

Brenchley & Matfield  
Neighbourhood Plan

# Position Statement

March 2018

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
FROM VENUE



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## **NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

### **THE DESIGN FORUM**

**It may be utopian to think that MATFIELD AND BRENCHLEY PARISH will retain its rural uniqueness as it is now. However it is that quality which I want to see preserved as far as is possible in this parish.**

**Change will come. There will be development but it has to be done in a sympathetic manner consistent with the rural village idyll image both project at the moment.**

**I am a firm believer in the principle of “custodianship” ie we are merely lifetime custodians of our possessions/surroundings and we have a duty to pass it on in a “better condition” to the condition we inherited them. What is decided through the events coming up will form our legacy for the future whilst up-holding the demands by Government.**

**So, the “theme” of my paper is that “we should retain as far as possible, while accepting change will and must happen in the parish, the rural quintessential style of these two beautiful Kentish villages.”**

### **TOPICS FORMING THE BASIS OF MY THEME.**

1. Building/Development. There are some huge proposed sites but small sites development in the middle of Matfield would be acceptable. I prefer small sites which collectively could make up the quota of houses we need to build. Small sites are more manageable when it comes to design and architecture. Large sites needs a more confrontational handling with developers so as to avoid hundreds of houses looking cheap and the same. We are in a conservation area of outstanding natural beauty. We must not let that go.

2. Energy. Our villages are run largely on oil and log burners. Gas other than Calor has not arrived. There is pollution. Many of our homes are old and draughty consuming a lot of energy/expense. The site known as 410 could be developed into solar panel site providing electricity sufficient for both villages, be a net contributor to the national grid and provide income for the community and so reduce the cost.

3. Affordable housing. Essential to provide more housing to employees in the hospital and other vital services plus an increasing employment. Essential we push for locals to have priority despite rules which do not allow them to be put to the top of the list..But try we must.

4. Quality/Style of building. This an absolute must. The two villages have unique buildings. We have an opportunity to create development with modern architecture which is much more eco-friendly using new materials.

5.Traffic/roads. The “B” road to Maidstone through Matfield is ruined by lorries and sheer volume of traffic. Lorries are the real problem. A way must be found to divert these away from Matfield down the Pembury by-pass and Colts Hill to the M25. A sign reducing the weight load from 7.5 tons to a maximum of 5 tons could be a solution. Proper signage needed to say this.

6. Small businesses. Should thrive here, work could be from home. Need top quality broadband/wifi net work improvement to attract these businesses to come here. Matfield has lost some precious small businesses. We need to make ourselves attractive to reverse the trend.

7.Children’s Playground. This is needed in Matfield.

8. Communication. Between Matfield and Brenchley communication is bad and the existing road without pavement is dangerous. Perhaps an alternative could be found by creating a cycle, and for part of the way a wheelchair, path along the current public foot path from Matfield through the black current fields to Brenchley. This could be a cheaper way of connecting the two communities than laying down pavements etc along the road. It would also be attractive to tourists.