

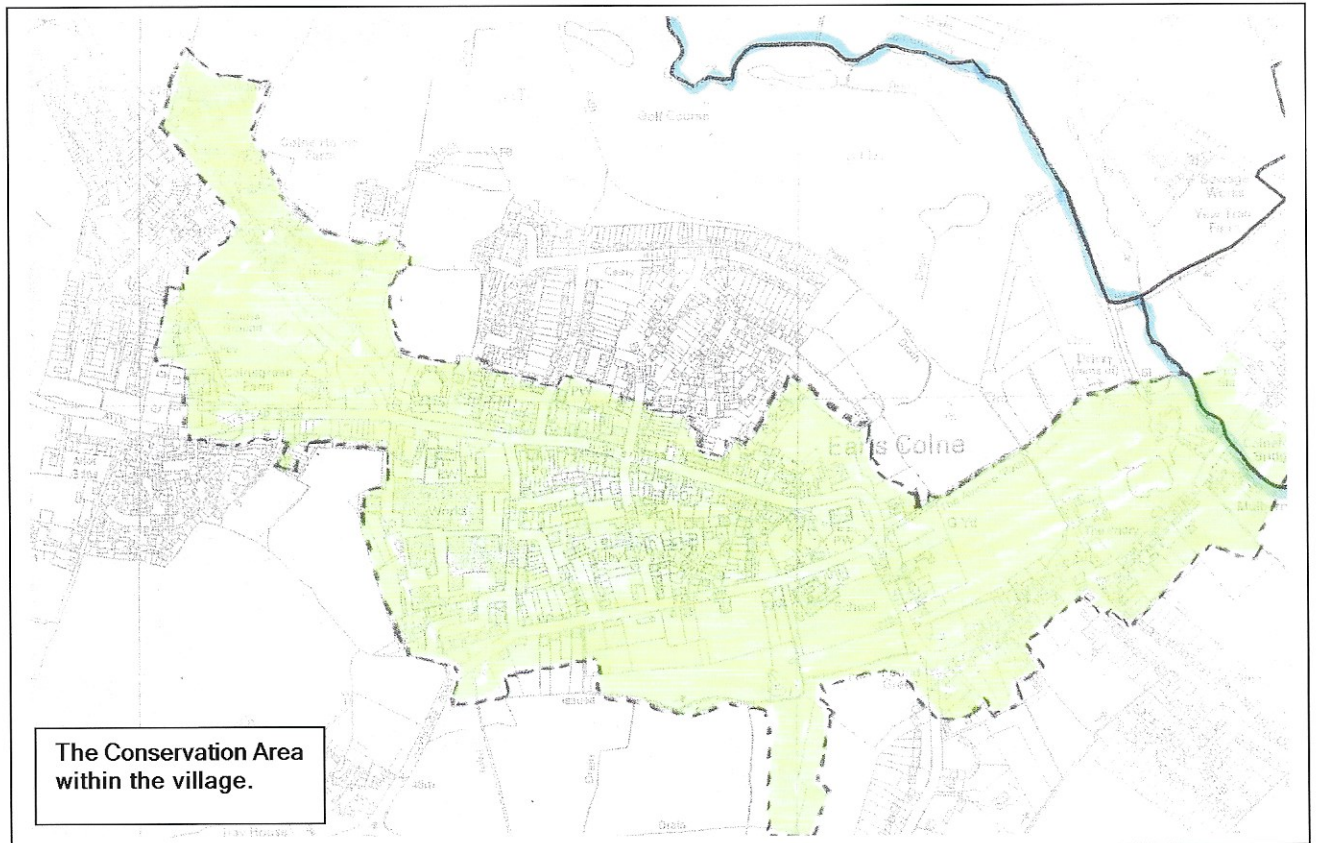
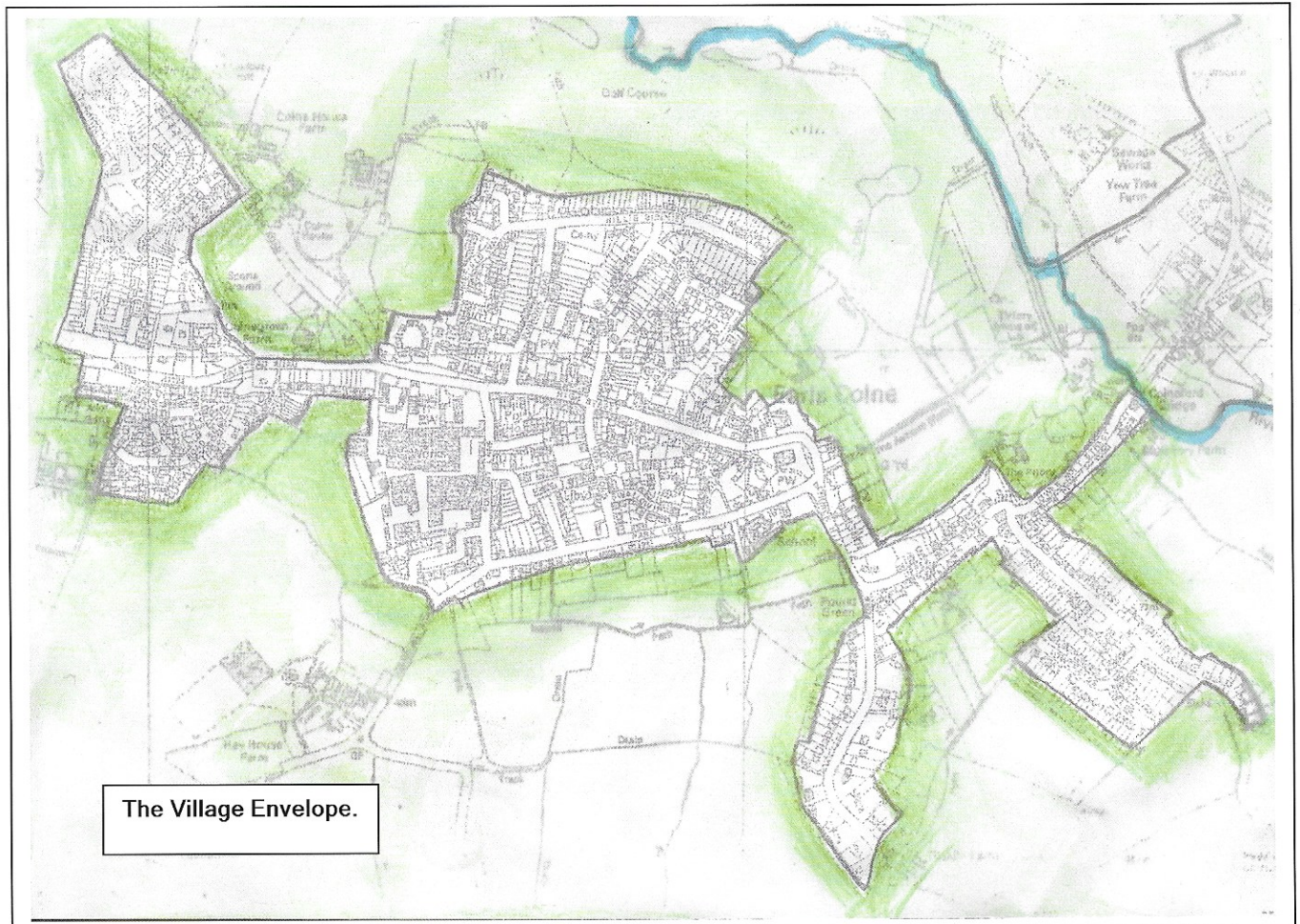
*Earls Colne
Village Design Statement.*

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Introduction

The Scope of this Document.

The Scope of this Village Design Statement document extends to the parish boundary.

The Purpose of the Design Statement.

The Village Design Statement (VDS) is a document that reflects how the people of Earls Colne perceive the character of their village in the 21st Century. Parishioners were consulted on their views of the village and its environment in 2003 with a Village Appraisal Questionnaire. The VDS is an inventory of Earls Colne's assets and liabilities, expressed as aspects that were acceptable or unacceptable by the community. For a village to remain a thriving community it must accept a certain level of change and whilst the impact of, for example, a new housing development, is of obvious concern, the cumulative effect of many small changes also needs to be addressed within their relevant locations.

The VDS can be used as a tool for managing change in order to preserve the unique character of Earls Colne. Its primary purpose is to give guidance and recommendations to developers and property owners on how changes should be approached in the context of being in sympathy with their surroundings. The VDS will also offer guidance to Council officers and members when considering planning applications.

Development Process

On the 2nd October 2004, parishioners were invited to take part in a one-day workshop in order to produce a character assessment and inventory of the village. This was well attended and resulted in a voluntary steering committee being formed to process the VDS through to completion.

The findings that emerged from the workshop were analysed and categorised resulting, in 2005, in the Village Design Statement Questionnaire. This was delivered to every house in the parish and invited each recipient to respond to a range of questions that would reflect personal feelings/concerns about the fabric of Earls Colne. Local primary school children were also consulted and given the opportunity to express their feelings. Summaries of both the Village Appraisal and VDS Questionnaire are available from Earls Colne Parish Council office. A further opportunity for villagers to participate in the process was made available at the VDS exhibition stand at the annual Four Colnes Show in August 2005. The results from the questionnaire were also displayed at this time.



VDS Exhibition August 2005.

A further chance for villagers to scrutinise progress was rained off in the summer of 2006, however, an opportunity was given at the annual Carol Service for interested parties to read, and comment on, the proposed recommendations to be put forward to Braintree District Council in the finished Village Design Statement.

Status of Document within Planning Policy Context

The draft VDS was presented to Braintree District Council and Earls Colne Parish Council for approval. Acceptance of the document by the district council gives it the broader scope for use as Planning Guidance, thus linking it directly to Development Control Policies so as to become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

A Brief History. and Overview of Earls Colne

Earls Colne is a large village near the Essex/Suffolk borders. It was first mentioned in the Domesday Book, however there is archaeological evidence of previous Stone Age and Roman occupation. The area has remained inhabited continually and has grown into the largest of the four 'Colne' villages.

Originally called 'Colne Magna', the name was changed in Norman times when the manor was given to Aubrey de Vere, whose descendants became the Earls of Oxford. A priory was founded here with lands donated by the Earls of Oxford. The parish church of St. Andrew founded c. 1100, was rebuilt between 1313 and 1360, with the tower being added in the 16th century. There has been a Baptist Chapel in Earls Colne for over two hundred years, this was at one time the largest Baptist Chapel in Essex. The Quaker Meeting House dates from the 17th century, and although much restored, it still contains one of the oldest galleries in the country. Earls Colne also had its own Grammar School, founded in 1520 by the Reverend Swallow. This was closed in 1975, having been amalgamated with nearby Halstead School. The former grounds are now a small housing development fittingly called Swallow Field.

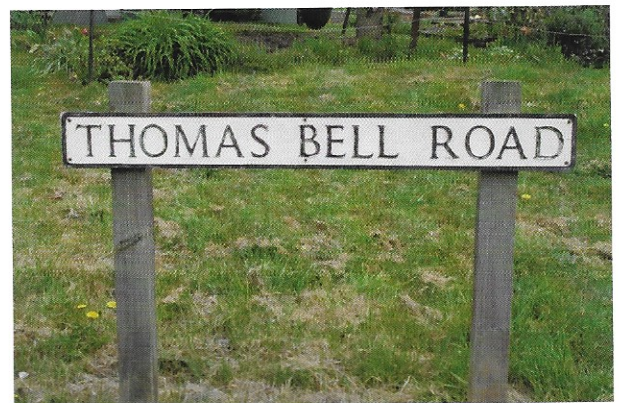


Earls Colne Baptist Chapel

Earls Colne has always been an agricultural village with both large and small farms. Businesses within the village have reflected this agricultural heritage over the years, with blacksmiths, a wood yard and, most notably, an iron works specialising in farm machinery, founded by Hunt and Co in 1824. By 1903 a large proportion of the inhabitants of Earls Colne were employed at the Atlas Works, as the iron works became known, whilst the remaining inhabitants were largely dependent on agriculture. By the late 1980s both the wood yard and the iron works had gone, being replaced over the next twenty years with new housing developments. Most industry in Earls Colne has now moved to the outskirts of the village, to the site of the old wartime airfield and the

area formerly occupied by the railway station. These areas contain a wide range of businesses, which attract workers from the surrounding towns and villages as well as from Earls Colne.

The history of Earls Colne can be traced through many of its street names, which celebrate past citizens of note, former land uses and changes in local economy. For example, Park Lane was originally an unpaved private lane leading to the Earl of Oxford's hunting park, which at one time covered most of the south of the village, Willow Tree Way is built on the site of the old wood yard and the recently built 'The Castings' commemorates the old iron works. Thomas Bell Road, Hunt Road and Massingham Drive remember just a few of Earls Colne's many benefactors.



Earls Colne is situated within the Colne Valley surrounded by open countryside and woods. Most of the parish is on boulder clay with the sand beneath exposed in valleys. The riverbed is on London clay. The original village spread along an east/west axis with the main part of the village to the west of the church and later developed across the river to the east. The parish boundary now stops at the River Colne to the north and east and Bourne Brook to the west.



River Colne

The village has grown, both to the north and south, dwellings on Church Hill provide a link between the main village and subsequently the lower area nearer the River

Colne. The parish boundary also includes isolated properties, country lanes and industrial areas.



Nightingale Hall Road.

Friends Meeting House.



Recommendations.

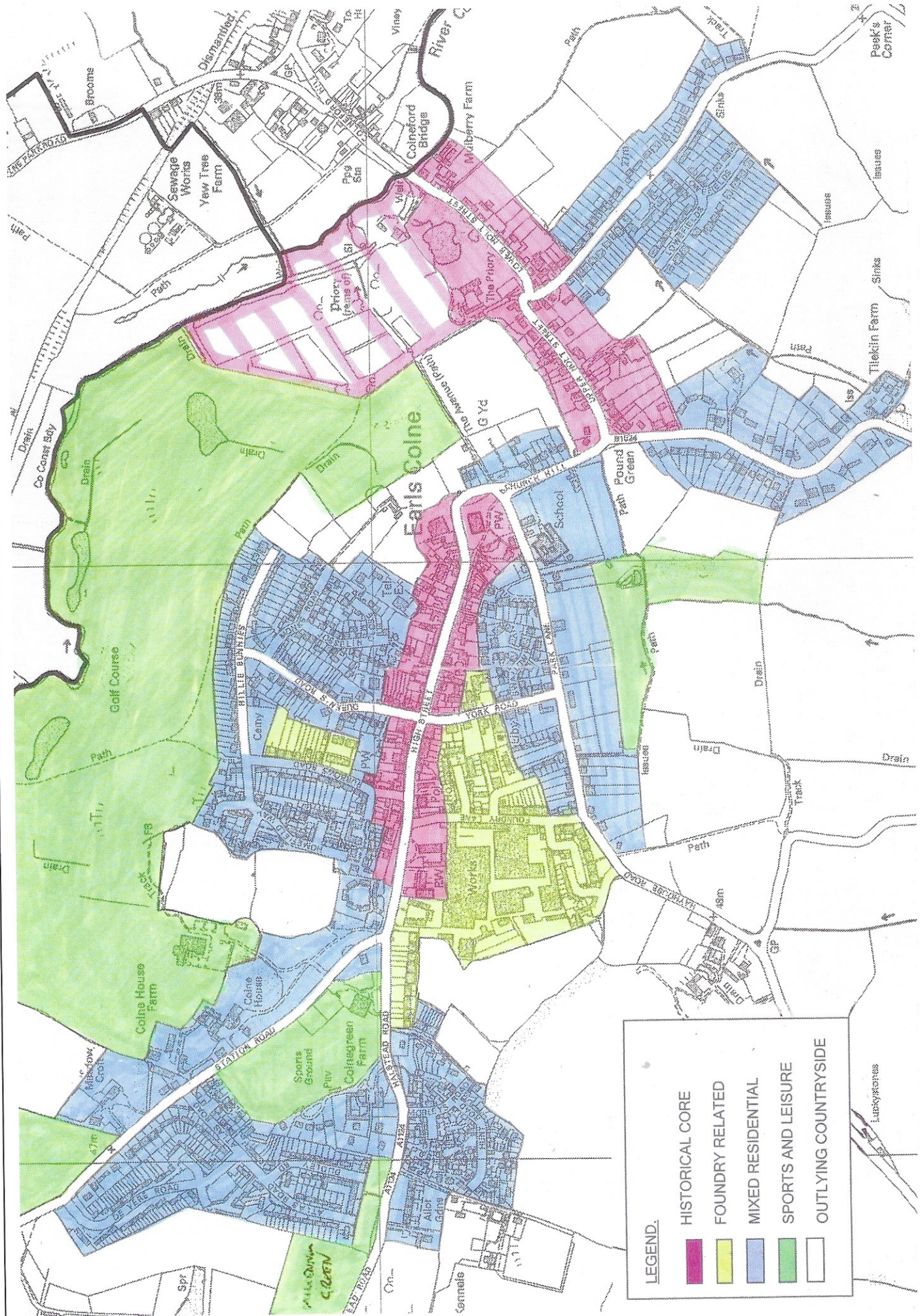
- The village should be preserved within its rural surroundings.
- All new build shall be confined to brown field sites and infill within the village envelope unless under exceptional circumstances when community gain would outweigh any disadvantage.
- Developments should be at the lowest permitted density levels to reflect the rural environment.
- The agricultural heritage should be preserved. Planning consent for dwellings and businesses outside the village envelope will need careful consideration and should only be considered if community gains outweigh any disadvantage.
- New build, extensions and alterations should be consistent in style with surrounding buildings and reflect the architectural heritage of Earls Colne.
- Facilities such as the school and library should be retained to preserve the lively ethos of the village.
- Design issues relating to energy saving, for example, wind turbines and solar panels, must be considered within their local context for appearances and/or noise nuisance.

The High Street contains a number of shops, a chemist, post office and a library. A new Doctors' Surgery and medical centre is situated on a new housing development in the west of the village. Earls Colne has a thriving primary school, parish council and three centres of worship. There is also a long running youth centre, the future of which is uncertain at time of going to press.

Regular bus services visit nearby towns. A large Village Hall serves the community and is the venue for activities ranging from Thai Chi to Old Time Dancing. It is also used for functions, meetings, Christmas markets, the Toddler Group and a Luncheon Club. The grounds of the Recreation Club are used for the annual Four Colnes Show. The school field is the venue for a bonfire and firework display each November as well as the annual school fete.

Earls Colne School Fete .





LEGEND.

- HISTORICAL CORE
- FOUNDRY RELATED
- MIXED RESIDENTIAL
- SPORTS AND LEISURE
- OUTLYING COUNTRYSIDE

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Character Areas.



Earls Colne from Curds Road.

Character Areas

To provide a Design Statement for Earls Colne the village was divided up into 'Character Areas'. This enabled the Steering Group to pin point specific design areas and to establish their needs accordingly. We found that Earls Colne could be divided into five distinct Character Areas,

- Historical Core dating from before 1850. (Pink on map)
- Foundry Related, 1850 to present day. (Yellow on map)
- Mixed Residential, c.1920 to present day. (Blue on map)
- Sports and Leisure, (Green on map)
- Outlying Countryside, (Left uncoloured on map)

There are of course some exceptions, for example, the High Street not only has historic timber framed houses but also housing built in the 19th and 20th centuries and a dwelling only finished in 2004. Foundry related housing could also be listed under the mixed residential umbrella but, as will be explained later, it was felt appropriate to give it a category of its own.

Earls Colne has approximately 1500 households at the time of going to press. The majority of these households are in mixed residential areas within the Village and are to be found in both large and small housing developments. Other small pockets of residential building are scattered about the parish. For the purposes of this Design Statement the Mixed Residential Character Areas have been sub-divided.

The Village Green

Historic Core

The High Street and The Green.

The Baptist Chapel in Halstead Road, west of the village centre, marks the beginning of Earls Colne's historic core. The red brick chapel, with its circular window and brick decoration was rebuilt in 1860 and is adjacent to a row of houses in mixed architectural styles, set back from the green on the south side of the road. On the north side, also set back, is the white rough rendered Priory Farm House and a converted barn, then a modern, red brick, detached house, which lies behind a brick and flint wall bordering these properties and continuing behind a small unpaved parking area. Opposite this, Tillwicks House (see Foundry Related section below), is on the corner of the Foundry Lane and Massingham Drive junction, marking the start of the High Street. The High Street runs gently down hill through a mixture of commercial and residential properties to St. Andrews Church at its eastern end. As might be expected from a period of continuous property development during the six hundred years from the early 14th Century to the present day, a rich variety of



architectural styles have resulted along this main thoroughfare. However, notwithstanding this and the frequent changes of use between residential and commercial properties, there is a surprising degree of visual consistency throughout the range of buildings.



Earls Colne High Street from the Church Tower.

No 1 the High Street, on the north side, is a detached period house with light coloured render, large bay windows and a small front garden, whereas the semi-detached cottages with painted rendered and pargetted exteriors, Nos. 3 and 5, are hard on to the pavement. On the eastern corner of Burrows Road is No 7, an ex-Hunt Director's residence next to The Lion public house which is a timber framed building with white rendered infill and dating from the 14th and 15th Centuries. Adjacent to The Lion is "The Old Manse", a detached brick residence with a small front garden bounded by iron railings atop a low brick foundation.



The Lion and the Old Manse

A shop, formerly "Alldays", adjoins an early red brick residential property, then The Drum, a rendered public house is in turn followed by the slate roofed, white rendered Chinese Takeaway, the red brick No.29 and the Victorian fronted medieval building now occupied by the Co-op Supermarket on the corner of Queens Road. The shop Ziel on the eastern corner of Queens Road occupies "The Old Forge". A terrace of period cottages incorporating a hairdresser, follows.

Next, beside the zebra crossing, is a newly built detached residential property with rendered walls and steps up to the front door from a raised frontage.



Old Forge, Cottages, New Build & beyond

The NFU Mutual is housed in a large brick built commercial property, formerly a bank, and the white rendered Drapers Hotel and Brasserie is next to Oxford Place. The latter is a rendered and red brick modern property, with a slate roof. It is set back from the street, which has allowed the retention of many pre-existing trees. This north side now remains largely residential with period, mostly white rendered homes. The Castle, a white rendered public house follows; this building is notable for its medieval origins and still displays imposing red brick chimneys and a peg-tiled roof.



Next to the Castle is 'Howchins,' this is a white rendered building with a peg-tiled Gambrel roof. A small medieval window remains in its sidewall. No. 85, 'The Old Dairy', also has pale coloured rendered walls with red tiled roof and a deep white painted bow window is set into the front gable. Both these properties have narrow front gardens fronted with a low brick wall topped by iron railings. No. 87, a Victorian brick villa, is hard against the pavement and adjacent to two large rendered residences with shrubbery in their front gardens. The second of these, "The Old Vicarage", has a pitched roofed porch at the front. The large Georgian house and walled gardens of Colne Place, now a residential home, is opposite St. Andrews Church, which marks the beginning of the south side of the High Street.

A row of smaller cottages, a mix of brick and rendered buildings, some with small front gardens, leads from the Churchyard and adjacent War Memorial up towards the centre of the village. The mix of earlier and Victorian properties continues up the slight incline. Notable

buildings include the 17th century white rendered Twin Gables with porches to the front, followed by the even earlier 16th century building, numbers 112 and 114, with its exposed first floor timber-framing. Next, the slate roofed Earls Colne Tandoori Restaurant and the adjoining optometrist both have small traditional painted signs suspended from simple black steel brackets, as does Gages Garage further along the High Street, which do not detract from the historic appearance of the centre of the village.



Numbers 98 - 104 The High Street.

A fine Regency style terrace of residences follow, numbers 98 to 104, rendered in pastel colours, each with steps flanked by iron railings to their front doors. Beyond here the properties are mainly commercial, with red brick Gage's Garage followed by the medieval building occupied by the Post Office and ABCO Insurances. The latter is probably one of the least consistent looking buildings in the High Street due to its later red, part half-tiled frontage with ornate red-painted gables. However, this building's ornamental mock-timber frame frontage, whilst equally unrepresentative of the area, is not quite unique in that both Tillwicks and the former Hunt's director's house at No. 7 have similar decoration.

Behind these is a small new residential development, Squires Court, which comprises eight half-boarded red brick and tiled properties. No. 56, a new red brick house, is adjacent to the entrance to the Grove, which is a small new residential development of five red brick properties. The red brick "Doune House" forms the corner of York Road. On the opposite corner, an estate agent occupies the first property of a long Victorian slate-roofed and brick built residential terrace that now includes the Library at its gabled centre. Contrasting brickwork patterns and curved frontages to each end are features of this terrace.

Older retail and residential rendered properties follow. A close of mid-20th century bungalows are followed by a terrace of three 20th century brick built ex-police houses



Squires Court



The pair of older red brick dwellings, No. 2 High Street and Priory School House, No. 1 Foundry Lane complete this set of properties.



A Sympathetic New-Build

Twin Gables.

Tillwicks House.





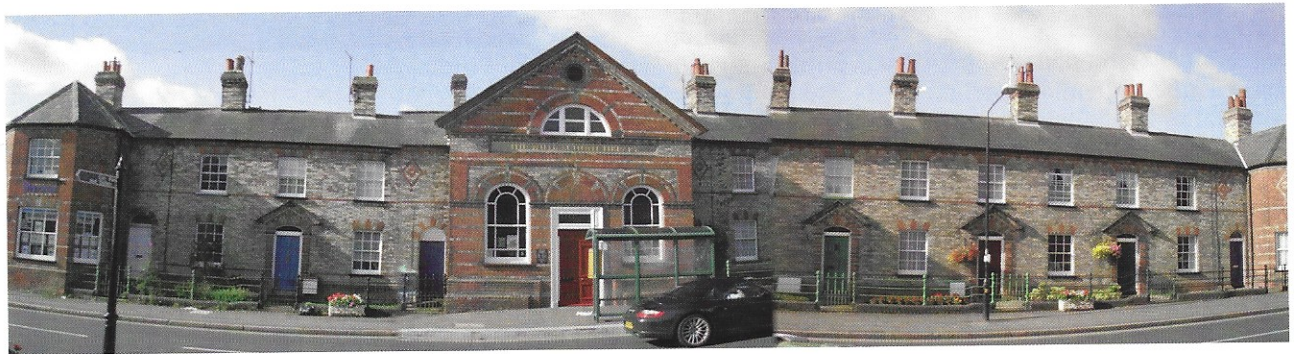
Almost without exception, all buildings in this area have either slate or red peg-tiled roofs, or modern equivalent small red tiles, and walls are either red or pale beige brick or are smooth rendered. Where walls are painted they are usually in white or pastel colours. Chimneys are always brick either matching the brickwork of the walls or contrasting with rendered and/or painted brick walls when they are so finished.

Glazing is with square wood-framed panes, window framing, regardless of age and style, is almost always painted white, sometimes with contrasting dark-coloured sills and/or lintels. For the most part, dormer windows facing the High Street have pitched roofs, there being few with utilitarian flat roofs. The Victorian sash-windows over the Pharmacy are set into gables of an unusual design. Where the gradient requires steps from pavement level to front doors they are typically red brick in construction. Few properties have significant front gardens. Boundaries that are marked typically use low red brick walling topped by black iron railings of relatively simple construction. Wooden fenced frontage is almost entirely absent, only occurring near the periphery of the area. Frontages are variously paved, set to gravel and or planted. The taller boundary walls between properties are usually red brick or, towards the former farms at the western end of the historic core, are brick with flint infill. The newly constructed residential property at No. 45 High Street is a good example of a sympathetic new build embracing the general themes prevalent in the 'historic core'. Its construction includes having pastel coloured, rendered walls, a roof of small red tiles, red-brick steps from the pavement to a front door without a porch, white framed windows with multiple square-paned glazing and the dormer windows being pitch-roofed.

Building walls constructed wholly or partly of timber framed weatherboarding, whilst historically fronting the High Street now only exist in side or rear elevations. The only exceptions are the occasional half-boarded modern extension of a High Street address and the properties comprising the recent development in Squires Court. Similarly, the only significant deviation from the usual roofing slates and small red tiles are the large modern tiles on the properties in The Grove.

Specific Recommendations

- Given the lack of potential development space anywhere fronting the High Street, any recommendations relating to the 'historic core' area are probably more relevant to extensions, restorations and conversions than new developments. However, off-street infill, as has occurred recently, might in future risk detracting from the overall appearance of the area and therefore the recommendations could usefully be applied in such instances.
- Overall, the recommendation is that new or changed properties should conform to the existing consistent architectural themes that have been identified. These include red, pale beige or painted brick or rendered construction with either slate or small red tiled roofs with brick chimneys. Unpainted brick walls with contrasting brick colour ornamentation would be welcomed. Painted brick or rendered walls should be in white or pastel shades. Windows should ideally be of small square-pane glazed design and preferably white in colouration. Dormer windows should be pitch roofed, slated or tiled to match the main structure.
- Any small frontage boundary should ideally match the existing norm of low red brick walling capped with black iron fencing. Commercial signage should be consistent with that of existing properties.
- It remains desirable that listed buildings consent should continue to be made available to those premises that fall into this remit.



The Library Terrace, Earls Colne High Street.

Upper and Lower Holt Street.

This area extends north-eastwards from the village pump on Pound Green at the foot of Church Hill down Upper Holt Street, past the junction with Tey Road, down Lower Holt Street to the parish boundary at the River Colne.

Entering the parish where the A1124 crosses over the River Colne into Lower Holt Street there is the beige brick built Georgian dwelling, River House, which is set well back from the road behind an iron gate set between red brick pillars. Next to this property are the extensive grounds of the long-demolished medieval priory. A redbrick 19th century mansion house with tall ornate chimneys currently occupies this site behind an ancient high red brick wall running all along the north side of Lower Holt Street.



Priory House & Grounds

On the south side of Lower Holt Street the first building is one of the few commercial premises in this area of the 'historic core', the Riverside public house. This is a pink painted brick building set a little back from the road behind a low brick flood protection wall, and shares an entrance with the Riverside Lodge, with its motel style accommodation located behind. There are then a number of mostly period properties all hard up against the pavement and facing the Priory boundary wall, these run all the way to the junction with Tey Road. They commence with three red brick residences, one of which, Maltings Cottage, differs in being set back from the road and having a black weather-boarded gable-end facing the road. Next is the impressive smooth white rendered, 16th century building and courtyard, Mulberry Close. This is unusual in that it has a heavy timber framed porch-way and is one of the very few buildings in the 'historic core' with diamond leaded-light windows. Period timber-framed cottages follow, numbers 24 and 26 are smooth rendered and painted and No. 20 shows a wealth of exposed beams, all these buildings having red peg-tiles.

Next up is a Victorian cottage constructed in an ornamental mix of yellow and red bricks under a slate roof, this in turn followed by Angel Cottage, one of the few other properties with diamond leaded-light windows.

The remaining cottages in this section, Numbers. 12, 10 and 8 are also rendered period properties, but unusual in having peg-tiled, Dutch-style roof pitches with embedded dormer windows. The Earls Colne Garage, no longer selling fuel, with its black weather-boarded barn workshop is followed by the pink painted period Soutwell House that is the end of Lower Holt Street at the corner of Tey Road.



No. 20 Lower Holt St. Cottages, Lower Holt Street

Opposite the Tey Road junction on the north side of the A1124 is the entrance driveway to the Priory grounds with its black iron railings, which is flanked by the unusual Priory Cottage constructed of red brick with flint infill walls. This, the beginning of Upper Holt Street, has on its south side the cream rendered Oxford House, formerly a coaching Inn and public house but now a Business and Conference Centre.



Priory Cottage



Oxford House

The rest of Upper Holt Street is a mix of period and modern properties of varying styles running either side of the road to Pound Green at the foot of Church Hill and the junction with Coggeshall Road. All properties now appear to be residential and many have front gardens, some bounded with high brick and flint infill walls. Building styles include the 17th century property Boxtedds, a large white part-rendered, part-boarded, building with a Mansard roof, and the adjacent smaller cottage at No. 7 that mirrors its architectural style.



Lower Holt St.



Boxtedds

Most later building periods are also represented, such as the large Georgian red brick and tiled Elm House, some slate-roofed and tiled brick built Victorian cottages, early 20th century houses half brick with pebble-dash first floor finishes and very recent red brick built residences with and without rendered or weather-boarded first floors, some of the latter having diamond leaded-light windows. On the north side there is also Priory Close retirement bungalows and of particular note the two semi-detached cottages numbers 11 and 13, which borrow a style from the village centre being of primarily of red brick but with yellow-beige brick ornamentation. Both cottages have redbrick extensions but only that of No.11 has attempted to match the yellow brick variation.



Upper Holt Street

In terms of detail, there is great variation in window styles, front doors, porches, paving and, where they occur garage construction. Where front gardens occur, boundary marking to the front of properties range from high and low brick walls, with those nearer the River Colne designed as flood prevention barriers, through wooden fences and iron railings to almost open plan.

There is such variation in the properties comprising the Lower and Upper Holt Street area of the 'historic core' that it is impossible to infer such specific themes and recommendations as is possible for the village centre. However, some parallels can be drawn. These include the roofs being either slated or finished with red peg-tiles or modern equivalents, some brick built walls have contrasting brick colour ornamentation, others being half rendered at first floor level. Windows consist almost entirely of white painted frames, some with black sills as a counterpoint, the exceptions being a few period rendered residences with black painted windows and a recent new build for which natural hardwood frames have been adopted.



Side view of a Cottage in Lower Holt Street, illustrating a mansard roof, peg tiles and tall brick chimney. -

Lower Holt Street with cottages to right of picture and the long brick wall of the Priory grounds to the left.



The leaded paned windows and deep porch are features of this property.

Specific Recommendations

- The recommendation is that new or changed properties should ideally conform to those village centre themes that have been identified with the additions of half rendered and weather boarded walls, either in black or pastel colours. Windows should ideally be of square-pane glazed design and preferably white or dark coloured in colouration. As with the village centre, any dormer windows should be pitch roofed, slated or tiled to match the main structure.
- Low brick wall and/or black painted iron railings should be welcomed as boundaries for small frontage areas, otherwise taller brick walls with or without flint infill would be ideal.
- Whilst part of No.19 has historically been used for various commercial purposes, with the existing exceptions of the Riverside, The Oxford House and the Earls Colne Garage, it is recommended that this area should retain its primarily residential nature.

St. Andrews Church and Surrounds.



St. Andrews Church. Voted joint first as one of the best features of Earls Colne.

Opposite the Primary School in Park Lane is St. Andrews Church, a brick and flint building largely altered in the 19th Century but retaining its 16th century tower. A closed churchyard maintained by Braintree District Council surrounds the church. There is a pathway from the lych-gate in Park Lane to a second lych-gate leading onto the High Street. This is used by residents from the east of the village as a short cut; there is a seat for rest and contemplation. Several of the headstones are made from cast iron, probably manufactured in the old Foundry. These are an unusual feature of this graveyard. A flint wall, damaged in places, surrounds the church. A new cemetery has been provided off the Causeway across the road to the north.

Opposite the church at the top of Church Hill, adjacent to the new cemetery, is a small shrubbery donated to the village by Reuben Hunt in 1889, which provides a quiet, reflective place to sit.

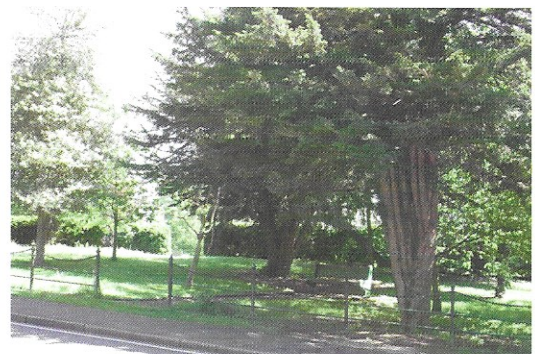
The Causeway is a public footpath leading to the privately owned St. Mary's Field and the Priory. It also provides access to the footpaths on the Colne Valley Golf Course.



The Lych-gate leading onto Park Lane.



An iron headstone in the church-yard.



The Shrubby, providing a quiet place to reflect.

Foundry Related Housing.

Foundry Lane, Hayhouse Road, Atlas Works Development, Thomas Bell Road, Willow Tree Way and parts of Halstead Road, York Road, Burrows Road (east).

These are areas of the village with buildings originally commissioned by the Hunt family or more recently built on redundant foundry land. They are mainly of a similar style, characteristically of red brick with courses of different coloured bricks, often yellow. There is usually a finely built arch of bricks over the doorways and windows. Most of the older buildings have the construction date set in a plaque in a prominent position. This area is largely residential and much of it was built at the end of the 19th Century.



Foundry Lane

Plaque at Atlas Works



Facade E. C. Social Club

Along Foundry Lane, formerly called Back Lane, the two long straight terraces of Hibernia Cottages and Belle Vue Cottages on the eastern side, were built in the 1870s, and the houses on the western side in 1900. The Earls Colne Social Club, with its distinctive shaped gable, is also on this side and was built in 1888. At the bottom of Foundry Lane along Hayhouse Road more terraced houses flank the original factory site. These terraced dwellings, built of red brick with slate roofs and all with gardens, were considered above average workers' cottages when they were constructed. A brick wall topped by iron railings front these homes and is a feature of most original Foundry related houses.



Thomas Bell Road



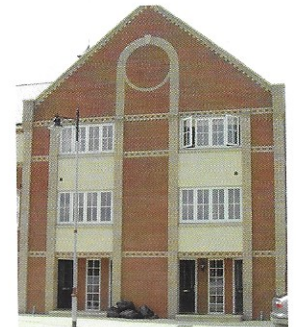
Willow Tree Way

Hayhouse Road leads into Thomas Bell Road, a modern residential development built of red brick with a lighter brick raised design and grey slate tile roofs, to fit in with the surrounding houses. This development also features brick lintels, iron railings and small gardens. Parking is in designated areas on the street. Some of these houses overlook fields.

The only remaining employer along Foundry Lane is in what was the Hunt and Co. Ltd. Millstore with its tall

chimney, now office accommodation. The site of the wood yard formerly belonging to A. J. Mann is now Willow Tree Way, a relatively new development of terraced housing built of red brick with tiled roofs and lighter brickwork decoration, gable fronts at intervals with round windows at attic height. Each house has a porch and small front and back gardens. On street parking is in bays and visitors' car park is also provided. Built on three sides of a square, this development is of an attractive design in sympathy with its surroundings.

In 2003, a new estate was built on the site of the old Atlas Works where agricultural machinery had been manufactured for over 150 years. Maximum use has been made of the space while still providing a small public garden and two play areas. There are small business premises and some live/work units amongst the houses, which also include some social housing. The former office buildings, water tower (now a local museum), boiler house (now the doctors surgery and medical centre) and the assembly shops have been retained and converted to modern standards whilst maintaining their original Victorian facades.



An original foundry building showing the influence of Victorian design on new homes.

The newly built houses have been tastefully blended to fit in with these. The brick colours and brickwork patterns closely follow the lines of the Hunt's Works, Foundry Lane and many other sites. Door and window frame colours have been chosen to fit in and there are covenants to prevent inappropriate changes. All properties have a very small rear garden but most open directly onto the paved areas at the front. Some semi-detached and detached houses have front gardens. Many of the homes have garages and off street parking is also provided, but the number of cars parked on the side of the narrow roads make rapid access difficult, particularly to and from the new doctors' surgery. All the street names have a local bias; these are Massingham Drive, Rueben Walk, The Castings and Nonancourt Way (this latter road named after the town in France that Earls Colne is twinned with).



Nonancourt Way



Earls Colne Museum in the old water tower.

Turning west at the top of Massingham Drive into Halstead Road, on the corner is Tillwicks House, formerly the home of members of the Hunt family, which has now been restored and converted into four flats with some newly built bungalows, Tillwicks Court, alongside. Both flats and bungalows are reserved for the over fifties. West of the Baptist Chapel, along Halstead Road, the semi-detached brick built bungalows, Atlas Close and Tillwicks Close on the north side of the road are now privately owned. Hunts built both of these originally for retired employees at 3 shillings per week rent! The ten bungalows in Tillwicks Close are accessed from the Halstead Road through an attractive wooden arch. Recently permission has been granted to provide parking within the garden areas of these two sites.



Tillwicks Close

Continuing west, there are nine pairs of red brick and render semi detached houses. Those built in 1905 have wooden porches, bay windows and gable fronts whilst the later houses, built between 1911 and 1912, are less Arts and Crafts in style having dormers and Gambrel roofs. All have long front gardens, some with areas turned over to parking, and small gardens at the rear. The row ends at The Croft with Croft Cottages built in 1903 with characteristic courses of yellow bricks among the red. After Croft House and others plus The Spinney, Morleys Road Estate and the lane leading to the Kennels, there are five more pairs of semi-detached houses built in 1911. Many of these long gardens have also been used to provide parking off the very busy Halstead Road.

The Village Hall in York Road was erected in 1912 on land donated by Rueben Hunt. Built of brick with render, it has wood gables and latticed windows in the Arts and Crafts style favoured by the Hunt family



The Village Hall and Colnes Constitutional Club

Next-door is the Colnes Constitutional Club, a red brick building with a pebble dashed third floor. Formerly, a certain stratum of village society provided membership here whereas another section of the village belonged to

the Earls Colne Social Club on Foundry Lane. York Villas, north of the Village Hall, have been built of yellow brick picked out with red brick courses and red soldier courses above the windows and doors.

Burrows Road runs north from the High Street. Just past this junction on the west side of the road, is a short row of four red brick cottages, accessed via steps to a paved footway. Each cottage has a porch over the front door and a rear garden with access to Sims Close. Just past the Quaker Meeting House on the east side of the road there is a terrace of homes, built originally as five almshouses. These are built of red brick with false half-timbered gables at each end and timbered, gabled porches to each doorway plus red tiled roofs. "Reuben Hunt" and "1909" is carved into the woodwork. There are large gardens to the front. Three pairs of semi detached yellow brick houses, built between 1892 and 1895, with red brick decoration, slate roofs and wooden porches follow, then a newer house also of brick to blend with the other older houses in the road. A terrace of four houses built in yellow brick to a simpler design, in 1895, succeeds this. An extension to one of these houses has the modern, flat soldier course of bricks above the doors and windows although the rest is in keeping with the original.



Burrows Road



Almshouses built in 1909

Recommendations.

- Further extensions to properties in these areas should be in keeping with the historical style and colours of brickwork.
- Open aspects should be preserved.
- Any covenants regarding changes to dwellings should be honoured.

Mixed Residential Areas.

1. Atlas Road, De Vere Road and Dudley Road.

This housing development is north west of the Village and is approached via Station Road. Braintree District Council built it on donated land between 1945 and 1974. Much of the development overlooks open countryside. The development is made up as follows:

Dudley Road built between 1945 and 1964, consists of bungalows, sheltered flats, Braintree District Council houses and one owner occupied property.



Dudley Road

Atlas Road also built between 1945 and 1964, also has a mixture of bungalows and houses, plus twenty owner occupied properties.

De Vere Road, built between 1965 and 1974, continues the mix of bungalows, houses and flats, with twenty-four owner occupied properties.

The properties have been upgraded over the years with new UPVC windows, gas and oil replacement heating, rewiring and some replacement security doors to the bungalows in Dudley Road. Many of the sheltered flats in Dudley Road look out over a green area to Halstead Road. The development caters for all ages. There are also some privately owned detached homes in Atlas



Atlas Road

Road, built at a later date. All the properties, with the exception of the block of flats in De Vere Road, have gardens, some large by today's standards. Green areas give a spacious feel to the estate, although some of the greensward in De Vere Road is to be utilised for much needed parking areas. There is a row of lock-up garages, some of which have recently been demolished to provide an open aspect, the remainder provide a colourful backdrop to the newly refurbished and updated children's play area. The building style is of brick with tiled roofs. The main block of flats has three storeys with a pitched roof. Gardens are fenced at the front and mainly well kept, some have been paved over to provide off road parking. Roads are of concrete and all areas have pavements and street lighting, although residents of Atlas Road felt that the street lighting available between the ends of De Vere Road to Dudley Road was inadequate.

Specific Recommendations.

- The open aspect of this housing development should be maintained.
- Roads, pavements, greensward and lighting should be kept to modern standards.



De Vere Road.

Flats and Maisonettes

Bungalows



De Vere Road Play Area Refurbished 2006-7.

Far left - the separate children's play ground.

Left - Grassed area with joint goal/basket ball net and 'Teen Shelter' in foreground.

2. Josselin Close, Monks Road and Ernalds Close, Oxford Court.

This housing development was built by a small independent developer in the middle to late 1970's north east of Queens Road, on land formerly the Old Vicarage garden. The development consists of three and four bedroom detached houses with gardens and garages; Josselin Close has twenty-six dwellings and Monks Road, twenty-one. These houses are constructed with tiled roofs and in a number of different brick colours all of which are neutral in shade. A number of properties have been extended and few retain all their original architectural features. House frontages are semi open plan and all properties have rear gardens.



Monks Road and Josselin Close.

Approximately half the houses have a courtyard style layout set between the house and garage. Ernalds Close consists of two individual properties with dissimilar architecture to the other parts of the development.

Oxford Court is a small private mews type development consisting of eight houses, their design being different from those of the earlier site described above. The Oxford Court area has contrasting but subtle rendered finish to the upper storeys, and extensions should reflect this established style. A popular feature of the estate is the convenient walk through to the High Street, which emerges opposite the Fish and Chip Shop. This facility was identified by the then residents as one that must be retained when the Oxford Court area was in the planning stages.

Specific Recommendations

- There are a number of large, old, trees with Preservation Orders in the small gardens on this development - while it probably seemed a commendable idea to retain them when the development took place in the 1970's, the very scale of the growing trees is causing problems and this is perhaps an issue to be considered for new housing developments.
- Extension of the estate into the field at the end of Monks Road should, for the foreseeable future, be strongly resisted.

3. Morleys Road, Hunt Road, Kemsley Road, The Spinney, Great Pitchers.

Situated at the west of the village and built in the 1970s by Federated Homes, this residential estate consists of a mixture of two and three bedroom, terraced, detached and semi-detached houses. Each house has its own garden at back and front and either a garage or designated parking space. All of the houses are built of red brick with tiled roofs. Small cul-de-sacs, some with green spaces at the centre, others with a row of garages, help to give this estate a less regimented appearance. A large green space off Hunt Road provides an open area for play, although no ball games are allowed, and helps break up the rows of houses.



Houses around a green space, Hunt Road

Houses to the east of Morleys Road and North of Hunt Road have gardens backing onto open farmland. Many of the original houses have been extended, mostly in keeping with the original building styles. Great Pitchers and Greenhills are to be found along a private road northeast of the junction with Morleys Road. This is a mixed development of individual designed houses and bungalows built in the grounds of Greenhills, a large house now divided to form more than one dwelling. A converted barn is also to be found at the end of this private road.



Hunt Road

4. Hillie Bunnies, Homefield Way, Priory Street, Burrows Road (west) and Queens Road.

Hillie Bunnies is totally residential and runs east to west, adjacent to the southern boundary of the Colne Valley Golf Course. The road is accessed from Queens Road and Burrows Road. There are two entrances to public footpaths that traverse the golf course. At the corner of Queens Road is a small children's play area run by Braintree District Council. Along the entire road there is a mix of bungalows, two storey detached and semi-detached houses. In 1949 the then Rural Council put up three semi-detached 'Airey' houses as temporary homes, which are still in use in the 21st Century, although the facades and facilities have been modernised over the years. At the eastern end there are a number of houses built between the wars by the local authority. These houses are totally rendered and painted in pastel colours. The remaining houses are built of red brick with red tiled roofs. At the western end of the road is a row of semi-detached houses built in the 1950s as local authority housing. These have been aligned at a slight angle so as to avoid a regimented vista. All these houses have both back and front gardens. Some have parking facilities but most of the residents park their vehicles in the roadway. The rears of all properties on the northern side of Hillie Bunnies overlook the golf course to the Colne Valley beyond.



Hillie Bunnies.

West of Hillie Bunnies is Homefield Way. Built in the late 1980s, this small mixed development has both social and private dwellings and consists of terraced houses with a few semi-detached and detached houses and bungalows. There is a pleasant open triangular area of maintained grass at the northern end of the development. The semi-detached and terraced housing is of red brick with the upper half rendered and some pargeting. At the extreme northern end of the road, in a cul-de-sac, are nine detached bungalows built of red brick with red roof tiles, each has a private driveway and garage. Along this section of road there is a notional pavement delineated by bricks forming part of the road surface.



Homefield Way

The rear of the four bungalows on the northern side of this cul-de-sac overlooks the Colne Valley Golf Course. The remainder benefits from properly constructed and maintained pavements and walkways.

A small development of two storey-detached houses around a paved area leads off the western side of the development. At the southern end there are a number of semi-detached bungalows, specifically designed for the elderly and provided by Braintree District Council. There is no vehicular access to these properties.

Priory Street leads off to the east of Homefield Way and forms a cul-de-sac. On its north side there is a row of six brick and render terraced houses and at its end are more semi-detached bungalows, again specifically for the elderly and provided by Braintree District Council. Only a few of the houses have garages and there are eight specially constructed hard standings to serve twenty properties. Many vehicles park on the roadway. Approximately one third of the properties do not have direct access to their fronts, which are reached by pathways from the roadway where vehicles may be parked.



Various housing styles, Sims Close.

Burrows Road (west) runs north from the High Street. Sims Close is reached via Burrows Road a short distance from this junction and leads to Harold Sims House, a retirement complex of bungalows and a residential home built of red brick with wood cladding, owned by the local authority. A semi-detached house and bungalows are also accessed from Sims Close. After a second bungalow, Burrows Road (west) consists of a row of rendered semi-detached homes, mostly white but a few in colours, all with good sized gardens but without garages, on-street parking is a problem along this road and some of the residents use their front gardens for parking.



Topiary in a front garden of Burrows Road.



Sims Close

Queens Road runs north from the High Street, joining Hillie Bunnies at the small children's playground. Building here, as elsewhere in Earls Colne, is an eclectic mix of late nineteenth/early twentieth century red brick terraces and villas with slate roofs interspersed with later builds. A row of detached bungalows have been built on the west side of Queens Road between the main car park entrance and the large detached house called 'The Warren', built in 1907 with rendered walls and decorative woodwork. A small close of bungalows have recently been erected on the site of the old Doctors Surgery.



Orchard Terrace 1906.



Bungalows built on site of the old surgery.



Modern Bungalows.



The Warren.
Queens Road.



South Lodge



The Scout Hut



Colne House



The Lodge

have been built small retirement bungalows in a similar style to the big house, these have access to a warden. The old Coach House has been carefully converted into apartments for the over fifties, also with warden attendance if needed and opposite this a second outbuilding has also been sensitively converted into more space for the residents.

A colourful terrace of painted brick houses on the west side of the road is followed by ribbon development, mostly also on the west side, and consisting of a mixture of bungalows and detached houses in various styles, using brick, render and tiled roofs, all have gardens.



Painted terraced houses.



Late 20th C. housing

Past some bungalows on the east side of the Station Road is a large house 'Meadowcroft' built in the Arts and Crafts style in 1912, with red brick and render, it features a jettied upper floor, tiled roof and ornate chimney stacks. It stands well back from the road and is hidden by mature planting. Adjacent is 'The Lodge', built in a similar but much less imposing style, originally for the staff of 'Meadowcroft'. It is currently undergoing some renovations. Continuing down the hill past open fields to the west and the golf course to the east, the local 'Scout Hut' stands back from the road. It has been built from brick with a corrugated roof to emulate a farm building. Just this side of the river Colne is a water treatment works and opposite this the Riverside Business Park described in the Economic and Employment section.

Specific Recommendations

- Any future plans to develop Station Road further should be carefully considered with regard to the resulting impact on the landscape.
- Conservation of the trees and hedgerows along this stretch of road should be encouraged and well managed.
- The natural banks are home to many flowers and wildlife and as such should be protected.

5. Station Road

Station Road runs northwest from the junction of the High Street and Halstead Road to the village boundary at the River Colne. A pair of semi-detached thatched cottages stands on the west corner of this junction. These are of white painted render with black painted gothic style windows. Opposite these is the single storey South Lodge built of light brick with slate roof, it has white painted fancy bargeboards and a porticoed front porch. A shared entranceway on the right leads to The Colne Valley Golf Club and Colne House.



Thatched Cottages at the junction of Station Road.

The golf club has a modern purpose built clubhouse and staff quarters, these have been designed to complement South Lodge, being also of single storey light brick, slate roofs, white painted wood work and porticoed porches.



Colne Valley Golf Course Club House

Colne House is now a home for the elderly. This was once a large mansion built in the pale fawn bricks common to the area, with a slate roof. Within its grounds

6. Tey Road, Tey Road Close, Lowefields.

Tey Road runs southeast from a junction with Upper and Lower Holt Street. It consists of a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. Properties date from the 17th Century to the present day. Consequently houses from many architectural styles and periods are to be found in this road. Older properties are mainly built of brick with render and either red or grey tiled roofs. A brick built, slate tiled semi-detached villa, dated 1908, has pebbledash and double storied decorative brick bow windows to the front. A small white painted cottage style detached home also with slate roof lies back from the road behind a mature garden, adjacent to it is a similar property which has been extended.

Tey Road



Sherwood Cottage.



Late 20thC Bungalows



Properties old and new.

The oldest property in this area, dated 1640, is a semi-detached building set well back from the road. It has white painted weatherboarding, and a red tiled roof with a row of small-pitched dormer windows along the roofline.



Weatherboard semi-detached cottages built in 1640

Post war building along this road has filled in all land between these original buildings. Those on the west side of the road, up to Tey Road Close, are semi-detached and detached homes, mainly of brick and render with tiled roofs. A row of six small brick and rendered bungalows, all with garages, has been built between Lowefields and the edge of the village

envelope. Most of the buildings on the east side are of bungalow and chalet bungalow styles with the occasional detached and semi-detached home. The favoured materials being brick and render with tiled roofs.

The majority of properties along Tey Road have been extended or altered, with, for example, a second storey room built into the roof of single storey bungalows being the most common change. Many homeowners have also 'individualised' their properties by adding porches, pargeting or wood cladding. All the properties along Tey Road have gardens, garages, or room for off-street parking, however there is a congestion problem caused by on-street parking. The rear entrance to a garage workshop is also accessed via Tey Road. The buildings stop at fields that form the boundary of the village envelope from which Tey Road becomes a narrow lane leading to the parish boundary and beyond. For details of this area see section headed Outlying Areas.



Tey Road Close.

Tey Road Close is situated halfway down Tey Road itself, to the west. This small area of social housing consists of a terrace of six two storey homes built of red brick with tiled roof, the front elevation having two double storey gables, this is flanked by two terraces of small bungalows, also built of red brick. Behind one set of bungalows is a communal garage area, whilst in front of the other set is a parking area for residents and visitors. In a small corner to the west behind these buildings is a small play area. A green area with trees and a seat divides Tey Road Close from Tey Road itself.



Lowefields.

Chalet Bungalows to the southeast.

Brick and rendered bungalows to the northwest.



Just past Tey Road Close, a second turning to the west leads into Lowefields. This development was built in the early 1970s and consists mainly of semi-detached bungalows built of render and brick with tiled roofs. A large detached bungalow constructed of light brick, has been built on a spare plot. The road at this end of

Lowefields stops at the entrance to a field, home to horses at time of writing. A row of five chalet bungalows have been built along the southeast branch of Lowefields, these have been extended and altered over the years. All these properties have long gardens at the back which overlook farmland. All the properties in Lowefields have garages, space for off road parking and gardens both back and front.

Specific Recommendations.

- This area has been comprehensively built up over the years and has reached saturation point. The eclectic mix of architectural styles and building materials also make it difficult to recommend design points. Recommendations are confined to suggesting that any extensions/alterations should stay in keeping with the property being worked on and with its neighbouring properties, particularly if this property is an adjoining (semi-detached) one.
- The open aspect of Tey Road Close should be preserved.

7. Coggeshall Road

Coggeshall Road (the B1024) runs south from a junction with Church Hill and Upper Holt Street. It consists of mainly large detached houses and bungalows set within their own grounds. The diverse range of building styles, particularly along the built up area nearest the village, bear very little resemblance to each other, although small 'clusters' of like dwellings form occasional unified areas. The first house in Coggeshall Road stands well back from the southwest side and is an older house with white painted brick walls and slate tiled roof. Next to this is a large detached brick and rendered house, a similar house has been built opposite. Set back and up from the B1204 is a row of six Neo-Georgian detached houses built in the 1970s of brick with tile roofs and bay windows.



Neo-Georgian houses set back up a slope.



Tile Kiln Farmhouse

Opposite these are two rendered bungalows. Continuing along the west side from the Neo-Georgian houses, brick and rendered detached bungalows and chalet bungalows extend to the bend in the road from which some large early twentieth century detached houses stand in good sized mature plots. A new build is at present being constructed between two of these homes. A late twentieth century chalet bungalow built of brick and tile stands in its own plot. A large detached home, also of brick and tile, sited at an angle from the road is just inside the village envelope. This house has

also been built in the chalet bungalow style, with three dormers at front and a gable end housing an integral double garage with rooms over.



Chalet bungalow style houses in Coggeshall Road

On the east side of Coggeshall Road, three large chalet bungalow style houses, each with four wood clad dormers, rendered walls and tiled roofs, have been built in a horseshoe to resemble a close and are set well back from the road with a shared drive. Large plots with houses and bungalows of varied age and design continue until the end of the village envelope at Tile Kiln Farm. This period farmhouse is situated on the corner of Coggeshall Road and a private road leading to farm buildings and is built of brick with a tiled roof.

From here fields follow the road for a short distance until a nineteenth century detached red brick house which has been built on the east side of the road. This house has the large white painted lintels and slate tiled roof typical of buildings of this period. Next to this house is Claypits Farm. A twentieth century red brick detached farmhouse next to farm buildings is near the road, with two older houses, rendered and with slate roofs which stand back behind mature hedging. Just north of the junction with Curds Road is Peartree Hall, a historic building set well back from the road. This too has a rendered façade with peg tile roof and small windows. A large wooden barn occupies some of the land visible from the road. The corner plots at each side of Curds Road junction contain, to the north, a small bungalow with farm outbuildings known as Rushpits Farm, and to the south, a very much altered house (the roof was raised at one point) surrounded by a tall hedge. The entrance to the Earls Colne Industrial Park is just south of this. Between here and the Parish Boundary are pockets of habitation, a mix of old and new often associated with a nearby farm. Worth a mention is the Old School House, a white painted rendered building with slate tiled roof and unusual windows, which has now been converted into a home and a pretty, painted weatherboard cottage (Dolphin Cottage), opposite Gatehouse Farm.



Old School House.



Dolphin Cottage

A public house, The Bird in Hand, stands on the corner of Coggeshall Road and America Road. This hostelry is also home to a Hand Car Wash enterprise. All the homes in Coggeshall Road have garages and both front and back gardens. Many of these houses have been

built back from the road and have mature planting. Some of the houses have been decorated with pargetting. Many of the fields have been fenced for paddocks and stables have been built in some of them. The Civil Engineering Contractors, Blackwells, is situated along this stretch of the road, as is the newly refurbished former builders yard, now known as Broomfield Park.



8. Park Lane, Park Lane Close, Ashwells Meadow, Swallow Field, York Road (part of), Church Hill.

Park Lane runs east to west, south of but not quite parallel to the High Street. It consists of a mixture of large and small properties dating from circa the 1600s (Hall Cottages) to the present day. Consequently houses from all architectural styles and periods are to be found along this road. Amongst its more unusual buildings is 'The Ark' opposite Park Lane Close. This is a timber and rendered building of character, and has been very well extended so as not lose any of its character, as has the cream painted rendered house adjacent to it. This house also features green painted woodwork on its gables.

brick with grey roofs and white woodwork, all have garages and gardens.

West to Foundry Lane is a mix of old and new properties, those on the north side of the road are set up on a bank and a modern house, with the double garage built below its living quarters, is to be found sandwiched between the older buildings.



Park Lane old and new.



Park Lane Close on the north side, was developed in the 1960s to accommodate the elderly in small terraced bungalows



The Ark



Ashbrook House



York Road



Swallow Field

East of the 'Ark' is 'Ashbrook House', a large 1960s style building with pale yellow/red brick and a coloured glass window at front stretching up two stories. Opposite this house on the corner of Park Lane and York Road is 'Bearcroft', a large 19th century house of light brick with slate tiled roof. A smaller version of this house is to be found on the south side of Park Lane.

A junction leads to some pre-war cottages built of brick, with bay windows, in York Road and a terrace of red brick cottages also pre-war. Opposite these is a pretty terrace of small homes built towards the end of the twentieth Century, also of red brick, each with a small porch and garden at front. Next to these is the entrance to Swallow Field, originally the playing field of the old Grammar School; it now contains a mixture of houses and bungalows started in the 1980s and completed in the 1990s. These are also built of red brick with tiled roofs, some also have part plain render.



Old and new houses in Park Lane.

In the grounds of an early twentieth Century house, 'Little Croft', are some recently built large detached houses, similar in style to two previously newly built homes in the road. These have been constructed in red

All properties in this area have gardens, with those on the south side of Park Lane having large back gardens overlooking Longmeadow to the countryside beyond. A public footpath leading to Longmeadow and Brickfield, is entered from halfway up Park Lane and exits beside the school.



Longmeadow and Brickfield Nature Reserve.



Red brick pre-war terrace York Road



Late 20th C. red brick terrace York Road

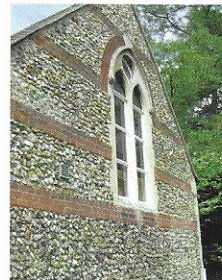
Ashwells Meadow is a 1980s development of individually designed detached and linked houses, incorporating a green area planted with a small shrubbery. Shut Lane, an un-adopted road which narrows to footpath width at the High Street, runs beside this and leads past an ancient cottage to the new rectory plus several other detached homes built at the end of the 20th Century, past a second old cottage and into the High Street.



Ashwells Meadow



The old primary school, now a centre for vulnerable adults.



The Gothic style window set into flint & brick wall.



Footpath to Brickfields & Longmeadow



Semi-detached Cottages opposite the primary school in Park Lane

These cottages have been extended and altered over time.



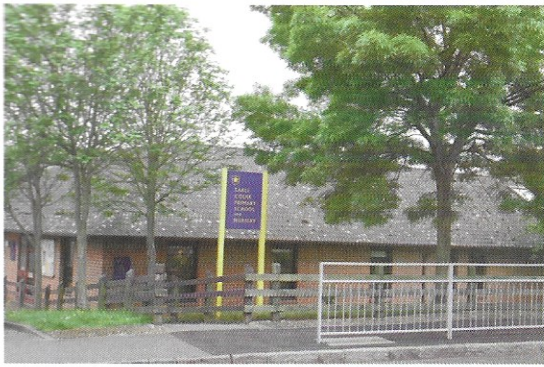
The old Victorian school buildings, built in 1843 of flint and brick with a tiled roof and stone gothic style windows and includes a second red brick building, have become a centre for vulnerable adults. Hall Cottages have over the years been modernised, extended and altered and they now have coloured render, porches and garages.

The present school, Earls Colne Primary School, has developed over the last twenty-five plus years, growing with the village, and as with many schools, is never quite big enough. Built of brick in a single storey around a courtyard, it has had several extensions and internal alterations. Two wooden 'demountable' buildings are still in use. It has a large playing field and a small swimming pool. Part of the playground is home to a large wooden building which has housed the Youth Centre for many years. This building may shortly be updated and used as a community based family centre.

Opposite the school are St. Andrews Church and the junction to Church Hill. Church Hill contains a mix of detached houses and bungalows built variously between the wars with some later in-fill. North of the Causeway are two rendered detached bungalows.



Church Hill links the two historic centres of Earls Colne.



The present Earls Colne Primary School.



The 'Quiet' play area.



Proposed Community Family Centre.

General Recommendations for Mixed Residential Areas

- Any new buildings or alterations to existing buildings should be in total sympathy with existing styles.
- The provision of a maximum number of affordable housing should be negotiated on any new development Any new buildings or alterations to existing buildings.
- The rapid growth in the number of cars parked on roads make it clear that future housing developments should always provide adequate off-road parking and hence avoid potential problems such as lack of access for wide emergency vehicles.
- Whilst the hard surfacing of front gardens is regrettable, residents should consider the visible impact on the street scene.
- Public spaces should be kept and not built on or surfaced over.



Earls Colne Nursery, Housed in a converted telephone exchange.

Plans to improve the play area are underway.



Specific Recommendations.

- The open aspect of this area should be preserved.
- The school field should be preserved for the use of the school children and NOT sold for housing.
- It is felt that in-filling has reached saturation point in this area
- Buildings used at present for community purposes should be retained for community use.



Lest We Forget.

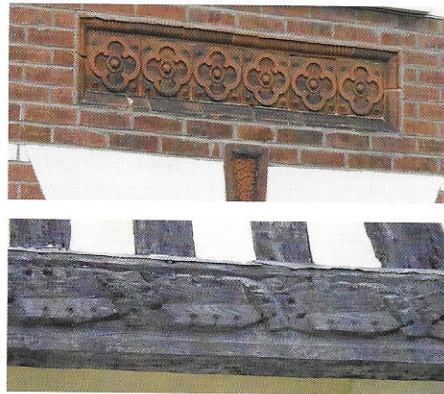
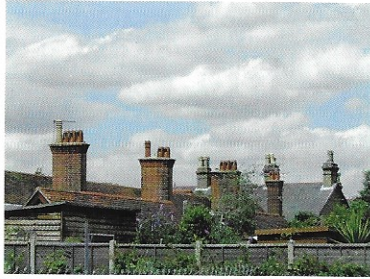
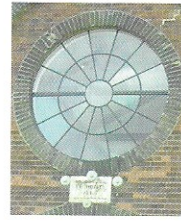
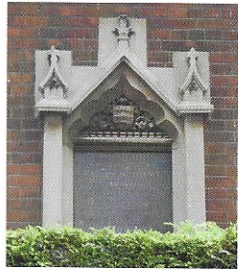
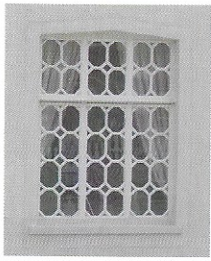
The War Memorial.

Standing next to St. Andrews Church, at the bottom of the High Street, in its own small garden, the War Memorial commemorates all those who gave their lives in the service of their country.



This Memorial was erected by the Hobbs Family, on the site of the old war time airfield, now a Business Park. It is dedicated to those who fought (and in many cases died) for our freedom during the second world war.

Design Details.



Outlying Areas.

America Road, Curds Road, Newhouse Road, Nightingale Hall Road to Bourne Brook boundary and Tey Road up to Chalkney Wood.

This area is part of the higher ground between the River Colne and the Bourne Brook. The land is mostly flat with gentle slopes down to these watercourses.



Swans on the River Colne



One of the many footpaths in the area.

This is farming country, now mostly arable but there is still some livestock and at the time of writing, a considerable area made into horse paddocks with new fences. There are some sheep near Chalkney Wood and rare breeds at America Farm and Chalkney Mill. It is an area of isolated farms and houses, winding roads and a few ponds; even the B1024 to Coggeshall has many bends. Some of the roads are between high hedges and sometimes the view is over fairly flat land. Hedges between the old fields have been taken out to benefit the larger machines today. Many of the fields were named and some of these are still remembered.



Growing arable crops using modern farming methods.

America Road runs west from Coggeshall Road to Tey Road. It is a narrow winding lane with few buildings. A private road leads to some houses of mixed style to the southeast near the junction with The Bird in Hand public house. Mid way along the lane to the north is America Farm. A training centre for disadvantaged people is also to be found along this road. Adjacent to this are a group of poultry houses. At its junction with Tey Road a white rendered, grey tiled cottage stands in its own plot, opposite are two more rendered cottages. Turning right on to Tey Road, after a short distance Burnthouse Road leads to Moorlands Farm passing a large house (Willow Park) on the way.



Ogilvie Court Training Centre



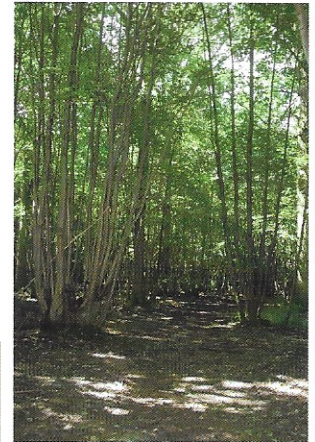
Ivy Cottage

East of Tey Road is Chalkney Wood, part Essex County Council and part Forestry Commission owned. It is one of five ancient woodlands surviving in Britain and has existed since the end of the last Ice Age. The oldest part of the wood has been coppiced for at least the last 400 years. There is good public access to 73 ha. of woodland by several footpaths.

Coppiced trees



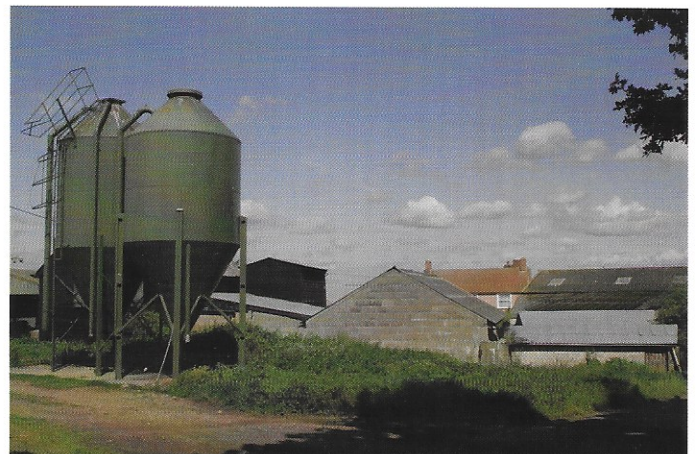
Orchids



Chalkney Wood



Opposite Chalkney Wood are Homefield Lodge, a converted Barn and Holmwood Farm with its large farmhouse and farm buildings. A bungalow is on the border of the wood and Tey Road, from here the lane winds down to the village with fields on either side.



Farm buildings, Tey Road.



Curds Road runs roughly north from Coggeshall Road toward the village. It is another narrow winding road with the old airfield to its east and fields on either side. A third of the way down Curds Road a row of cottages can be found. Almost all of these homes have been extended at some point in time, mostly in sympathy with each individual style. Two modern detached houses have been squeezed in just before the sharp bend. On the bend is Reed Cottage, one of Earls Colne's few thatched dwellings. This small cottage is rendered white and has very little surrounding land.



Cottages in Curds Road



Wey House & Tuffets, Curds Rd.

Behind these cottages is Richard's Grove, a piece of ancient woodland. Highfields, a modern bungalow, is a working wood yard run by our local tree surgeon. A disused Civil Defence bunker is to be found in a field just off the road at the last deep bend before the junction with Newhouse Road.

Newhouse Road runs southwest to the perimeter of the old airfield. There are just five houses along this stretch of lane all have been extensively altered over the years and little is left to show for the original tithe cottages, apart from the typical narrow plots that run adjacent to the lane. Newhouse Road becomes Nightingale Hall Road at the airfield perimeter.



Cow Parsley in the verges of Newhouse Road

Extended & Altered homes. Shepherds & Holly Cottage on right has become a single house.



Lodge Farm is a moated farmhouse and stands back from the road along a track lined with beautiful old trees. This is a working farm with the many out buildings, barns

etc. associated with farming. Further down, Nightingale Hall Farm consists of a modern bungalow and detached house with barns and outbuildings now used as units let to small businesses. The road becomes very narrow and winding, just past a sharp bend is Nightingale Hall, a large house with ancient foundations, altered over the years. It lies behind a brick wall.



Farm buildings now used as business units.



Nightingale Barn



Nightingale Hall

Next a large and attractive barn conversion with opposite a cottage that has also been extensively enlarged and altered. Finally Bush Cottage is on the parish boundary at Bourne Brook, this is at present also undergoing enlargement.



The village and beyond across large flat fields.

Recommendations.

- Building on agricultural land and other green field sites should be strongly resisted.
- Change of use for farm buildings should take into account the rural nature of this area and the narrow winding character of local lanes to minimise the risk of noise and traffic disruption

Open Spaces

The retention of open space is important to the residents of Earls Colne, as highlighted in the VDS Questionnaire. These open spaces range from the wide High Street of the village itself to the open aspects incorporated within housing developments, most of which include green areas in their design. Earls Colne village is surrounded by open countryside, a mixture of agricultural land, woods, and leisure areas. Many homes within residential areas have open views across this landscape. The majority of homes have gardens, although these have become smaller over time as land costs rise and many new developments do not now include front gardens in their plan.



Open fields behind houses in Halstead Road.

Earls Colne has a village Green and several children's play areas. Most of these play areas are run by Braintree District Council, however the Parish Council leases land next to and from the Recreation Club, to provide a small play area at the west of the village for under 12 year olds.



The Parish Council run Playground.

The equipment is provided and maintained by the Parish Council. The large play area in De Vere Road was completely refurbished by Braintree District Council in 2006 following consultation with residents, the Parish Council and the Baptist Chapel. Smaller play areas are situated in Tey Road Close and on the corner of Hillie Bunnies and Queens Road, Braintree District Council also funds these and plans for their refurbishment are in the pipeline. The new residential development built on the old foundry site includes two small play areas, equipped by the developer, and a small public garden for use of the residents.

An 'unofficial' allotment site can be found behind the car park in Queens Road, this belongs to Braintree District Council. Green spaces are also to be found in the Atlas Road area, Tey Road, Hunt Road and Homefield Way.



Public gardens on the new Atlas Works Development.

The village Green lies on either side of Halstead Road, west of the High Street. Houses bound it on two sides. Both areas have trees and each has a seat. The north green is the site of a post office pillar-box, public telephone kiosk, Parish Council notice board and the village sign. There is a short permitted driveway to the bungalows at Tillwicks Close across this part of the Green.



This meadow is at the junction of Coggeshall Rd. & Church Hill, giving an open aspect on entering the village from this direction.



Pound Green.

Earls Colne Primary School in Park Lane has retained its large playing field. The pupils use this for games lessons, sports day and inter-school matches. The field is also utilised for the annual school fete and the popular Bonfire Party held every year. We feel it is important for this sports field to remain, not only to help the health of the children using the school but also to preserve the open aspect at this end of the village.



The Primary School playing field

Brickfield and Long Meadow.

South of Park Lane lies the Brickfield and Long Meadow Local Nature Reserve. This is a managed reserve criss-crossed with public footpaths. The mixed habitats of these reserves are a haven for all types of wild flowers and insects. This is a popular area for dog walkers.



The Reserve is home to many creatures both large & small

The Millennium Green.

Earls Colne Millennium Green lies on the western outskirts of the village. The twelve-acre site was the first of its kind in Essex. The green was made possible with the support of local people, businesses and Braintree District Council. The Millennium Commission via the Countryside Agency provided a substantial grant. The top of the green has an adventure playground and wide views over the Colne Valley. The site slopes gently down to Bourne Brook, which has been widened into a pond before continuing on its way. The area is planted with native trees, wild flowers abound and it is a haven for many forms of wildlife. Seats, benches and picnic tables are placed in strategic places, and it is a popular venue for dog walkers and families. Trustees manage the Millennium Green. An annual open day is held here in late summer when the villagers are encouraged to bring a picnic. Guided walks and nature quizzes play an important part of the afternoons entertainment.



Donkey Rides at the Open Day.

Selling produce to raise funds

The Pond and Weir formed by damming Bourne Brook



The Adventure Playground



Picnicking on the Green



The Human Sun Dial.

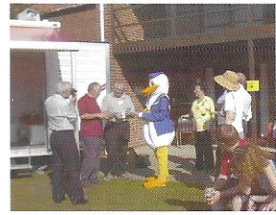
Recommendations.

- All open spaces within the village and its immediate surrounds should be retained and not be released for development.
- Existing leisure facilities should be protected.
- Buildings and extensions should be in keeping with the rural nature of the area and be sympathetic to any building already in existence.
- Off road parking facilities should be preserved.
- All areas of green space should continue to be well maintained, with equipment and/ or landscaped areas inspected regularly to ensure the safety of people using such spaces.
- Features such as telephone boxes and seating should be retained for general public use.
- Additional recreational space should be provided if the opportunity presents itself.

Sports and Recreational Areas.

The Recreation Club.

West of the High Street is the Recreation Club, a large brick built building with tiled roof and large balcony overlooking the sports ground. The club was provided for the people of Earls Colne with a legacy from the Hunt family and is run by trustees. It operates a membership system. The club is home to the local Cricket, Football and Tennis clubs. Carpet bowls, squash and badminton, plus other sporting facilities and a bar are also provided. The large sports ground is also used for the annual Four Colnes Show and other large events such as, for example, the millennium celebrations.



Fun at the Four Colnes Show



Village Cricket.



Earls Colne Recreation Club.

Privately Owned Facilities.

North of the village centre is one of the two golf courses within the parish boundary. The Colne Valley Golf Club is accessed from Station Road and is a private membership club. Its course looks over the Colne Valley and can be traversed by using public footpaths. There is also a permissive path along the River Colne.



Colne Valley Golf Course



The Essex Golf Course

The second golf club, The Essex, is situated on the disused wartime airfield south of the village between Newhouse Road and Coggeshall Road. This can be accessed through the entrance to the business park. Attached to the golf club, which operates both a membership and a pay and play policy, is a 42-room hotel and a fully equipped leisure centre with swimming pool, indoor and outdoor tennis courts, hair and beauty salon. The main buildings are in a similar style to those of its industrial neighbours, red brick with a low, tiled roof. Opposite the leisure centre is a golf driving range. All these facilities have good parking areas. The west side of the airfield is home to a flying club.



Planes at the flying club.



Golf Driving Range



Health & Beauty.



Gyms



Fitness classes are held both at the Essex & in the Village Hall



There are over thirty footpaths and permissive paths in the parish of Earls Colne.

Earls Colne Through the Eyes of Children.



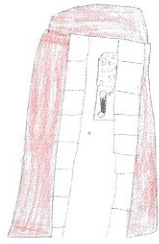
Jade Ford 9.



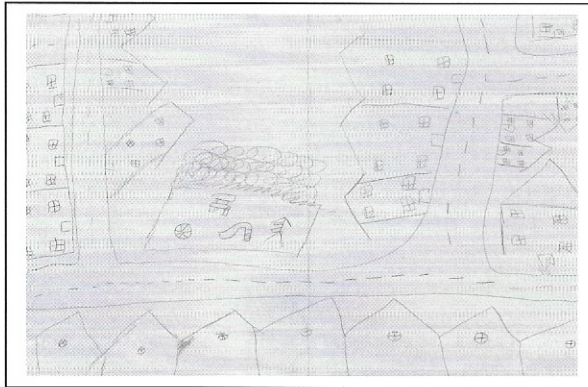
Tom Colville 9.



Rebecca Simpson 6½



Fern Condon 7



Daniel Van Stone 9



Oliver Simpson 9½



Rebecca 6



Alasha Jeffery 9

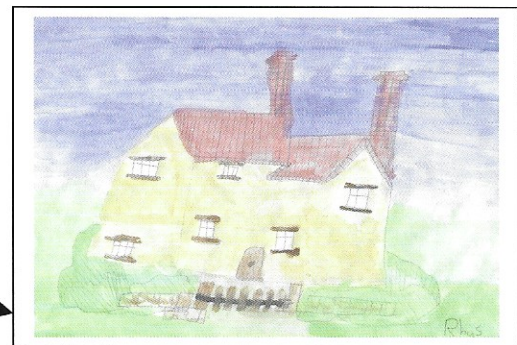


George Neale 8



Geoff 11

Rhys Brown 8



Economic and Employment Opportunities.

Earls Colne has several Business Parks. They range from semi-agricultural, changed use of farm outbuildings, changed use of redundant industrial buildings and purpose built business units.

Semi-agricultural.

Hayhouse Farm has a very large artificial environment for the mass production of plants. These are built as huge glasshouses with storage and loading facilities to the front. Though somewhat out of sight it is nevertheless very near to the village. Service traffic has caused some congestion in the village at times although the owners have addressed this as far as they are able. No noise, or smells, comes from it but its security lights cause some light pollution. There are seasonal job opportunities for local people.



Glasshouses and Grain Stores at Hayhouse Farm.

Changed use of farm buildings.

Colne House Farm, in Station Road, uses farm outbuildings for a variety of business activities. At present these include a joinery, a worktop company, and a plant sales unit. The units are set in a circular manner around the original farmyard. Access is through a galvanised metal gate set back from the road. Redundant barns at Nightingale Hall Farm in Nightingale Hall Road are leased out to various enterprises. The farmhouse opposite is the headquarters for a local grass cutting and mower service and repair business.



Business Units at the old foundry site.

Changed use of redundant industrial buildings.

Converted factory units, once part of the Atlas Works, are to be found in the recently re-developed site. They

are an example of what can be achieved when suitable commercial activities are enabled to exist on what is primarily a residential site. As many key design features as possible were incorporated into the new parts of the buildings and, where possible, retained in the old buildings. These units are filled with small business ventures so offer limited work opportunities to the village. Situated off Foundry Lane, and adjacent to Willow Tree Way, is a converted industrial building that was once part of the Atlas Works. The building with slate roof, red brickwork and render retains the original chimneystack. Behind this a purpose built unit has been erected also with a slate roof and bricks.



The old railway station, now a factory employing local people.

In Station Road the now redundant railway station is the home, at time of writing, to a manufacturing company. It still retains the appearance of the old station despite the addition of a two storey cross-wing extension and the loss of two chimneystacks. The building is of red brick with a red tile roof. The windows are in the original design and painted grey. The old car park is now used for the company's employees. The old station goods yard is now the 'Riverside Business Park'. Entered via a galvanised gate set into brick walls, past an ugly concrete building to a group of large brown steel purpose-built units home, at time of writing, to six businesses. This Business Park is sufficiently remote from the village for any sensory pollution (i.e. light, noise, smell) but is almost on the riverbank and therefore could pose pollution problems if not managed well.



Private Enterprise is part of the rural economy

Purpose-built Industrial Areas

On Coggeshall Road, just south of the junction with Curds Road is the entrance to 'Earls Colne Business Park'. This is sited on the old world war two airfield, reflected in the names of the roads in the industrial area. A large part of the airfield is turned over to leisure activities (see Sports and Recreation Areas) the rest is a purpose-built modern industrial area with units of brick and steel set into landscaped grounds. There is a pleasant change of colour and shape of the building contours as you progress around the park. The range of businesses using these facilities is very diverse, from heavy industry to food manufacturers. The site is well designed and offers good employment opportunities to the village. The whole is serviced by its own roads, which have been built to a high standard. The park is sufficiently remote as to minimise any negative impact on the village.



Purpose built units in a sympathetic setting on the Business Park



The Business Park also supports heavy industry.

Further south along Coggeshall Road an old builders yard has been converted into work units known as 'Broomfield Park'. This is entered by a decorative gateway and is screened from the road. The black weather-boarded buildings have slate roofs. There are car parking facilities and some landscaping. Next to Broomfield Park are the headquarters the Civil Engineering Contractors, Blackwells. An attractive large office building of red brick stands well back from the road, with car park and landscaping to the front. A large corrugated hanger style building painted green at the rear of the office is in fact an original 'Type T2' aircraft hanger used in the war. This helps to hide plant stored behind the business.



Shops and Retail

Earls Colne is lucky in that it retains a number of shops and retail outlets, these are all centred on the High Street. We have at time of writing a thriving Co-op Store and family butchers shop, a post office, chemist, and optician. Specialist retailers include a fashion shop, gift/soft furnishing shop, fancy dress emporium, estate agents, an art gallery, and a store specialising in country pursuits. Service industries include three hairdressers, a

homeopathy centre, a garage offering MOTs and a kitchen supplier. There are also some financial and insurance businesses. Earls Colne is well served for entertainment as it has five public houses, three in the High Street, one beside the River Colne in Lower Holt Street and one in Coggeshall Road. Most of these establishments serve food. In the High Street 'Drapers' Hotel and Brasserie has recently opened. Earls Colne also boasts an Indian restaurant with take-away facilities, a fish and chip shop and two Chinese take-away outlets. In Upper Holt Street 'The Oxford House' is a Conference Centre and function rooms.



Earls Colne boasts a diverse selection of shops.



New businesses in the refurbished Atlas Works.



Chicken Farm, America Rd.

Recommendations

- Care must be taken when considering any new business developments. The village design statement survey results clearly express a desire to minimise any future industrial development - (95% of survey respondents felt that any new development should be kept to existing industrial areas).
- Any new business, or industry, should be designed to respect local character and, if possible, contribute to the rural economy by way of offering job opportunities to local people.
- The impact of noise, smells, signs, lighting and the size, frequency and noise from service vehicles should also be considered.
- The fabric of individual buildings, which are of heritage value, should be retained.
- Support must be given to the continuance of services and facilities in order to maintain community life. Proposals, which would lead to the loss of village facilities, should not be permitted unless sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate they are not viable and that all options for their continuance have been fully explored.

Movement within Earls Colne.

Transport

Regular bus services run between Colchester and Halstead, but because of current life styles and the need to travel to other destinations (over 70% of residents work outside Earls Colne) most households have the use of at least one private vehicle and in many cases two or more. One of the main points to show up on the 2003 Village Appraisal was a lack of public transport to local railway stations and the poor provision at peak times. Consequently the main form of transport in the village is by private vehicle, 75% of which, according to the Village Appraisal 2003, use their vehicle for work, training or study, less than 10% use a public bus. Statistics from the 2003 Appraisal claimed 623 households owned 847 roadworthy vehicles, this level of ownership causes various problems throughout the village and some are addressed below. It is acknowledged that once a household or individual makes the decision to become a car owner there is a natural tendency to use the vehicle for most, if not all, journeys that are regarded as too far to walk. The low incidence of bicycle use (Village Appraisal 2003 figure 8) may be due to the hazards of using our busy roads and lanes.

Recommendations.

- Safer routes for walking and/or cycling reasonable distances within the Village should be encouraged by the provision of either 'Green Lanes' or the creation of designated foot/cycle paths.
- A more flexible public transport system with more buses at peak times and to other popular destinations such as Kelvedon and Colchester Railway Stations.



Heavy lorries cause disturbance to residents

Parking

Parking is and will remain a big issue, with 'on street' parking cited in the Village Appraisal 2003 as a constant problem on residential roads. Current planning parking standards do not appear to allow sufficient spaces for the number of vehicles needed within a rural location. However most comments received on the Appraisal and

subsequently at the Parish Council Offices concern parking on pavements causing obstructions and making it difficult for pedestrians to go about their business (Village Appraisal 2003). The Village Appraisal 2003 statistics state however that the majority of vehicle owners park their vehicles either in a garage or off street. It is possible people parking in the village for work, shopping and/or visiting purposes cause many of these problems. Public parking is provided on the High Street in demarked bays and in a public car park situated off Queens Road behind the Co-op Store. There is also a small unpaved parking area at the top of the High Street opposite Foundry Lane, although this is often filled with 'cars for sale' especially at weekends.



Parking is a problem in Earls Colne

Parking in front gardens is acceptable in Earls Colne, as in many areas of the village this is the only space available for owners to park their vehicles off the road.

Parking outside the school morning and late afternoons causes problems for two-way traffic, but this is confined to a half hour 'window' at each time. Because of the narrow nature of Park Lane, cars parked on the road cause pedestrians and cyclists difficulties getting to and from the school even though there is a painted pathway in the vicinity. Short of trying to encourage more people to walk or cycle to school there does not appear to be any real solution to this problem.

Recommendations

- Adequate off street parking is a priority. All current parking provision should be retained with extra spaces provided if at all possible.
- Parking provision for employees who commute into Earls Colne should be an important consideration when plans are approved for future businesses within Earls Colne Village itself.
- Planning permission sought for change of use of garages or off street parking should only be granted if it can be shown that adequate alternatives exist.

Traffic calming

The Village has three areas where Traffic Calming has been implemented

- Park Lane to slow vehicles in the vicinity of the school and to try and avoid 'rat running' from the High Street.
- Foundry Lane, installed as part of the Atlas Works Development to try and encourage drivers to access the new development from the High Street via Coggeshall Road rather than Curds Road and again, to deter the High Street 'rat run'.
- Massingham Drive as this route is used to access the new Doctors' Surgery.

These are in the form of humps and raised areas in the road, placed at varying distances. The sharp bend at the bottom of the High Street is the scene of many accidents, speed restriction signs have been put up here. 20 mph limits are have also been introduced in many of the residential areas.

Traffic Signs and Markings

Whilst signs and road markings should be as unobtrusive as their purpose allows they also need to be visible to have any effect. The problem of signs obscured by overgrown vegetation was cited in the Village Appraisal 2003 as a problem. However a plethora of signage detracts both from their usefulness and the appearance of the village. In the conservation area narrower primrose yellow lines are used for parking restrictions rather than the bolder wider type.

Wooden finger posts still exist in some areas of the parish, notably in the outlying areas such as the Curds Road - Coggeshall Road junction and the Tey Road - Burnthouse Road junction. There used to be one at the top of Newhouse Road on the perimeter of the old wartime airfield, but this has long since rotted and has never been replaced.



Street Furniture

Street furniture throughout the village is as far as its possible kept to the same designs as fitting its place in the environment. High Street furniture is of the black iron - gold trim design in keeping with the historic nature of the buildings. Elsewhere benches and rubbish bins are generally of wood. Installation of any new street furniture should not compromise road user visibility but servicing and maintenance issues should also be born in mind. There are many wooden bench seats in and around the village for the comfort of local residents. These have been provided over the years both by the Parish Council and as memorials to much loved villagers. Occasionally benches are placed in areas which can cause some nuisance, these are repositioned where possible to more suitable places.

There are two old style red telephone boxes, one on the green and one near the pedestrian crossing in the High Street. These should be retained as a service to the villagers. The style also compliments the historic properties in the main areas of the village.



Recommendations for the Attention of the Highway Authority

- Efforts should be made to identify problem areas to signage early to ensure a high standard is maintained.
- Wooden finger post style signs should be retained as a rural characteristic of the village.
- Where possible one sign should replace two to avoid overcrowding.

Recommendations

- Street furniture, especially in the High Street, should be carefully selected, of good quality and in keeping with that already in place.
- Colour and design should be carefully considered as well as positioning

Conclusion.

Earls Colne has always been a vibrant village, embracing change when necessary. Over the years it has grown considerably and not always with great thought to the architectural styles already extant. New developments have remained true to their own particular architectural style with some harmonising with their surrounding environment better than others. The development built on the old Foundry site is an example of good homogenised design within modern constraints as is Willow Tree Way and Thomas Bell Road. However, ribbon development along the edges of the village leave much to be desired with a hotchpotch of housing styles and a wealth of bungalows. Most of these areas are saved by the advantage of having front gardens to soften the building lines. Local 'brown-field' sites are becoming scarce and many of the larger houses have already had developments built on their grounds (Greenhills and Little Croft, Park Lane are such examples). There are still some pockets of suitable infill sites available but care should be taken to avoid overcrowding. Building on green-field sites should be resisted within the village and on its outskirts. Earls Colne residents feel its' open spaces are important and would not like to see them eroded for building. Indeed the Village Design Statement Questionnaire results (Appendix 1) show that in general the villagers now feel Earls Colne is big enough. Within the village, on-street

parking is a problem as many of the older style houses were not built to accommodate the motor car, but the newer developments also appear to lack enough parking facilities, especially as this is a rural area and people are often reliant on their cars for work (Village Appraisal 2003). Residents in rural areas will always have a necessity to use cars for everyday transport unless or until public transport matches that available in urban areas. Earls Colne in 2007 still retains those quirky areas that help make a village unique, for example cottages along "secret" passageways, well designed modern homes in small courts and closes, which add character to any village. It is unfortunate that today's need for high-density housing and high profit margins precludes personal space, i.e. front gardens, even minute ones and adequate parking facilities. Issues relating to energy saving and its impact on the community, for example, wind turbines and solar panels, will need careful consideration, particularly within the conservation area. The provision of one or both of these devices may cause the unwelcome intrusion of appearance and noise nuisance. Thought will be needed in future architectural designs to allow space for the storage of recyclable materials and the larger "wheelie bins" now in use. Earls Colne is a pleasant and desirable village in which to live, its residents would like to keep it that way.



Earls Colne Through the Seasons.



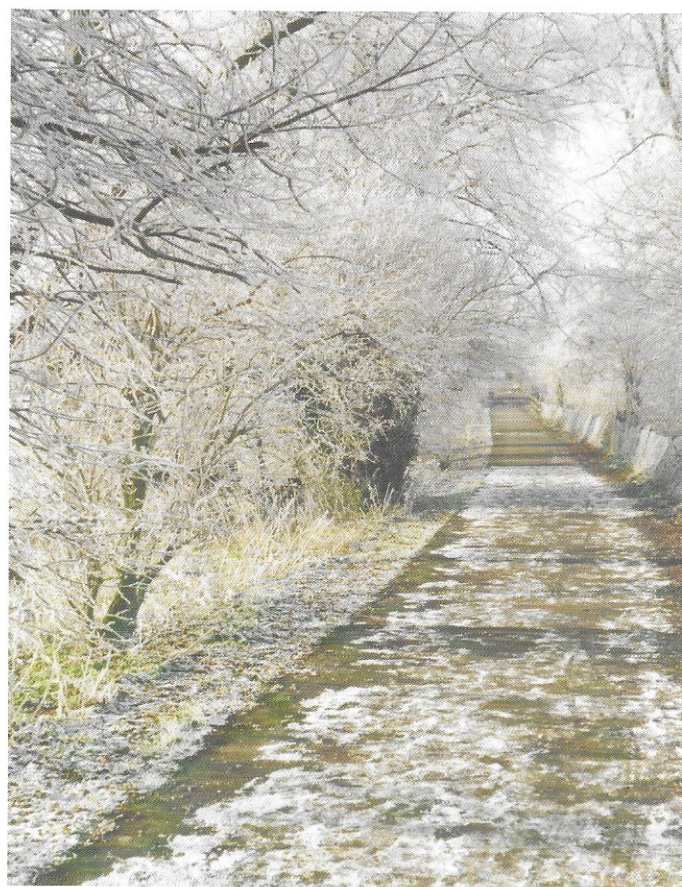
Spring



Summer



Autumn



Winter