

Hoath Neighbourhood Plan

Hoath Parish

May 2024

Dear Hoath Parish residents,

As you know, Hoath Parish is undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan so, as far as possible, we have a voice in how the parish develops over the next 15 to 20 years. It is about our future. And although it cannot be all encompassing, the plan Hoath agrees will have statutory strength and complement the policies in Canterbury District's Local Plan. We are already mentioned in the draft Local Plan 2040.

As mentioned in the Parish Council meeting in April, our steering group has been delayed, due to unforeseen circumstances, in collating and sending you the following results from our community consultation held in Hoath Parish Hall in early December 2023. This was only the start of the process which will gain momentum during the coming months.

Eighteen (18) Hoath residents from across the parish attended. We were split into four teams to undertake six (6) tasks aimed at starting the process of uncovering

- Why Hoath is a special place
- How we use our street, lanes and roads
- Hoath's main challenges
- Hoath's architecture and design
- Our favourite places and those we don't like as much, and
- A vision of Hoath in 15 years' time, including the best things about Hoath as well as the things which could be better.

You will discover the results in this document. On the last page there is a summary of the topics and related questions which are interspersed in the preceding pages. We would love your feedback and answers. Please do get in touch via Hoath's Parish Clerk, Caroline Read, via email at clerk@hoath.org or in person at a dedicated Neighbourhood Plan meeting at the Parish Hall. Meetings will be announced at Parish Council meetings, on the Hoath Parish facebook page, Hoath Parish website and in the Hoath Newsletter.

Present at our December meeting were Richard Eastham from Feria Urbanism <https://feria-urbanism.com/> the Neighbourhood Plan consultant working with Canterbury City Council who guided us through the exercises, together with Canterbury City Council's Andrew Thompson, Corporate Policy and Strategy Manager and Ella Gibbs-Walsh, a member of the Corporate Policy and Strategy Team. Our Neighbourhood Planning steering group, comprising parish councillors and residents, were represented as were residents who were engaging with the Neighbourhood Plan for the first time.

Hoping the following inspires and stimulates community conversations about a vision for Hoath,

With best wishes,

Imogen Morizet on behalf of the Hoath Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

TASK 01 -- Why is Hoath Parish a special place?

The answers which follow are in order of priority and show how many groups chose a particular word. Participants could choose from the options provided as well as create their own description. In several instances words that are similar in character have been grouped together.

The numbers correspond to the four groups of residents.

- Open x 4
- Green x 4
- Biodiverse x4
- Friendly x 4
- Safe x 4
- Clean x 3
- Unique/Distinctive/Independent x 3
- Serene/Peaceful x 2
- Interesting x 1
- Refreshing x 1
- Village Hall Activities x 1
- Wonderful views x 1

Question: What do you think makes Hoath Parish a special place?

TASK 02 -- Hoath's streets, lanes and roads

The groups were given a map of the parish and asked to

- mark out the main routes between where people live and where they work, shop, go to school etc.
- provide a few words to explain the experience of using these routes as pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and car drivers
- suggest where new links might be created and mark these as distinct from the current route options.

The aim was to start creating a vision about how our parish movement system responds to life here and think about new ways people could move around the parish.

Roads identified and categorised:

Major axes/routes:

- Maypole/Hoath Road (A28 to Heart-in-Hand Road and A299)
- Old Tree Road
- Hicks Forstal Road
- The road linking the A28 (Sandpit Hill, Church lane, Boyden Gate Hill) and Highstead/Ford Hill (Boyden Gate – the Gate Inn side -- is part of the parish.)

Minor axes/routes:

- School Lane
- Maypole Lane
- Hollow Road/Mill Road/Church Road

Question: Are there other types of streets, lanes and roads that should be considered?

Problems identified:

Maypole Road

- Heavy speeding traffic, road trenching and rutting on the road surface and margins of the road
- Suggestion to extend 30mph to include the entire stretch to Heart-in-Hand road

Ford Hill

- Single width and dangerous.

Group observations:

- Hoath road is a spine road that all other roads link up to so people use it to access facilities in Herne Bay, Broomfield and Canterbury (e.g., shops, doctors)
- Industrial estates in Herne and Hersden employ a lot of people. It would be good to make some new routes, or improve existing ones so people could cycle to the estates.
- New bridleways to support local liveries and equestrianism. There is only one bridleway at the moment.
- Redesignate existing footpaths to bridleways so that footpaths are multiuse.
- Walking routes are impacted by heavy large agricultural vehicles.
- Reintroduce old footpaths and rights of way prior to current map to link up with the existing footpaths that we have.
- Byway, Park Farm Road, should be redesignated as a multi use route for cyclists and equestrian use.
- Maypole Road and Ford Hill: Too dangerous for riders, cyclists and pedestrians during rush hour and the school run. Potholes dangerous.
- New routes are impossible in Hoath given road widths and hedgerows etc.
- No buses, no room for cycle paths, no public transport facilities or safe routes out of Hoath by transport other than by car.
- Boyden Gate has become a cut through route to Thanet and Herne Bay.
- Traffic volume on all roadways.

Question: What do you think about Hoath parish streets, lanes and roads?
How would you like to see these developed and improved?

TASK 03 -- What are Hoath parish's main challenges?

The answers which follow are in order of priority. Participants could choose from the options provided as well as create their own descriptions.

The numbers correspond to the four groups of residents.

- Traffic x 4
- Road safety – walkers, cyclists, horses x 4

- Countryside protection x 3
- Village Hall access for residents x 3
- Disconnect between Hoath and farming activity x 2
- Retaining character of area x 2
- Creeping unauthorised development x2
- Starter/first homes x 2
- Housing growth x 2
- Architectural quality x 2
- Super-fast broadband x 2
- Bus service x 2
- Opportunities for seniors and the retired x 1
- Bungalows and proper use of existing social housing x 1
- Work from home x 1
- Schools and education x 1
- Sense of community x 1

Question: What do you think are Hoath’s main challenges?

TASK 04 -- Architecture and Design

The groups gave feedback on 48 photos of architecture in the parish. Overall, depending on the quality of design, the groups liked the diversity of Hoath’s buildings, from centuries old thatched cottages to homes from the 2000s.

The aim of this exercise was to lay the foundation for a Parish Design Code so anyone applying to build in the parish has clear components and a link to historic analysis. The code, part of the Neighbourhood Plan, would identify the features the parish feels at home with in its built environment. Any planning application would need to show how it had been applied. A design code can manage change and evolve over the years.

For example, groups liked:

- Hipped rooves, wooden weatherboarding, clay tiles, wooden window frames, Sussex post and rail fencing, dormer windows.
- Features that were in keeping with the age and character of buildings
- The rhythm and scale of roof lines with hedges
- Homes set back from the road

Question: What architectural features do you like?

For example, groups disliked:

- Buildings not in keeping with the rural location
- The colour of weatherboarding in relation to brick
- The bulk of buildings in relation to the landscape
- Hardstanding in front gardens
- Plastic architectural features
- Mismatched materials and designs

- Non-traditional fencing

Question: What architectural features do you **dislike**?

TASK 05 – General audit

Groups were asked to identify the places in the parish they cherish and those they don't cherish. There were two maps.

a) Map of Hoath Parish

Places the groups cherish:

- Duck pond at Old Tree/farmyard development
- A solitary tree resembling a mushroom oak on Old Tree road overlooking Shelvingford going towards the Gate Inn
- The view when Maypole Lane meets Maypole Road across fields and woodland towards Saint Nicholas at Wade
- Footpath from Corner Farm PROW down to the valley, view from Shelvingford, across marshes to Saint Nicholas at Wade
- Wilderness of valley, ponds, trees and wildlife haven
- Corner of Old Tree Road with Hollow Road, panoramic view down to Minnis Bay
- Shelvingford Farm – ancient building
- Historic feel of Mill House
- East Blean woods/Hicks Forstal
- PROW leading from the Church, past the former Rectory down to Rushbourne, the hedgerows and shape of the smaller fields, and big views from the footpath towards the Wantsum Channel, and the Nethergong wetland and Sarre Penn
- Green gap/meadow on Maypole Lane
- Bottom of Park Farm Road: dark skies, nightingales, conservation and wildlife need protecting
- High point view of Nethergong Valley/Blean Woods from the PROW opposite the Church
- Maypole and Hoath – field next to R18 (draft LP 2040), keep undeveloped/protect from infilling/keep open views
- Village Green
- Bridleway – Maypole Lane
- Park Rough

Places the groups didn't cherish:

- Ford Hill – rutted, dangerous, too many trucks
- Hoath School – parking, speed of traffic AM and PM
- Marley Lane, track down to digestate pit, rutted and potholes, too narrow
- Bund Walls at the Gate Inn, bottom of Old Tree Road, cut down willows
- Tree planting on corner of Old Tree Road and Hollow Road, leylandii and laurel
- The maize crops in the field – encourage agricultural community to grow crops for food consumption

- Corner Farm, the mess of the farmyard

Question: Which places **do** you cherish in the parish? Which places **don't** you cherish in the parish?

b) Map of Hoath village and Maypole

Places the groups cherish:

- Ash Tree at Knaves Ash
- Footpath to the airfield
- Village Green
- Church
- Village Hall
- Marley Fields development
- View exiting Hoath on Marley Lane
- Tree and bench with view on Mill Road
- Maypole Lane – Alan Smith's house and horse field with hedgerows and shelters
- School and playing fields and play area-paddock
- Green Spaces: Karen's parents, Alan Smith, R27 field – protect from infilling
- Village Green
- And the Paddock
- Prince of Wales pub
- Field next to Huff House
- Old Tree View
- Verges broader on our stretch of old Tree Road
- Oaks along School Lane
- Open views of triangle
- Love open views
- Like the church
- The Rectory and walled garden
- Knaves Ash – Hicks Forstal Road, view across the fields down to Nethergong
- Poplar trees on Maypole

Places the groups didn't cherish:

- MBS using former airfield as storage/commercial facility/security fencing/big lorries
- Redundant farming as housing
- Digestate pit on Marley Lane
- Corner Farm yard mess/farmyard dump
- "Huf" Haus on Maypole Lane
- Heath House
- Density of Barn Close development
- Knaves Ash blocked culvert
- Traffic around school

- Traffic intersection School Lane and Maypole Lane

Question: Which places **do** you cherish in Hoath and Maypole? Which places **don't** you cherish in Hoath and Maypole?

TASK 06 -- The Future

In 15 years' time, Hoath will be:

- A recreation hub inclusive of footpaths, riders, cyclists, a rural area the towns can enjoy
- The green lung between Hersden and Beltinge/Herne with distant views towards the new Wantsum Nature Reserve and Blean Woods, spreading toward the coast and the Chislet Marshes
- A rural village supporting biodiversity, preserving dark skies/ancient woodlands – keep it rural!
- A more engaged community with more villagers getting involved in activities, more community friendly.

BEST THINGS ABOUT HOATH
Far reaching open views
Near beach/East Kent coast
Conservation areas
Listed Buildings
Historic value of Hoath
Big skies
Dark skies
No street lights/no light pollution
Green open spaces
Green gaps between settlements
School field
Settlements of Hoath maintaining connection with rural past and green spaces between
Sense of community –support around church school & village hall
Social activities community led
Equestrian facilities (improve with, e.g., circular paths)
Undulating landscape
Footpaths
Multiuse footpaths
Biodiversity
Marshes and wetlands
Ancient woodland
East Blean woods
Wildlife -- birds, badgers, foxes, moths, bats etc
Natural springs & ponds

Hedgerows
Stodmarsh Nature Reserve
Rural location

COULD BE BETTER
Expanding Blean Woods over the airstrip
Road surface conditions
Speed and traffic
20mph throughout the village
30mph from Oxenden House to Tile Lodge
Need bus service back, 8.00am to Canterbury, 16.30 back to Hoath a minimum
Public transport to counter social isolation and improve mental wellbeing
Cycle paths
Bridleways
Access for all residents to village hall, especially weekday daylight hours
Protection of road verges
Protection and restoration of hedgerows
Enforcing planning rules/breaches
Protection from creeping development
Landowner of local farms to respect roads/residents
Preventing abuse of permitted development rights
Minimising isolation of residents
Improving connection between agriculture and community
Monitoring illegal burning of waste/bonfires
Tree felling – improve enforcement of tree preservation
Preventing inappropriate planting e.g., Leylandii
Planting scheme
Greater respect for the conservation area
Broadband/internet
Starter and low-income homes
Enforcing parking outside the primary school and village hall
Preschool extension on primary school
Taking solar farm proposal away
Taking the digestate pit away
Engagement of residents in parish life and management

QUESTIONS:

- How would you like Hoath to be in 15 years' time?
- What are the best things about Hoath?
- What could be better?

TOPICS and QUESTIONS summary – Keeping in touch . . .

For easy reference, we have collated the topics and questions scattered through this document. We would love to know your thoughts. Please do send them to our Parish Clerk, Caroline Read, topic heading Neighbourhood Plan at clerk@hoath.org

Or get in touch at a dedicated Neighbourhood Plan meeting at the Parish Hall. Meetings will be announced at Parish Council meetings, on the Hoath Parish facebook page, Hoath Parish website and in the Hoath Newsletter.

Any time you can share in sending us your thoughts and answers will be hugely appreciated. They will be included in this initial research.

Thank you.

TASK 01 -- Why is Hoath Parish a special place?

Question: What do you think makes Hoath Parish a special place?

TASK 02 -- Hoath's streets, lanes and roads

Question: Are there other types of streets, lanes and roads that should be considered?

Question: What do you think about Hoath parish streets, lanes and roads? How would you like to see these developed and improved?

TASK 03 -- What are Hoath parish's main challenges?

Question: What do you think are Hoath's main challenges?

TASK 04 -- Architecture and Design

Question: What architectural features do you **like**?

Question: What architectural features do you **dislike**?

TASK 05 – General audit

Question: Which places **do** you cherish in the parish? Which places **don't** you cherish in the parish?

Question: Which places **do** you cherish in Hoath and Maypole? Which places **don't** you cherish in Hoath and Maypole??

TASK 06 -- The Future

Questions:

- How would you like Hoath to be in 15 years' time?
- What are the best things about Hoath?
- What could be better?