation Areas include:

- Church of St Laurence, Church Street (grade I)
- Church of All Saints in Little Stretton (grade II listed)
- Church of St Michael and All Angels in All Stretton

These include several separate listings for gates, walls, monuments, graves and other features.

Burgage plots (long, narrow strips of land in medieval towns, with a narrow street frontage for a shop or house and a long yards or gardens stretching to the rear) are still in evidence in The Strettons.

By identifying some key elements of character of the Conservation Areas, the Policy may be useful in applying the special statutory duties for conservation areas under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Figure 8: All Saints Church, Little Stretton (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

4.5 Design

Policy Rationale

Residents of The Strettons wish to see positive development which further enhances the Parish as a place in which to live. They want to see a vibrant, attractive and safe town centre which offers the shops and infrastructure needed by its residents and which is a pull for the tourists which are so important to support the local economy.

Sustainable design sits at the heart of this future. Public spaces and the public realm should be safe, attractive, convenient and support a range of social activities and ease of movement. The community wants high-quality, attractive and sustainable buildings and townscape which enhance their location and are effective in delivering their purpose for the people who use them. In so doing, they should be well designed and built to the highest standards. The aim should be to build the listed buildings of tomorrow.

Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work, encourages tourism, and helps make future development acceptable to communities. The evidence suggests that incorporating green spaces, using high-quality materials, and maintaining local heritage contributes to the beauty and usability of the environment. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that direct and guide development in creating a walkable neighbourhood with attractive and practical spaces that reflect the community's character and aspirations.

Addressing climate change and mitigating flood risks are critical for the long-term sustainability of the neighbourhood and have been consistent themes throughout community engagement. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the urgency of these issues and contains policies that support green infrastructure, energy-efficient buildings, and improved drainage systems. By proactively tackling these challenges, the Plan seeks to protect the environment and ensure the safety and well-being of residents both now and in the future.

Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England's design toolkit) provides a methodology for considering design. Ease of pedestrian movement is of particular importance in creating a walkable neighbourhood.

Policy TS-NP7: Sustainable Design

1. Development should create a convenient, safe and attractive environment for pedestrians, including:
   a. taking opportunities to enhance ease of movement and connectivity for pedestrians;
   b. ensuring that streets and spaces are overlooked by active frontages with doors and windows, to create natural surveillance;
   c. creating or contributing to an attractive public realm, including green spaces, taking account of character, amenity, accessibility and safety.

2. Development should include positive design features to reduce carbon use.
3. Development should take opportunities to provide or enhance green infrastructure and to enhance biodiversity, including:
   a. incorporating existing landscape features, landform and green infrastructure into the design, layout and landscaping;
   b. using native species or other species with high environmental value in landscaping;
   c. tree and hedge planting, including street trees, garden trees and boundary trees and hedges;
   d. wildflower and species rich grassland areas;
   e. creating hedgehog highways to reduce habitat fragmentation and enable hedgehogs to move around at night.

4. Development should take opportunities to enhance and have no significant adverse impact on the safety, amenity or accessibility of community and green spaces, including sports pitches, recreational areas and play areas.

5. Development should have no significant adverse impact on surrounding land and properties through surface water run-off and should not impact the water quality of streams that flow through and beyond the development site. Support will be given to:
   a. inclusion of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as part of landscape design;
   b. minimisation of hard surface areas and use of water permeable materials for hard surfaces.

6. For commercial development external servicing areas should be located and designed to minimise their visual impact on the public realm and wider landscape, including appropriate screening.

Interpretation

The Policy should be applied in a way proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme. Clearly, some parts of the Policy only apply where new layouts and public realm are being created.

In considering the public realm, its different functions should be appreciated, including ease of movement and other activities like recreation, social interaction, play and exercise.

Where design and access statements or heritage significance statements are required to accompany planning applications, they should explain how the scheme meets the requirements of this and other policies.

Ways of building to reduce carbon use and support biodiversity could include:

- use of efficient heating and cooling systems, or design to reduce dependency on heating and cooling systems;
- superior insulation properties and airtightness;
- orientation to take account of climate;
- natural ventilation and air flow to help avoid over-heating in warmer weather;
- use of local, low-embodied energy, recycled and recyclable materials;
- living (green) walls or roofs as part of the design;
- rainwater capture, storage and reuse (grey water) such as connecting rainwater goods to a water butt or collection of bath water;
- inclusion of space for natural drying of clothes;
- flexible spaces and layouts to accommodate changing demands;
- sustainable urban drainage incorporated into the landscape design;
- using permeable materials for hard surfaced areas;
- use of traditional hedges for boundary treatments, to create a greener environment;
- use of native species in planting, or other species with high environmental values;
- use of deciduous trees to assist summer shading while enabling solar gain in winter months.
- local renewable energy schemes such as ground heat pumps, photovoltaics, and other technologies;
- micro and domestic energy generation, such as rooftop photovoltaics;
- reusing and retrofitting existing buildings to maintain the embodied energy used in their construction, whilst also avoiding landfill.

Design features to support wildlife could include, but are not limited to:

- Bat bricks and swift bricks;
- Wildlife corridors comprising species rich grass and wildflower verges and footpath edges, and native hedgerow corridors;
- Wildlife connectivity within the development to include native species pollinator friendly trees and flowering plants.

Meeting the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standard is encouraged. BREEAM is a leading method of assessing the environmental, social and economic suitability of building and infrastructure projects. Achievement of Passivhaus and similar standards is also encouraged.

Flooding is already a major issue in The Strettons and one that is likely to be accentuated by climate changes in the future.

The main types of flooding affecting The Strettons are:

- Fluvial, where rivers and streams burst their banks. This can occur quickly, bringing down debris from the hills and causing blockages of watercourses in the settlements.
- Pluvial, where surface water cannot be absorbed, overwhelming the drainage systems and flooding streets and houses.
- Flash floods, where sudden high velocity water torrents/weather bombs carrying debris overwhelm drainage systems.

Culverted watercourses blocked by leaves and debris also add to flooding problems, as do sedimentation build up and poor maintenance.

The hard surfaces associated with new developments (roofs, driveways and roads) increase water roll off. Where developments are on the hillsides this is likely to have a consequential impact on lower lying properties in Church Stretton town.

Where development is proposed in areas known to be a flood risk, developers should ensure that risks can be mitigated through incorporating green infrastructure, permeable surfaces and sustainable drainage systems. Developers are encouraged to contact Severn Trent Water at an early stage for site-specific assessments.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should inform development plans.

4.6 Movement

Policy Rationale

This chapter includes policies which seek to ensure new developments are sustainable in terms of location and access. Placing new homes close to shops and local facilities helps to create a walkable neighbourhood. Walking and cycling helps to address traffic congestion.

The Strettons are fortunate in having a railway station (linking Shrewsbury and beyond, including to Manchester, Birmingham, North Wales, Hereford, Cardiff and South Wales). A bus service (435) connects The Strettons to Shrewsbury and Ludlow, although it does not run in the evenings or on Sundays. Many residents would like to see more public transport provision. The Shuttle Service across the Long Mynd (summer weekends) is well used by locals and visitors alike.

The A49 forms the main north–south route, connecting The Strettons to the larger towns of Shrewsbury, Ludlow and beyond. Aside from the B5477 connecting Little Stretton, Church Stretton and All Stretton and the B3471 (Sandford Avenue) rural lanes are mostly single track. These lanes are used primarily by agricultural traffic, cyclists and walkers and link local footpaths and public rights of way.

Building new homes in and around the town centre provides access to public transport (bus and train).

Evidence points toward a desire for easy access to public transportation, pedestrian-friendly streets and the ability to cycle and walk rather than using cars. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies that promote an active travel area (i.e. walking and cycling area) and the support for a sustainable transport network that connects people to jobs, schools, and recreational activities while minimising environmental impact.

Policy TS-NP8: Transport and Active Travel

1. Development should take opportunities to enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity, ease of movement and accessibility, meeting the needs of people with a range of mobilities and disabilities including visual impairment.

2. Development should avoid adverse impacts and take opportunities to enhance footpaths, bridleways, cycleways, verges and public rights of way in terms of accessibility, amenity, outlook and safety.

3. Development should have adequate and safe access for vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and other road users.

4. The absence of on-site car-parking provision will be supported where the following requirements are met:
   a. the site is on or near to public transport routes, including bus routes and the railway station;
   b. the scheme includes ample cycle storage;
   c. appropriate offsite public car-parking provision is available nearby;
   d. a green travel plan and any other evidence justify it.

5. Development proposals likely to generate significant additional car journeys must provide robust evidence showing how such journeys can be mitigated by effective provision of active travel options.

6. Development affecting traffic flows on rural lanes or making access to rural lanes should have no significant adverse impacts, including:
   a. avoiding severe impacts on traffic safety and congestion;
   b. avoiding harm to historic or rural character from any associated highway works.

Interpretation

The Policy should be applied proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.

Promotion of Active Travel is a key theme of our Neighbourhood Plan. Active Travel can be described as purposeful travel by walking, cycling, wheeling (using a wheelchair or other mobility aids) and public transport. Developments which prioritise Active Travel and minimise future car use are encouraged.

Shropshire Council has no Car Parking Policy covering car parking requirements in new developments. Neighbourhood Plan Policy TS-NP8 outlines that appropriate car parking provision for new developments will be considered on a case by case basis. As such, provision of car parking facilities may be minimal (or not provided at all) in specific cases, particularly where there is the existing facility for public parking nearby. Shropshire Council operates off-site parking permit schemes for Church Stretton residents at Easthope Road and Crossways Car Parks.

Outside Church Stretton Town, the landscape is formed by ancient field patterns, villages, hamlets and farms. Rural lanes are valued by residents, walkers and visitors but they are also essential routes used by local businesses and farm vehicles. Getting the balance right is critical. Planning applications should demonstrate how proposals avoid adverse impacts on highway safety, congestion or different aspects of rural and historic character.

The character of rural lanes can be affected by changes in the nature of the users and their impact at choke points on the lanes. Large vehicles can cause considerable damage to verges.

In considering impacts on footpaths or on rural character and rural lanes, it should be noted that environmental harm also results in economic harm, given the reliance of the visitor economy on walking in a high-quality environment.

Figure 9: Fell Runners, Sandford Avenue Bridge (Credit: John Luck)

5. Local Green Space

5.1 Overview

It has been widely documented that green spaces hold value in many ways. This can be recreational, historical and archaeological importance, providing a tranquil space, enhancing the green corridor of a built-up area. Green Spaces are also valuable to nature and the ecology of an area, giving space for wildlife to thrive whilst keeping areas of habitat connected. Green Spaces also have an important visual impact, softening and blurring the relationship between built and natural environments. As such, Green Spaces add to the "special qualities" of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape.

The pandemic of the early 2020s demonstrated very strongly the appeal and importance of green (land) and blue (water) areas to society, especially those living with limited or no private outdoor space. Reliance on nature to soothe and ease daily stresses was widely reported in the media, and this continues to be important to many people.

Protecting these spaces is not just about the physical space; it is about the community use of the space.

As outlined in more detail in Section 4.2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, Local Authorities have a statutory duty in exercising or performing any function that affect National Landscapes in England to "seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape." This is a statutory duty. The use of the word 'duty' in the legislation means that it is something all 'relevant authorities' must do; it is not discretionary.

5.2 Local Green Space Designations

Policy Rationale

The following Policy designates Local Green Space (LGS). All the sites are wholly within the boundary area of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. Local Green Space designation recognises the value of the specific spaces to the local community. The NPPF makes clear that LGS have similar protection to green belts.

Of the ten sites designated, five are wholly owned and managed by Church Stretton Town Council, with the remaining five owned and managed by private landowners or conservation charities and trusts.

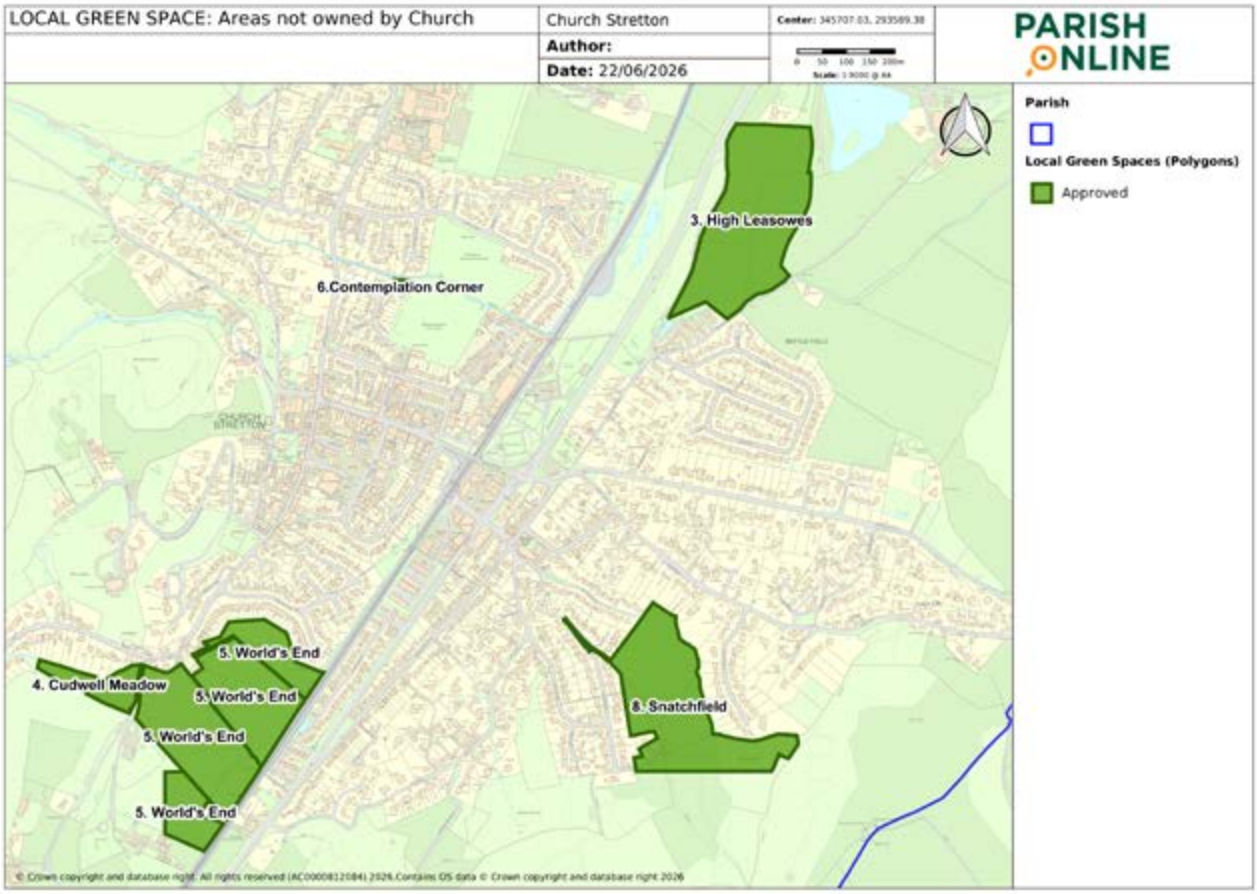
The provision of greenspaces is greatly valued by a broad spectrum of community members, including those with limited financial means, people struggling with social isolation, users of outdoor sports clubs, parents doing the school run through a park rather than along a busy road, or volunteers who want to assist in looking after areas that are important to them. Protecting and designating Local Green Spaces will have an impact on future generations, and our planet.

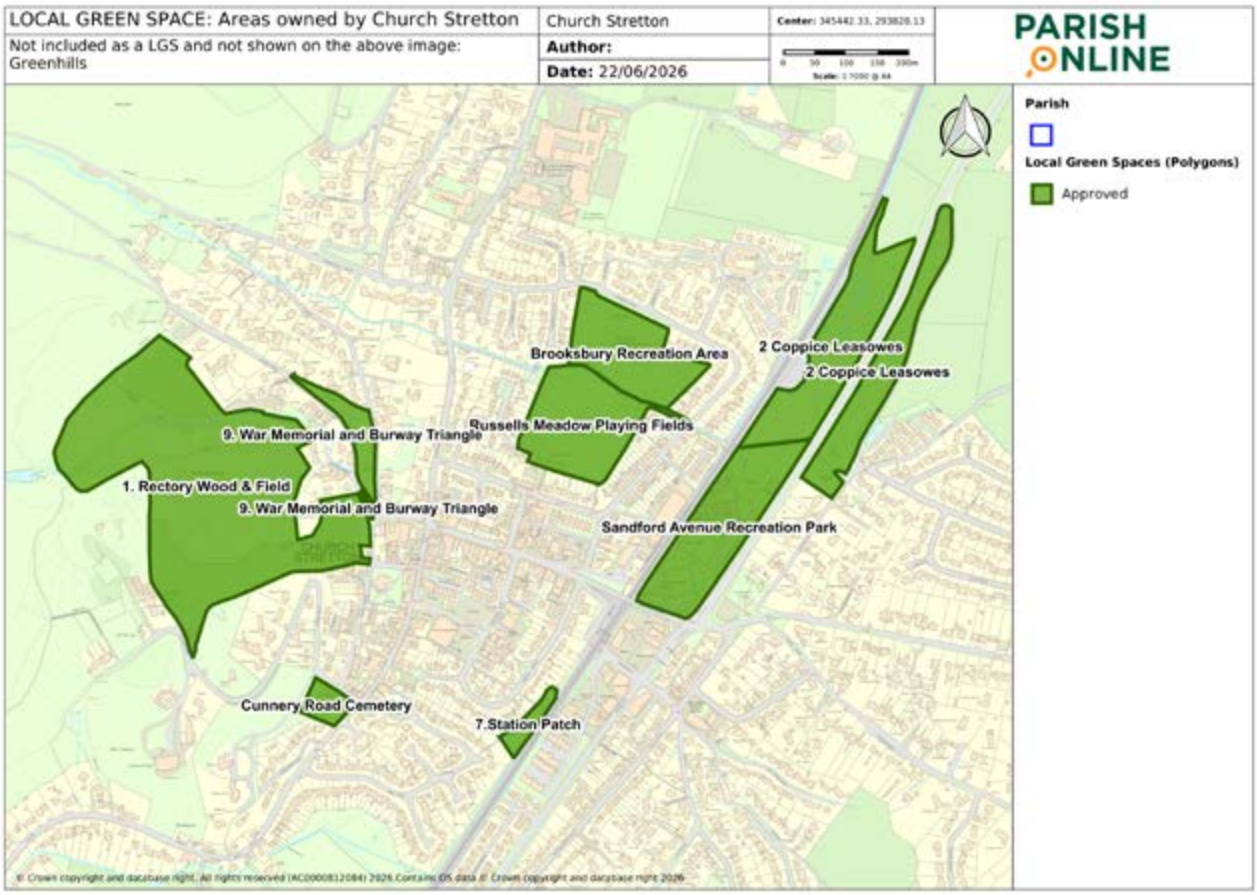
These spaces have demonstrable community value and meet the requirements in Policy HC2 of the NPPF. The analysis to demonstrate this is in the Local Green Space Analysis Report (2024).

Policy CS-NP9: Local Green Space

1. The following spaces are designated as Local Green Space:

LGS1: Rectory Wood & Field
LGS2: Coppice Leasowes
LGS3: High Leasowes
LGS4: Cudwell Meadow
LGS5: The Wetlands
LGS6: Contemplation Corner
LGS7: Station Patch
LGS8: Snatchfield
LGS9: War Memorial/Burway Road triangle
LGS10: Hazler Triangle


LOCAL GREEN SPACE: Areas not owned by Church
Church Stretton
Author:
Date: 22/06/2026
PARISH ONLINE
Parish
Local Green Spaces (Polygons)
Approved
3. High Leasowes
6.Contemplation Corner
5. World's End
4. Cudwell Meadow
5. World's End
5. World's End
5. World's End
8. Snatchfield
© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (AC0000812084) 2026.Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2026


LOCAL GREEN SPACE: Areas owned by Church Stretton
Not included as a LGS and not shown on the above image:
Greenhills
Church Stretton
Author:
Date: 22/06/2026
PARISH ONLINE
Parish
Local Green Spaces (Polygons)
Approved
Brooksbury Recreation Area
2 Coppice Leasowes
2 Coppice Leasowes
Russells Meadow Playing Fields
9. War Memorial and Burway Triangle
1. Rectory Wood & Field
9. War Memorial and Burway Triangle
Sandford Avenue Recreation Park
Cunnery Road Cemetery
7.Station Patch
© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (AC0000812084) 2026.Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2026

Interpretation

Full details of each proposed Local Green Space together with maps are provided in the accompanying Local Green Spaces Analysis Report.

National policy states that Local Green Space has similar protection to Green Belt land. It should be noted that the purpose of the Local Green Space designation relates to community value and is therefore different to the five purposes identified for Green Belts.

Figure 10: Coppice Leasowes, Local Nature Reserve (Credit: Yvonne Beaumont)

Figure 11: Walkers, Rectory Field (Credit: Geoff Taylor)

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

6.1 Implementation

The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan will help inform developers and anyone making a planning application, or reaching a decision on a planning application, about what will be considered acceptable and what will not. Church Stretton Town Council will use the Neighbourhood Plan as a basis for making representations on planning applications and appeals.

6.2 Monitoring and Review

The Plan will be monitored to assess its effectiveness, with input from the community. The specific content of the Neighbourhood Plan updated as and when necessary, with any significant update being subject to community consultation.

The impact of changes in National Planning Policy, Local Planning Policy and local circumstances will also be assessed.

Appendix 1 – Meeting Housing Need in The Strettons

This appendix sets out the supporting evidence to show the progress made against the targets issued by Shropshire Council. It illustrates how the number of properties needed to meet the housing targets established for The Strettons can be met and exceeded through development within the Development boundary and on brownfield sites. Several additional brown field sites beyond those detailed below exist.

1. **Shropshire Council Assessment of Housing Need**
   Shropshire Council's assessment of housing need in the Parish is 200, in the period 2016 - 2038. This is, in effect, a 'target'.

2. **Progress against Shropshire Council Assessment of Housing Need**
   As part of the Neighbourhood Plan work, Shropshire Council have supplied information about numbers to date, in respect of that 200 target. These are (31 March 2024, the latest figures available) -

   Dwellings Built = 63*

   Additional Dwellings Committed through Planning Permissions = 65**

   Total Dwellings Delivered/Committed (as at 31 March 2024) = 128 as agreed by Shropshire Council

   Still to Achieve (between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2038) = 72

3. **Future Opportunities Within Church Stretton Town Development Boundary**
   Sites known to be available within the Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (with positive landowner intention to proceed to Planning Permission within the next 5 years and submitted into the Shropshire Local Plan 'Call for Sites' exercise).

   Site A. Lutwyche Rd/Beaumont Rd. Indicative Capacity = 12. 1 and 2 Bed apartments, including affordable homes. Brownfield Site.

   Site B. Beaumont Rd. Indicative Capacity = 12. 1 and 2 Bed apartments, including affordable homes. Brownfield Site.

   Notes - Site A and Site B are adjacent. By combining the sites, the options increase. For example, a mixed-use development (apartments, retail, leisure) would be possible.

   Site C. Indicative Capacity = 35. Apartments/Townhouses, including affordable homes. Brownfield Site.

   Notes - Site C Landowner wishes Commercial Confidentiality to apply at present but a Site Promotion Form has been submitted by the owner to Shropshire Council as part of their call for sites.

4. **Further Future Opportunity Within Church Stretton Town Development Boundary**
   Cunnery Rd (formally Oakbank Motel). Brownfield Site in state of disrepair. Early indications are that sensitive redevelopment of the site would have support from residents. Indicative Capacity = 15

   Notes – Multiple options exist in respect of this Brownfield Site.

5. **Total Future Opportunities (Point 3 + Point 4) from 4 Sites = Up to 74**
   Notes – It is highly unlikely that these Sites will be the only suitable Sites to come forward for development in the period up to 2038. The Site known as the 'Old Coal Yard' (behind corner of Burway and Shrewsbury Roads) in Church Stretton Town Centre is but one additional development opportunity. Neighbourhood Plan Policy TS-NHP3 also outlines that small scale sites outside of Church Stretton Town Development Boundary (typically referred to as Rural Exception Sites) will be supported where specific circumstances are met.

   Notes - In addition, The Strettons has a steady supply of 'windfall' development – single plots, barn conversions, garden infill, conversions from retail etc. These have averaged 7.9 dwelling completions per annum in the period 2016/17 to 2023/24. There is no reason to assume that this supply will disappear in future years.

   *Completions per annum are as follows –
   2016/17 = 9, 2017/18 = 10, 2018/19 = 6, 2019/20 = 3, 2020/21 = 7, 2021/22 = 11, 2022/23 = 11, 2023/24 = 6. Average per annum = 7.9.

   ** The 65 referred to above primarily consist of the following –
   Development to the Rear of Oaks Rd/Alison Rd = 43. 6 x 2 Bed, 15 x 3 Bed, 22 x 4 Bed. 8 x Affordable (6 x 2 Bed, 2 x 3 Bed).
   Burway Rd Development = 14. Number correct as at 31 March 2024. Capacity now reduced to 10.
   High Street Development = 4. 3 x 2 Bed, 1 x 3 Bed.