

**Shifnal Town Council**

# **Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2026**



**December 2016**



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

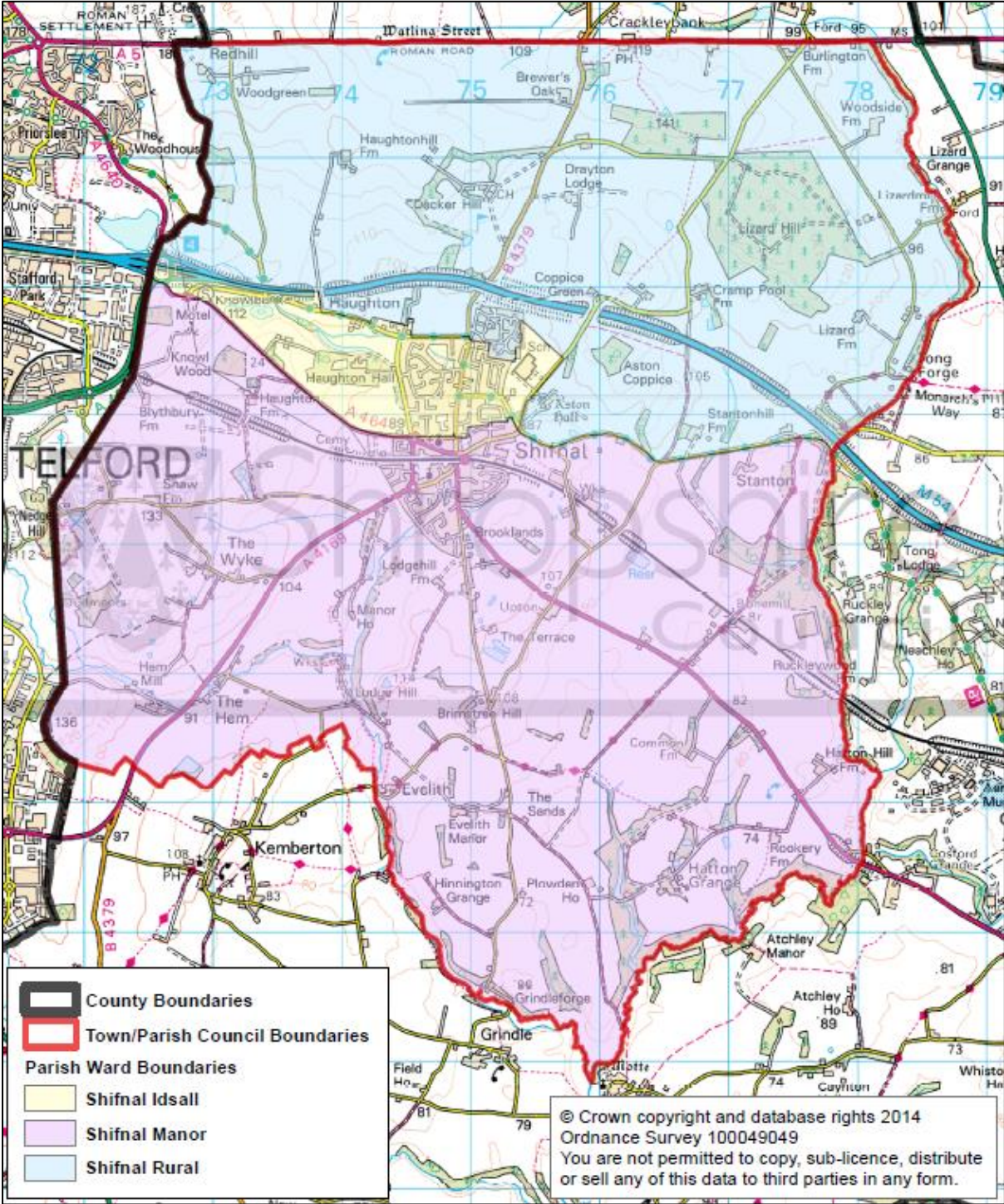
- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Shifnal parish. It represents one part of the development plan for the parish over the period 2014 to 2026, the other parts being the 2011 Shropshire Core Strategy and the SAMDev.
- 1.2 Shropshire Council, as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Shifnal parish in October 2014 to enable Shifnal Town Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SNPSG).

## **View over Shifnal from pathway to Lodge Hill**



- 1.3 The SNP has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The SNPSG has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning land use and development change over the plan period 2014 to 2026.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Shifnal, its residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.5 Each section of the Plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.
- 1.6 The map below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the boundary of Shifnal parish.

Neighbourhood Plan area



## National policy

- 1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

*"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).*

*Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.*

*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).*

*Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)".*

- 1.8 The relevant Shropshire Core Strategy was adopted in 2011. This is complemented by a site allocations and management of development (SAMDev) document, which was adopted in December 2015. These documents have provided the strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Consultation

- 1.9 The SNPSG has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community.
- 1.10 Previous consultation exercises undertaken as part of the development of a local Town Plan for Shifnal and during the Shropshire Council consultations on their Local Plan for Shifnal, the SAMDev, had identified a number of local issues.
- 1.11 An extensive programme of engagement has also been undertaken to identify further issues, develop policy options and seek feedback on the emerging plan. This has included:
- Public exhibitions and drop-in events
  - Face-to-face sessions with local organisations including schools, scouts and guides and other young peoples' groups, the business forum, and voluntary and interest groups

- A questionnaire distributed to all households.
- 1.12 As part of the plan preparation, Shifnal Forward has played a key role, both as a stakeholder on a range of matters, and also as a sounding board on emerging policies. Shifnal Forward is a partnership between Shropshire Council, Shifnal Town Council and the wider Shifnal community which has come together to assist in the delivery of Shifnal's local priorities and maximise, through on going consultation with the wider community, the potential benefits from development contributions. It had four action groups: Economy and Tourism; Community Wellbeing; Planning and Environment; Transport, and a Steering Group.



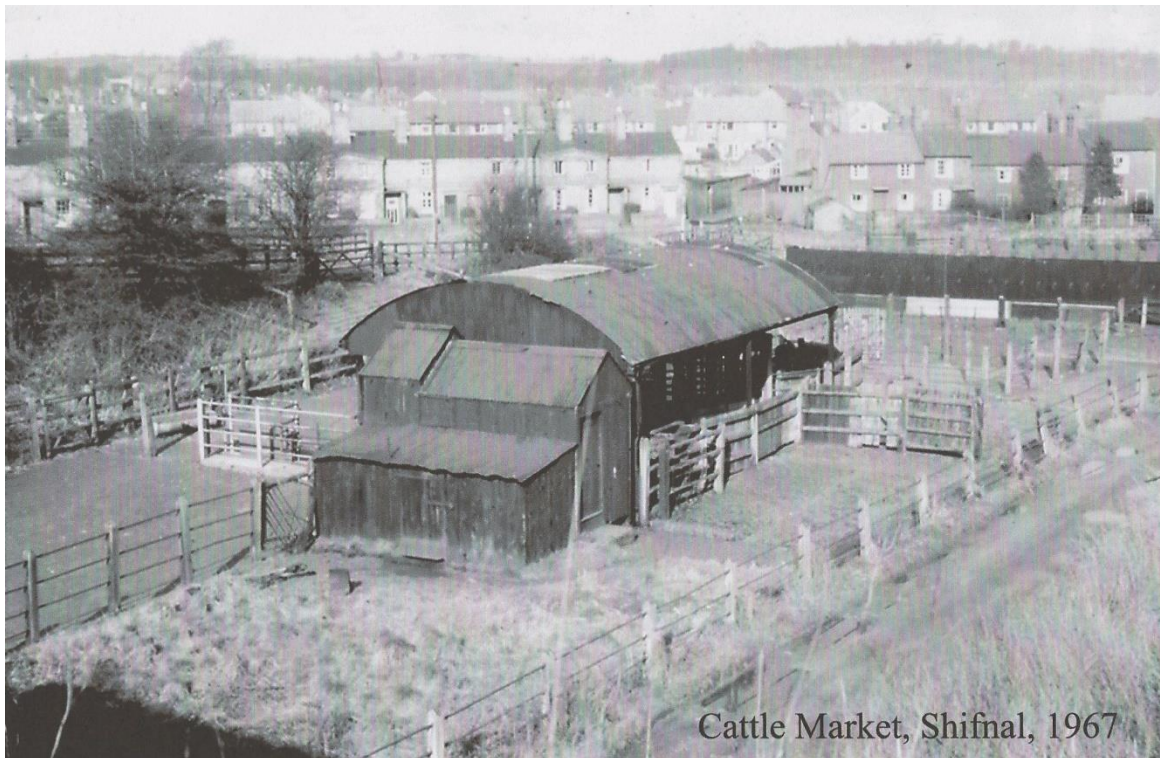
## 2 LOCAL CONTEXT

### History of Shifnal

#### Origins

- 2.1 The Domesday Book of 1086 shows that Shifnal (or Idsall as it was then known) was a relatively prosperous and well-populated community which continued to prosper in the Middle Ages. In 1245 Walter de Dunstanville, then lord of the manor, obtained a charter from the king for him to hold and take the profits from a weekly market and yearly fair. The size and beauty of the Parish Church indicate a prosperous medieval community. In 1591 a serious fire destroyed many old buildings and caused severe damage to the Church.
- 2.2 Until the late 17th century most of the population of Shifnal were involved in agriculture; even craftsmen such as blacksmiths and weavers and tradesmen such as innkeepers also had their own cattle and grew some corn. Then in the 18th century there was a great expansion in the number and range of crafts in the town with local craftsmen meeting the needs of local people. Later on, Shifnal enjoyed considerable prosperity catering for coaching traffic. However, by 1844 there were only nine coaches a day, and when the railway from Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury opened in 1849 the remaining coaching trade rapidly disappeared.

#### Cattle Market in 1967



Cattle Market, Shifnal, 1967

- 2.3 One of the most striking developments in 19th century Shifnal, as in most towns, was the proliferation of a variety of buildings for community purposes: a Mechanical Institute offering lectures, a library and reading rooms, a small Grammar School and then a National School, Chapels for dissenters, a Workhouse and a Magistrates' Courthouse.

## Modern Shifnal

- 2.4 Until the 1960s Shifnal changed very little and remained a small market town catering for local needs. In the inter-war period the population was falling and the impression is one of stagnation if not actual decay. Around 1970 many of the older buildings which had grown up in the original Market Place over the centuries were cleared to create the present wide shopping area of Bradford Street and Cheapside. Many 17th century half-timbered buildings remain, as well as some attractive brick houses of the 18th and 19th centuries, and the church is of considerable interest.
- 2.5 Since the Second World War Shifnal has expanded considerably and large housing estates have been built around the core of the old town. The population has more than doubled to over 7,000 (2011 census). Many of the new residents came to work in the New Town of Telford, others moved from the West Midlands conurbation and elsewhere and travelled to work. Like other small towns, however, Shifnal experienced in the same years the loss of many local facilities, including its cinema, magistrates' court, fire station and cattle market. In part, this was due to the development of Telford, which has had an impact also on Shifnal's retail sector.

### Shifnal Carnival – parade of community floats



- 2.6 There is still some light industry, but Shifnal is no longer a self-contained socio-economic community and has become primarily a dormitory town. Its shops and services meet the everyday requirements of its residents, and it has good schools and sports facilities. Communications by road and railway are excellent. Though not an obvious tourist attraction like Ludlow or Shrewsbury, Shifnal has had a long and interesting history, and much of its past can still be traced in the modern town.
- 2.7 Shifnal has retained the character of a small historic market town, which makes it an attractive place for people to come to live. This character is made up of a combination of physical, economic and social factors. These include a focal, distinctive and recognisable town centre that acts as a community hub for the town. The centre has a core of historic buildings which are clustered

together and of a human scale of design which does not dominate the surroundings. It has a range of small local-needs shops mixed with offices, and residences, and acts as a central meeting place for people and for community events. The town centre is within walking distance of most residential areas, and with all areas of the town being in close proximity to and with access to the surrounding countryside, the town has retained its 'small scale' character.

- 2.8 Shifnal has kept a strong community spirit with traditional events such as the annual Carnival and the Christmas Fair, Carol singing and Lights display. Local businesses support local organisations and events, and the town offers a wide range of leisure facilities including sports clubs, public houses, cafes and restaurants.
- 2.9 There have been a number of recent permissions for large scale residential developments on the outskirts of the town, which together will add some 1,350 dwellings and could increase the population by over 40% (taking 2006 figures as a base). The challenge for the future will be to retain these established characteristics whilst providing the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of this significant growth in the town's population. The community considers that the existing infrastructure is already insufficient to cope with existing demand so, as the town grows, this issue will become more and more critical.

### **Profile of the community today**

- 2.10 A detailed profile is shown in Appendix A. In summary, the key aspects of the profile of Shifnal parish, as they relate to the Neighbourhood Plan, are as follows<sup>1</sup>:
- Shifnal has an ageing population - over 50% were aged 45 or over in Shifnal compared to less than 42% across England. By contrast, it has a lower proportion of children and young people.
  - Shifnal experienced very strong growth in its retirement population (aged 65 and older) whilst also experiencing a decline in its younger population of working age (aged 25 to 44).
  - Shifnal has reasonably high levels of car ownership.
  - Despite the town being well served by rail links to several major employment centres, it does not have a noticeably high proportion of commuters that travel by train. Equally, commuting locally on foot or by bicycle are below the county and national averages.
  - Shifnal has comparatively high levels of social housing coupled with the low qualification levels and a small part of Shifnal town is within the 25% most deprived areas in the country in terms of income, employment and education.

### **Local infrastructure**

- 2.11 As at March 2015, in addition to 178 houses permitted on a planned site off Wolverhampton Road (Phase 1), a number of planning permissions have been granted or resolved to be granted on sites on the outskirts of the town, particularly on land designated as Safeguarded Land (defined in paragraph 4.3). These sites (Haughton Road, Coppice Green Lane, Aston Street, Stanton Road, Wolverhampton Road Phase 2 and the former medical centre site within the Thomas Beddows estate and The Uplands off Wolverhampton Road) are scheduled to provide a further 1,167 dwellings. All these developments together with other infill and windfall sites, will have a major impact on local infrastructure provision and its ability to meet the needs of a significantly expanded town. This was a significant issue raised consistently by the local community in its consultation

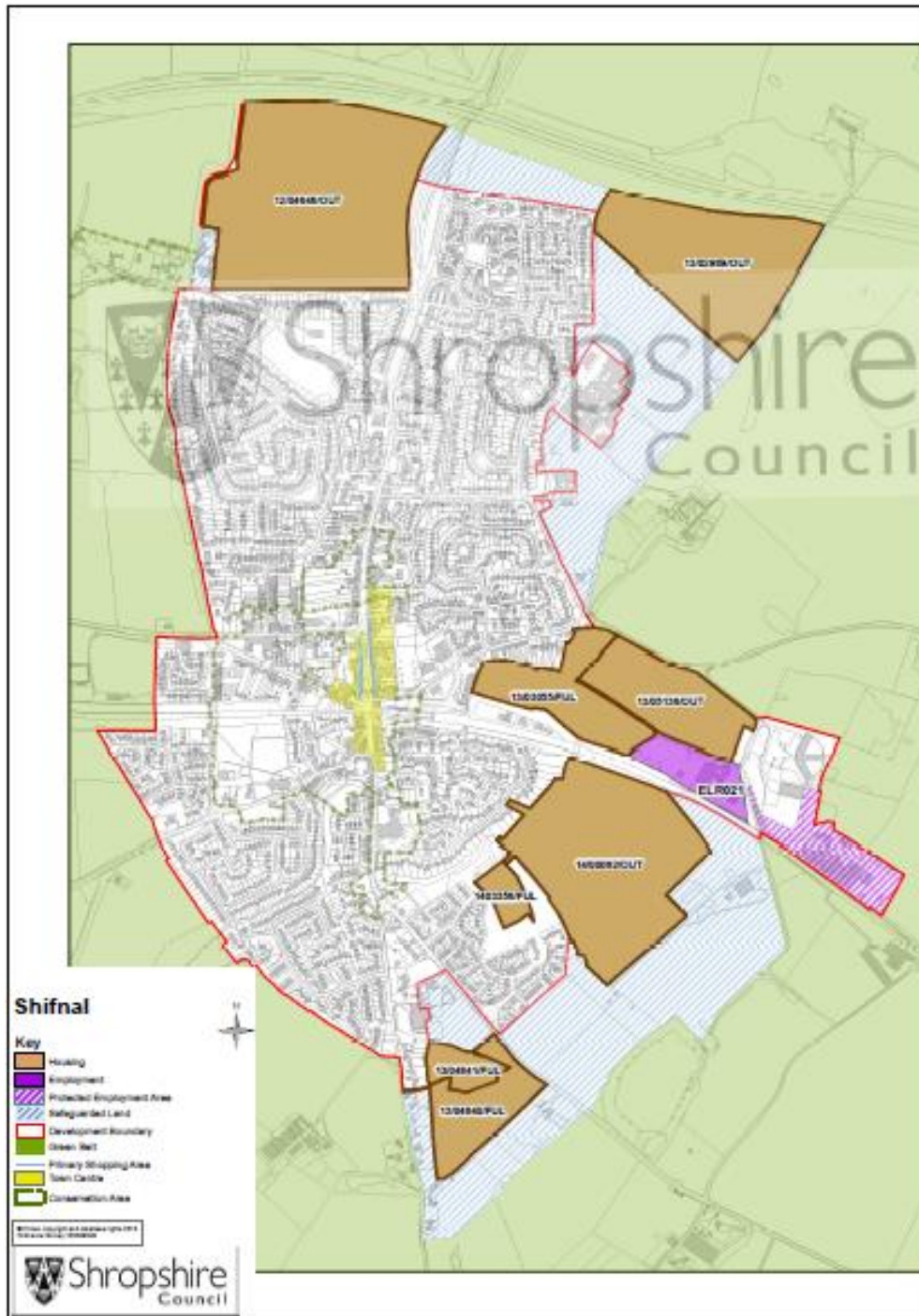
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<sup>1</sup> Source: 2011 Census



response to the Neighbourhood Plan. The development sites and Shropshire Council planning allocations in Shifnal are shown in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Development sites and Shropshire Council planning allocations in Shifnal**



Source: Shropshire Council

2.12 Shropshire Council and Shifnal Town Council have produced a Place Plan for the Town, with the aim of ensuring the delivery of sustainable places. Two particular areas of infrastructure have been identified as being of critical priority for the Town, a new medical centre and highway improvements.



- 2.13 There is an existing GP surgery which is on a small confined site in the centre of the town. The surgery is substandard in terms of health and safety and accessibility for disabled patients. It has limited consulting rooms with no space for additional clinics or diagnostic services to be offered. The site is too small to extend the building and car parking is inadequate for staff and visitors. It is therefore of insufficient size to meet the forthcoming expansion in population from permitted housing developments.
- 2.14 Planning permission has recently been granted for a site for a new replacement health centre as part of a residential development at Haughton Road.
- 2.15 Because of the form and historic growth of the layout of the town, the road layout is basically a radial network from the centre of the town. As well as these roads having to provide access to the town centre, much of the through traffic also has to pass through or close to the centre. This puts pressure on the ability of the road network to accommodate past growth in traffic let alone the significant increase arising from the recently permitted housing schemes on the outskirts of the town.
- 2.16 A transport and movement study has been commissioned by Shropshire Council to assess what improvements to the highway network are required to meet increased traffic demands. As well as meeting additional vehicle movements, improvements will also be required to pedestrian and cycle ways, and an emphasis on reducing reliance on the use of the car.
- 2.17 Additional bus services may also be required to access areas of the town, and in particular new developments, not presently having easy access to such services. For example, better access by bus to the proposed new medical centre site has been identified as a high priority by residents.
- 2.18 The town has a secondary school and two primary schools. The schools at present take pupils not only from the town but also from outside the town. With the expected growth in population of the town, it is intended to reduce the proportion of pupils from outside so that the schools will take primarily Shifnal schoolchildren. However, this will still be insufficient to meet future demand therefore some extension to existing facilities will be required. There are also existing concerns regarding traffic and parking issues outside the schools, which will be exacerbated by the increased demand on the schools.
- 2.19 The town does have a number of sports clubs, leisure facilities and public recreational play areas which contribute to the diversity of community wellbeing and the market town character. However, analysis of recreational provision undertaken by Shropshire Council in 2010<sup>2</sup>, identified Shifnal as one of the most recreationally deficient settlements in Shropshire. The significant increase in population will put more pressure on the amount and type of recreational and leisure facilities available to meet the needs of an expanding town, particularly for young people.
- 2.20 The town has been subject to past flooding with a serious incident in 2007 when 80+ dwellings were flooded. There is also local concern at the ability of drainage systems to meet flows from new developments. The town has set up a Flood Partnership Group to assess these issues, with some support from Shropshire Council and the Environment Agency, and it recommends improvements to systems where considered necessary. It is also important that new developments are designed to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made to reduce flood risk and to avoid adverse impact on flooding or drainage problems for the town.

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<sup>2</sup> PMP (2010) *Shropshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (PPG17)*

## **Local Plan policy**

- 2.21 Local Plan policy consists of the Shropshire Core Strategy, adopted in 2011, which provides high level planning policies and general spatial principles for growth. The Shropshire Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan (SAMDev) provides more detailed policies for each of the settlements, including Shifnal.
- 2.22 A summary of the key policies as they apply to the Neighbourhood Plan area are as follows:

### **Shropshire Core Strategy**

- The Core Strategy states that Market Towns – of which Shifnal is one - should become more sustainable places and will have a distinct identity, be vibrant and accessible.
- Market Towns will maintain and enhance their roles in providing facilities and services to their rural hinterlands and providing foci for economic development and regeneration. Balanced housing and employment development of an appropriate scale and design that respects each town's distinctive character and is supported by improvements in infrastructure will take place within the town's development boundaries and on sites allocated for development.
- Shifnal will have development to meet local needs respecting its location in the Green Belt. No change is proposed to Green Belt boundaries. Some development to meet needs of returning military personnel will be accommodated in the town if required.
- Shifnal is defined as a service centre with an indicative level of housing between 2006 and 2026 of 500-1,000 homes.

### **Shropshire SAMDev**

- The town will have balanced development providing a mix of housing, employment, facilities and services with around 1,250 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment over the period 2006 to 2026.
  - The Primary Shopping Frontages at Bradford Street and Cheapside are protected for retail uses.
  - Land beyond the settlement boundary that is not part of the Green Belt is safeguarded for Shifnal's future development needs beyond the current plan period. Development is restricted in this area.
  - Existing employment land at Lamledge Lane Industrial Estate is reserved as an employment zone for employment uses.
- 2.23 A full list of policies and how they link with Shropshire Council and national planning policy are summarised in Appendix B and expanded upon in the Basic Conditions Statement.

### **3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Challenges for Shifnal**

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Shifnal parish. In summary these challenges are:
- To ensure that the infrastructure of Shifnal town is improved and expanded so that it can address the cumulative impacts of the growth in population that will arise through already-permitted residential developments (in line with SAMDev Policy MD3). In particular this relates to the need for expanded healthcare, education and leisure facilities and highways provision.
  - Ensuring that the community continues to have good access to the surrounding countryside, particularly given the expansion of housing on the edges of Shifnal town.
  - The growing volume of traffic in the town centre, with narrow streets of an old market town and a lack of options for providing expanded parking.
  - The need to protect recreational areas and green spaces of value to the community in order that Shifnal does not become too urbanised.
  - The need to create new recreational areas and green spaces.
  - To bring the vacant and derelict sites and buildings within the town back into positive use, so helping to retain the historic core of the town.
  - To protect existing employment opportunities so that Shifnal does not become solely a commuter town.
  - For Shifnal town centre to continue to be a focal point for the community and a high quality destination for shopping, leisure and tourism, with movement possible by a range of modes, not just the car.

## Vision for Shifnal

3.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Shifnal is as follows:

***'In 2026, Shifnal is still a pleasant place to live. It has grown considerably in size, but good planning which has taken account of the concerns and policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan has meant that its long-established character as a bustling town with an attractive built environment, a distinctive town centre with a range of independent shops and good community facilities has not changed. It has enhanced its role and sustainability as one of Shropshire's historic small market towns.***

***Shifnal has successfully addressed its two key issues. First, a new medical centre with the latest facilities meets the health needs of residents including newcomers to the town and has reduced the need to travel to local hospitals.***

***Secondly, there have been great improvements in traffic management and pedestrian safety. The improvements to bus service infrastructure and the development of walkways and cycle paths into and around the town centre have encouraged people to leave their cars at home. This has reduced congestion and the pressure on the town's car parks, and so has improved the town centre as a place to stop and walk around, and its shops and businesses are thriving in both daytime and evening. This has led to increasing job opportunities for local people.***

***The protection of the character of the town centre, including the actions taken with regard to former derelict and empty shops and buildings, has led to an increase in the number of visitors and tourists coming to the town. Shifnal has become a destination, where people come to walk or cycle in the surrounding attractive countryside and then return to enjoy a drink or meal in the town.***

***Better leisure facilities have been developed, and those green spaces listed in the Neighbourhood Plan because of their recreational and informal leisure value have been retained and improved to meet the needs of all sections of the population, and new green spaces including a Town Park have been provided as part of recent housing developments. Community effort backed by public and private funding has led to the Wesley Brook becoming an attractive feature. The greenbelt and the agricultural land around the town have not been built upon.***

***Some small-scale housing development has taken place on infill sites, but in accordance with the policies in the Plan it has matched the size, scale and character of the existing built environment and has met local housing needs. This has meant that neither younger nor older people need now to move away to find affordable or suitable housing. New car home provision has been made to provide for those in need of dedicated care.***

***There has been an increase in local employment opportunities due to the implementation of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, thereby reducing the need to travel out of the town to work.***

***A strong community spirit continues to exist and new residents have successfully integrated into the town, and this has given everyone the opportunity to participate in and live a healthy, safe and satisfying life.'***

## **Neighbourhood Plan Objectives**

- 3.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

### **Green Belt and the Shifnal Settlement Boundary**

- The existing Green Belt around the town should be retained
- Development should be focused within the settlement boundary of the town

### **Housing**

- The design of any new housing in Shifnal should be in keeping with and improve upon good design in the town, provide varied and interesting frontages and incorporate design features found in the vicinity of the site
- New housing should meet the needs of Shifnal, particularly in respect of providing more smaller dwellings for first-time buyers and older people
- Encourage the provision of additional care home places to meet the needs of older people

### **Transport and Movement**

- The road network should be improved to accommodate the extra local traffic generated by the new housing developments as well as through traffic
- Encourage the provision of and improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes into and around the town to support a more sustainable and safer environment, reduce reliance on the car and offer healthier lifestyle options
- Improve the provision of bus and rail services and infrastructure in order to increase public transport movements
- Adequate public car parking should be provided in the town centre

### **Character and Conservation**

- Any new development should not adversely affect the market town character of Shifnal
- Encourage and support re-use or redevelopment of derelict, unused and vacant sites and buildings to protect and enhance the character of the town

### **Health and Leisure**

- A new health centre should be provided to meet the health needs of existing residents and the new households coming to live in the town
- Better opportunities for leisure should be provided for everyone in the community

### **Environment**

- Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided
- Any new development should seek to reduce flood risk and should not adversely affect drainage and flooding in the town

### **Town Centre and Economy**

- Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract visitors and tourists to the town
- Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town
- Rural farming activities should be protected and encouraged

## 4 GREEN BELT AND THE SHIFNAL SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

**OBJECTIVE:** The existing Green Belt around the town should be retained

**OBJECTIVE:** Development should be focused within the settlement boundary of the town

- 4.1 The Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan area outside the settlement boundary and the safeguarded land is within the West Midlands Green Belt which means that the town itself is completely surrounded by green belt. Shifnal along with Albrighton and Alveley are the only major settlements in Shropshire to be located wholly within the green belt. The Green Belt is tightly drawn on the town's western side to protect the open countryside between Shifnal and Telford. On the northern, eastern and southern sides, a buffer of safeguarded land exists between the town and the Green Belt.

### View from railway viaduct down Victoria Road with green belt beyond



- 4.2 National policy is clear that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances and through a local plan review. The Green Belt boundaries were not reviewed in the 2011 Shropshire Core Strategy, but are due to be considered as part of the review of the Core Strategy by Shropshire Council.
- 4.3 National planning policy (NPPF) states that where necessary plans should identify areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt in order to meet the longer term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period. The NPPF makes it clear that such land

is not allocated for development at the present time. Also that planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a local plan review which proposes the development. In her comments on the SAMDev, the Inspector commented that only development that is not prejudicial to the potential future use of this land to meet Shifnal's longer term development needs would be acceptable.

**An example of development permitted on safeguarded land**



- 4.4 Whilst it accepted that the Green Belt is a matter for Shropshire's approved Core Strategy and SAMDev, responses to the public consultations confirmed that the Green Belt was still an issue of considerable local planning significance. There was overwhelming support expressed for the existing Green Belt boundary to be retained in future to safeguard the character of the town and prevent it joining up with surrounding towns and settlements. 86% of people in the initial consultation responses said it was very important that the existing green belt around the town should continue to be protected. This was confirmed in responses to the Pre-Submission Consultation.
- 4.5 In view of the strength of local opinion, it is proposed to forward these consultee responses onto Shropshire Council to be fully taken into consideration when the Core Strategy review of Green Belt is undertaken.



**POLICY SL1: GREEN BELT, SAFEGUARDED LAND AND SHIFNAL SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY**

The settlement boundary of Shifnal Town is shown on the Proposals Map. Development or redevelopment will be permitted within the settlement boundary subject to the other policies in this plan and those in the Shropshire Local Plan.

Outside the settlement boundary within the Safeguarded Land, only development that is not prejudicial to the potential future use of this land to meet Shifnal's longer term development needs will be supported.

Within the Green Belt development should comply with national policy, Core Strategy Policy CS5 and SAMDev Policy MD6.

## 5 HOUSING

- 5.1 With several large housing sites recently having been granted permission and their impact on infrastructure needing to be assimilated into the town, the Neighbourhood Plan does not consider it appropriate to allocate further sites for housing development. Any new housing development should be restricted to infill development within the settlement boundary of the town.
- 5.2 Two particular issues of concern to the community are the quality of design of new housing, and a need for a greater mix of housing particularly smaller properties to meet the needs of first time buyers and older people.

### Design of residential development

**OBJECTIVE:** The design of any new housing in Shifnal should be in keeping with and improve upon good design in the town, provide varied and interesting frontages and incorporate design features found in the vicinity of the site

- 5.3 Through the engagement on the Neighbourhood Plan, the community has stressed the need for new housing development to be of a high quality that respects the character of the town and is in keeping with its immediate surroundings. The new development off Aston Street has been cited as a good example of new housing with a frontage of varied styles and elevation treatment. On the other hand, development off the Wolverhampton Road at the southern entrance to the Town has been considered to be bland with little variation and presenting a rather uninteresting appearance on such a prominent site. The production of housing design guidance has been suggested as a means of assisting developers in designing new schemes that respect the local distinctiveness of the town.

#### An example of good modern residential development



- 5.4 The aim of this policy is to ensure that housing development:
- respects the character of the area and existing street scene in the vicinity of the site in particular with regard to building heights, external materials and elevation detailing;
  - is of high quality with a varied and interesting appearance;
  - provides good pedestrian and cycle connections with the town and countryside;
  - provides adequate storage for bins and recycling;
  - provides high quality boundary treatment; and
  - provides adequate off-street parking.
- 5.5 Particular local characteristics are a variety in street form and architectural style avoiding frontages or developments of uniform appearance. Materials are predominantly red and red-brown brick with a mix of white/cream render elevations under red, brown and grey roof tiles. There is a mix of elevation detailing including gabled elevations, tile creasing, bay windows, eaves detailing and chimneys.

**An example of established street form and architectural style**



**POLICY HG1: DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Where residential development is permitted in line with Policy SL1 and the development plan, the following criteria are to be met:

- It demonstrates high quality design that is in keeping with the scale and character of buildings and layout in the area;
- It complements the existing external materials in the town;
- It provides variety in house design and elevation treatment;
- It provides high quality boundary treatment;
- It provides good pedestrian and cycle connections to the town and countryside;
- It provides adequate storage for bins and recycling;
- It does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring uses through loss of privacy, loss of light or visual intrusion; and
- Traffic generation and parking does not adversely affect road and pedestrian safety.

**Housing mix**

**OBJECTIVE:** New housing should meet the needs of Shifnal, particularly in respect of providing more smaller dwellings for first-time buyers and older people

- 5.6 Although there is a large amount of housing in the planning pipeline in Shifnal as at mid-2015 which is expected to address the majority of needs over the plan period, there will still be other housing developments that come forward within the settlement boundary of the town. It is considered that this growth should, alongside the growth in the planning pipeline, address the needs of the community of Shifnal.

**Affordable housing need**

- 5.7 The most appropriate guide to the amount of affordable housing required at present in Shifnal is provided by the Shropshire Housing Register.
- 5.8 At August 2015 there was a total of 126 applicants that already live in Shifnal that have expressed a preference for an affordable property in Shifnal parish<sup>3</sup>. Of these, 94% require a small property – either one or two bedrooms.
- 5.9 Shropshire Council identifies the priority band that each applicant on the Housing Register is in. 'Priority' and 'Gold' are those in greatest need and priority is given to these people when new properties become available. Those in the 'Bronze' band are applicants not deemed to be in any form of housing 'need'. If these applicants are excluded, then there are a total of 71 local applicants with a need for an affordable property in Shifnal, with 66 of these requiring a one- or two-bed property.

<sup>3</sup> This is out of a total of 152 households in Shifnal that are on the Housing Register.

### Market housing need

- 5.10 The evidence from the Shifnal survey and engagement events was that the community considers there is a need for a greater number of smaller properties in Shifnal. This is also supported by the Housing Register with those in the 'Bronze' band not considered to be in need but, by virtue of being on the Register, clearly finding it difficult to access housing on the open market. At August 2015, there were up to 55 applicants on the Housing Register that wish to live in Shifnal but have little prospect of securing a social rented or equivalent property.
- 5.11 This is a common trend with, in particular, first-time buyers struggling to access housing at current property prices. In the twelve months to August 2015, the average price of a semi-detached house in the Shifnal postcode area was £178,900<sup>4</sup>. Flats and terraced houses were significantly cheaper but the stock of these is low in Shifnal and, as a general trend across the national housing market, such dwellings are relatively less attractive to housebuilders in non-urban locations when compared to semi-detached or detached houses. Based on a 95% mortgage, a couple would therefore need a combined income of £68,000, or a single person an income of £56,650, to be able to buy a house. Yet evidence from the 2014 Shropshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update Report<sup>5</sup> showed that only 34% of households in Shifnal and the surrounding area were on an average household income of £43,700, which is 57% below the required household income to afford such a property. As the 2014 SHMA Update Report summarises, only 41% of households in Shifnal can afford to buy an entry-level home at today's prices and a large proportion of this figure includes those already on the housing ladder and therefore not interested in such a property.
- 5.12 One aspect of the difficulty for first-time buyers in accessing housing in Shifnal raised by the community is the limited number of small properties when compared to demand. In particular, the limited number of one- and two-bed properties suggests that the supply of such properties needs to be increased.
- 5.13 Equally, the analysis of population change in Shifnal shows that over the period 2001 to 2011, there has been strong growth in retirees or those approaching retirement age. For a lot of these people, the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process has shown that they would like to downsize from large properties to smaller ones that are more easily manageable. This also serves to free up existing family housing which many older people, wishing to stay living in their community but lacking a choice of appropriate smaller properties, feel compelled to stay in at present.
- 5.14 For older people, there is also a need for social rented property. Evidence from the housing register showed that at August 2015, a total of 36 households (29%) were households where the oldest resident was over 60 years of age.
- 5.15 Engagement with the community of Shifnal reinforced the issue of the ageing population and their growing and changing housing needs. This is supported by the evidence with over 20% of the population of the parish being of retirement age.
- 5.16 It is therefore important that the supply of one-and two-bed properties is increased in Shifnal. To achieve this, all developments of five or more dwellings should provide at least 20% of dwellings as one- or two-bed properties. There should also be a mix of one- and two-bed properties (market and affordable) so where a scheme is of sufficient size to require at least five one-or two-bed properties, then at least 40% of these should be one-bed properties.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: [www.zoopla.co.uk](http://www.zoopla.co.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Shropshire Council (2014) *Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update Report, Appendix 3*



5.17 By way of example:

- For a small scheme of 5 units, 2 of these would be one- or two-bed and the applicant could provide these either as solely one- or two-bed properties, or as a mix of one- and two-bed properties, i.e. one of each size.
- For a large scheme of 25 units, the requirement would be to provide 5 one-or two-bed properties, therefore at least 2 of these would have to be one-bed properties.

**An example of existing housing for older people**



- 5.18 In 2015, national planning standards were brought in to ensure that new properties are appropriate for older persons' needs whilst still meaning that they are suitable for other types of occupiers such as first-time buyers. What this means in practice is that 'general needs' housing should be designed to provide, either from the outset or through simple and cost-effective adaptation, design solutions that meet the changing needs of households over time<sup>6</sup>. Examples include doorways wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or stairways that enable the fitting of a stairlift.
- 5.19 The Shropshire Local Plan already provides guidance on the provision of affordable housing in new developments (Core Strategy CS11 and the Council's Interim Guidance on Affordable Housing).

**POLICY HG2: HOUSING MIX**

All housing proposals of five or more units will be expected to deliver at least 20% of these units as one- or two-bed properties.

To reflect the need for a mix of one- and two-bed properties, all schemes which are required, by virtue of their size, to deliver at least five one- and two-bed properties should provide a minimum of 40% of these units as one-bed properties.

An alternative dwelling mix will only be permitted where new evidence is brought forward which clearly demonstrates the need for a different mix.

<sup>6</sup> This was previously addressed by Lifetime Homes standards which were not mandatory

## Care home provision

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage the provision of additional care home places in Shifnal to meet the needs of older people

- 5.20 One of the issues commonly arising from an ageing population profile (such as that in Shifnal) is the need for professional care for the elderly. In Shifnal this was borne out during engagement with the community on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, with many people citing the need for care home provision within the town, alongside homes suitable for the needs of older people.
- 5.21 Whilst the policy of Shropshire Council's Adult Services Department is to support people to remain at home for as long as possible, with admission to a care home as a very last resort, the current provision in Shifnal of a single private residential care home totalling 31 beds has been assessed through the work on Neighbourhood Plan as being insufficient to support the growing population over the plan period.
- 5.22 There is interest in making additional care home provision in Shifnal, with an outstanding planning permission for the provision of extra care facilities at 'The Uplands'. This would comprise 29 self-contained apartments with communal facilities. In addition, there have been proposals for a 60-bed extra care home as part of development at Stanton Road. The development of care homes in these locations is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the other policies in the development plan. However, over the lifetime of the plan there is the potential need for further care home provision. Further provision within Shifnal Town will not only address these needs but will provide new jobs in the town.

### **POLICY HG3: CARE HOME PROVISION**

Proposals for residential care home (use class C2) provision on land at The Uplands and Stanton Road/Lawton Road and other sustainable sites within the settlement boundary will be supported.

## 6 TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

- 6.1 With the population of Shifnal town set to grow through the permitted development of a number of significant housing sites around the edge of the town, traffic and movement around and through the town will be an even greater issue for residents and visitors alike. In particular, the speed and volume of traffic is of concern. Equally, developments outside Shifnal such as Priorslee, Stafford Park and i54 are likely to have impacts because of the economic change they are expected to enable.
- 6.2 Shifnal Town, as a place to shop and spend leisure time, has always been attractive because of the relative ease of access. However, engagement by the community in the Neighbourhood Plan process identified a high level of concern about the extra traffic that will be generated by the new housing developments using roads in the town that are already considered by people to be congested at busy times of the day. The need for adequate parking in the town centre was also raised as of significant concern to residents and retail businesses. Also, the need for better pedestrian and cycleways into and around the town centre were cited as important and the point made that in order to promote social inclusion they should be provided from the new housing estates being developed to link them with key facilities, such as shops, schools, medical and community facilities. Safety of pedestrians and cyclists is seen as an important issue, particularly around 'sensitive' areas such as schools.
- 6.3 The emerging Shifnal Transport and Movement Strategy being prepared by Shropshire Council will be a key strategy for delivering these objectives. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a policy framework to ensure that the strategy can bring forward a package of improvements and changes that not only address the infrastructure needs arising from growth but deliver a positive and sustainable change in the way people move around Shifnal. The changes to be implemented must also address the issue of safety of all users but especially the needs of vulnerable users particularly those of disabled users. Existing footpaths need widening in some places to enable pushchairs and mobility scooters to use them safely, e.g. outside the former Jerningham Arms. More pedestrian crossing points are also important in this respect and the need for these has been raised during the public consultations, e.g. on Park Street, Shrewsbury Road near to the Medical Centre, Victoria Road near the five-ways roundabout and bus stops, Market Place and Broadway.
- 6.4 The Shifnal Transport Strategy will ultimately identify a series of actions addressing wider movement issues across the Neighbourhood Plan area. Proposals to address these action points, either as part of planned developments or individually, will be strongly supported, subject to there having been positive engagement with the community at the earliest stage.

### Highway improvements

**OBJECTIVE:** The road network should be improved to accommodate the extra local traffic generated by the new housing developments as well as through traffic

- 6.5 Significant concern was expressed by the community of Shifnal in respect of the increased traffic on the highway network resulting from all the planned developments. 75% of people responding to the residents questionnaire saying that it was 'very important that the road network should be improved to accommodate the extra traffic generated by the new housing developments'. The comments raised particular concerns about the impact on the town centre highways and key



junctions. The speed of traffic through the town was also highlighted by many residents during the consultations on the plan.

**Traffic congestion at one of the key road junctions in the town centre**



6.6 The provision of improvements to movement at the junctions around Market Place/Bradford Street/Aston Street/Victoria Road/Shrewsbury Road is seen as a key requirement of the Transport Strategy for Shifnal in order that Shifnal town centre remains an attractive service centre that local residents will visit. Failure to provide improvements will result in significant congestion and unsafe movement for non-vehicle users.

**Traffic congestion at one of the key road junctions in the town centre**



6.7 The emerging Shifnal Transport Strategy has identified the need for a solution which reduces congestion at these junctions whilst facilitating increased safe movement by pedestrians and cyclists.

6.8 Whilst the town centre improvements are a priority, the Transport Strategy must also provide a strategy for the whole town, specifically identifying actions at other junctions and roads outside the town centre, particularly the junction of Wolverhampton Road and Upton Lane, where there have been serious accidents. The issue of traffic congestion around the school gates and consequent safety concerns also needs to be addressed. It is important that all of the proposals emerging through the Transport Strategy are actioned and implemented so that there is a comprehensive approach to address movement into and through Shifnal Town and the roads leading out of the town centre and the built-up area into the surrounding countryside.

- 6.9 New development that results in an increase in traffic generation will need to provide a strategy to mitigate traffic impacts and ensure the free and safe flow of traffic and the safety of pedestrians and cycle users.

#### **POLICY TM1: HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

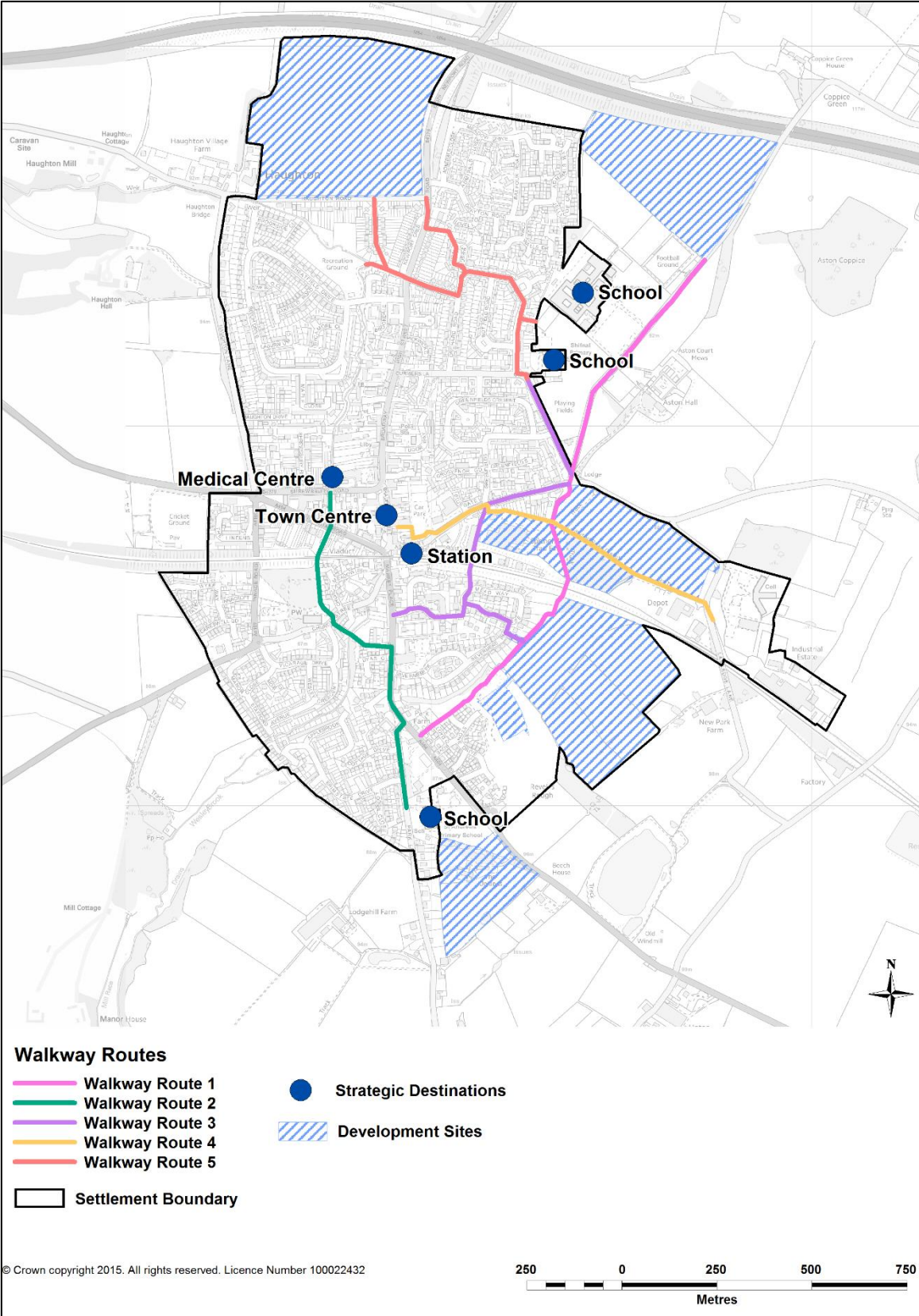
Proposals to improve the flow of traffic and pedestrian safety on highways and at key junctions in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be strongly supported. This is particularly the case in respect of highways and junctions serving Shifnal Town Centre.

## **Walking and cycling**

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage the provision of and improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes into and around the town to support a more sustainable and safer environment, reduce reliance on the car and offer healthier lifestyle options

- 6.10 In terms of trying to positively influence future patterns of movement into and around the town, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to focus on making improvements for pedestrians and cyclists in order to encourage more walking and cycling from all the residential areas. Linking the new housing sites into the network of walkways is vital to encourage more walking and less use of the car but also to connect these areas and their residents to the community of Shifnal. Such improvements have a range of benefits including:
- Providing genuine alternatives to the private car as a means of accessing key shops and services, such as the GP surgery and local schools;
  - Provide health benefits through increased walking and cycling;
  - Facilitating less congestion at busy times by encouraging children walking to and from school and people walking to the station and shops rather than 'jumping in the car' for a short journey;
  - Providing a safer environment for the community of Shifnal, including for vulnerable users.
- 6.11 Access on foot into and around Shifnal town centre and to key facilities such as local schools and Shifnal Railway Station requires improvement to existing walkways as well as the provision of some new walkways and pedestrian crossing points in order to encourage increases in usage. Work by the Shifnal Forward Transport Action Group has identified and mapped the main footpaths and alleyways in Shifnal town. From this, a number of Walkway Routes have been identified that will enable access on foot to these key facilities. These are shown in Figure 6.1. It is vital that these Walkway Routes are improved and that access to them from the new housing developments can be provided.

Figure 6.1: Walkway Routes





**Examples of Walkway Routes new and existing**



- 6.12 The SNPSG has engaged with Shropshire Council Highways Department to develop possible walkway routes that would help mitigate the impact of car use to key destinations within the town. Head teachers from the three schools in the town have held discussions with the Town Council and identified their concerns about safety because of the traffic congestion around the school gates at the start and the end of the school day. They support the policy to encourage more walking to school for those children who live in Shifnal.
- 6.13 Five walkway routes have been identified and are shown on Figure 6.1 and the Proposals Map. At this stage these routes are a draft for consultation as part of the Transport and Movement Strategy for Shifnal. Further action on the walkway routes is included in the table of Non-Policy Actions in Section 11.
- 6.14 The railway line, which is elevated as it crosses the town on an embankment and viaduct, creates a physical barrier across the centre of the town. The walkway routes will enable access under the railway, through existing tunnels, to schools and the town centre for children and families living in the south of the town and the town park for those living in the north of the town. The routes are as follows:
- Walk route 1 (pink) – a new route being established by the developers of the new housing estate, which will enable access from both existing and new housing developments to the south and west of the town to Shifnal Primary School and Idsall School. It also enables access to the proposed new Town Park.
  - Walk route 2 (green) – an existing walkway for residents from the south to access the Medical Centre and those from the north to access St Andrews Primary School in the south.

- Walk route 3 (purple) – uses an existing access to the town centre for residents from the new estate and alternative route to schools in the north. Access from the north to the proposed new Town Park.
  - Walk route 4 (yellow) – from the town centre and the railway station via an existing footpath for employees at the Lamledge Lane Industrial Estate.
  - Walk route 5 (orange) – for the residents of the new housing estate to access the schools via the existing walkways and footpaths.
- 6.15 For any development which does come forward, it will be important that safe footpath access is provided to link in with these walkway routes. Without this, these new developments will be isolated from the footway network and will become car-dependent estates.
- 6.16 Where improvements are needed, contributions will be sought through Section 106 agreements and will be used to part-fund these and lever in match funding from other sources.

#### **POLICY TM2: PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND WALKWAY ROUTES**

To ensure that residents can walk safely to the town centre, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities serving Shifnal town, all new developments should ensure safe pedestrian access to link up with existing footways that, in turn, directly serve the Walkway Routes shown on the Proposals Map or any other Walkway Routes subsequently identified.

Proposals to enhance the identified Walkway Routes and any other Walkway Routes that are subsequently identified will be strongly supported.

Development will be expected to not have an unacceptable impact on Walkway Routes, and provide a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access.

- 6.17 In respect specifically of cycle access, it is proposed that further discussions be held with Sustrans regarding the National Cycle Network Route 81, which goes through the north end of the town. It is proposed that this be re-routed or extended through the town centre, along the Wolverhampton Road and turn into Upton Lane to re-join the main route on Stanton Road. This would encourage more cyclists to come into the town centre and use local cafes and shops. To support this, appropriate bicycle parking facilities need to be provided in the town centre.

#### **POLICY TM3: CYCLE ROUTES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Proposals to extend National Cycle Network Route 81 into Shifnal Town Centre, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be supported.

The provision of cycle parking in Shifnal Town Centre will be supported.

## Public transport provision

**OBJECTIVE:** Improve the provision of bus and rail services and infrastructure in order to increase public transport movements

- 6.18 More than half of the Neighbourhood Plan survey respondents said that bus services in Shifnal needed to be improved. The improvement of bus services is a costly exercise and the levels of growth expected in Shifnal do not provide a mechanism to secure the levels of funding needed to expand routes or the frequency of existing services over a prolonged period. There is, however, a sum of £150,000 available through a section 106 agreement from the planning permission for phase 1 of the Thomas Beddoes development to be used for the provision and enhancement of bus services in the vicinity of the site. Any proposals to improve and extend bus services, either commercial services or community-run schemes, will be strongly supported. This is included as a specific action in the Non-Policy section.



- 6.19 The specific need for new bus shelters for passengers and better information, either in the form of fixed or real time passenger information (RTPI), was identified. RTPI may, in time, be overtaken by smartphone access to bus timing information but for many people this is not appropriate.
- 6.20 Improving the bus infrastructure and services to better link with the rail services is also a key objective in improving public transport options in the town.
- 6.21 The Shifnal Forward Transport Action Group has carried out detailed research into rail use and identified an increase in numbers who are using Shifnal Station in recent years at peak times in both directions. With more people living in the new developments use will increase in the plan



period and discussions are taking place with rail service providers to meet this need longer term. Proposals for additional services have been put forward to the Department for Transport for inclusion in the specification of services from Shifnal for the new franchise to start in 2017. With more people using the station, the infrastructure supporting the Station needs to be improved. The provision of cycle parking facilities will help to encourage the greater use of bicycles by rail commuters to travel to the station.

**Railway Station entrance from town centre**



- 6.22 Whilst travel to the station on foot or by bicycle is desirable, the provision of additional car parking is important to ensure that people can continue to travel by rail. Whilst a site for additional car parking has not yet been identified, support will be given to such provision within short walking distance of the station.

**Inadequate car parking and lack of disabled access at Railway Station**



- 6.23 The need for additional car parking, provision of cycle parking and improvements for access to the station by the disabled are included in the proposals for the new franchise lodged with the Department for Transport. The existing franchise holder is also being asked to make improvements to the station access from the Town Centre and information available at the street level entrance to the station and these will be included in the non-policy actions schedule.

#### **POLICY TM4: RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE**

The provision of additional cycle and car parking to specifically serve Shifnal Railway Station will be strongly supported.

As part of any improvements to Shifnal Railway Station, the provision of improved disabled access will be strongly supported.

### **Car parking**

**OBJECTIVE:** Adequate public car parking should be provided in the town centre

- 6.24 The issue of car parking, and particularly the availability of parking spaces in the town centre, was an important one raised by the community. 77% of people in the consultation said this was very important. Provision of new car parking requires significant amounts of land and in a historic town centre such as Shifnal, this is not possible. Shifnal has seen a lot of smaller development sites in and around the town centre being taken up over the last decade, so there is little or no option for additional car-parks serving the town centre. What the plan does do therefore is to look to retain, manage and improve the quality of the existing car parking areas that are available in the town centre. This is important for the continued economic prosperity of the Town centre as well as the convenience of residents. Benchmarking undertaken by Action for Market Towns in 2012/13<sup>7</sup> showed that car park vacancy rates for Shifnal were well below the regional and national averages as well as the average for a market town of the same type as Shifnal. However, since this time it has been observed that car parking has increased and now there are rarely many available spaces in the car parks at peak times. With the planned increase in housing, demand for parking is expected to increase, even allowing for more journeys to the town centre being made on foot or by bicycle.

<sup>7</sup> Action for Market Towns (2013) *Market Town Benchmarking: Measuring the performance of Town Centres - Shifnal*



**Main Town Centre car park (Aston Street)**

- 6.25 The fact that there is little or no option for new car parks supports the policy of developing walkway routes from the housing areas into the town, including access to the station. This is reinforced by the fact that the Benchmarking Study found that nearly half of all people coming to the Town Centre did so on foot. Encouraging and promoting travel to the Town Centre by alternatives to the private car is an important ongoing action to ensure that there are sufficient parking spaces for visitors. A scheme to offer local employees, who may park all day in the town centre car parks, to park elsewhere in the town has been raised as a possible option to explore and has been noted in the non-policy actions schedule.
- 6.26 The railway station was highlighted by the community in the consultation as an asset to the town but an important factor affecting the amount of parking needed in Shifnal. Parking at the station is limited and oversubscribed on a daily basis and is leading to parking along the access road to the station. It may also be encouraging rail commuters to use the free parking at the 'shoppers' car park off Aston Street.

**POLICY TM5: CAR PARKING IN SHIFNAL TOWN CENTRE**

There will be a presumption against the loss of publicly accessible car parking in Shifnal Town Centre. Any proposals that would result in the loss of existing publicly available car parking spaces must provide at least an equivalent number of spaces in an equivalent location that serves the town centre.

## 7 CHARACTER AND CONSERVATION

**OBJECTIVE:** Any new development should not adversely affect the market town character of Shifnal

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage and support re-use or redevelopment of derelict, unused and vacant sites and buildings to protect and enhance the character of the town

- 7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area has 82 listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments, of which two are Grade I listed – the Church of St Andrew and the chest tomb south of the chapel of the church. The remainder are Grade II listed, and of these just over half are within the built up area of Shifnal town. In addition, the central area of the town is designated as a conservation area.

### Examples of historic buildings in the Conservation Area



- 7.2 The conservation area and the listed buildings, together with some other older non-listed buildings which are of local historical importance, contribute greatly to the character of the town and give a focus to the town centre. There is legislation and national and local planning policies that seek to protect the character of conservation areas and listed buildings from inappropriate development. However, the local community, in its responses to consultation, has commented that there are some sites and buildings where their existing poor or derelict condition detracts from the appearance of the area. This has been reinforced by similar comments made by town centre businesses.
- 7.3 There are a number of buildings in the town centre which have been empty for some years. These include the former tuck-shop in Market Place, the former workshops in Shrewsbury Road, the former 'Nell Gwyn' pub/restaurant in Market Place, a number of empty houses in Shrewsbury Road, the house adjacent to Williams's timber yard and the former solicitors' offices in Victoria Road. These empty buildings need to be brought back into use to ensure they are maintained in good condition and do not detract from the appearance of the town and its attractiveness for residents as well as visitors and tourists as at present. Owners of independent shops in the town have highlighted that there is a demand in Shifnal, from enquiries to them, for additional retail space that some of these premises could provide.

**Examples of derelict/unused buildings in Town Centre**



- 7.4 The most obvious derelict building is the former Baptist Chapel/Magistrates' Court on Shrewsbury Road which is in public ownership. However, action is now being taken by the Town Council to bring this site back into use. This will not only improve the appearance and character of this frontage within the conservation area, but may also act as a catalyst to encourage private owners of sites and buildings that have become eyesores to take action to improve the appearance of their properties and/or to bring empty or derelict properties back into use.

**Examples of derelict/unused buildings in Town Centre**



- 7.5 The railway arches in Aston Street front onto one of the busiest entrances into the town and are used as workshops by small businesses. These are useful as employment-generating spaces, but are very unattractive at present and need to be refurbished as they detract from the appearance of the town centre.
- 7.6 The Plan seeks to encourage owners of such sites and buildings to bring them into use, to improve their appearance for the benefit of the area as a whole and so enhance the attraction of the town to tourists and visitors. Whilst owners cannot be compelled to take action, a proactive approach in engaging the community and other stakeholders such as Shifnal Town Council will assist in levering in funding which could unlock such sites for development. Examples of such funds include the Heritage Lottery or Historic England funding for historic buildings.
- 7.7 A wider non-policy action is for a study of derelict sites to be undertaken and to engage with the landowners of these sites to explore possible opportunities for their reuse or redevelopment.

**POLICY CH1: DERELICT AND EMPTY BUILDINGS**

Proposals for re-use or re-development of derelict or empty buildings in the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the character of the conservation area is not harmed by the proposed development; and
- the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours, including the impact of increased on-street parking.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.



## 8 HEALTH AND LEISURE

### Health provision

**OBJECTIVE:** A new health centre should be provided to meet the health needs of existing residents and the new households coming to live in the town

- 8.1 A new primary healthcare centre is required to support the increasing population in Shifnal. As explained in Section 2, the current health centre on Shrewsbury Road is unable to expand in its current location. The community identified this as their highest priority in the Neighbourhood Plan survey work – 83% of respondents considered this to be 'very important'.

#### Current Medical Practice premises in Shrewsbury Road



- 8.2 In the Shifnal Place Plan this need is identified as a critical item. It is proposed to be delivered as part of the outline planning permission for 400 dwellings at Haughton Road. This is proposed to be on land at the corner of Haughton Road and Newport Road. It is considered important that there is a policy reflecting this need and opportunity in the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **POLICY HL1: NEW MEDICAL FACILITY, LAND AT CORNER OF HAUGHTON ROAD/NEWPORT ROAD**

As shown on the Proposals Map, land at Haughton Road is allocated for the provision of a medical centre.

Proposals to build a new medical centre on this site will be strongly supported.

## Leisure provision

**OBJECTIVE:** Better opportunities for leisure should be provided for everyone in the community

**OBJECTIVE:** Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided

- 8.3 There will be considerable growth in the population over the early part of the plan period as a result of the number of large developments that have been granted planning permission on sites around the edge of Shifnal town. As a result, there will be considerable additional demand for leisure activities and this is an issue that has been raised by the community. An analysis of recreation provision undertaken by Shropshire Council in 2010<sup>8</sup> identified Shifnal as one of the most recreationally deficient settlements in Shropshire.
- 8.4 The town supports a number of sports clubs including football, cricket, bowls and tennis with both adult and junior sections. The existing playing fields on Coppice Green Lane, attached to Idsall School and Shifnal Primary School, are easy to access and used by local junior and adult football clubs; however, the number of playing fields is limited with increasing demand putting pressure on usage of these areas. To support a sustainable town and easy accessibility to facilities, it is considered essential to ensure that existing facilities are retained for sporting and recreational use and to support new facilities on suitable sites, to meet the needs of the expanding town.

### Wheatfield Drive Recreation Area / football pitches on Coppice Green Lane



- 8.5 Existing public play facilities are provided at Wheatfield Drive, Jubilee Park and Curriers Lane. Again it is important that these are retained for such use and that appropriate and accessible play areas are provided and subsequently maintained for such use on new developments.
- 8.6 The community considers that a Town Park should be provided and negotiations are progressing for the provision of such a facility as part of new development in the south of the town. Responses from young people also referred to the provision of a nature area, perhaps as part of the Town Park. It is important that the community is engaged in the development of the layout for the Town Park to ensure that the design of the park reflects their wishes.

<sup>8</sup> PMP (2010) *Shropshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (PPG17)*



- 8.7 In addition, there is a new proposal to provide a linear green park running through the town. This will include seating and fitness elements and information about the history of the town. This is included in the Non-Policy Actions in section 11.
- 8.8 There is a demand for allotments and outline permission has been granted for an additional site adjoining the motorway. Similarly, community interest in the provision of a swimming pool has led to outline permission for a site in the same location, although funding has not yet been secured.
- 8.9 Consultation responses have specifically mentioned the need for additional leisure facilities for young people, including a multi-use games area (MUGA) and youth shelters.

#### **POLICY LE1: EXISTING LEISURE USES**

Proposals that would result in the loss of leisure facilities will only be permitted if alternative and equivalent leisure facilities are provided.

Alternative leisure provision will be required to meet the following criteria:

- the scale of the alternative provision must be at least of an equivalent scale to the existing provision; and
- the alternative site must be at least of equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing provision; and
- the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

On safeguarded land outside the settlement boundary, proposals must be able to demonstrate that they are not prejudicial to the potential future use of this land to meet Shifnal's longer term development needs.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.

This policy does not apply to the local green spaces identified in Policy EN1.

#### **POLICY LE2: PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL LEISURE USES**

Proposals to provide new leisure facilities to serve the community of Shifnal town will be strongly supported. These proposals must be of a scale commensurate with the site and its surroundings, particularly in terms of the built form, traffic generation and parking.

The location of the new facilities must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

On safeguarded land outside the settlement boundary, proposals must be able to demonstrate that they are not prejudicial to the potential future use of this land to meet Shifnal's longer term development needs.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.

**POLICY LE3: SHIFNAL TOWN PARK**

As shown on the Proposals Map, land in the centre of the new housing development (Thomas Beddoes Phase 2) is allocated for the provision of a town park. It is expected that such provision will address the following:

- the provision of a range of access points for pedestrians and cyclists, with routes through the park; and
- the potential to create a nature reserve as part of the park; and
- play facilities for children.

## 9 ENVIRONMENT

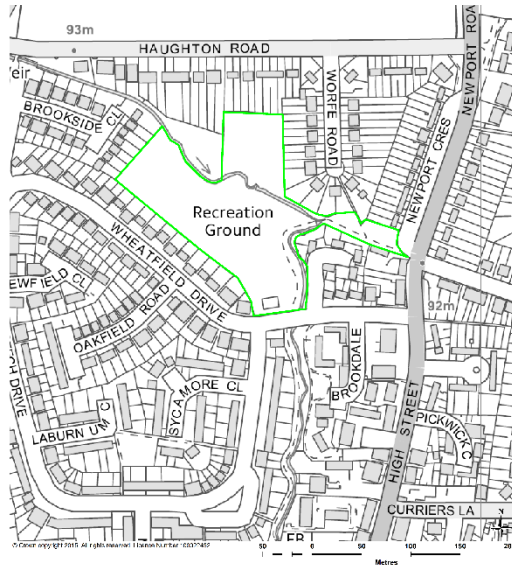
- 9.1 A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to retain the features that make Shifnal an attractive market town and, where possible, to enhance the environment of the town.
- 9.2 In particular, the need to preserve the identity of Shifnal is seen as important, with part of this being the need to retain its green areas. These green areas help to retain the feel of a rural market town.

### Local Green Spaces

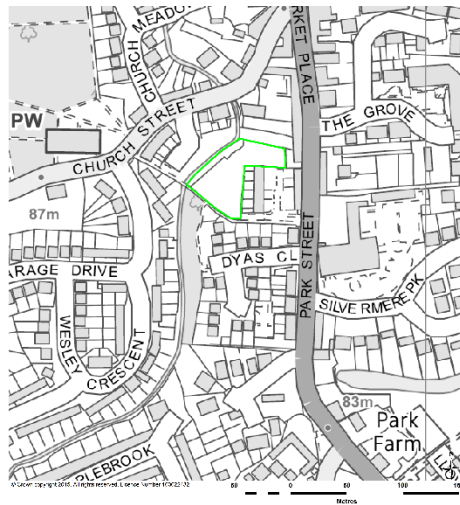
**OBJECTIVE:** Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided

- 9.3 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF says that Local Green Spaces should only be designated:
- *"where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
  - *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
  - *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*
- 9.4 At the public consultation event on the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies there was very strong support, with 87% agreeing with the policy designating various areas in Shifnal as Local Green Spaces, meaning they are of special significance and value to the local community. The following areas have been identified by the community as being of value to them and in need of protection:

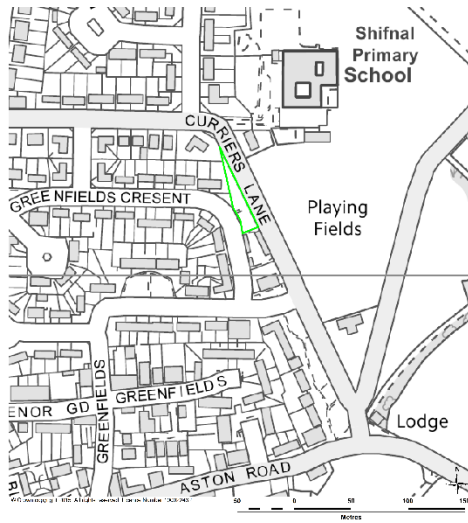
**1. Wheatfield Drive Recreation Area**



**2. Jubilee Park Play Area**



**3. Curriers Lane Play Area**



9.5 All of these recreation areas are maintained by the Town Council who have a programme of investment to upgrade the play equipment for the young people. Curriers Lane and Jubilee Park have been completed and have been well received by the community with even greater usage of these popular play areas within the existing residential areas. A multi-use goal post facility has recently been installed in Wheatfield Drive. This is also a popular area of significant green space bordered on one side with a walkway along the Wesley Brook. There are aspirations to extend the walkway along the Brook through the town if funding can be found to support the project.

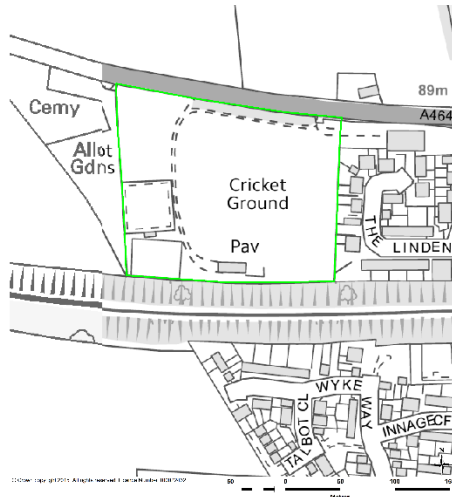
**4. Idsall School and Shifnal County Primary School Playing Fields, Coppice Green Lane**





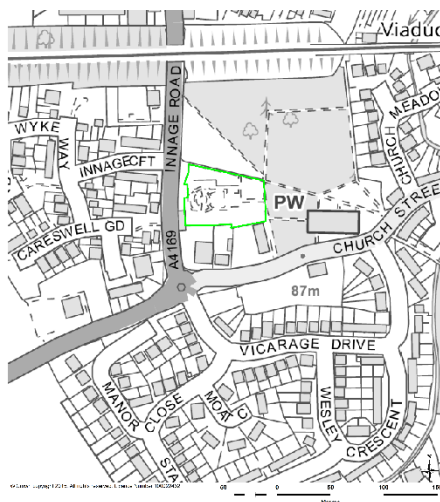
- 9.6 This is attached to the grounds of the Idsall School and Shifnal County Primary School and is managed through the Idsall Sports Centre on the same site. All of the eight pitches are used out of school hours for training and league games by a number of local football clubs, comprising three adult teams, four junior clubs with teams in each age group. The pitches are also used for some county cup matches, referees course, and Shifnal Harriers hold a two-day annual football tournament during the summer. The playing fields are often used informally in the evenings and at weekends by local people, particularly young people, to play informal games of football.

**5. Cricket Ground, off Priorslee Road**

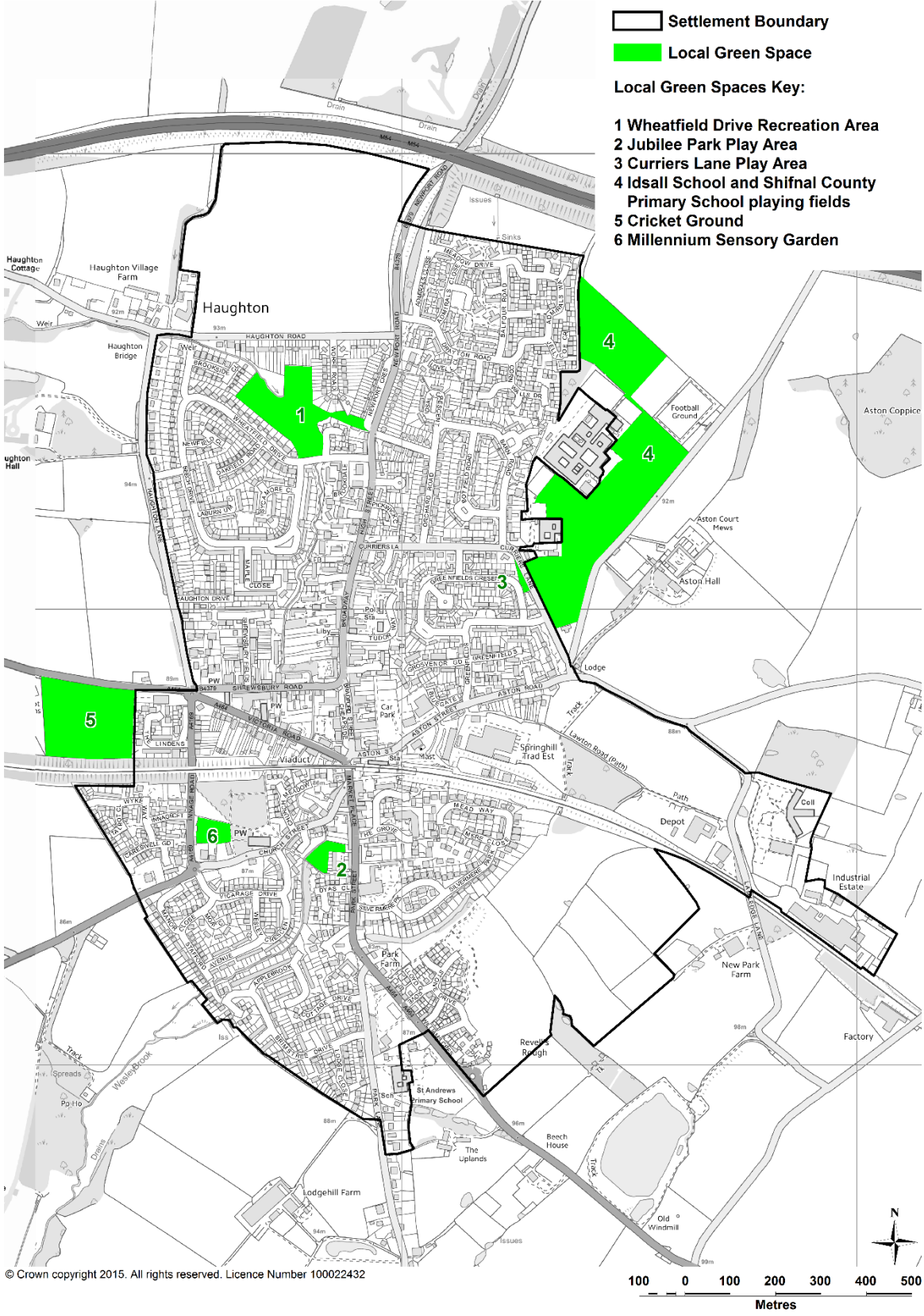


- 9.7 This includes the cricket pitch, tennis courts and a crown bowling green. It constitutes a large, prominent and attractive open green area that is not only used by the local community for a number of different sports but, although private ground, allows local people access to walk around the ground and enjoy its green openness and provides an annual fireworks display that has become an important local community attraction. The cricket club plays in local leagues at the junior and senior levels and the tennis club has teams in the Shropshire summer and autumn leagues and a strong junior section.

**6. Millennium Sensory Garden**



9.8 This is adjacent to the church grounds and is maintained by volunteers. It is a peaceful haven that people can go and enjoy and sit in and is valued by the local community.



- 9.9 Development on these designations will only be permitted in order to enhance their function. An example could include improvements to changing room facilities at the sports pitches or enhancement of the play area. In making a judgement, the expectation is that the amount of development should only take up a small minority of the land area and that it should be ancillary to the function of the local green space in question.

#### **POLICY EN1: PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

The following areas and as shown on the Proposals Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Wheatfield Drive Recreation Area
2. Jubilee Park Play Area
3. Curriers Lane Play Area
4. Idsall School and Shifnal County Primary School Playing Fields, Coppice Green Lane
5. Cricket ground, off Priorslee Road
6. Millennium Sensory Garden

Proposals for development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space.

### **Loss of public open space**

**OBJECTIVE:** Existing parks, play areas, playing fields and open spaces should be retained and additional open space areas provided

- 9.10 Policy LE3 proposes a new town park to serve Shifnal. However, there are many other public open spaces which break up the urban fabric and give Shifnal a green 'feel' within the settlement boundary. It is important that such spaces are retained, particularly given the increase in population within the town that will be using such spaces. The loss of such spaces will only be permitted if appropriate re-provision is made of suitable quality and in an appropriate location.

**POLICY EN2: LOSS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

Proposals that would result in the loss of public open space will not be permitted unless alternative and equivalent public open space is provided.

Alternative public open space provision proposed as part of such development proposals will be required to meet the following criteria:

- the scale of the alternative provision must be of an equivalent scale to the existing public open space provision; and
- the alternative site must be of at least an equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing public open space provision; and
- the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

Outside the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town, Policy SL1 will apply.

## Flooding and drainage

**OBJECTIVE:** Any new development should seek to reduce flood risk and should not adversely affect drainage and flooding in the town

- 9.11 A significant number of properties were affected by flooding in the town in 2007. A Shifnal Flood Partnership Group has been set up to consider actions necessary to protect these and other properties from future flooding and to consider the impact of new developments on flood risk and flooding and drainage issues affecting the town.
- 9.12 There is around £500,000 of Government and Environment Agency grants available for schemes that would improve the protection from flooding of those properties affected in the 2007 flood. Shropshire Council, the Environment Agency and the Shifnal Flood Partnership Group are together preparing schemes in order to submit applications for accessing these grants. The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals that would improve flood protection measures for these properties and also any other schemes that would help reduce flood risk within the town.
- 9.13 To ensure that flooding and drainage matters are not made worse in the future, it is essential that any new development fully takes into account its possible impact on flooding and drainage issues not only within the site itself but its off-site effects within the town and surrounding areas. Development schemes will need to ensure that they provide proposals and supporting evidence to ensure that any drainage from the site and proposed development, will not increase the flood risk of properties in the town and surrounding areas and in accordance with national and Core Strategy policies, should aim to integrate measures to reduce flood risk. In particular, the creation of new culverts will not be viewed favourably as it is consistently observed that developments which do so serve to increase the prospects of localised flooding. Where flood management pools are proposed, appropriate safety measures should be provided.
- 9.14 In light of the ongoing work of the Shifnal Flood Partnership Group, it will be important that developers engage with the Group as well as the statutory bodies at pre-application stage so that any proposed solutions are jointly agreed

**POLICY EN3: FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT**

1. Development proposals will be expected to:
  - be designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of flood risk within the parish; and
  - provide appropriate surface water drainage; and
  - open existing culverts where practicable.
2. Development will not be permitted in flood risk areas where that development would reduce the ability of these areas to alleviate flooding.
3. Proposals will need to demonstrate that development has avoided the loss of open water courses through culverting with existing culverted sections opened up where viable.
4. Any new development must have adequate receiving surface water drainage, i.e. drains, culverts and definable water courses, under Environment Agency and Local Authority control.
5. Any new development must ensure that appropriate measures are secured to ensure the adoption and ongoing maintenance of any flood prevention measures.



## 10 TOWN CENTRE AND ECONOMY

### Shifnal Town Centre

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract visitors and tourists to the town

- 10.1 The Town Centre is a vital asset to economy and the community of Shifnal. Benchmarking undertaken by Action for Market Towns in 2012/13<sup>9</sup> showed that the mix of retail uses in Shifnal Town Centre was very much in line with national averages in terms of the split of convenience and comparison retail. Vacancies are below the national average. 93% of people that come to Shifnal Town Centre do so more than once a week which is well above national averages. Shifnal Town Centre is thriving and it is important that it continues to do so.
- 10.2 The town centre highway improvements supported in Policy TM1 will also help to bring wider economic and social benefits as the town centre will be a more attractive place to shop and spend leisure time. This will ultimately increase footfall and overall spending.

#### Town Centre with Farmers Market



<sup>9</sup> Action for Market Towns (2013) *Market Town Benchmarking: Measuring the performance of Town Centres - Shifnal*

- 10.3 The boundaries of Shifnal Town Centre are defined in the Shropshire SAMDev and shown on the Proposals Map. Policy CS15 of the Shropshire Core Strategy states that town centres are the preferred location for new retail, office and other town centre uses. Development will be encouraged to:
- Support a balanced approach to the planned level of housing and employment growth for each town;
  - Support improvements to the accessibility of town centres, including from surrounding rural areas;
  - Positively contribute to the delivery of wider investment, regeneration and town centre management strategies;
  - Positively contribute to the mix and diversity of uses within town centres, without undermining their primary retail function;
  - Support the appropriate re-use or regeneration of land and premises.
- 10.4 The policy focus is therefore on protecting and promoting uses that are most appropriately located within a town centre.

### **Primary shopping area**

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract visitors and tourists to the town

- 10.5 The retail area within Shifnal town is a vital part of the local economy. For Shifnal to continue to prosper as a market town, it is vital for it to have a thriving town centre which is visited regularly by residents and visitors to Shifnal alike. In order to achieve this, Shifnal needs to be capable of adapting to changing retail and service needs; in short, Shifnal town centre needs to provide the shops and services that people want in an attractive environment. Whilst the planning system cannot prevent shops from closing, it can ensure that if this happens then they are replaced by new businesses which are appropriate for the retail core of a town centre. Policy EC1 below focusses on achieving this outcome. It reinforces the protection provided by Policy MD10 in the SAMDev Development Management DPD and assists in ensuring that non-Class A uses would not dominate or detract from the core objective of providing retail outlets for the shopper.
- 10.6 The Proposals Map shows the primary shopping area of Shifnal. This is the area which should be protected against uses that are inappropriate for a high street. The SAMDev identifies this as comprising Bradford Street and Cheapside. However, in consultation with the community, it has been established that both sides of Victoria Road and Market Place, as well as the west side of Church Street, also form part of what shoppers consider to be the primary area for shopping. Policy EC1 therefore extends the area to include these streets. The shops are considered to be as valuable to the overall offer as the more centrally located units because they are busy and their loss would be detrimental to the vitality of the town centre. In addition, there are regular enquiries regarding the availability of shop units in Shifnal and so the loss of such units would reduce the potential to accommodate new retailers and thereby strengthen the offer of the town centre.

**POLICY EC1: PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA**

In the Primary Shopping Area of Shifnal town centre, as defined on the Proposals Map, there will be a presumption in favour of retail proposals and a presumption against changes of use away from use classes A1 (shops), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) and A4 (Drinking Establishments). This relates to proposals that sit outside of permitted development rights.

**Shopfront design**

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract visitors and tourists to the town

10.7 The importance of improving the environment of Shifnal Town Centre was raised by many members of the community. One particular issue was the quality of signage of the shops in the primary shopping area. The signage and illumination of certain existing shopfronts serves to detract from the overall quality of environment. It is therefore important to ensure that new shopfront signage, as far as is possible, conforms to certain requirements. Flush-fitted signs (as opposed to those mounted at a 90-degree angle) will be preferred.

10.8 Some examples of good and attractive shop front design are shown below.

**Examples of good shopfront design**



**POLICY EC2: SHOPFRONT SIGNAGE WITHIN THE PRIMARY SHOPPING AREA**

Proposals for shopfront signage within the primary shopping area should be in sympathy with the upper storeys of the building and adjoining facades.

The use of traditional materials such as timber with sign-written titles rather than plastic, externally illuminated signs will be supported.

**Tourism**

**OBJECTIVE:** Provide for and enhance existing facilities and support initiatives to attract visitors and tourists to the town

- 10.9 In November 2014, Shifnal Town Council adopted a Tourism Strategy and Action Plan which was written by the Shifnal Forward Economy and Tourism Action Group<sup>10</sup>. The aim of the Plan was to boost the development of the visitor economy in the town and surrounding area through encouraging both residents and visitors to appreciate its heritage and its wide range of retail businesses, thereby stimulating the local retail and leisure economy and creating additional employment.
- 10.10 It is important that this is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan which recognises the potential for tourism in Shifnal and has an objective of attracting visitors to the town.
- 10.11 The Tourism Strategy and Action Plan set objectives which are to be delivered in partnership with public, voluntary and private organisations. It is recognised that meeting some of these objectives will require financial outlay, and adoption of the Plan will facilitate applications to appropriate funding bodies.

**POLICY EC3: VISITOR AND TOURIST ECONOMY**

Development proposals that will improve the local visitor and tourist economy will be supported.

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<sup>10</sup> Shifnal Forward (2014) *Shifnal Tourism Strategy and Action Plan*, Shifnal Tourism Group



## Protection of existing employment premises or land

**OBJECTIVE:** Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town

- 10.12 The community of Shifnal – both residents and existing businesses – consider that the local economy of Shifnal is very important and should not be neglected. The danger of Shifnal becoming simply a commuter town is clear – currently over half the working population leaves Shifnal every morning to work elsewhere<sup>11</sup>.
- 10.13 Clearly any strategy needs to recognise that this is partly a function of Shifnal’s strong road and rail links. Equally though, there is an important balance that the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve. It wishes to encourage the growth of appropriate employment activities which create jobs for local people. This will be achieved by protecting existing employment premises from change of use or redevelopment where the existing businesses are of demonstrable benefit to the community.

### Existing employment premises at Lamledge Lane



- 10.14 Shifnal has a small but significant business base and it is important that this is protected.
- 10.15 Without adequate protection, such employment premises will then be lost. Away from Shifnal there are limited employment opportunities in the surrounding rural area and the large proportion of employment opportunities are further afield in Shrewsbury, Telford and the wider West Midlands conurbation. Whilst there are opportunities to commute by rail, inevitably the majority of people working away from Shifnal will do so by car. The retention of and support for new local employment will not only provide greater prospects for local people to access jobs but will ensure that these are sustainable in terms of the patterns of travelling to work that they generate.

<sup>11</sup> Source: 2011 Census (Datashine, University College London)



- 10.16 The Neighbourhood Plan considers that it is important to protect the stock of existing employment property in the parish. To do so, it is necessary to restrict the redevelopment or conversion of existing commercial premises (A- and B-class uses) for non-commercial purposes.

#### **POLICY EC4: PROTECTION OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT PREMISES OR LAND**

There will be a presumption against the loss of employment premises or land which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- the employment premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
- the employment premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses, as demonstrated through the results both of a full viability report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 12 months.

### **New employment opportunities**

**OBJECTIVE:** Existing employment land should be retained and new employment opportunities encouraged within the town

- 10.17 The Shropshire SAMDev has already allocated land for new employment opportunities in Shifnal, at the Lamledge Lane Employment Zone. This creates the focus and opportunity for development of B-class employment opportunities over the plan period. However, at present the market for B-class employment uses is considered to be weak in Shifnal. The viability of delivering new B-class employment space is limited and there is also a surplus of employment space, particularly offices, in more commercially attractive locations such as Telford.
- 10.18 It is therefore considered that a more flexible approach is taken to encouraging employment-generation uses on allocated employment land. Uses that create jobs which are appropriate for a location on the edge of the settlement will be encouraged. This distinction is important because, for example, the Lamledge Lane Employment Zone is not considered appropriate for retail uses because this would detract from the town centre and its retail facilities.
- 10.19 It is also considered that, in order to grow medium- and larger-sized businesses, then it is necessary to nurture small businesses. Nationally there has been strong growth in self-employment and this has been mirrored in Shifnal. Not all of these businesses will require employment space, as many people will work from home. However, for some small businesses, the ability to access workspace on flexible, 'easy-in, easy-out' terms helps to provide the foundation to grow a business. The analysis in Appendix A shows that Shifnal has a well-qualified workforce and this foundation creates the potential for new businesses to be started up by local residents who are keen to also work locally.

**Existing premises for small-scale businesses, Victoria Road**



10.20 Strong support will therefore be given to the provision of small-scale businesses premises, ideally on flexible rental terms.

**POLICY EC5: SMALL-SCALE EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT**

Development proposals to provide small-scale B-class employment opportunities will be supported. This could either be through the following:

- conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to the impact of provision on the highway network and parking and subject to it being an appropriate use within the Green Belt (where applicable); or
- provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within the settlement boundary of Shifnal Town.

**Rural economy**

**OBJECTIVE:** Rural farming activities should be protected and encouraged

10.21 Whilst the focus of employment is in Shifnal town, there is a significant rural economy in the rural hinterland of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Agricultural activities on the farmland in the area creates significant value for the local economy as well as providing a valuable source of food supply. Part of the reason for this is that much of the farmland around Shifnal is of high quality.

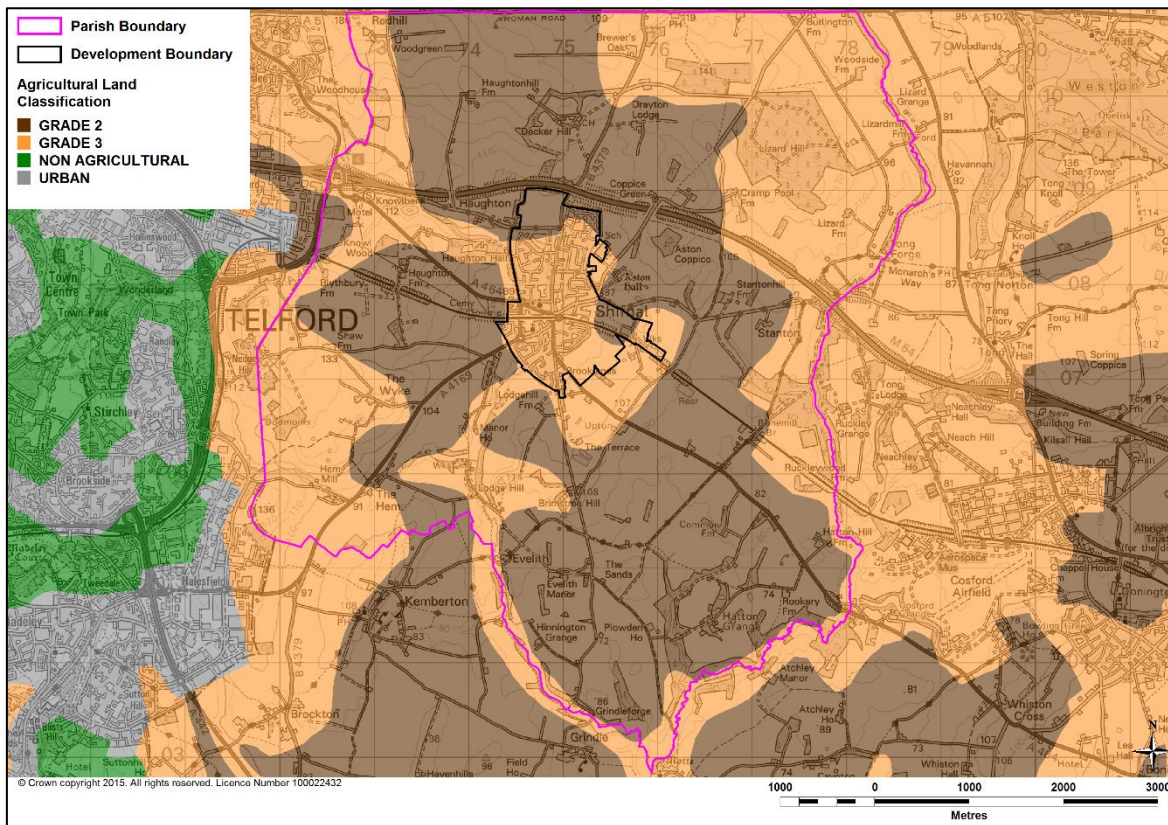
**Examples of farmland around Shifnal town**



10.22 Continued support for these rural farming activities is therefore given, provided they do not conflict with the purposes of the green belt. In addition, the plan seeks to reinforce the protection of high quality agricultural land. This is supported by national planning policy; paragraph 112 of the NPPF states:

*"Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality."*

**Figure 10.1: Agricultural Land Classification**



Source: Shropshire Council

10.23 Figure 10.1 shows that all the non-urban land in the Neighbourhood Plan area is either Grade 2 or Grade 3. 'Best and most versatile agricultural land' is classified as Grades 1 to 3a, so all of the Grade 2 land is of high quality and it is possible that the Grade 3 land is as well, provided it is Grade 3a.

**POLICY EC6: RURAL COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND AGRICULTURAL LAND**

Support will be given for proposals that strengthen the rural economy. It is important that any such proposals represent appropriate development in the countryside and do not conflict with the purposes of the green belt.

Planning permission will not normally be permitted for development on grade 1 and grade 2 agricultural land unless:

- it is for the purpose of improving the agricultural activities already being undertaken on the land; and
- it represents a small scale development that is required for the continuation of agricultural activities.



## 11 NON POLICY ACTIONS

**Table 11.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed**

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
<b>Housing</b>		
Need to provide developers with housing design guidance to ensure new schemes retain a local distinctiveness	Prepare housing design guide for Shifnal	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Forward
<b>Transport and Movement</b>		
Management of car parking.	A review of car park users needs to be carried out and options for a managed approach to be drawn up. This may include introduction of charges to ensure spaces are available for shoppers and visitors. May also include discussions on viability of using edge of town car parks for longer stay daytime parking.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Forward, in consultation with Shifnal Business Forum and the Chamber of Trade.
Key junctions outside the town centre that need to be addressed to manage the safe movement of traffic	The following junctions have been identified as hazardous by residents - Upton Lane/Wolverhampton Road, the A5/Sherrifhales crossroads, Aston Street car park exit and Station Drive junction with Aston Street. 5-Ways roundabout is very congested, esp. at peak times. Appropriate measures need to be designed and implemented as danger will increase with the volume of traffic using these junctions.	Shropshire Council Highways/Residential developers/Shifnal Forward
High number of HGVs through town	Consider effects of HGV ban which would reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety	Shifnal Town Council/ Shropshire Council in consultation with the Business Forum and the Chamber of Trade.
Walkway proposals	Consultation on the draft walkway routes will be part of the consultation on the Transport and Movement Strategy for Shifnal to be carried out by the Shropshire Council Highways team. Discussions need to be held with the Head teachers of the three schools in the town. Implementation needs to ensure issues such as safety, including pedestrian crossings, lighting, improvements to surfaces, signage and publicity are all addressed.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shropshire Council Highways and Education/Schools
Inadequate bus services - daytime bus services are concentrated on the Shifnal – Telford corridor but do not meet the wider needs of the community.	Conduct survey into need for services to instead provide links to as many local destinations as possible including the existing and new medical centres, if necessary through the introduction of a community bus service. These objectives may not be deliverable commercially.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shropshire Council/Shifnal Forward in consultation with commercial bus service providers and Community Transport operators locally.
Provision of bus shelters and better service information.	There is a need for a bus shelter on Victoria Road and the need for additional or improved bus shelters needs to be considered as part of the discussions about bus services.	As above



Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
	Better information at bus stops and via digital applications also needs to be provided to encourage bus use.	
Improvements to the Railway Station access, car parking, cycle parking and signage.	It has been identified in a report by the Shifnal Transport Action Group that there needs to be improvements to pedestrian access from the town centre and in particular for disabled access to the station. The provision of cycle parking is also identified. The need for additional car parking to serve the station is an important improvement to be taken forward.	Shifnal Forward/Shifnal Town Council in consultation with Rail services provider and Network Rail
<b>Character and Conservation</b>		
Need to bring empty and derelict buildings back into use.	Identify and list all derelict and empty buildings in the town. Consult with the owners about possible future re-use.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Business Forum and the Chamber of Trade
<b>Health, education and leisure</b>		
Lack of adult education services	Look into the need/demand for more services locally and models of provision	Shifnal Town Council/ Shropshire Council/Shifnal Forward
Insufficient leisure facilities for young people	Assess need for more facilities and/or investigate funding sources. Examples are a multi-use games area, seats and shelters in park areas, BMX track, skate park, café/meeting place	Shifnal Town Council/Shifnal Forward
Provision of a Town Park	The provision of a Town Park has been negotiated as part of a Section 106 agreement with the developers of the Thomas Beddoes Phase 2 housing site. (Consultation for the Town Park was carried out by the former Town Plan group during 2008/9). Young people have asked for a Nature area during consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and could be involved in the development of such an area in the park as well as the design of other areas as young people are likely to be major users.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Forward in consultation with Taylor-Wimpey site layout and landscape development team.
Retention of the library	Transfer of the management of Library to the Town Council to be considered.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shropshire Council
<b>Environment</b>		
Development of a linear green park through Shifnal, utilising existing green spaces within residential areas and potentially some areas along Wesley Brook.	Develop the concept of the linear Green Park in Shifnal and put forward a proposal for funding for implementation and ongoing maintenance. Identify any land ownership issues, funding requirements and resources. This proposal links with encouraging non-car use, increases in leisure opportunities and the visitor economy.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Forward/Shifnal History Group/Shropshire Council
<b>Town Centre and Economy</b>		
Need for an historic trail to enhance attractiveness of the town for tourists	Prepare and introduce a historic trail.	Shifnal Forward/Shifnal Local History Group
Shop Front Design	Prepare design guide for shop front design with examples of good and bad design currently in the town centre.	Shifnal Town Council/ Shifnal Forward

## 12 CONTEXT AND PROPOSALS MAPS

Figure 12.1: Context map of Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan area

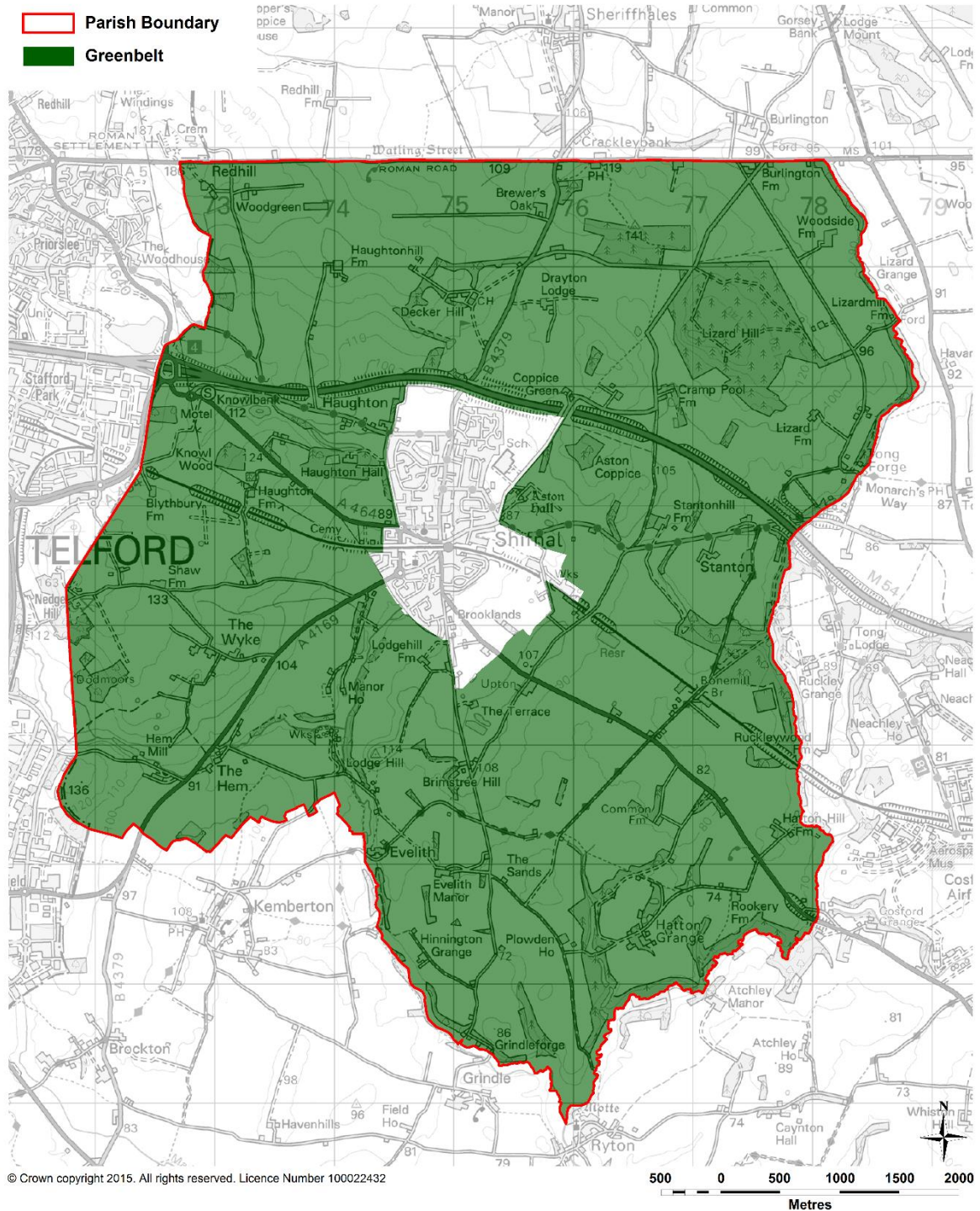
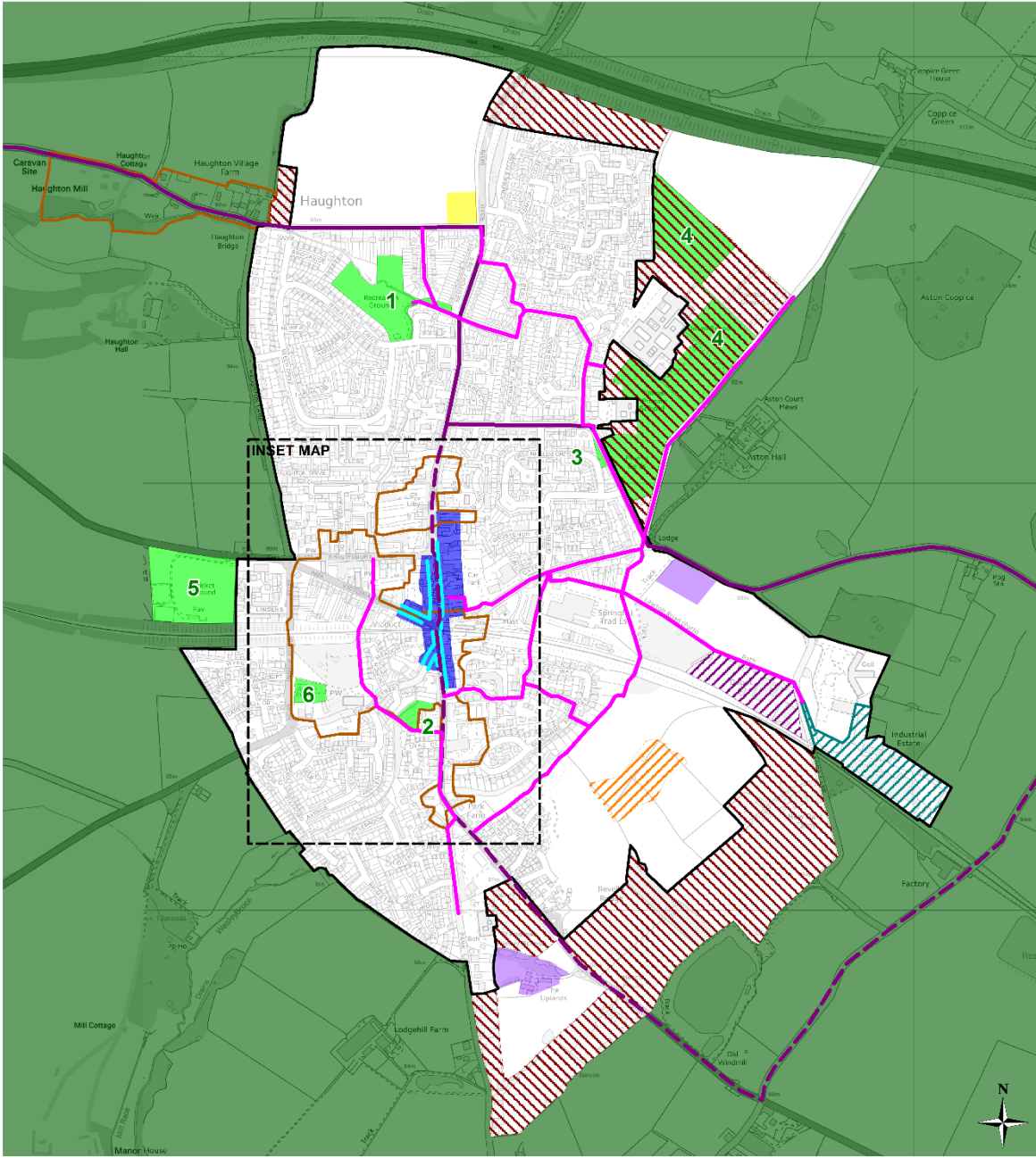


Figure 12.2: Proposals Map



Local Green Spaces Key:

- 1 Wheatfield Drive Recreation Area
- 2 Jubilee Park Play Area
- 3 Curriers Lane Play Area
- 4 Idsall School and Shifnal County Primary School playing fields
- 5 Cricket Ground
- 6 Millennium Sensory Garden

- Settlement Boundary
- Town Centre
- Primary Shopping Frontage
- Employment
- Protected Employment
- Safeguarded Land
- Conservation Area
- Care Home Locations

- Area for New Medical Facility
- Walkway Routes
- Cycle Route 81
- Cycle Route Extension
- Local Green Space
- Greenbelt
- New Town Park

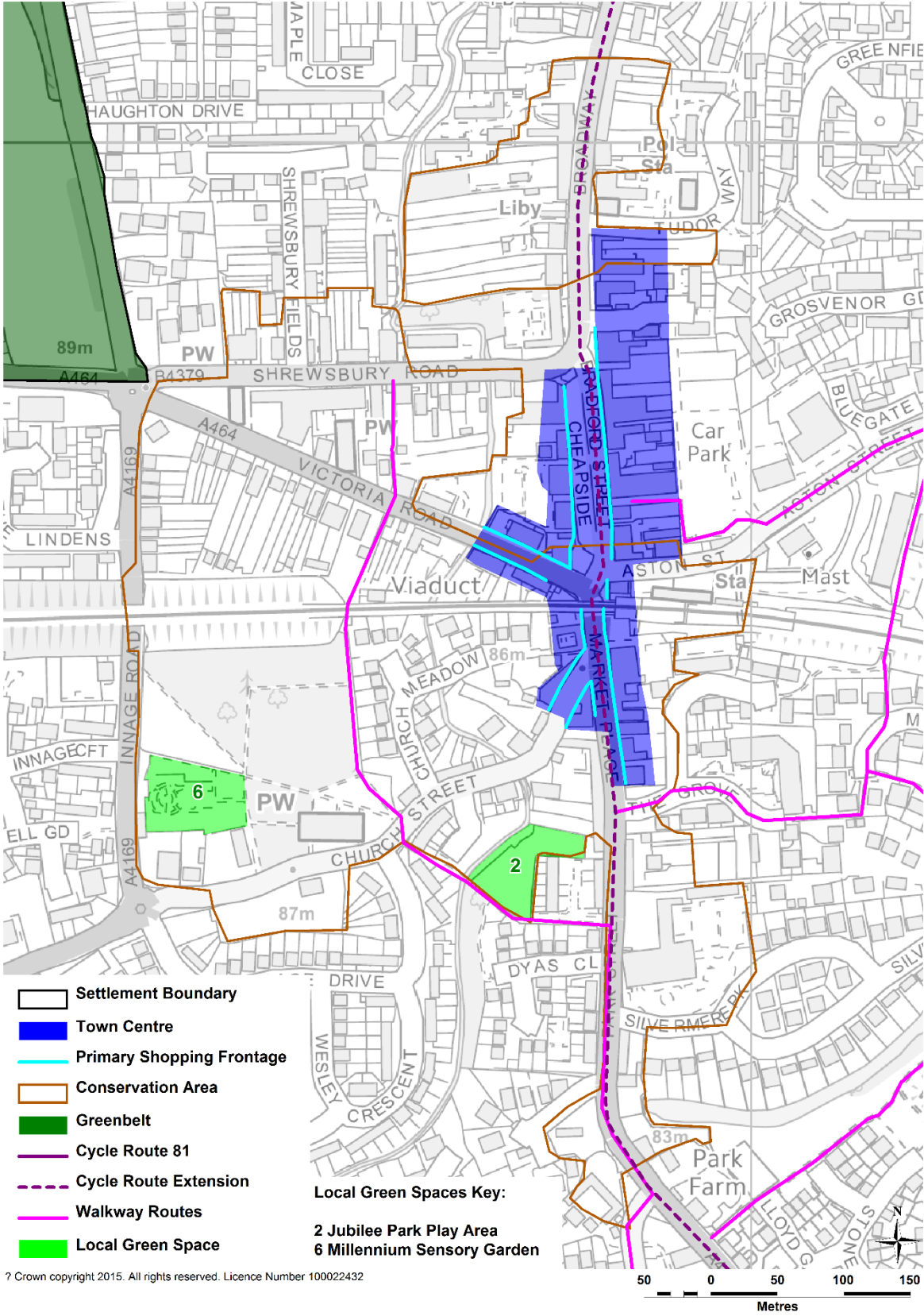
250 0 250 500

Metres

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Figure 12.3: Inset map



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## GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing** - Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by Shropshire Council.
- **Comparison retailing** – this is shopping for higher value goods, such as white goods, clothes, electrical items, etc, that is not undertaken on a regular basis.
- **Conservation area** - an area of notable environmental or historical interest or importance which is protected by law against undesirable changes.
- **Convenience retailing** - this is primarily food shopping and shopping for everyday grocery items.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – the national planning policy document which sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Real time passenger information (RTPI)** - an electronic information system that may include predictions about arrival and departure times, as well as information about the nature and causes of disruptions. It may be used both physically within a transportation hub and remotely using a web browser or mobile device.
- **Section 106 agreement** - A mechanism under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable
- **Social rented housing** - Housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.
- **Use classes** - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'. Certain changes between uses require a planning application although certain changes are permitted development so do not. For more information visit:  
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/changeofuse/>



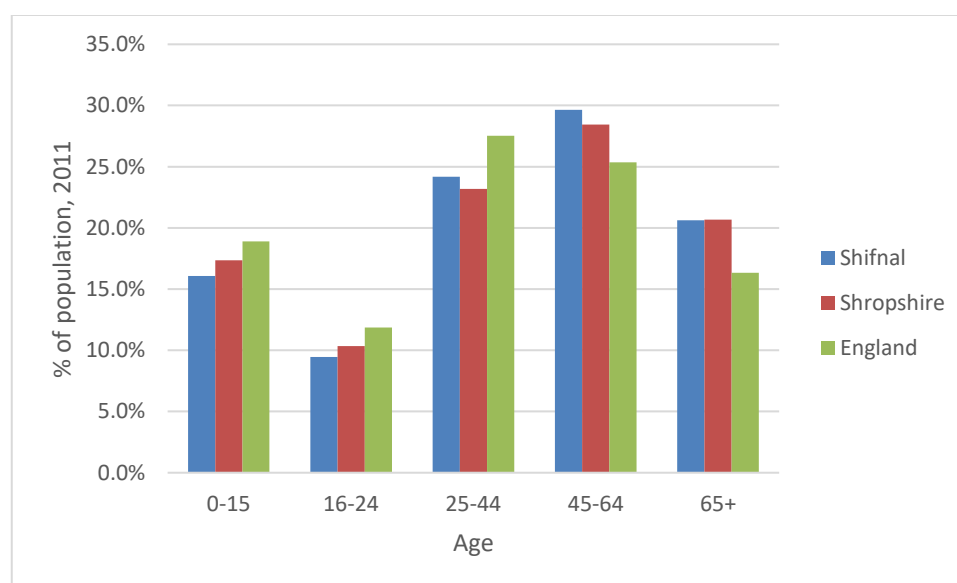
## Appendix A Profile of Shifnal

Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census.

### Population

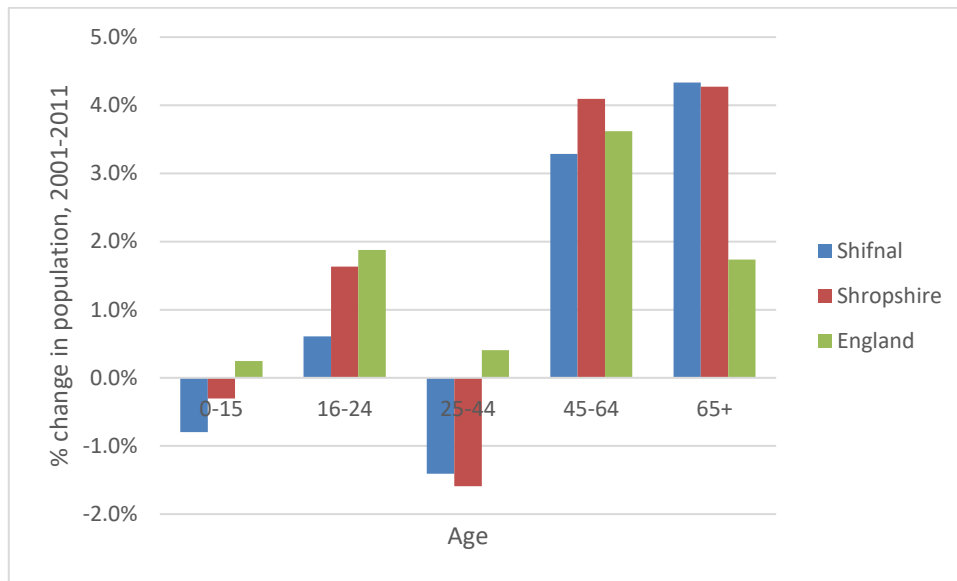
In 2011, the population of the parish of Shifnal was 6,776. Compared to the national average, it has a high proportion of older people – over 50% were aged 45 or over in Shifnal compared to less than 42% across England; it is also slightly higher than the Shropshire county average (see Figure 1). By contrast, it has a lower proportion of children and young people.

**Figure 1: Population profile, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

Since 2001, the population of the parish has grown by 385 persons, a 6.0% change compared to 8.1% growth across Shropshire county as a whole (and 7.9% nationally). This is reflective of the restrictions on growth in Shifnal due to the presence of the green belt. What is particularly interesting is the change in population by age group.

**Figure 2: Change in population, 2001-2011**

Source: 2011 Census

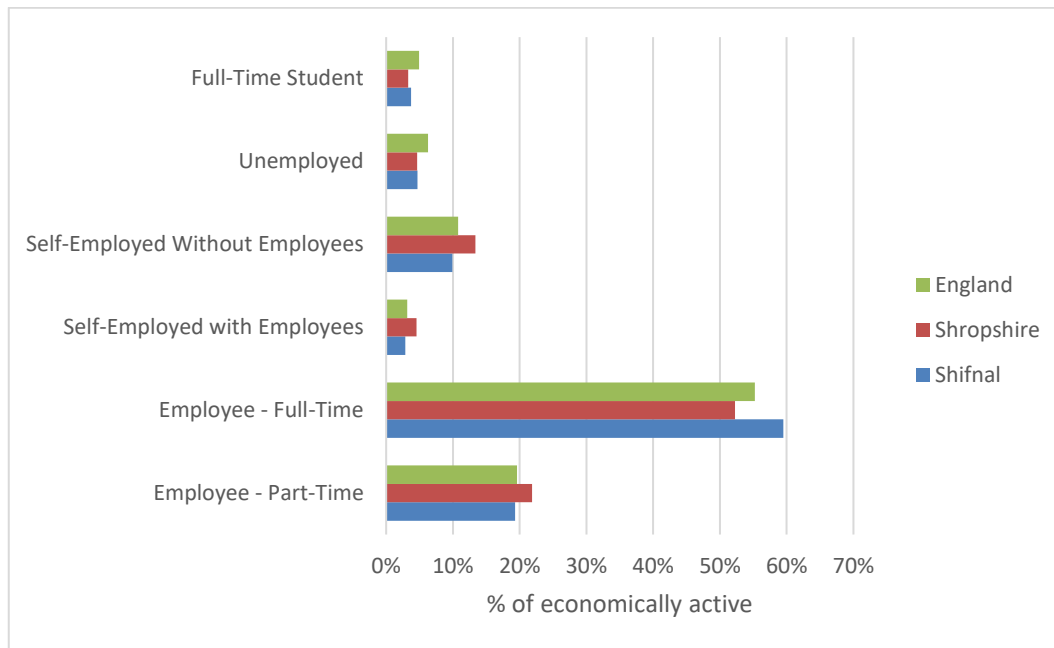
Shifnal experienced very strong growth in its retirement population (aged 65 and older) whilst also experiencing a decline in its younger population of working age (aged 25 to 44). This demonstrates not only an ageing population structure but also a stagnation in the size of its workforce, although this could be partially offset by the increase in young people that will be of working age during the plan period. This is shown in Figure 2.

Coupled with this has been a decline in the number of children in Shifnal which is not surprising given the decline in the number of adults of 'family' age. The additional housing development expected to come forward in the plan period is expected to address this.

## Work

What is noticeable about Shifnal's population that are economically active is that it has a comparatively high proportion of people in full-time employment. One area that Shifnal is slightly weak in is self-employment, both with and without employees. This is shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Economic activity, 2011**

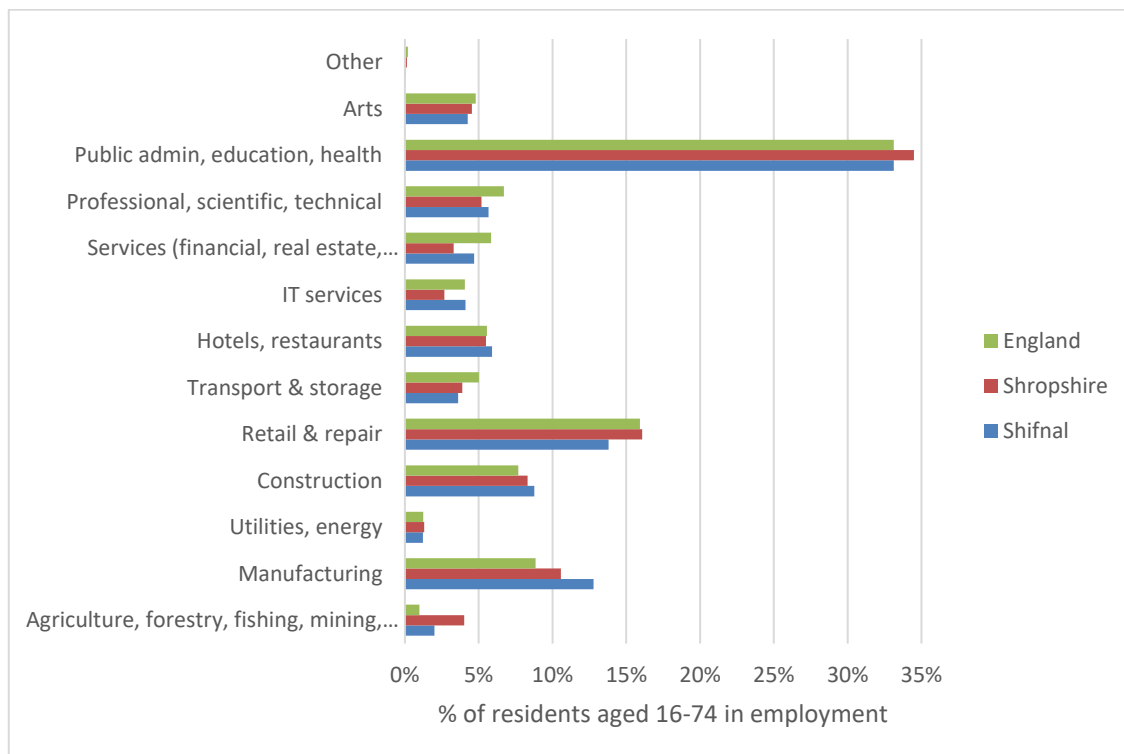


Source: 2011 Census

Shifnal is comparatively strongly represented in the manufacturing, with 13% of the workforce working in the sector. It also has good representation in the professional, scientific and technical sectors and also in services (albeit slightly below the national average).

This is shown in Figure 4.

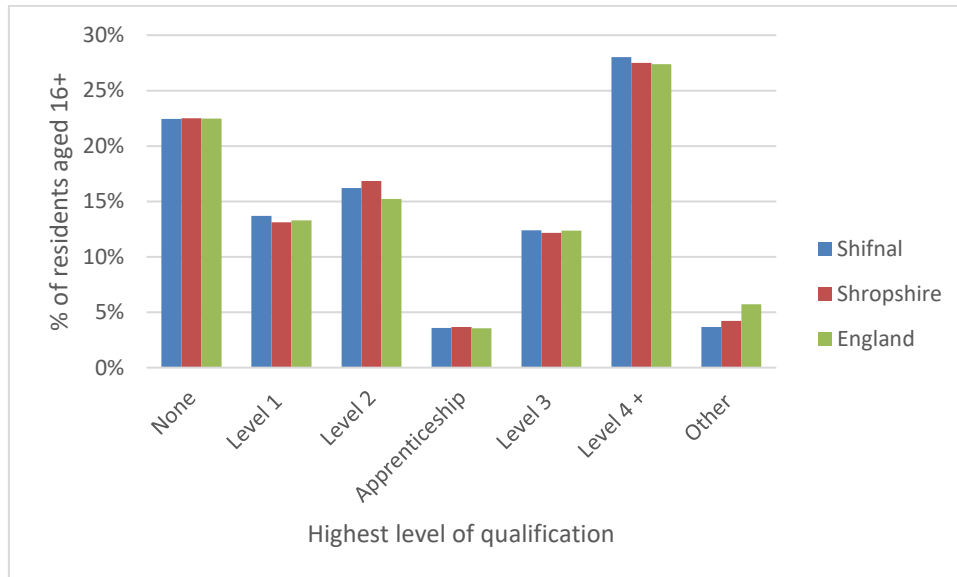
**Figure 4: Type of industry, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census

Figure 5 shows that the highest level of qualification of residents aged 16 or over very closely mirrors the county and national averages.

**Figure 5: Qualifications of residents aged 16 and over**



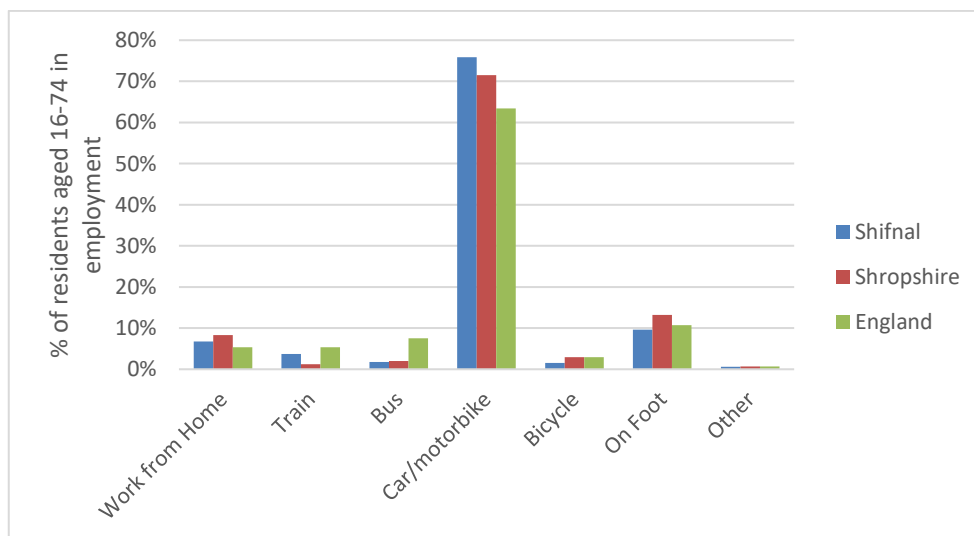
Source: 2011 Census

The large majority of those in work travel to work by car, well above the county and national averages. This is supported by Census figures on access to a car within households. On average, each Shifnal household has access to 1.38 cars. This compares to 1.42 cars per household in Shropshire county and 1.16 cars per household nationally. This represents reasonably high levels of car ownership.

Despite the town being well served by rail links to several major employment centres, Shifnal does not have a noticeably high proportion of commuters that travel by train. Equally, commuting locally on foot or by bicycle are below the county and national averages.

This is shown in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Mode of transport to work**



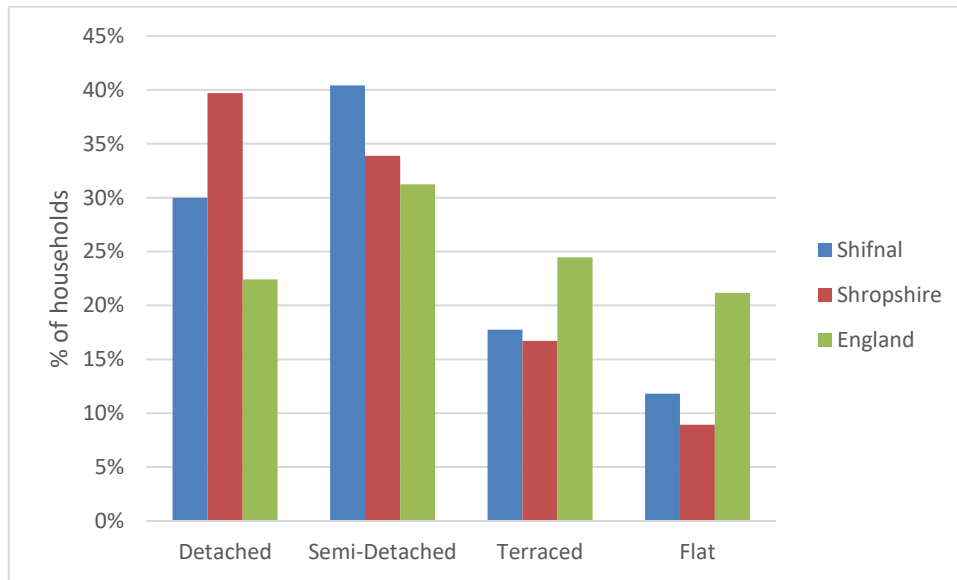
Source: 2011 Census

## Housing

Shifnal is dominated by semi-detached housing, representing over 40% of the housing stock. Whilst the proportion of detached housing is well above the national average, it is also well below the county average. By contrast, the proportion of smaller properties (terraced houses and flats) are above the county average but well below the national average.

This is shown in Figure 7.

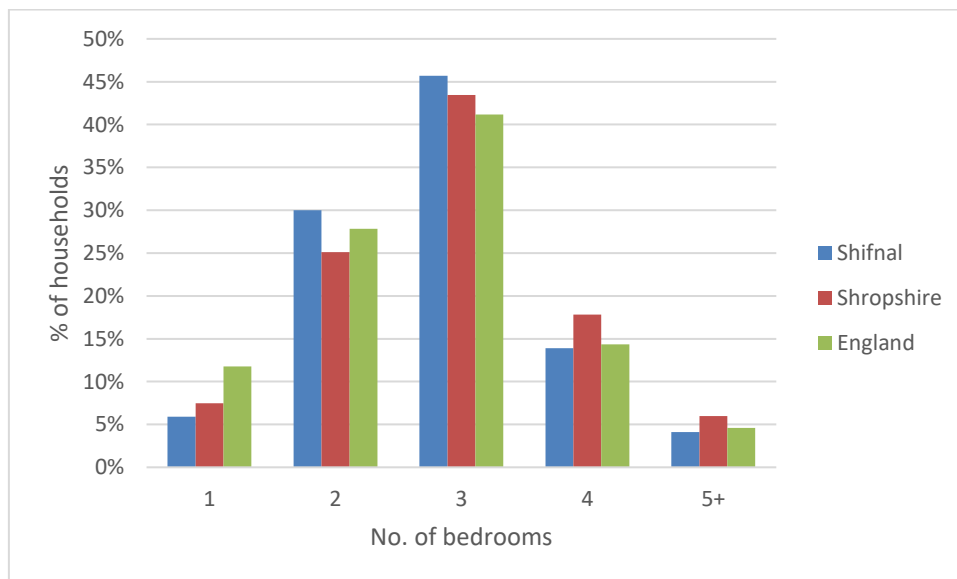
**Figure 7: Type of dwelling**



Source: 2011 Census

This is reinforced when looking at the number of bedrooms that properties in Shifnal have. Figure 8 shows that it has a high proportion of both 2- and 3-bed properties, indicative of semi-detached dwellings. By contrast, the number of small properties (1-bed) and very large properties (4+ bed) are below the county and national averages.

**Figure 8: Number of bedrooms**

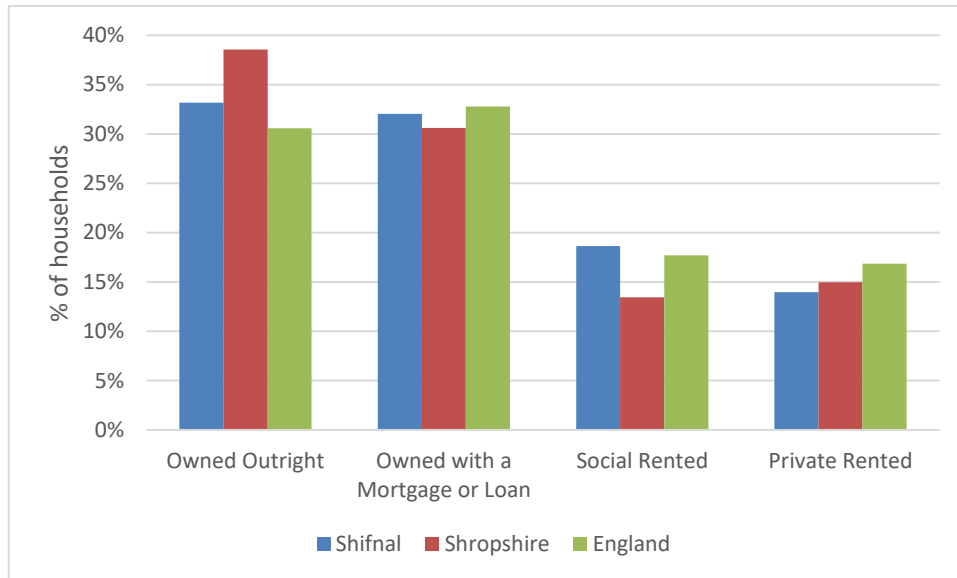


Source: 2011 Census



The ownership profile of these dwellings reinforces the profile of Shifnal as a reasonably affluent area but one that caters for a range of needs. Figure 9 shows that the proportion of households that own their property outright is below the county average, but there is a significant proportion that own a property through a mortgage or loan. Also there is strong provision of social rented property, representing 19% of the total stock of property.

**Figure 9: Ownership profile**



Source: 2011 Census

This analysis – and the high levels of social housing coupled with the low qualification levels - points to certain possible issues of deprivation in parts of Shifnal. Analysis of the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that part of Shifnal town is within the 25% most deprived areas in the country in terms of income, employment and education.

## Appendix B Conformity of Neighbourhood Plan policies with local and national policy

This is a summary of conformity with key policies. A more detailed evaluation of conformity with local and national policy is contained in the accompanying Basic Conditions Statement.

NP Policy	NPPF	Core Strategy	SAMDev
	Paragraph	Policy	Policy/Paragraph
SL1	17, 79, 85	5	MD3, MD6, MD7A, S15.1
HG1	7, 9, 17, 56, 58	3, 6	MD2, MD3, S15.1
HG2	7, 50	11	MD3
HG3	7, 50	11	S15.1, para 4.18
TM1	30	7, 8	MD8, para 5.143
TM2	23	7, 8	para 5.143
TM3	17, 35	7, 8	para 5.143
TM4	17, 35	3, 7, 8, 15	
TM5	17, 35	15	
CH1	7, 17, 126	15, 17	MD2, MD13
HL1	17, 70	3, 8	MD8, para 5.143
ED1	7, 37	3, 8	MD8
LE1	7, 37, 73, 74	8	
LE2	7, 37, 73	3,8	
LE3	7, 37, 73	8	MD2
EN1	7, 37, 73, 74, 76	8	MD2
EN2	7, 37, 73, 74	8	MD2
EN3	99, 100, 103	3, 8, 18	MD2, para 5.143
EC1	7, 9, 56, 58, 67	17	MD2, para 5.142
EC2	7, 9, 17	3, 13	MD4, MD9, para 5.141
EC3	28	16	MD11
EC4	7, 17	3, 13	MD4, para 5.141
EC5	7, 17	3, 13	MD4. para 5.141
EC6	17, 28, 112	3, 13	

## Appendix C List of evidence base documents

All documents are available at [www.shifnalplan.co.uk](http://www.shifnalplan.co.uk):

- Note on sources of additional dwellings with planning permission, September 2015
- PMP (2010) *Shropshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (PPG17)*
- Housing Need in Shifnal, August 2105
- Shropshire Council (2014) *Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update Report, Appendix 3 (Shifnal)*
- Care Home Places – *Evidence of Need, July 2015*
- Shifnal Forward Transport Action Group (2015) *Shifnal – Improving Rail Services*
- Action for Market Towns (2013) *Market Town Benchmarking: Measuring the performance of Town Centres - Shifnal*
- Shifnal Forward (2014) *Shifnal Tourism Strategy and Action Plan*, Shifnal Tourism Group

## **Appendix D      Members of the Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Chair	Chris Raine (Community)
Town Councillors	Robert Harrop (Mayor) Andrew Mitchell (Deputy Mayor)
Community	Trevor Tarran Bob Vincent Tim Day
Shropshire Council	Andrea McWilliams (Community Enablement Officer - Albrighton / Shifnal)

The Steering Group and the Shifnal Town Council would also like to acknowledge Mrs Suzanne Broderick, former Mayor of Shifnal Town Council, who took the important first steps to start the process of developing the Neighbourhood Plan for Shifnal by getting the Shifnal Parish area designated.