

PANFIELD
VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

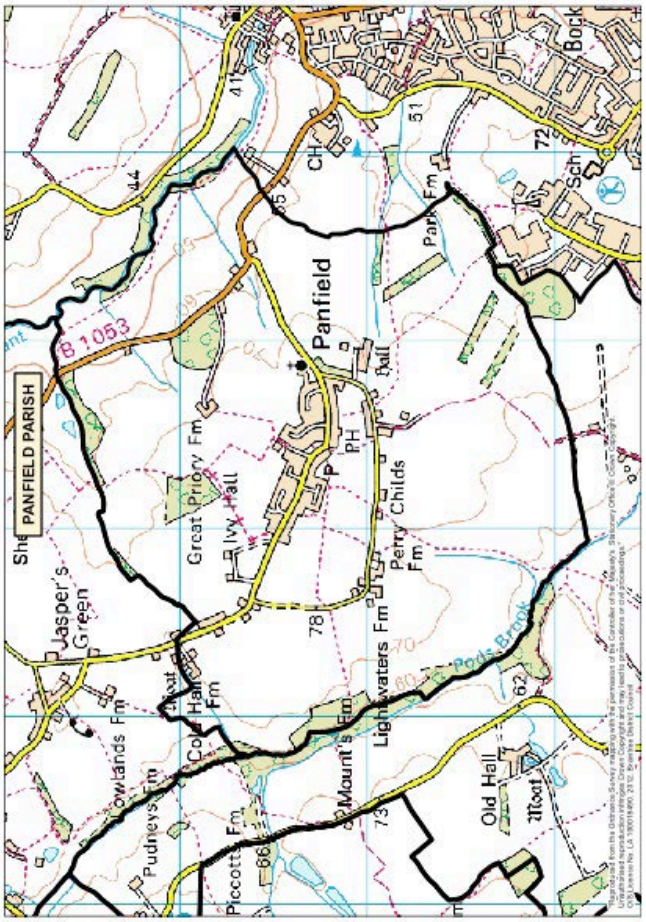
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Inside Back Cover: Village Envelope with Public Right





INTRODUCTION

"We love the whole Village. Various ages and styles of houses, lovely walks, in peace and quiet"

The focus of a VDS is to describe the character of Panfield and include guidance to manage change and improve the physical qualities of the village.

This document explains why our village is special. It was produced by Panfield residents who believe in the aims and proposals of the Village Design Statement (VDS). Those involved have enjoyed finding out and learning more about their village, its history and evolution. However, the VDS is not an historical document. It describes how we are able to retain and develop what is best in our village and the surrounding countryside within the Parish Boundary.

What is the Village Design Statement?

The focus of a VDS is to describe the character of Panfield and include guidance to manage change and improve the physical qualities of the Village.

The VDS is about managing change in Panfield



Who is it for?

It is for the residents to help them know more about and appreciate their village. It is also for planners and those interested and involved in the planning and development process of the village and its surroundings.





The residents of Panfield were kept informed and consulted at all the major stages of the VDS process. This was achieved by:

1. Invitations to consultations and exhibitions.
2. A questionnaire about their opinion on the characteristics of the village, what they appreciate and what they would like to see in the future.

In September 2012 work commenced by holding a workshop in the Village Hall inviting all residents to attend.

Liaison with Braintree District Council Planning Department was needed before the VDS could be considered ready for printing.

A VDS can give a clear statement of what is special, unique and distinctive about the character of a Village.

BACKGROUND

Village History

An appropriate opening to the history of Panfield is the comment given in White's Directory of Essex, 1848, which describes Panfield, or Pantfield, " as a pleasant and salubrious village and parish on the western side of the vale of the river Pant, 2miles NW of Braintree. It contains 299 souls and 1475 acres of land. .....". However, the history of Panfield goes much further back.



The name Panfield almost certainly derives from the Saxon name Panfelda meaning "open country on the banks of the river Pant" and was probably settled by the Saxons between the 5th and 10th centuries. However, the first known reference to Panfield is in the Domseday Book of 1086, and to the entry for Panfelda which states "Panfelda is held by Robert of Richard: it was held by Wisgar in the time of King Edward .....".

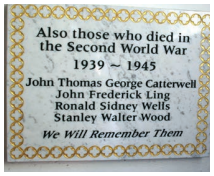
Also well documented in the earlyhistory of Panfield is the existence of Panfield Priory. The priory was founded by Benedictine monks from a gift in about 1070 by a Waleron Fitz-Ralph, the then "Lord of the Manor" and although the actual date of construction of the priory itself is a little uncertain it is thought to be between 1200 and 1250. Subordinate to the abbey of St. Stephen in Caen, Normandy, it was seized in 1285 by Edward II as an "alien" priory to prevent funds being passed to the then enemy, France; an action repeated by Edward III in 1337-38. In 1414 all alien priories were suppressed by Henry V with ownership passing to the crown until, with the Dissolution in 1538, Panfield Priory passed into private ownership. Initially given to a Sir Giles Capel, the property passed through various hands and now, regrettably, nothing remains apart from remnants of the foundations some 0.5miles N of the church and close to Great Priory farm.

Subsequently, and although there are in total 28 listed buildings in Panfield, much earlier documented history centres around the three oldest, still existing, buildings, the Church (Grade II*) and Panfield Hall (Grade I), both largely 15th Century and the 16th/17th Century Bell Inn (Grade II).

Turning briefly now to the more recent history of Panfield and its inhabitants:

From around 1800 to the mid-1950s the population of Panfield was relatively constant, fluctuating between approximately 240 to 320 persons. The census of 1831 describes the working population as consisting of roughly 80% labourers or servants, 10% employers or professionals and 10% "middling sorts"(!); probably typical for this type of village.





The first school in Panfield was opened in June 1876, largely as a result of the 1870 Education Act, which facilitated a system of "school boards" to build and manage schools in areas where they were needed and with funding drawn from local rates. In 1875 a school board, consisting of 5 members was duly formed at The Rectory in Panfield. The school was eventually closed in July 1960; ironically just prior to a major increase in Panfield's population, and the old school building now serves as the Panfield Village Hall.

In common with many villages in the Braintree area the population of Panfield saw a dramatic increase during the 1960's, roughly trebling between 1960 and the mid-1970's with the major housing developments of Queens Gardens, Ketleys View, Meadow Close, Church End/ Kynaston Rd. and St. Mary's Close. The final major development was Thistledown in the mid-1980s, since then the village population has been reasonably stable at around 840 today.

Despite the rapid increase in population of Panfield it is true to say the village always largely retained its character and social values. The old and new inhabitants harmonised well, with the latter rapidly recognising and helping to protect the virtues of village life. Probably the most significant manifestation of this social cohesion was the formation of the Panfield Community Association in 1974, which, after much co-operative effort from villagers, resulted in the conversion of the old school building to the present village hall, which opened on the 25th November, 1978.





Settlement Pattern

The village envelope itself is essentially linear in shape and closely centred around the main Kynaston Road through the village. It consists mainly of domestic dwellings built along Kynaston Road, with several small developments in the form of "closes" radiating from this road.

Hall Rd. is the only other highway in the village with any significant building development and takes the form of a loop around the village envelope and to the south of Kynaston Road.

The above picture is of Main Road, now Kynaston Road. This is the main thoroughfare through the village taken in 1948 before Panfield was developed to the village it is today.

Outside of the Kynaston/Hall Road loop the remaining, and also by far the largest, area of the parish consists of agricultural land and associated farm buildings.

A notable feature of the village is the undeveloped agricultural area between the village envelope and Hall Road, which provides for a feeling of easily accessible open countryside from any point in the village.

A valued aspect, which is apparent in many of the villager's comments from the questionnaire.

The Village Today

Housing Type: There is a mixture of bungalows/houses alongside the main road and in the adjoining "closes," mainly built mid-1950s to 1970's but interspersed with a few more modern and also much older, "original" dwellings.

Community Activity: This is mainly based around the activities of the Panfield Community Association (PCA), the church, and several local clubs, the latter using the village hall, which is leased from Essex C.C. and managed by the PCA. The Bell pub also forms an important part of the village community and the playing field associated with the pub forms the focus for the football team and village fetes etc.

Panfield Village is twinned with St. Symphorien-Le-Chateau, and the Twinning Association enjoys exchange visits every other year.

Local Services: These are minimal and there is no shop/post office. Fortunately, on weekdays there is a reasonable daytime bus service to Braintree.

The economic activity is very similar to the Braintree District as a whole with just over two-thirds (70%) of people employed, 3% actively seeking employment, and 27% are economically inactive, retired, homemakers or carers.



A Key Feature of the village today is that, despite its close proximity to Braintree, the residents still very much value its separate identity from Braintree Town. Residents value its existence as a community with its own distinct village atmosphere.

A significant concern is the future impact and implications of the major developments planned for NW Braintree and the future of the Towerlands site regarding possible encroachment into the village.

Some key statistics about Panfield Village, as supplied by Braintree District Council. This information is correct as at April 2013 and much of the information was gathered from the 2011 Census.

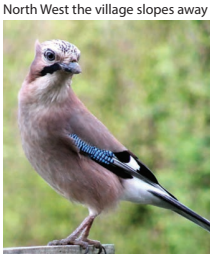
There are 368 households in Panfield Village with a population of 841 people, which is 0.57% of Braintree District as a whole.

15% of the population is under 15 with the greatest proportion of residents (36% being aged between 45 to 64 years.)

The majority of properties in the village are under private ownership (84%) with 15% of the properties under social or private rent schemes.

LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Panfield Village sits on a plateau, at an altitude of approximately 76 metres above sea level. To the South West the land slopes gently towards Pods Brook and to the North West the village slopes away



to the River Pant.

Panfield is surrounded by mainly arable agricultural land, with woods and copses surrounding the village. The village itself has wide grass verges, with trees and hedgerows lining the roads. There is a large variety of trees within and around the village, which includes oak, ash, field maple, beech, sycamore, damson, bullace, horse chestnut, crab apple, mountain ash, holly and elder. The Parish Council planted an oak sapling in Thistledown Playing Field to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and residents have planted a blue spruce and oaks there.

The hedgerows contain a wide variety of bushes and plants including brambles, dog roses, hawthorn, hazel and sloe.

There is a wildlife conservation area at the rear of Thistledown Playing Field, which affords a valuable habitat for wild flowers and insects, and a large pond with a number of aquatic plants, waterfowl and amphibians.

Many species of birds can be observed, including green and lesser-spotted woodpeckers, kestrels, red kites, meadowlarks and owls, as well as a large variety of garden birds.

The copses and banks surrounding Panfield have a wealth of wild flowers: in spring there are primroses, bluebells, daffodils, violets and snowdrops, and later in the year the flora includes sow-thistle, chamomile daisies, speedwell, ransoms, wood groundsel, knapweed, rose bay willow herb and celandine.

It is of vital importance to keep the rural quality of this village in tact. We have chosen to live here for the views, walks peace and quiet. It is a great environment for children and young people to grow up in and learn about the countryside and wealth of wildlife. The village feel and ethos and so much more.

The churchyard is also a wildlife haven, with areas of nettle, buddleia, wild flowers and woodpiles designed to attract insects. The bell turret is home to a colony of bats.





Since 1999 the churchyard has been entered into the RCCE Best Kept Churchyard Competition. The results are listed below:

1999 - Runner up
2009 - First Place
2002 - Runner up
2010 - Highly Commended
2004 - First Place
2011 - First Place
2006 - Third Place
2012 - Third Place
2007 - Runner up
2013 - First Place
2008 - Second Place

Additionally, in 2004 the Churchyard was entered into the Ecclesiastical Insurance National Competition and was a finalist. A calendar was produced and Panfield church placed in the calendar.

Herds of fallow deer regularly cross the road by the church, and occasionally roe deer can be seen; there is quite a thriving population of muntjac deer, as well as bats, foxes and badgers.

Landscape Character Areas

Panfield's situation provides for extensive views across open countryside in all directions, which can be enjoyed via a readily accessible network of footpaths around the village.

Normal vehicle access to the village is only possible along country lanes running from Braintree to the eastern end of Kynaston Road and Shalford/ Saling to the western end of Kynaston Road. In both cases the access lanes are characterised by passing through open rolling countryside with good views to either side, a very attractive feature of the village which emphasises its separate identity.

Open agricultural fields, small copses and isolated farms and dwellings represent the majority of the parish area. These directly border the village envelope and the existence of open fields and an old orchard are also a feature of the main village area itself between Kynaston and Hall Roads.

Recreational Facilities

Within the village envelope there are several designated recreation areas.

John Barr Playing Field where there is play equipment for younger children and goal posts for football. The playing field is bordered by an area designated for allotments, which is managed by the Parish Council. John Barr is owned by Braintree District Council and Leased to Panfield Parish Council.

Thistledown is owned by the residents of Panfield and has a multisport wall. There is a pond and areas that are left uncultivated in order to encourage wildlife and a wealth of biodiversity.

The Bell Playing Field is owned by Green King but is used for organised football matches and has its own changing facilities. This field is also used for events such as the Village Fete.

A small area of greensward, next to the junction of Kynaston Road and Bell Lane houses the Village sign. Some residents have suggested that this area could be made more use of and, perhaps, could be improved by further planting.



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The village extends to the north-west towards Jasper's Green and in an easterly direction towards Shalford Village.

Character Areas

The entry to the village from the East (i.e. Braintree) is particularly attractive being bounded by a short section of mature trees with the church and its grounds clearly visible to the right and followed by the junction of Kynaston and Hall Roads.

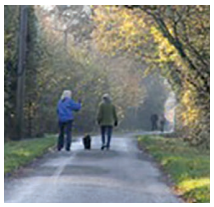
From that junction and continuing along Kynaston Road into the main part of the village there is a long, straight and open section of road, the first part of which is called Church End and from where the road is mostly paved on both sides to the other end of the village envelope. Other than a chicane bend close to the centre, Kynaston Road is very straight through the village, which can unfortunately encourage some speeding.



There is no street lighting in the village even on this main road, a feature which the majority of residents appreciate as it maintains the rural ambience.

Apart from the Village Hall and The Bell Inn, all of the buildings alongside Kynaston Road are domestic dwellings of various types and ages and with few exceptions are set well back from the road. Other than the most recent development at the entrance to St. Mary's Close in Church End the entrances and approaches to the other "Closes" along Kynaston Road are also characterised by wide grass verges, providing an overall impression of space and openness along the length of the village envelope.

Hall Road (formally known as Back Lane) in Panfield runs in a loop starting at the eastern end opposite the church and runs to the south of the village off the main thoroughfare of Church End / Kynaston Road and exits at the western end.



There are many types of properties, mainly detached, situated in the road ranging from those built in the 16th century, up to present times.

As you enter Hall Road the houses are of conventional construction with brick walls and tiled roofs, leading on to thatched roof cottages, and then to the east of the road a farm entrance leading on to a substantial country house c1570 originally built as a hospital for the local priory. As you journey on, the style of houses continues to change with another thatch roofed cottage, farm houses, converted barns, bungalows and extended houses. Over the years some properties have been demolished and rebuilt adding to the unique character of the area. The majority of the residences in Hall Road are sited within the first section where access is gained by the road where it is wide enough for two vehicles, from then on it narrows to a one-vehicle-wide lane.

This single-track part of the road leads to open countryside with sporadic residences comprising large houses varying from modern to listed bungalows and farm buildings. This part of the road has many entrances to farmland and during cultivation periods farm machinery and equipment can be seen in active use.







A bridleway and several footpaths run off of Hall road for walkers and riders to enjoy. Rayne and Braintree are easily accessed via these routes and they are also connected to other paths, which makes all surrounding villages and hamlets accessible

Buildings and Design Features

Of the 28 listed buildings in Panfield the three oldest are the church, Panfield Hall and The Bell Inn. All three are key buildings within the village with the church and the Bell as landmark buildings within the village envelope.



A summary of the more recent main building developments with their dates and features: -

Queens Gardens – late 1950's to early 1960's – predominantly semi-detached, 2-storey houses with a few bungalows.

Ketley's View was built in the mid 1960's. This road is of redbrick semi-detached and detached bungalows.

Meadow Close was erected in the mid 1960's with a mixture of part rendered bungalows and two-storey houses, both semi-detached and detached.

Corner of Hall road/Church End again was predominantly built in the mid to late 1960's with detached two-storey houses.

St Mary's Close is late 1960's to early 1970's.and similar to Meadow Close but with redbrick dwellings.

Thistledown was developed in the early to mid1980's and consists of redbrick bungalows and semi-detached and detached houses.

Bell Lane is a mix of age and style of properties. Several were built in the 1970's and 1980's mainly consisting of brick and rendered properties. There is a thatched property and several listed cottages.

All of the above developments were typical of the period, in particular the rooflines of the properties were low, with relatively flat pitched roofs and mainly constructed in brick with part rendered or cladded front elevations.

The more recent and smaller "infill" developments on the entrance to St Mary's Close and on Kynaston Road are of a very different style to the above having much higher rooflines with steeper pitches to the roofs and more individualistic styling features. They mimic the older type of building style in Essex villages and represent a marked and interesting contrast to the village developments of the 1960's to 1980's.







The properties within the areas referenced above, exhibit a mix of construction features most being brick and rendered with tiled roofs.

There are a number of properties exhibiting timber features and a significant number of thatched properties. This subtle mix of colour, texture and style has enhanced the character and interest of the village properties. It is felt that any new developments should not dominate or intrude so that they change the character of the village.

Design Guidelines

Any new development should include provision for off-road parking in accordance with Braintree District Council's adopted Parking Standards.

Developments should respond sensitively to the existing natural environment in the following ways:

Existing trees and hedges in and around the village must be preserved and protected wherever possible.

Planting of native hedging and broadleaf species must be encouraged, to retain the leafy character of the village.

The grass verges should be retained and maintained.
Any new development should include ample provision for off-road parking.

New development should include the planting of native boundary hedges.

New buildings should incorporate alternative energy resources. All development should be designed to be energy efficient where possible.



Braintree District Council's adopted Core Strategy (2011) identifies Panfield as an "other village" along with other villages within the District, which have a development boundary. These villages are expected to provide a minimum of 300 dwellings between them up to 2026. However, as a large number of these dwellings have already been identified, it is not necessary to allocate any housing sites for Panfield at this time.

Further Building

Just over a third of residents of Panfield Village do not want any further building within the village.

The only proviso would appear to be that roughly a third would accept some building i.e.: 1-5 properties if these were small affordable houses for purchase by the next generation of residents of the village so that they can get themselves onto the property ladder.

The majority of comments show that residents would not favour any developments of more than five small houses as they feel it would not enhance or improve Panfield.

The Draft Pre-Submission Site Allocations and Development Management Plan does not propose any additional housing allocations for Panfield. It shows the location of the development boundary, protects areas of formal recreation, the allotment, and church. It is expected that any further development within the parish will come from limited infill opportunities within the development boundary where they exist, or through the conversion of rural buildings to residential uses where they comply with the relevant planning policy. The possibility of a rural exception site to provide affordable housing for local people could be explored with the co-operation of the Parish Council.

HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Kynaston Road, the eastern end of which is called Church End, is the main road running through Panfield from Braintree Road to Shalford Road towards Jasper's Green. Pavements along Kynaston Road are narrow in places, and residents are to be congratulated for keeping hedges and bushes in their front gardens well trimmed so that they do not impede pedestrians. Apart from Hall Road, which forms a loop joining Kynaston Road at either end, the other roads in the village are cul-de-sacs.

Parking can sometimes be a problem, especially outside the Community Centre and on the road outside The Bell when events are held. There is also an occasional problem with vehicles being parked on the greensward and sometimes on the narrow pavements along Kynaston Road.

Roads in the village are suitable for cycling, but the narrow pavement-less road into Braintree is very dangerous for both cyclists and pedestrians, and there is one bridleway. Most footpaths follow field boundaries and open farm tracks.

A regular hourly bus service connects Panfield to Braintree up to 18.30 hours and children use the School Bus Service to get to and from local schools. There are two bus shelters on Kynaston Road and one at Ashton's Corner on the Braintree Road.

Street furniture includes the village signs and speed limit signs at the entrances to the village, and there is currently a speed indicator device which was placed at either the Church End or Jasper's Green end of Kynaston Road, but negotiations are being undertaken by the Parish Council to have the device converted to solar power, and possibly obtaining a second device so that it does not have to be moved between the two sites.

There is also a 7.5 tonne weight restriction sign at Ashton's Corner limiting HGVs to access only. The whole of the village is covered by a 30 mph speed limit.



Power and telephone cables all run over ground on poles, which are sometimes compromised by the proximity of trees. It is hoped that future installations of utilities will be underground.

"I don't want street lighting; I like to see the stars." "We are used to living in a country village without street lights, so why would be want then now?"

Over the years, Panfield Parish Council has installed a number of benches for seating on Kynaston Road, Hall Road and in both playing fields.

There is a BT telephone kiosk and letterbox at the corner of Bell Lane and another letterbox in Hall Road.

There are no street lights in Panfield, and the VDS Public Consultation showed that the majority of residents wish this to continue, as demonstrated by their comments:

A network of footpaths connect different areas of Panfield as well as taking you to Braintree, Rayne and the surrounding villages.

Panfield Parish Council has also made representation to Braintree District Council regarding possible light pollution from the proposed North West Braintree Growth Location. A high proportion of residents also felt that phone masts and wind turbines would be an unacceptable proposal for Panfield Village.



It is considered essential that the open aspect between the Parish of Panfield and Braintree is maintained.

CONCLUSION

Public consultation revealed Panfield to be a desirable place to live because of its rural location and small village atmosphere. Wildlife is varied and plentiful due to the small population and no major development.

The response to the questionnaire (55%) was excellent, and far exceeded many responses to VDS questionnaires.

These responses were augmented by additional comments and input at the VDS exhibition and open afternoon in the Village Hall. A selection of these responses have been included as an Appendix to this document and, as far as possible, were considered within the framework of Braintree District Council's Guidelines.

All future development in Panfield should be considered in the light of these guidelines, with particular thought given to the following points.

To Retain:

- Its existence as a community with its own distinct villag identity and separate from Braintree Town.
- The rural environment and ambience of Panfield Village.
- Existing footpaths, bridleway and open spaces
- Hedgerows and natural areas
- Village facilities including the Church, Village Hall and Pub

To Encourage:

- Sympathetic alterations and additions to existing buildings
- In any development to use materials in character and appropriate to the rest of the village.
- Keeping to the speed limits and weight restrictions.

To Discourage:

- Street lighting
- Large scale developments of high-density building.
- New development or land usage within the village which would cause noise or light pollution

To Cherish our community assets:

- Panfield Church
- The Bell Public House
- John Barr and Thistledown playing fields
- Village Hall
- The peaceful and rural nature of Panfield Village

Panfield Village is a special place to live and can only be preserved by careful planning and thoughtful use of available building space.

Everything must be done to preserve the distinctive character and feel of our village.

APPENDIX 1 - RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

" The open space and countryside around the village are important.

Being a rural village – keeping our community a village.

Keeping our village identity

The size of the village means it is possible to strike up friendships that last.

Various ages and styles of housing with lovely walks in the peace and quiet.

A safe and secure community atmosphere.

Ensuring our footpaths are maintained.

It would be useful to have Speed Indicator Signs (SID) at both ends of the village.

Enforcement of speed restrictions and weight limits

No more building in the village the infrastructure cannot cope.

Any development should be small and not affect the present outlook.

To keep our bus service.

A limited amount of affordable housing for children of residents.

Not to lose our open spaces and countryside.

The reason for buying a property in Panfield is because it is small, quiet and safe. If I wanted somewhere bigger then I would have bought somewhere else.

Better use of Thistledown open space. For example a cricket pitch.

Improvements to our Village Hall to make it more welcoming.

More seating in open spaces.

It would be nice to have a community shop.

We are used to living in a country village without streetlights, so why would we want them now? "

APPENDIX 2 - ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND THANKS

Anne Cole
Vice Chair Panfield Parish Council & VDS Working Group

Jan Cole
RCCE

Bernard Clubb
VDS Working Group

Alan Luxton
VDS Working Group

Rev. Julie Nelson
VDS Working Group

John Pesti
VDS Working Group
& Photography

Peter Prince
VDS Working Group

Michele Roskrow
VDS Working Group

Sue Russell
VDS Working Group

Jean Simmons
Parish Clerk/RFO

All the people who collected and delivered the questionnaires

Finally, without whom this project would not have been possible, the residents of Panfield Village



APPENDIX 3 - VDS DIARY

Date	Event	Outcome
March 2012	RCCE Neighbourhood Plans Event	Starting point for VDS Working Group
9th July 2012	Parish Council discusses holding a consultation event in village hall.	Agreed to hold on 29th September 2012.
10th September 2012	Parish Council Meeting re ideas for draft VDS and	Confirmation of VDS Consultation event.
29th September 2012	VDS Consultation Event in Village Hall	Well attended by residents. Volunteers for working group and delivery & collection.
8th October 2012	Parish Council Meeting	AC presented working agreement for agreement by PPC in order that application can be submitted to Awards for All in order to get grant for VDS.
February 2012	Quotes requested for Survey analysis and VDS booklet printing	Quotes received over next few weeks
6th November 2012	VDS Working Group first meeting.	VDS Working Group formed Attended by Jan Cole of RCCE who outlined project as well as giving guidance notes on preparation of VDS.
25th March 2013	VDS Working Group Meeting	Agreement on style for Village Questionnaire. Prepared over the next 3 weeks (PP). JP will produce a booklet of photographs for the VDS.
20th to 29th April 2013	Questionnaire delivered and collection.	Delivery and collection questionnaires to residents
23rd May 2013	Conditional Offer from Awards for All	PPC Agreed accept. All paperwork completed.
24th June 2013	VDS Working Group Meeting.	Analysis of questionnaire received and discussed. Preparation of history & photos
28th June 2013	Awards for All	Award monies received by Panfield Parish Council
19th October 2013	Village Exhibition Event	Well attended agreed informative.
27th January 2014	VDS Working Group	Amendments to VDS document.
18th February 2014	VDS Working Group	Amendments agreed. RCCE thought it was an excellent document.
10th March 2014	Parish Council Meeting	Approval by Parish Council of VDS
14th March 2014	Sent to BDC	For final approval

APPENDIX 4 - CHILDRENS' ARTWORK

Artwork produced by children of the Village at the VDS Exhibition in November 2013. They were asked to draw their favourite places in the village.



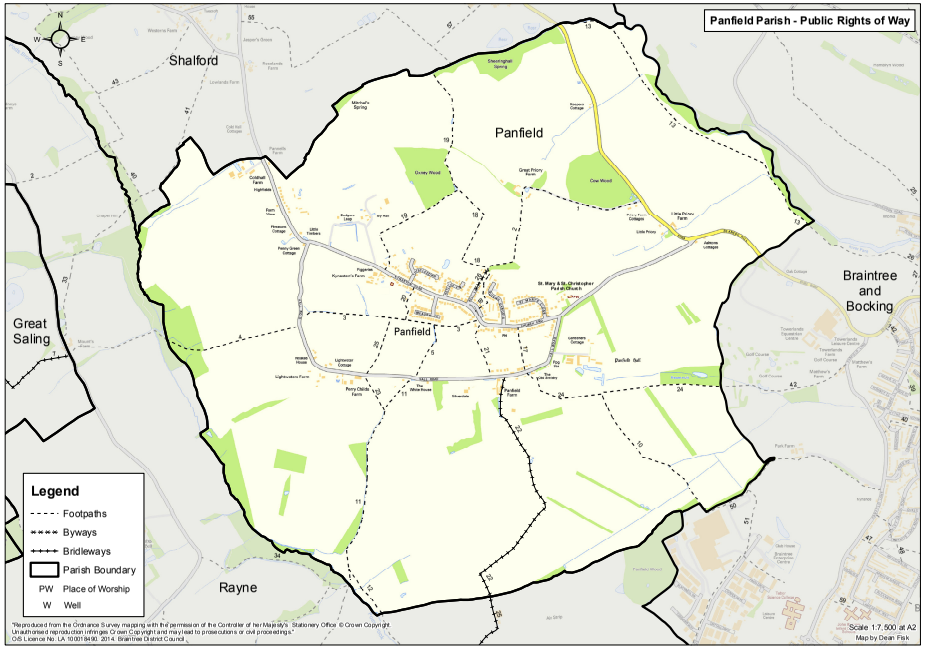
John Barr Playing Field



The Bell Inn



Thistledown


Panfield Parish - Public Rights of Way
Shalford
Panfield
Braintree and Bocking
Great Saling
Rayne
Legend
Footpaths
Byways
Bridleways
Parish Boundary
PW Place of Worship
W Well
Scale 1:7,500 at A2
Map by Dean Fisk