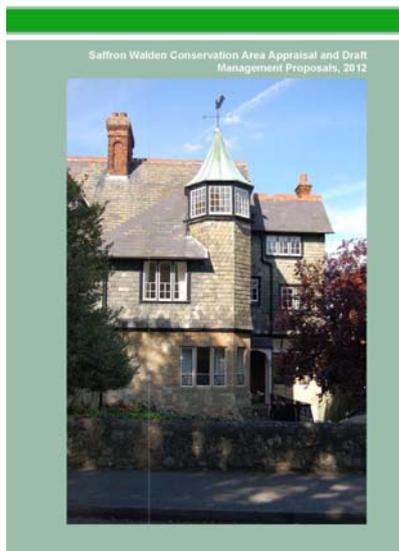


**Report of Public Participation  
on  
Saffron Walden Conservation Area  
Appraisal and Draft Management Plan  
24 September – 4 November 2012**

**Report One  
Comments made at the Public  
Exhibition  
and during the consultation period**



**November 2012**

## **Contents**

Introduction

Summary of findings of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal

Publicity

Results from Consultation

1. Exhibition

2. Consultation

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Copy of letter to Saffron Walden Residents

Appendix 2 – Saffron Walden consultation form (the council's standard equalities monitoring forms were also made available)

## **Introduction**

This report outlines the responses received from the public exhibition held at Saffron Walden Museum on Monday 1 October 5.00pm to 8pm and all responses received during the consultation period which ran between 24 September and 4 November 2012.

The Government encourages Councils to undertake appraisals of Conservation Areas and as part of an ongoing programme an appraisal of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area was carried out earlier in 2012. Anyone with an interest in Saffron Walden was invited to respond to the consultation on the draft Appraisal which was available on line at <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldencaa> or, from 24 September paper copies could be inspected at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden, Saffron Walden Library, the Tourist Information Centre or from the Saffron Walden Town Clerk.

Consultees were invited to visit the council's website, read the document and send in responses as to whether all the measures should be included or just a selection of them. For those who could not access the web site, consultees could send any comments to the Project Officer at the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER by email, letter or fax.

There was also a chance to see details of all the proposed changes and to discuss them with council officers at a public exhibition which was held at Saffron Walden Museum on Monday 1 October 5.00pm to 8pm.

Following consultation, the District Council will take into account all comments and approve an amended document that will be an important material consideration when processing applications.

## **Summary of findings of the Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal**

The historic core of Saffron Walden has an exceptional quality environment where the 320 Listed Buildings make a significant contribution to its architectural and historical importance. It has been noted by Essex County Council that the town has the finest surviving collection of timber framed buildings in Essex. Most of the Listed Buildings are in good condition but the Appraisal has identified several in need of

## Uttlesford District Council Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Consultation

repair. Most notable in this respect is the remains of the Castle Keep, the oldest standing structure and monument of greatest historical importance.

In addition to the Listed Buildings, this Appraisal has identified significant groups of late 19th or early 20th century non listed buildings of considerable architectural and historic merit, many of them being largely unspoilt and worthy of being protected from demolition. A large number of these have architectural detailing worthy of additional protection. Because of this it is proposed to introduce additional planning controls to give further protection. Should the council proceed, all affected properties will be consulted on the detail. Throughout the Conservation Area, this Appraisal has identified the high importance of walls and chimneys which need to be protected. The quality of shop fronts and fascia signage varies considerably and there are some areas where they detract. This Appraisal suggests further consideration be given to this issue and discussions take place locally and best national practice researched.

Traffic signage detracts in a number of locations and discussions need to take place with the Highways Authority and others with an objective of identifying improvements that can be made, consistent with highway safety. The high importance of a number of open spaces has been identified and several additional areas are recommended for protection in the emerging Local Plan. Several landscaping and improvement schemes are proposed and the possibility of providing a new environmental wildlife area accessible to the community is flagged up.

The boundaries to the Conservation Area are considered to be generally well defined but three amendments are proposed, most notable a proposal to include the historic frontage to Radwinter Road Cemetery and conversely to exclude the part of Swan Meadow Car Park that currently lies within the Conservation Area.

### Publicity

Publicity was carried out to advise all possible respondents of the publication of the Appraisal, the duration of the consultation period, ways of making a response and the details of the public exhibition held in the town.

**Town Council** -Saffron Walden Town Council were notified of the council's intention to appraise the Conservation Area and were supplied with advance notification of the consultation and with a pre-publication copy of the Appraisal report to which they were invited to make an initial response.

**Posters** were distributed around the town and copies were sent to the Town Council and the Tourist Information Centre.

**Fliers** in the form of A5 postcards were distributed in the town and deposited at local shops.

**Information letters** were delivered to all properties within the Conservation Area where a change is proposed and in any other areas affected by any amendments. A copy is included in Appendix 1.

**Website** – a dedicated page on a marketing url <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldencaa> was created on the council's website from which links were supplied to enable access to pdf and online interactive versions (via the council's Objective consultation portal) of the Appraisal. Summary

## Uttlesford District Council Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Consultation

information on the report was given on the page and links to pdf and Word versions of the comments form.

**Direct Mailing** - all the consultees within the Saffron Walden postal area on the Council's database (Objective) were emailed advising them of the new consultation event.

**Public exhibition** – a public exhibition which was held at Saffron Walden Museum on Monday 1 October 5.00pm to 8pm.

**Press release** – a press release was issued on 18 September and was subsequently published in local newspapers. It was also available on the council's website and via its Twitter and Facebook pages.

**Copies of the Appraisal** - The Appraisal document was available online, as noted above, and paper copies could be inspected at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden, at Saffron Walden Library, the Tourist Information Centre or from the Saffron Walden Town Clerk.

### Results of the consultation on the Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal

A public exhibition which was held at Saffron Walden Museum on Monday 1 October 5.00pm to 8pm and was attended by 43 people. The exhibition was attended by the fieldworker who had carried out the appraisal and by the council's Conservation Officer and the Project Officer. All were on hand to answer enquiries. Maps, plans, a slideshow of images of important local buildings and copies of the Appraisal were available as were paper copies of the response forms.

- A total of 43 people attended including 5 town or district councillors and the Town Clerk
- Small deputation from the 'We are Residents' group also attended
- General approval for the management actions and for the revisions to the boundary. A number of consultees noted the clear and concise language of the report
- A future recommendation was made that the mapping should have clearly marked road names, at least on the major thoroughfares.
- Suggestion was received from the Town Clerk that in future organisations such as CPRE, RCCE, Natural England, EWT and English Heritage should be consulted as a matter of course.

The consultation period ran 24 September and 4 November 2012 and all responses received during this period are detailed below:

## Saffron Walden Town Council

Many thanks for the comprehensive CAA which we found extremely interesting. Our comments below are forwarded for your necessary action.

1. There were 3 proposed changes to the boundary:
  - extend the boundary to include Elm Grove Lodge which is a late 19th C/early 20th C dwelling with highly decorative detailing and prominent chimney stack (Figure 4 on Page 78), and the Council agreed to this proposal.
  - exclude Swan Meadow car park from the CAA (Figure 5 on Page 79) and the Council agreed to this proposal.
  - include a small front of the Radwinter Road Cemetery together with the Chapel and listed railing in the CAA (Figure 6 on Page 80). **The Council objected to this proposal.**
  
2. The Town Council would not wish any part of the Cemetery to be included in the CAA for two reasons:
  - Whilst it is an interesting area it is separated from the existing conservation area by some way and in order to link it to the existing area would mean that a line of new and not historically interesting houses would also have to be listed. UDC will recall that we took it over in a very run down condition and have taken great steps to enhance the location.
  - Whilst it is a Cemetery it is also a “living” space to which people come to visit their departed and also to inter new ones. It will change with time and we need to be able to accommodate those changes without the need to constantly ask permission from another body. There is a requirement to maintain it without constant reference to other authorities and if we do so, we run the risk of letting the area slip to its old appalling state.
  
3. At Para 1.122 (Page 28) relating to Little Walden Road/Catons Lane proposals and the landscaping. In fact UDC own the land and not SWTC.
  
4. At Para 1.162 George Street outside new shops. We would wish to be in control of any plans here, it was UDC planners who allowed these shops to be built so out of character and they should not be allowed to decide on the future shape of this area.
  
5. At Para 1.208 (page 45) we believe that planting an Ash tree in the centre of the Turf Maze may need further investigation for 2 reasons. Firstly, are we quite sure that a tree used to be there and secondly, would over the years any spreading of the roots not ruin the maze?

Otherwise the Council were content with the report, which will serve as a useful ‘guide’ to ensuring that we fulfil our environmental obligations to the town.

## **GeoEssex**

Thank you for letting us know about the Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal.

On behalf of GeoEssex I would be grateful if you could take into account the following:

There are two sites of geological interest in Saffron Walden town centre that are to be put forward for designation as Local Geological Sites (LoGS). Local Geological Sites are non-statutory designations that are the geological equivalent of Local Wildlife Sites. One of these sites (The Gibson Boulders) is already designated as a Regionally Important Geological Site or RIGS. RIGS is a redundant designation and RIGS in Essex are being renotified as Local Geological Sites.

The sites are:

**ELM GROVE SUMMER HOUSE**, Elm Grove, Saffron Walden CB10 1NA  
Grid reference TL 5398 3828

**THE GIBSON BOULDERS**, Gibson Gardens, Saffron Walden  
Grid reference TL 5369 3817

A document containing details of the two sites is attached.

**Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)**

(This representation made on behalf of SPAB and by the respondent as a resident of Saffron Walden)

I welcome the draft conservation area for Saffron Walden that has been put out for consultation by Uttlesford District Council.

I've had a quick review of the document and wish to make the following points (though please forgive me if they are already covered - I've read the document at speed to meet the council's deadline for response):

- General: I am very much in agreement with the proposal to use Article 4 Directions to protect traditional windows, particularly given the threat from the increasing drive for energy efficiency (often leading to well-intended but misguided work on old buildings).
- Section 1, Area 2 Appraisal: Unlike the other grade I buildings within the conservation area, little mention (only one, I think) seems to be made of the importance of the buildings making up the old Sun Inn - one of the main properties viewed by tourists (and No 2 on the popular town tourist trail). This would seem like an omission to be corrected.
- Section 1.153: The brick wall alongside the path at the entrance to Emson Close from the Common (ie: on the north side) is in poor condition. Some past attempts have been made at repairing it but these have been bodged with standard modern cement rather than traditional lime mortar, hastening the decay of the wall. (The inappropriate use of cement for mortar and plaster repairs generally rather than proper lime mortar is a problem generally in the conservation area - it causes not just visual damage but physical damage to historic fabric. Perhaps UDC should consider promoting some of the excellent courses run by Essex County Council at Cressing Temple that aim to train builders and others in traditional building skills?)
- Section 1.181: The dates associated with the construction and alterations to 1 Myddlyton Place have been refined by the dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) just undertaken by the new owners so it would be worth basing this paragraph on the new information available.
- Highways markings: The appraisal (rightly) makes many references to unsympathetic street signage but neglects to mention the inappropriate yellow kerb markings that have recently appeared along much of Church Street. They seem to be: (a) unnecessarily wide, and (b) the wrong shade of yellow for a conservation area? The need to control parking on the pavements in Church Street - particularly by high-sided commercial vehicles (one of which recently damaged the historic plasterwork on one of my jetties in Church Street) - is vital but it should be achieved in a more refined manner befitting the historic environment here.
- Vernacular methods and materials: I feel the appraisal would benefit from the brief inclusion of a paragraph or two on the traditional building materials and techniques that are especially associated with the town and set it apart from other towns. Little mention is made of pargeting, for example, something for which the Saffron Walden and its immediate surroundings are well-known; similarly, the range of traditional bricks and peg tiles found, not just reds but some of the buff colours synonymous with neighbouring Cambridgeshire. Etc etc. I feel later materials are also worth a mention - such as the extremely impressive decorative leadwork on Barclays Bank.

## Churchill Retirement Living

### Question 8

#### **Comment here on the buildings that make an important architectural or historical contribution to the conservation area**

The identification of the Flint building situated on the site of Lodge Farm, Radwinter Road at point

1.217 as a building that makes an important architectural or historical contribution to the Conservation Area is not appropriate.

An independent assessment of the building has been prepared to support the current application UTT/12/5227/CA under consideration by the Local Planning Authority.

The site is also the subject of an extant housing land allocation from the Adopted District Local Plan.

The independent character assessment notes the following;

*"Based on the English Heritage Principles of Selection guides, it is unlikely that the extant building would qualify to achieve listed building status. The building is not by a known architect, nor is it intact to its original courtyard design. Furthermore, the building has been extensively rebuilt and does not retain an historic interior; nor is it an example of particularly high quality architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship.*

*The report finds that the history of the site is layered and that the demolition and rebuilding that has taken place on site means there is only partial historic fabric surviving. The building does not have 'special' interest to merit listing, nor is it an example of a particular building type or display any technical innovation. In its own right the building has little intrinsic architectural merit and its external visual quality is limited to the selective appearance of flint and the 'perception' of early layout and plan.*

*In terms of the contribution made by the building to the conservation area, the building is of low historic interest. Architecturally, the building makes a limited contribution, principally as an example of the vernacular building tradition of knapped flint with brick dressings. The building lies at the edge of the conservation area and has lost much of its context. The setting of the edge of the conservation area is now determined by some fairly random development which gives the area a neutral character.*

*The report finds that Lodge Farm is of little or no heritage significance."*

With this in mind, the application has been prepared on the basis of the replacement of this existing flint building, with a high quality development which incorporates elements of the design characteristics associated with the existing. It is noted that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. The building on the site is not designated and the prime historical significance of the building (as part of the original Lodge Farm) has already been completely lost, leaving the current building looking isolated and without context.

At point 1.229 it is also noted that the tall distinctive flint boundary wall fronting Radwinter Road is identified as a distinctive feature within the Conservation Area. The current application proposal seeks to reduce the height of the wall to a more appropriate height adjacent to the footpath and repair and replace in the same style and materials where necessary.

### Question 10

#### **Any other comments**

Reference to the Heritage Statement prepared by GHK should be had when assessing the contribution this building and the wall makes to the overall Conservation Area

### A Saffron Walden resident

The appraisal is a very interesting document and I am very pleased to see that Saffron Waldens historic importance is recognised by so many.

### A Saffron Walden resident

I wish to comment on the draft of the above document.

1. As a resident of one of the houses in Mt Pleasant Rd discussed in the document, I support the strengthening of policies designed to protect their architectural features.
2. Much of the detraction from the quality of the Conservation Area has come from inappropriate and ugly alterations to the public sphere rather than from residents' alterations to their property. I am thinking in particular of insensitive work by the highways authority that prioritise the fast movement of motor vehicles at the expense of all else, even along residential roads. There is little incentive to private property owners to maintain their property when they see this sort of willful destruction of the environment.

I therefore would like to see the sections that deal with the way in which Uttlesford will approach this matter considerably strengthened, by, for example, the inclusion of sentences that deal with traffic management and design.

### A Saffron Walden resident

I am the owner of 40 Audley Road, Saffron Walden and note the proposal to incorporate 44 Audley Road in the conservation area. I merely wish to point out that the plan shows part of my property within the curtilage of 44. I purchased part of the back garden of 44 some years ago

### A Saffron Walden resident

#### Question 1

##### Comment here on the character analysis of Area 1

Bus depot area is deteriorating and an eyesore. Also must minimize traffic nuisance and violation via Bridge Street and past The Close - obvious in both directions heavy vehicles via Audley End Road.

#### Question 2

##### Comment here on the character analysis of Area 2

Try to keep shop signs in character

#### Question 3

##### Comment here on the character analysis of Area 3

Must reduce traffic in fact in Bridge Street, Myddleton Place and Freshwell Street to control accessibility and pollution damage to buildings in Bridge Street and High Street (including cellars), and visual pollution. Keep Swan Meadow pond and adjacent paths in conservation area when deleting the park.

#### Question 7

##### Comment here on the revised conservation area boundary

## Uttlesford District Council Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals Consultation

Reasonable to include the cemetery, but avoid excessive rules on appearance of graves.

### Question 8

**Comment here on the buildings that make an important architectural or historical contribution to the conservation area**

Bridge End and adjacent streets are particularly important for protection.

### Question 9

**Comment here on the management proposals**

Must manage traffic to bring down pollution levels (eg oxides of nitrogen and particulates) well below permitted limits, instead of above, as now.

### Question 10

**Any other comments**

Listed buildings, especially in areas 1 & 3, are often obscured by parked vehicles and access and parking cause frequent problems.

### A Saffron Walden resident

#### Question 9

**Comment here on the management proposals**

In the light of recent events, a different native tree should be considered for the centre of the maze (perhaps a native hawthorn?).

#### Question 10

**Any other comments**

The consultation does not mention the impact of traffic: Bridge Street and the High Street suffer from vibrations from heavy traffic, air pollution and potential building strikes. While there is a ban on HGVs entering the town from the North, this is often breached. There is no provision to prevent HGVs travelling the other way. If we are to preserve the buildings in the conservation area, something much more radical will need to be done to prevent the heavy traffic which is currently threatening the area.

### A Saffron Walden resident

#### Question 4

**Comment here on the character analysis of Area 4**

The ash tree should not be planted on the maze. Historically it is dubious if it was originally there (i.e. when the maze was constructed) and its roots will eventually disrupt the maze itself.

#### Question 6

**Comment here on the character analysis of Area 6**

Suggest old Training College building should be within Conservation Area. Impt building both historically - Gibson donation and one of first female training colleges in the country and important visually on junction of two major linear roads.

#### Question 10

**Any other comments**

Excellent document - thoughtfully worked out. Well done!

### A Saffron Walden resident

#### Question 7

**Comment here on the revised conservation area boundary**

Including part of the car park in the conservation area is no longer appropriate and this change would seem sensible.

**A Saffron Walden resident**

**Question 3**

**Comment here on the character analysis of Area 3**

The use of the open space between Swan Meadow car park and Freshwell Gardens needs to be very carefully considered. I am not convinced that it fails to function as an environmental resource now, in its overgrown state. While some management to preserve habitats (such as yearly cutting) may be appropriate, opening this to the public seems likely to defeat the object of making this a conservation site. The areas next to the duckpond (New Pond) suffer from vandalism and are a regular meeting place for young people to drink and smoke (and occasionally set fire to litter bins or cause other damage). It would be very worrying if this spread into the area opposite Freshwell Gardens, which is currently quiet and full of wildlife. There are large numbers of long-tailed tits living here, and deer have been seen here too as well as the more usual rabbits and squirrels. Opening the site up is likely to reduce the attractive "wildness" of this area. It does not need to be tidy - we are perfectly happy to live opposite it in its "unkempt" state.

**A Saffron Walden resident**

**Comment here on the character analysis of Area 1**

I support the inclusion of Moore's garage on the "at risk" register. This building is deteriorating to a worrying extent. On a wider point, consideration should be given as to whether it is still appropriate for a bus/coach garage to operate out of this site. This is a narrow street, and the coaches coming in and out shake the houses, hold up traffic and pass worryingly close to old buildings.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Copy of letter to Saffron Walden Residents

## Saffron Walden conservation area appraisal and draft management proposals consultation



Dear Saffron Walden resident

The Government encourages councils to undertake appraisals of Conservation Areas and one has just been completed for your town. We now need your comments on the Conservation Area appraisal for Saffron Walden; a consultation on the draft document will be running between **24 September and 4 November**. The document will be available on line at <http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldencaa> or, from 24 September, paper copies can be inspected at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden, Saffron Walden Library and the Tourist Information Centre or from the Saffron Walden Parish Clerk. The main findings are set out below. There will also be a chance to see details of all the proposed changes and to discuss them with council officers at a public exhibition which will be held at Saffron Walden Museum on Monday 1 October 5.00pm to 8pm.

The historic core of Saffron Walden has an exceptional quality environment where the 320 Listed Buildings make a significant contribution to its architectural and historical importance. It has been noted by Essex County Council that the town has the finest surviving collection of timber framed buildings in Essex. Most of the Listed Buildings are in good condition but the Appraisal has identified several in need of repair. Most notable in this respect is the remains of the Castle Keep, the oldest standing structure and monument of greatest historical importance.

In addition to the Listed Buildings, this Appraisal has identified significant groups of late 19th or early 20th century non listed buildings of considerable architectural and historic merit, many of them being largely unspoilt and worthy of being protected from demolition. A large number of these have architectural detailing worthy of additional protection. Because of this it is proposed to introduce additional planning controls to give further protection. Should the council proceed, all affected properties will be consulted on the detail. Throughout the Conservation Area, this Appraisal has identified the high importance of walls and chimneys which need to be protected. The quality of shop fronts and fascia signage varies considerably and there are some areas where they detract. This Appraisal suggests further consideration be given to this issue and discussions take place locally and best national practice researched.

Traffic signage detracts in a number of locations and discussions need to take place with the Highways Authority and others with an objective of identifying improvements that can be made, consistent with highway safety. The high importance of a number of open spaces has been identified and several additional areas are recommended for protection in the emerging Local Plan. Several landscaping and improvement schemes are proposed and the possibility of providing a new environmental wildlife area accessible to the community is flagged up.

The boundaries to the Conservation Area are considered to be generally well defined but three amendments are proposed, most notable a proposal to include the historic frontage to Radwinter Road Cemetery and conversely to exclude the part of Swan Meadow Car Park that currently lies within the Conservation Area.

Please visit our website, read the document and let us know what you think and whether we should include all the measures or just a selection of them. If you cannot access our web site, please send any comments to the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER. For further information please call Bruce Tice, our Project Officer, on 01799 510670 or email [btice@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:btice@uttlesford.gov.uk) who will be pleased to assist and answer any of your queries.

**If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language please  
contact us on 01799 510510**

Saffron Walden conservation area appraisal  
and draft management proposals consultation



Important information on the Saffron Walden  
Conservation Area Appraisal

For the attention of the property owner

# Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal Public Exhibition



Monday 1 October 5.00-8pm  
Saffron Walden Museum  
Museum Street Saffron Walden

Your chance to have your say on the draft Conservation  
Area Appraisal for Saffron Walden

The consultation runs 24 September to 4 November 2012  
For more information call 01799 510670 or take part online at  
[www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldencaa](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/saffronwaldencaa)

If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language please  
contact us on 01799 510510

**Uttlesford District Council Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal  
and Management Proposals Consultation**

Appendix 2 – Saffron Walden consultation form (the council's standard equalities monitoring forms were also made available)

## **Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal Consultation**

### **Consultation Feedback Form**

Comment here on the character analysis of Area1 - Church Street north side, Bridge Street east side and part High Street east side; Castle Street and Museum Street and including St Mary's Church, the Castle remains and Bridge End Garden:

Comment here on the character analysis of Area 2 - Church Street south side, Common Hill and Fairycroft Road west sides, High Street east side including King Street, Market Place area, Hill Street and Gold Street and Audley Road:

Comment here on the character analysis of Area 3 - Bridge Street and High Street west, including Freshwell Street, Myddylton Place, Park Lane and Abbey Lane

Comment here on the character analysis of Area 4 - The Common and Area South of East Street

Comment here on the character analysis of Area 5 – London Road and adjacent area

Comment here on the character analysis of Area 6- The Friends School, Mount Pleasant Road and West Road

**Uttlesford District Council Saffron Walden Conservation Area Appraisal  
and Management Proposals Consultation**

Comment here on the revised conservation area boundary:

Comment here on the buildings that make an important architectural or historical contribution to the conservation area:

Comment here on the management proposals:

Any other comments:

Please send any comments to the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER. For further information please ring Bruce Tice, our Project Officer, on 01799 510670 or email [btice@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:btice@uttlesford.gov.uk) who will be pleased to assist and answer any of your queries.

**If you require this publication in an alternative format and/or language  
please contact us on 01799 510510**