



# East Hagbourne

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN -  
2018 to 2033

Submission Version 17 September 2018

## **Appendix 1: The Parish of East Hagbourne**

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Origins and History of East Hagbourne.....	3
Biodiversity, fauna and flora .....	7
Human population .....	10
Human Health .....	10
Soil.....	11
Water (flooding).....	12
Sewage .....	15
Material and Community Assets.....	15
Community Activities .....	18
Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage .....	19
Historic development and layout .....	20
Architecture .....	20
The Historic Village .....	21
Tadley.....	23
New Road.....	23
Harwood Road, Windsor Crescent and Wilcher Close .....	24
Outlying Areas – Coscote and Hagbourne Mill .....	24
Archaeology .....	25
Landscape .....	26
Green spaces.....	27
Education .....	31
Traffic and Transport .....	32
Housing .....	33
Waste .....	34
Employment.....	34

## Introduction

The information presented here provides a robust baseline of evidence for the East Hagbourne Neighbourhood Plan. A summary of the information is presented here in support of the Plan policies.

## Origins and History of East Hagbourne

East Hagbourne lies in an area of agricultural farming and provides an attractive country environment, while being close to the facilities offered by the town of Didcot. The extensive network of footpaths provides recreational opportunities for both village and town dwellers, as well as providing pleasant walking routes for journeys within the village. A weekday bus service currently provides a link with Didcot, its shops and wider transport connections. A prevailing theme of the 2016 EHNP consultation survey was the overwhelming feeling that East Hagbourne is an “extremely attractive and special place”. East Hagbourne is a small village with a strong local identity and residents feel that the unique character and community should be maintained. The primarily agricultural and rural character of the village should be safeguarded.

East Hagbourne has a long and distinguished heritage. There is evidence of occupation of the area during the Iron Age and the village was one of the larger centres in this area in Saxon times. East Hagbourne is listed in the Domesday Survey (1086) and this is recorded in a plaque on the wall of the previous Post Office in Main Road. Throughout its history East Hagbourne has been involved in agriculture, and the Domesday record listed 14 farms and two mills in the area. In the 19th/20th century the village was known for orchards, water cress beds and hops with one remaining hop kiln at Manor farm. Hops can still be found growing in hedgerows. East Hagbourne was known for paper making and it is said that blotting paper was invented here. The railway line between Didcot and Newbury, built in the late 19th century, came through East Hagbourne and is used today as a cycle and walking trail. Most development up to the 17th century was in the area around Main Road with some down Bakers Lane, Tadley, Coscote and Hagbourne Mill. Development in the 19th century continued mainly in Main Road and around Tadley. In the middle of the 20th century there was significant ribbon development along New Road and Blewbury Road. The area around the centre of village was designated as a Conservation Area in 1970 and its boundary was extended in 1993.

A detailed Landscape Study and Village Character Assessment- available as a separate annex - has been commissioned as part of the development of the EHNP plan. The Character Assessment methodology takes as its starting point the whole of the parish as it has developed to the present day, in accordance with the aims of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- To place good design, local character and conservation of the historic and natural environment at the heart of sustainable development and good planning.

- To conserve heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- For any development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, drawing on 'the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place' (paragraph 126, 29).

The NNPF's defines the historic environment as resulting from 'the interaction between people and places through time'. This simple definition places people and their perceptions at the centre of understanding what makes places distinctive and what benefits they offer, how they have changed into their present form and how they can change in the future.

A number of characteristics make East Hagbourne distinctive in a national and regional context, and mostly result from the action and interaction of human and natural factors in the period up to 1900, which includes the 1840s enclosures and the modest amount of building that took place in the second half of the 19th century. Developments in the 20th century also bring their own character, many houses being built in the 1950s to owner specifications and the variety of council housing adding its own character.

The landscape of East Hagbourne parish is dominated by its village, which was established by the 11th century. This nucleated settlement pattern has strongly influenced the pattern of routeways, fields and tree cover, along with the survival of curved and ridged plough strips called ridge and furrow. These all overlay an earlier landscape of scattered farmsteads and their associated fields. This relationship of the village to its fields can still be discerned today, giving a strong sense of a village within its landscape. Two small areas of dispersed historic settlement outside the village are the former medieval hamlet of Coscote to the west, dominated by a 17th century farmstead, and Hagbourne Mill Farm in the south eastern corner of the parish. The ancient hamlet of Tadley was physically separate from the main village until about 80 years ago.

A highly distinctive feature around the village is the open agricultural landscape with few trees, resulting from its enclosure with straight thorn hedgerows from former open fields. These extended across most of the parish and into what is now Didcot. There is some surviving ridge and furrow within many of these former open fields. By the 11th century this area had some of the lowest recorded densities of tree cover in England. The open fields are documented from charters of the 10th and early 11th centuries (the late Saxon period) and remained in use until the 1840s, which is very late by national standards. There has been some 20th century removal of the field boundaries, but comparison of the 19th century and modern maps shows that this largely continued as an open arable landscape, as fields remained large. There was relatively little need for new boundaries to be inserted between the older (generally east-west aligned) boundaries dating from the medieval period and even earlier. This open landscape provides extensive views both into the village and outwards to the Downs to the south and south west and to the Chilterns to the south east and east, giving a sense of space contrasting with the more intimate atmosphere of the historic village.

Species-rich boundaries - which include willow, poplars, oak and formerly elm, used for timber in construction - are found in the green corridor to the north of the historic village,

along the southern boundary of the village bordering Hacca's Brook and along other watercourses which generally run in an east-west alignment, between which are stretched the 19th century thorn hedges. Many of the hedges include fruiting bushes providing winter food for birds. The impact of Dutch Elm Disease was very significant across the parish, there formerly being a fine line of elms between Coscote and East Hagbourne. Today, the parish overall has few relatively trees by national standards, although planting around houses and on the plotlands to the south of Main Road provides a green ambience. Significant plantings have taken place in recent years at and around the Millennium Wood, at the 'Green Gap' between Didcot and East Hagbourne and around the Great Mead Recreation Ground.

Routeways, most now used as recreational footpaths, are an integral and highly distinctive part of East Hagbourne. Numerous footways run between the houses in the historic village including Shoe Lane and Bakers Lane reminiscent of past activities. Paths and tracks also extend out of the village into the former open fields around it and connect the church to West Hagbourne and to Fulscot Manor in the east. Routeways provided access to open fields subdivided into strips, which remained unenclosed until 1840-3, and to an area of meadow in the Alluvial Lowlands to the east (termed Great Meadow on a map of 1775). A significant feature to the west of the village is the abandoned 1880s railway line which is now an important ecological resource and provides extensive and highly valued views from its embankment.

Historic maps show that orchards developed on the plots around the medieval village and to the south of the shrunken medieval settlement of Coscote. There is fragmentary evidence of the extensive orchards which extended to the south of Coscote and throughout East Hagbourne village including areas now developed, including Blewbury Road. These date from at least the early 17th century, when Harwell cherries are first documented as being exported to London. Lawson's Orchard on Main Road is the only surviving example of a whole orchard.

Watercourses are a distinctive feature of the parish. The Mill Brook, extends along the southern boundary past Hagbourne Mill Farm and the site of the paper mill to the north east. William Slade, the paper mill's owner, is credited with the invention of blotting paper, for which he received a medal at the 1855 Paris Exhibition. Hacca's Brook runs through the village with tributary streams joining from the north and from Shovel Spring to the west. It is an attractive feature of the village, but also brings a risk of flooding to some areas. A group of local volunteers carries out regular maintenance work to help keep the stream flowing through the essentially flat landscape. The twin channels of the stream downstream of Tadley are of long standing, being shown on the first OS maps, both draining at different points into the Mill Brook. There is evidence for damming and diverting of watercourses, particularly along the southern fringe of the Village for flood management and the growing of watercress. This can also be seen in the Alluvial Lowlands at Hagbourne Mill Farm and along the Mill Brook.

Domestic architecture in East Hagbourne displays the key characteristics of rural architecture in the vale landscapes around the fringes of the Berkshire downs - many shared with the south east of England generally. There are many timber frame buildings dating from the 17th century and earlier, often with hipped as well as half-hipped roofs. These were commonly

thatched with straw before the more widespread use of clay tile (and occasionally slate) from the 18th century. Brick is used for chimneystacks and for the infill between panels, some of this being set out in a distinctive herringbone pattern. Tile hanging, commonly applied to decorative gable ends, is also a distinctive feature.

Farm buildings are distinguished from domestic buildings by their use of weatherboard over timber frame and straw thatch, some of which was replaced by slate and tile in the 19th century. Their construction and form also displays the characteristics of farmstead architecture fringing and extending into the Downs: loose courtyard arrangements of buildings around one or more sides of a cattle yard are dominated by barns, some aisled to one or both sides, for storing and processing the harvested corn crop and in this area for housing horses and even cattle as well. Aisled barns - as at Tudor House on Main Road - mark the western border of their concentration in south east England and southern East Anglia.

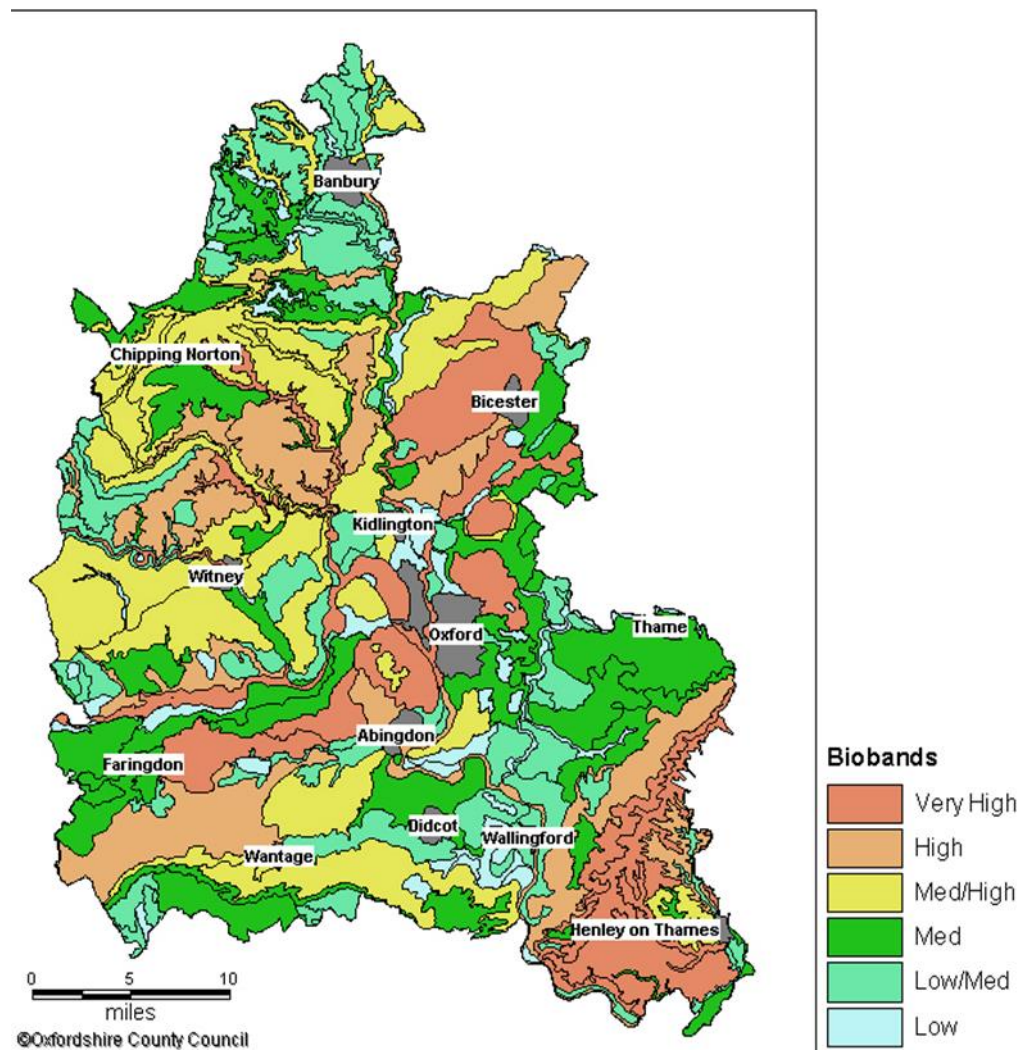
In spite of its proximity to the town of Didcot, East Hagbourne has a distinct identity, with many community events centred on the village, including the Fun Run, Scarecrow week, the Church Fete and the Produce Show. These events and the wide range of clubs and other activities, provide a lively and distinct atmosphere to the village. St Andrew's Church, at the west end of the village, is the centre for religious worship and the Church community is also extensively involved in other activities including charity fund raising. The Church has a fine peal of bells, regularly played by a dedicated and expert group. East Hagbourne residents have a strong volunteer ethos. The Village Survey underpins this and this is apparent with all the clubs, societies and activities that take place. Our award winning Community Shop is entirely run by volunteers, there are also regular litter picks, stream clearing, church cleaning and other events for the benefit of the community. Through the monthly Parish Magazine and village website, the community is kept updated of events and activities going on in the Parish and fosters the strong sense of community that this village has in abundance.

It is clear from village meetings and the community survey that residents of East Hagbourne have a very strong feeling of local identity and value the fact that East Hagbourne is a well defined and historic small village in South Oxfordshire. A very important aspect of the village is its rural nature and setting and the very good access to the open countryside through a well maintained network of footpaths both within the village envelope and connecting the village to open farmland and neighbouring villages. The open spaces that surround the built environment are particularly valued. The farming community is still well represented in the village which retains a remarkably strong agricultural and rural aspect seen in both the mix of buildings and the surrounding field systems. The strong feeling of local identity is partly expressed through the many activities and clubs in the village which are described in more detail in Section on Community Vitality.

Despite the proximity to Didcot, East Hagbourne has retained its strong rural character largely because of its setting in open countryside where the village centre is surrounded by open fields and farm land. There are several active farms still in the village envelope and the sight of farm vehicles frequently coming through the village is a constant reminder of this. Several tracks and footpaths lead from Main Road and cross the surrounding fields, bringing fields and the village closely together. The very extensive network and mixed variety of footpaths

add greatly to the village character. The views out of East Hagbourne to fields and hills around are a very important feature and a strong element of the village character. The views from New Road and Blewbury Road to the Chiltern Hills and south of the village to the Downs, areas of the AONB, are particularly outstanding.

## Biodiversity, fauna and flora



**Figure 1- Oxfordshire Biomap** (Source- <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk>)

South Oxfordshire contains a rich variety of natural habitats of local, national and international importance. There are a total of 203 designated nature conservation areas in South Oxfordshire including 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), 38 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 157 proposed or confirmed County Wildlife Sites (CWS) and 4 Local Nature Reserves. Most of East Hagbourne parish is categorised on the Oxfordshire biomap in the low/medium biobands. The parish landscape is mainly lowland village farmlands which do not support habitats that are deemed to be of national or international importance, however there are many smaller areas in the parish that support rich biodiversity and with sensitive management could be further enhanced.



The historic and natural character of the parish provides habitats for wildlife, as well as offering opportunities for enhancement which are explored in the Character Assessment. East Hagbourne contains the following *UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats* (see <http://incc.defra.gov.uk/page-5706>):

- Traditional orchards
- Streams and rivers
- Hedgerows

Within the built environment, habitats are afforded by the pre-1840 historic environment of ancient boundaries and managed watercourses. The increased role of the village community in managing land for public enjoyment and sustaining wildlife has played a significant role together with the management of gardens, road verges and private plots of land. The community and individuals can bring benefit to East Hagbourne's environment through the creation of new habitats, such as the Millennium Wood and the wildflower meadow at the cemetery and the maintenance of its historic routeways and boundaries to enable species to move from one area to another.

The open landscape around East Hagbourne has historically afforded habitats for a diversity of farmland birds, including fieldfares and redwings profiting from the abundant hedgerow fruit. Historic boundaries, including the thorn hedgerows introduced with enclosure, afford habitats for the movement of invertebrates and other species. The various channels of Hacca's Brook provide a home for mallard, water hen and kingfisher and along some stretches hops twine in the trees, a reminder of the 19th century when they were grown commercially.

The cessation of traditional activities such as the management of trees for fuel, fencing and building, the maintenance of field boundaries and the decline of the orchard industry together with the removal of field boundaries and intensive agriculture has clearly had an impact on species diversity. 20th century change has resulted in the substantial loss of historic orchards and close trimming of hedgerows, some which has affected species diversity, however there remain areas of tall hedges around Butts Piece, Great Mead and to the east of Tadley which provide good habitats. The planting of trees, shrubs and boundaries around house plots has also made a significant contribution to species diversity and habitats and in particular through the action of the local community in for example the planting of Millennium Wood and the maintenance of watercourses and their boundary features.

The remaining hedges have been progressively reduced over the years with loss of hedgerow birds including yellowhammer which was formerly found. The presence of skylark in spring indicates the potential to improve biodiversity with sensitive management. The field margins retain some variety of arable weeds, but again diversity has diminished over time.

While relatively few detailed wildlife surveys have been conducted in the parish, the existing evidence from studies and local observations indicate that much is to be found both in the 'wild' areas and in the built environment.

Mowbray Fields (part of the Green Corridor and lying in Didcot Parish) includes a Local Nature Reserve with a rich flora and invertebrate fauna. The reserve harbours an extensive colony of Common Spotted, Southern Marsh and hybrid orchids measured at over 3000 in the 1990s.



A survey carried out in 2012 identified 320 species of invertebrates including 11 Nationally Scarce and one Red Data Book 2 Vulnerable Species. Orchids are also found in the wildflower meadow planted in the cemetery as well as in local gardens, including a population of white helleborine. Mining bees can be seen on a local front lawn and other solitary bees are visitors to local gardens. Even road verges can provide habitats - the locally scarce bur chervil grows in the grass next to a village bus stop.

The Green corridor including Butts Piece and Millennium Wood provides a good and improving wildlife habitat, both areas being actively managed. The hedges and scrub around this area are a good place to look for bullfinches and many other local species of bird. Slow worms are present on Butts Piece and muntjac are frequently seen in this area as well as in gardens. The larger area of the cemetery is managed by the Parish Council and roughly half is presently a species rich wildflower meadow, sown in 1998 and holder of an award from the CPRE. Management is carried out jointly by local farmers and Hagbourne Environment Group.

The various water courses provide a network of wildlife corridors throughout the parish. Water life has sometimes been compromised in the past by contamination from sewage, but this is hopefully now overcome and though management to control the risk of flooding progresses, the water quality should become more stable and healthy for wildlife. Kingfishers can be seen along the stream and the bordering scrub is home to many birds including warblers and winter thrushes (redwing and fieldfare) that feed on the abundant berries. Tracks reveal the presence of animals including muntjac and roe deer that are frequently seen in the scrub, open fields or in gardens. Watercress beds were once developed along the brook where it flows behind Main Road and this area retains a species-rich boundary separating it from the former open fields to the south.

The areas of pasture and paddocks, often showing the marks of ridge and furrow cultivation present a further habitat. Although the grassland is in most cases 'improved', the fields provide a refuge for winter birds including redwing and fieldfare, particularly north of Coscote, and a habitat for mushrooms including parasol. Blewits may also be found within the parish and a wider range of less conspicuous fungi are found on more established grassland including at the Recreation Ground. The Alluvial Lowlands to the south of the parish, particularly around Hagbourne Mill comprises older permanent pasture and waterside habitats, both within and alongside the watercourses. To the west is a small patch of species rich, wet wood pasture between two watercourses.

The embankment of the former Didcot, Southampton and Newbury railway, built in 1882 provides short and long grassland together with some areas of scrub as well as trees including walnut, apple and cherry. It is now a rich wildlife corridor, featuring species rich limestone grassland, due to the chalk excavated from the cuttings through the downs to the south, Several species of butterfly are common in summer, particularly marbled white, but also small blue are present and lizards are present.

## Human population

The parish of East Hagbourne today covers the areas of New Road and Blewbury Road, the central village and the small settlements at Coscote and Hagbourne Mill. Prior to the boundary change of May 2015, the Parish also extended into the Millbrook area of what is now Didcot.

At the 2011 Census, the population was given as 1880, however when the area transferred to Didcot is excluded, the figure within the current Parish boundary was 1158. All data in this report refers to the boundary as it exists today.

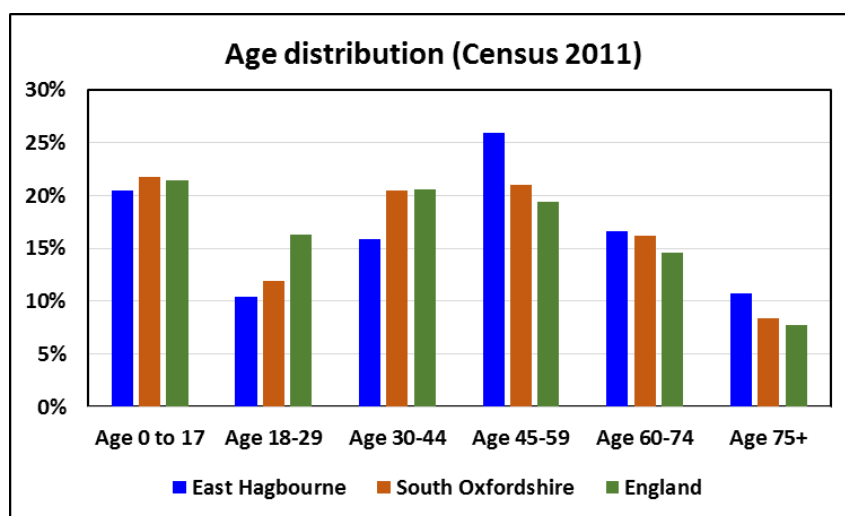


Figure 2. Population Data for East Hagbourne Parish (current parish boundary)

East Hagbourne has a similar proportion of children up to 17 years as South Oxfordshire and the whole of England, but a smaller proportion in the 18-44 age range. This is balanced by a higher proportion of people aged 45 and over compared to these wider regions.

## Human Health

There is neither a GP surgery nor a nurse in the village, the nearest facilities being in Didcot at Didcot Health Centre (3.4km), Woodlands Medical Centre (3.4km) and The Oak Tree Health Centre (5.5km), taking the Fleur-de-Lys pub in Main Road as the starting point. For those without a car, travel by bus is possible, but involves a change in Didcot. In the 2016 Parish Survey, 55% of respondents said they would like to see a satellite doctor's surgery in East Hagbourne.

The John Radcliffe Hospital in Headington, Oxford is the nearest Accident and Emergency facility and is located 31km away and there is a minor injuries unit at Abingdon Hospital. Travel times by car vary depending on traffic conditions, but are at least 45 minutes under normal conditions. The local District General Hospitals are the John Radcliffe and Churchill in Headington, Oxford. The village also has reasonable access by car to other hospitals in the Eastern segment of Oxford, such as the Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital.

Access to these hospitals from the village by public transport is available and connections by train and bus from Didcot are reasonable, although the hourly bus service to East Hagbourne does not always connect easily. Journey times are in the range 1.5 to 2.5 hours.

Ambulance and fire emergency services are located 3.4km (6 minutes) away in Didcot. The village has a defibrillator, currently housed in the lobby of the Fleur-de-Lys public house.

The 2011 Census showed that there were 107 households (22.8%) containing a person with a long-term health problem or disability. This figure is slightly higher than that for South Oxfordshire, perhaps reflecting the population bias towards higher ages, but is lower than the figure for the whole of England, which is 25.7%.

## Soil

East Hagbourne lies in an area of undulating land, draining through a number of small streams towards the River Thames near Wallingford. The land comprises a band of siltstones/sandy limestones of the Upper Greensand lying slightly higher than the Gault Clays leading down to the Thames north of Didcot. The slightly harder Greensand rocks create an area of more rolling landform within the Vale and give rise to fertile, well-drained sandy Brown soils of the Harwell series, which cover most of East Hagbourne parish. These are locally shallow over sandstone in places and despite their tendency to harden or 'pan' they are generally well suited to arable and root crops, as well as fruit growing.

There is a narrow band of less well-drained soils (the Ford End series) stretching from the south of the village towards Coscote. These soils have more cultivation limitations than the Harwell series on which most of the parish lies, although they are still suitable for cereal production. In particular, there can be high groundwater due to impermeable Gault Clay below. These fields have caused flash flooding after prolonged rain (2014) when the soil became saturated and eventually burst, sending water down towards Hacca's Brook. It is probable, therefore, that this area was not ploughed on such a regular basis - a possible explanation in combination with post-1950 arable cultivation for the lack of ridge and furrow.

Similar soils, broadly classed within the Block series, are also found in the alluvial lowlands to the south and east of the parish. Many of these areas, including the lower lying land in the south east corner of the parish, are liable to flooding and are predominantly under permanent pasture. Together with the presence of numerous ditches, this creates the impression of a wetland landscape characterised by poorly draining land.

NPPF Paragraph 143 requires "safeguarding the long term potential of best and most versatile agricultural land". Land classified Grades 1/2/3a in Agricultural Land Classification ALC code are "Best and Most Versatile" land for agriculture. In the National Character Area Profile 108 for the Upper Thames Clay Vales of which East Hagbourne forms a part, only 16% of land is classed as Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land. It notes that such land allows for growing of cereals and, near Harwell for example, orchard fruit. It also states that "some of the most productive soils are sandy brown earths developed from the Greensand",

The Agricultural Land Classification map for London and the South East (ALC007) classifies most of the area in East Hagbourne (the Harwell Series) as Grade 2 land, with the Alluvial Lowlands lying along the Mill Brook being less productive. Some of these, which lie further away from the current built area are nevertheless under cereal cultivation today, while the lower lying areas are under grass.

Any significant building activity around East Hagbourne would therefore involve loss of "best and most versatile agricultural land".

## Water (flooding)

The Hacca's Brook flows from west to east through the parish, crossing the southern edge of East Hagbourne village. A smaller tributary stream joins from the north at Parsonage Lane. At Tadley, the stream splits, with a southern (lower) channel acting as a spillway when water levels are high. This lower channel is of long standing and is shown on the first series OS map. Both channels continue to join the Mill Brook, which in turn eventually joins the Thames near Wallingford. The Mill Brook itself forms the southern boundary of the parish over part of its stretch, with channels continuing upstream to Upton and Blewbury.

The land around East Hagbourne is relatively flat and gently undulating. The fall on the Hacca's Brook and Mill Brook before they reach the Thames near Wallingford is modest, so good stream flow cannot be taken for granted. There is a long history of flooding of the Hacca's Brook with houses and roads in Tadley and Main Road being affected.

The Environment Agency flood map for East Hagbourne (accessed 23 January 2017) shows that the risk of flooding extends from Tadley along all of the Hacca's Brook as far as the railway embankment. The northern tributary stream, which is culverted over much of its length shows risks particularly at Parsonage Lane and in Mowbray Fields, just outside the parish. In addition, the Mill Brook is also at risk of flooding, affecting the road and fields to the north of Hagbourne Mill.

Water run-off from the fields, as well as augmenting stream flows, can also have direct effects on properties. Houses in Tadley can be affected by run-off from the fields on the low ridge to the south. At the north of the parish, field run-off can cause problems for houses in Millbrook to the north.

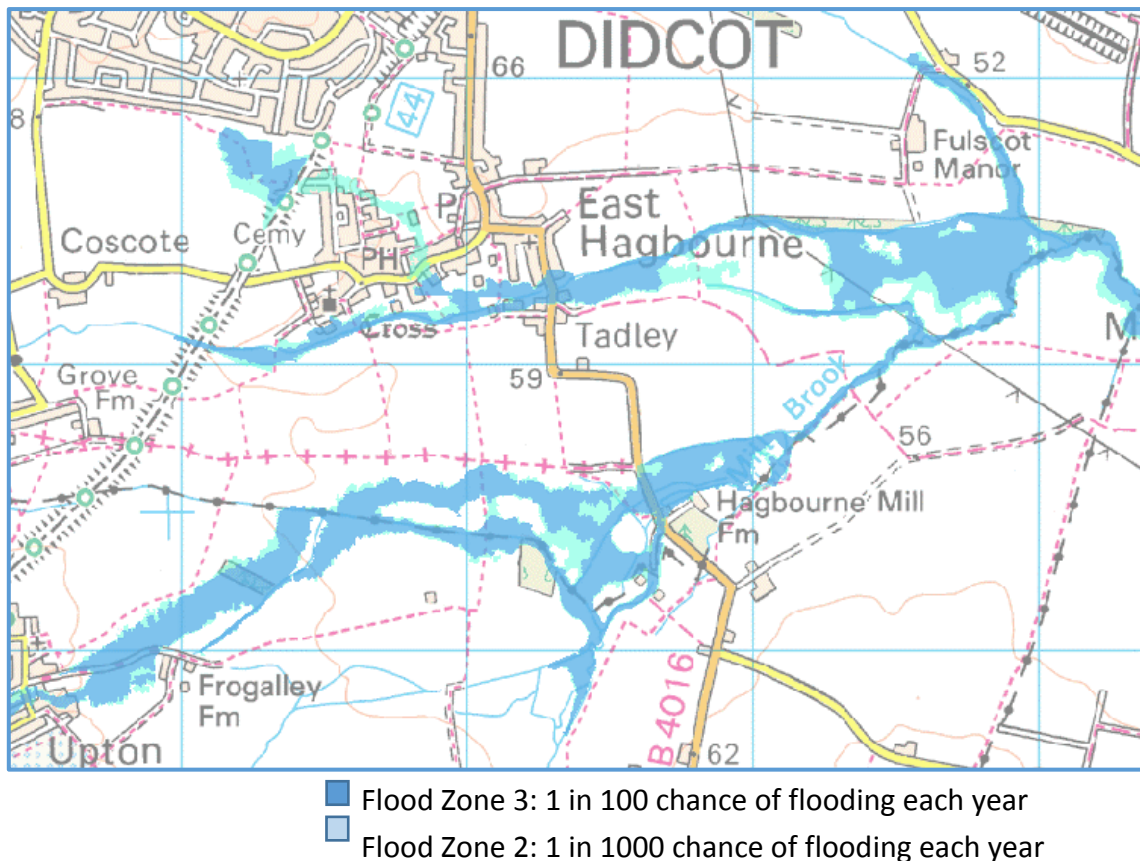


Figure 3. Environment Agency Flood Map for East Hagbourne

Severe flooding events occurred in 1990 and again in 2007/2008, with the main areas affected being Tadley (Blewbury Road and surroundings) and Main Road, particularly near Parsonage Lane. In both events, several houses suffered flooding. Although both these events were triggered by heavy rainfall, it is now acknowledged that lack of maintenance of the stream was a major contributing factor. In 1990, a fallen tree blocked flow downstream of Blewbury Road, while by 2007 the stream was badly blocked by vegetation. All of this occurred in spite of concerted and expert representations by the Parish Council to the regulating authorities over many years.

Following the 2007 flooding, new efforts were made to better understand the causes of the flooding and the possible remedies. Stream levels were recorded and analysed by villagers, and in discussion with the authorities it became clear that both the stream and the road drains needed attention. Over the following 2 years, Monson (for SODC) carried out a major clearance of both the lower and upper channels downstream of Blewbury Road, and OCC carried out work on the Highway surface water drains. Local farmers have carried out their own work further downstream. The cleared stream coped well with the winter rains of 2009/10 and both authorities carried out further work within the village.

Over the spring of 2010 the challenge of maintaining the stream in its clean state was reviewed. Vegetation growth had been very rapid and risked undoing the clearance work of the previous year. Under the leadership of the Parish Council, a volunteer flood group of stream dwellers around Tadley was formed to raise awareness and encourage everyone to



help keep the stream clear. Work parties were organised to keep the main channel clear through the houses and downstream of Blewbury Road. Stream dwellers throughout the village were contacted to raise awareness, and with their help, a start was made on controlling the invasive Himalayan Balsam.



Tadley 2014



Main Road 2014



Parsonage Lane 2014

2012 was again a very wet year with a lot of volunteer activity to keep the channels clear and although the stream ran high there were no serious issues. Late 2013 and early 2014 were again very wet, and roads were flooded at Parsonage Lane, the path to West Hagbourne and the road near Hagbourne Mill.

In January 2014, some houses in Blewbury Road, East Hagbourne came very close to flooding. The stream itself was in good condition, and the pressure points on this occasion were the road drains. The drains were flowing, but those to the south of the stream became overwhelmed by a large volume of field run-off from the fields to the south of the village.



Dry weather water levels: after and before maintenance  
2009



Run-off from South Fields  
2014

It is clear that responsibility for flood control has to be shared between local people and the authorities. We need the help of experts to handle big maintenance jobs, but local efforts are the best and perhaps only way to keep the stream clear on a routine basis, and the eyes of local people can help identify problems before they become serious. In East Hagbourne the floods of 2014 showed that even when the stream is well maintained, heavy rains can lead to a risk of flooding. The condition of the road drains is also critical. Blocked drains have occurred in Main Road, New Road, and Blewbury Road and in the culverted stream crossing Main Road at Parsonage Lane. Constant vigilance and routine maintenance is needed to avoid problems.

## Sewage

The various channels of Hacca's Brook provide a home for mallard, water hen and kingfisher, and along some stretches hops twine in the trees, a reminder of the 19th Century when they were grown commercially. Water life has sometimes been compromised in the past by contamination from sewage.

From East Hagbourne, the land rises gently towards the north before falling onto the lower areas of Didcot where the sewage treatment plant is located. Mains sewerage came to the village in the early 1950s and two pumping stations deliver sewage over the hill into Didcot.

The pumping station at the Hacca's Brook bridge on Blewbury Road failed during the 1990 floods, leading to sewage backing up and contaminated water entering some local houses. The pump was subsequently upgraded although there have been some pump failures there have so far been no major problems. The second pumping station is located at the end of The Croft, opposite the Bowling Green. There have been repeated incidents where the pump has become overloaded after heavy rains with release of untreated sewage into the waterways.

These sewers are designed to carry only domestic waste water, but some houses drain their surface water to the sewer and surface water can also enter the system through when rainfall is heavy, which can add considerably to the flow.

Attention needs to be given to adequate provision for sewage for any new development in the Parish.

## Material and Community Assets

### **St Andrew's Church**

St Andrew's Church is in the heart of the oldest part of the village. As well as being a place for worship and reflection, the church hosts various charitable events and activities, such as the Christmas Tree Festival, the popular annual Safari Supper and many other appeals throughout the church calendar. The Friends of St Andrews have recently been formed to raise funds towards maintenance of this important Grade 1 listed building.

### **St Andrew's CofE School**

The Village School is a Church of England primary school which serves the villages of East and West Hagbourne, Coscote and more recently the fringes of Didcot. It is a single form entry of approximately 30 children per year and is popular and currently oversubscribed.

### **Hagbourne Pre-School and Toddler Group**

Hagbourne Pre-School is base in Hagbourne Village Hall and runs every week day for children aged between two and a half to five. Although not linked to the primary school, many infants



transfer to the primary school at 5 years old. For younger children, East Hagbourne also has a drop-in Baby and Toddler Group once a week now located at the pavilion.

### **Fleur de Lys Pub**

The Fleur de Lys is the only remaining pub in the village and is currently under the management of the Sarginsons, licence holders since 2013. It is an extremely popular and valued hostelry. (Evidence – 118 of 203 respondents in survey use it from daily to 1-2 times a month). The Fleur hosts many musical nights and their annual weekend long “Fleur Fest” has become an established event which appeals to music lovers as well as attracting diverse artists from far afield.

The Fleur offers a traditional lunch and dinner menu six days a week and caters for family occasions and business events. Its customers are drawn from the village, from surrounding villages and it is the nearest “countryside pub” to Didcot. The pub holds a monthly quiz night and boasts an Aunt Sally and a cribbage team.

### **Hagbourne Village Hall**

Hagbourne Village Hall serves the villages of East and West Hagbourne. Lying just across the road from Hagbourne Primary School, it is a valuable amenity within the village. There are a large number of regular users including Hagbourne Pre-school, Brownies and Boy Scout groups and a ballet school as well as being the home for the HAMS amateur dramatic society. It also accepts individual bookings for functions such as birthday parties and dances. It is well appointed with a kitchen, stage, meeting room and a larger function room, The village car park is situated just outside. Public meetings are regularly held there along with several annual events such as the Produce Show and Fun Run.

### **Recreation Ground, East Hagbourne Pavilion and Playground**

The Recreation Ground at Great Mead is owned by the Parish Council and is home to the children's playground which was refitted with modern equipment in 2009. The playing field itself is surrounded by mature trees and provides an attractive green space. A new Pavilion with a 24 space car park was formally opened by Ed Vaizey MP in January 2016. It houses a Community Room together with changing facilities and showers to support sports activities. Hagbourne United Football Club plays in the North Berks league and is working to increase the number of friendly fixtures during the summer months. Other sporting activities are being encouraged, with table tennis and Pilates already using the Community Room, which is also home to the Community Choir and an art group. The whole site supports the annual village Fête which takes place in June. Other groups are expressing interest in this new facility and it will bring great benefit to the village, as an alternative venue to an already over-subscribed Village Hall.

### **Community Shop and Post Office**

East Hagbourne benefits from a volunteer run Community Shop with an integral Post Office situated at the lower end of New road. In the village survey, both the shop and the PO ranked highest for usage once or twice a week. This is clearly a valued asset to the village. For such a small shop, the variety of stock is considerable, providing a convenient means of purchasing

staple goods and enabling villagers to stock up basics without the need to get in their cars to go further afield. In the last two years the shop now provides fresh bread and baked goods on Saturday morning which can be ordered online or purchased ad hoc. Surplus from local allotments and gardens is also sold. More recently a Baking Circle has been started supplying the shop with weekly fresh cakes and puddings. Stationery, toiletries, cards and sweets are also available plus frozen and chilled goods. The shop also provides access to a dry cleaning service.

The presence of the Post Office within the community shop is crucial not only for the usual services it provides, but also for its connection with regular customers. It is open 6 mornings a week and Monday and Thursday all day. Our sub-postmaster has initiated various grants for better signage and facilities and cash can be withdrawn as well as the depositing of cheques with some banks. Foreign currency can be ordered and picked up within 24 hours and euros are available immediately. Anecdotally, customers go in to use the post office and more often than not purchase goods from the shop. It is a mutually beneficial relationship and provides services to not only East Hagbourne but surrounding villages too.

### **Cemetery & Lych Gate**

The cemetery lies in a triangular space between the railway embankment and the Coscote Road as it leaves the village. An older section is semi-wild and a haven for wildlife, while part of the newer area is a mature wildflower meadow, created by Hagbourne Environment Group. The whole area provides a restful green area and a lych gate, installed in 1999 adds to the character of the location. This gate was erected in 1999, designed by C Underhay and paid for through a public subscription along with contributions from the East and West Hagbourne Parish Councils.

### **Bowling club**

The bowling green is situated at the end of The Croft and is open for play most evenings during the summer months. The club has both ladies and men's teams playing in the local league and in addition to organising friendly games has hosted a learn-to-bowl course sponsored by SODC.

### **Allotments**

The village allotments have occupied various sites in the past, but now occupy part of the Butts Piece site situated at the end of Harwood Road. Up to the 1980s allotments covered all of Butts Piece, but as demand decreased they fell into disuse. More recently, the site has been leased by the Parish Council from the Parish Charities and the new allotments were opened in 2011.

### **War Memorial**

The War memorial sits in a prominent position at the junction of Main Road, New Road and Blewbury Road on the site of one of the three ancient crosses located in the parish, the base of which is still visible at the edge of the triangular mound. The Memorial commemorates the

residents of East Hagbourne who were killed or missing in World War I and World War II. A short service is held there each Remembrance Day when wreaths are laid in their memory.

### **Bus Shelter**

The main bus stop in the village is at the same road junction as the War Memorial. A bus shelter with cedar shingle roof was built following a public subscription in 1948 which raised £100 in memory of local councillor and Alderman Frank Ryman. It is owned by the Parish Council.

### **Footpath Network**

The main village of East Hagbourne is compact and most area areas can be reached on foot without using the busier roads, using the extensive network of attractive footpaths leading between the houses within the village. Shoe Lane and Baker's Lane provide a reminder of past activities when the village had to be more self-sufficient and Parsonage Lane, leading from main Road to Fieldside runs along a causeway with Hacca's Brook flowing along both sides. The wider network of paths is also extensive with some of the routes showing the patterns of earlier land use. These foot routes give access both to Didcot and the surrounding villages and are widely used for recreation by both town and village dwellers. The long distance cycle route 44 passes through the parish along the old railway embankment. An attractive map showing the footpath network is available from the village shop.

## **Community Activities**

What makes East Hagbourne special, though, is the sense of community. There are many groups, formal and informal, covering activities from gardening (including newly reformed allotments), book clubs, and the community shop, which is entirely run by volunteers. The Fleur-de-Lys pub retains a country atmosphere and is a popular meeting place. There are active bowls and football clubs, tradition is kept alive through regular folk music sessions and the Mummers Play. Many events that draw people together punctuate the year, centred on the Fun Run, Church Fete and Produce Show. The Village Hall and Pavilion acts as a centre for many activities, from the local pre-school, to scouts and brownies, as well as musical concerts, a community choir, plays and private functions. In addition to the physical attractions of East Hagbourne, there is a strong and vibrant community with many regular events and a large number of clubs and societies. The church has not only an active congregation with many activities but is also used for a large number of secular village activities.

The May Bank Holiday is the occasion for the annual Fun Run and Walk which draws entrants from the village and further afield for a 6km event through West Hagbourne, Upton and Blewbury. In addition to the over 200 entrants, volunteers help steward the runners and walkers, and prepare teas and refreshments in the Village Hall - a real social event and chance to welcome the spring. In the lead up to summer, the scarecrow competition is an established event and brings delight to the many visitors from Didcot and neighbouring villages who are able to vote for their favourite.

The start of summer sees the annual Fete which supports church funds, but draws people throughout the parish and beyond to help with the stalls, or simply to come along and enjoy the day. The Fete starts with a fancy dress parade, serenaded by a local band, and children from the school continue the theme with country dancing. September sees the Village Produce Show, which in addition to the traditional exhibition and sale of garden produce, includes arts and crafts created by local people. Every three years a cohort of villagers volunteer for the National Garden Scheme open gardens which attracts hundreds of visitors from a wide area including from abroad.

For those in energetic mood, the Barn Dance Club meets in the Village Hall and the Ramblers meet once a month for a Sunday walk around and beyond the Parish boundaries. For those less energetic a mobile library visits twice per month. A senior citizens' lunch is available each Friday at the School during term time. There are groups for painters including lectures and demonstrations as well as hands on experience, and groups for ballet, dress making, and an informal bridge group. Scouts, guides brownies, beavers and cubs cater for younger people. Details of most of these activities can be found in the Parish Magazine and on the village web site. An amateur dramatic society, The HAMS, was formed in 2009 and has performed several successful and high quality productions in the Village Hall.

Although there is no formal group dedicated to village history, a large and interesting archive collection of documents, maps and photos exists and is housed in Hagbourne Village Hall.

## Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage

A strong feature of East Hagbourne that lends itself to enhancing the village character is the very varied range of buildings most of high quality and many with interesting historical connections from the Civil War and before. East Hagbourne survived a great fire in 1659 and several buildings predate this fire including the church. In all there are 47 listed buildings and structures in the village.

The village has many well-preserved yeoman's houses, most dating from the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries several with original barns attached and most of which are listed. These are interspersed with attractive cottages, half-timbered and thatched properties, some with over-sailing top stories, red brick Georgian and later Victorian villas. Among the listed buildings there are many significant examples on Main Road including Kingsholm with an Elizabethan wing and Tudor house with its Tithe Barn listed Grade II\*. These buildings are under constant threat from increases in traffic through the village because of vibration and pollution and the possibility of collisions along a road not built for modern traffic. They would suffer greatly if there was any development that increased traffic flow significantly.

The cultural heritage of East Hagbourne is recognised by the Conservation Area which was first designated in 1970: a Conservation Area Appraisal was published by South Oxfordshire in 2000, when the area was extended. The appraisal also identifies significant trees, walls and spaces which contribute to the setting of the listed buildings, and the important views into and out of the designated area. It also makes recommendations for enhancement of the character and appearance of the area.

## Historic development and layout

The key characteristics which make East Hagbourne distinctive are the direct result of its historic development from the medieval period onwards. These changes overlay an earlier landscape of scattered farmsteads and their associated fields that have been revealed through aerial survey and excavation around the parish. By the end of the second millennium BC the area around East Hagbourne and Blewbury was probably part of a territory which supported mixed land use and the seasonal movement of livestock onto the thin soils of the downs. This system, and the movement of livestock from the vales to the downs where Neolithic and Bronze Age burial sites are concentrated, continued after the Romans left.

Houses, farm buildings and other buildings in East Hagbourne have developed within medieval plots and closes and a framework of lanes and routeways, the extent of the medieval village being marked by the crosses at either end. Medieval routeways and paths which extend northwards are intersected by an east-west routeway (The Croft) which served as a back lane along the north side of the plots extending from Main Road. Trackways also extend to the south of Main Road, the widest being a route for livestock which ran to the east of Parsonage Farm and exited via a stock funnel (now Fieldside) into the South Field.

This layout is a fundamental aspect of East Hagbourne's historic character and has provided the framework for how the village has evolved. Of particular importance is that East Hagbourne, like many villages in this area, shows signs of having been both planned and transformed by the development of large farmsteads. The 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps show these farmsteads sited amongst a much looser density of houses than is now the case, with many open spaces occupied by gardens and orchards. This most probably is the result of houses and farms falling out of use, and being amalgamated into larger holdings and then demolished: there are several locations around the village where old houses are known to have been demolished, for example along the southern side of Tudor House and at Lime Tree Farm, and along Blewbury Road, Tadley and The Croft. Many vacated plots have been developed with houses from the late 19th century.

## Architecture

### **The Church and surrounds**

St Andrew's Parish Church which serves the villages of East and West is grade 1 listed. It was built, or rebuilt, at the beginning of the twelfth century, and consisted then of a nave and chancel. Only a few walls remain from this time. The current tower was built in the mid-fifteenth century, and features a very unusual Sanctus bell-cote, its original bell remaining in daily use. The pulpit also dates from the fifteenth century. The stained glass dates variously from the fourteenth through to the twentieth century. The octagonal stone font was added in the thirteenth century.

The phasing of the church - with a 13th century south aisle and early-mid 14th century north aisle added to a 12th century or earlier chancel and nave - hints its subsequent expansion, at a time of economic and population growth in England and Europe. There is plentiful evidence in this area for churches being established in the late Saxon period (in the 10th and early 11th centuries), but it is possible that the church here is post-Conquest in date and that the crosses mark the settlements at Coscote and either end of the main street of the village. The manor is situated close to the church, on a fully or partly moated site which was reworked in (and

may even wholly date from) the 18th and 19th centuries, with a farmstead to its north. The manor house itself was rebuilt in about 1870.

The separation of both the church and the manor from the main village is characteristic of other settlements in the area such as Prince's Harwell and Steventon. The church and the former Manor Farm barns (converted in the 1980s) are very prominent in public views from the path to West Hagbourne and the railway embankment across surviving ridge and furrow. This legible church-manor grouping, and its relationship to the agricultural landscape with visible remains of medieval cultivation, is highly significant.

### The Historic Village

The centre of East Hagbourne is marked by the Upper Cross, a fine medieval cross and a rare survival with two niches (the other being at Great Malvern). The east end of the central village has the base of the old lower cross beside the War Memorial and a further base is situated in the hamlet of Coscote.

The housing in Main Road predominantly dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and earlier and generally faces into and is built tight up to Main Road within plots which extend north and south to back lanes. Some early properties are also found in Blewbury Road, Shoe Lane, North Croft and Bakers Lane as well as at Tadley. The village suffered severe damage to property as a result of the Great Fire of 10 March 1659. Houses were clearly rebuilt in timber frame and farm buildings thatched in straw. There are some houses with inscribed dates and features which predate the Great Fire of 1659. Much of the oak for building was probably imported into the parish, but young elm and poplar from hedgerows was also used. Jettied fronts (with overhangs, many of which have been underbuilt) and carved brackets are also a distinctive feature of older houses in the parish.

There is some evidence for building and remodelling in 18th century brick, and for the subdivision of houses as they passed out of agricultural use. The village largely developed within its medieval confines in the second half of the 19th century, with a Church of England school built in 1874, a Primitive Methodist chapel in 1884 and some larger houses reflecting the influence of the Domestic Revival style. Some buildings clearly retain the imprint of the Lockinge estate, in the form of decorative tile hanging and restored timber frame following the principles of the Domestic Revival movement and its interest in traditional English styles. There is a wide diversity of door and window detail in the 19th century and earlier houses - casements, horizontal sliding sashes, vertical sashes, and leaded lights: some of the latter display the influence of the Lockinge estate.

The Upper Cross area is characterised by its high density of late 17th century houses in a consistent architectural style. Tudor House (II\*) is a fine example with a central entrance to a fashionable lobby entry and to the rear a brewhouse and L-shaped aisled barn with internal granary and stabling/cattle housing. Tudor House, together with the II\* Upper Cross, offers a key focal point at the western core of the village which is enhanced and set off by the allotments by Tudor House. The view eastwards towards the Fleur de Lys and from the Fleur looking west reveals a remarkable consistency of timber-frame techniques and architectural style. Cobblers in Shoe Lane, which retains a strong sense of the character of the medieval

village layout with 17th century buildings dominating the internal view, has a beam dated 1659: this almost certainly marks rebuilding after the Great Fire.

Lime Tree Farm to the east, and opposite the Fleur, is a rare surviving example of a smaller-scale historic farmstead typical of villages in this area with timber-framed farm buildings - an 18th century cartshed/stable (converted into accommodation) opposite an unconverted combined barn and animal housing range now attached to a separate property. Further east of this and on the north of Main Road is a mid 19th century terrace, formerly shops, with lozenge-pattern brick panels.

Continuing along Main Road, the area has a far looser layout of buildings which at least in part pre-date the 1659 fire. Despite some post-1950 infill, this area has retained a very strong sense of the layout of the 17th century and earlier village. The largest property is Parsonage Farm which was already a significant property by the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 18th century, the house was given a fine brick front facing into its own garden away from Main Road and the farmyard with its large barn and animal housing situated to the west.

At the core of this area is Kingsholm, a large L-shaped house dated through tree-ring dating: its crucks were built from trees felled in 1550. Opposite is an attractive open space (Lawson's Orchard) with fruit trees and the earthworks of an historic house or farmstead.

To its east is Kingsholme Close of 1968, which is notable in a national context for its overall composition and high-quality detail and is a very fine example of Vernacular Revival housing by the distinguished architect Eric Throssel.

At the eastern end of Main Road is Buckels, a listed house with a decorative bracket dated 1605, adjoining Bakers Lane which to the north retains a strong sense of its historic character in relationship to Higgs Field on its west side. Extending into this field and facing south is No 2 Bakers Lane, which is a grade II listed late 17th century house with central entrance and a rear stair turret. Buckels also commences a group of 17th century and later properties, mostly set in large plots, which continue along the north side of Main Road.

Together with Lower Farm, The Grange and Grange Farm (refronted in brick in the early 18th century and with a large converted barn to the rear), provide a group of historic properties around Lower Cross and the war memorial. Open views from here along Blewbury Road contrast with the narrowing of the view northwards into New Road.

The first section of Blewbury Road is characterised by a mix of post-1950 and earlier property, and it is known that some of the later houses occupy the plots of 18th century and earlier houses demolished in the later 19th and 20th centuries. On the north side of the road, Starfields (an early bungalow of c1910 with a decorative iron porch), the timber-framed Cobblestones and the 18th century rendered house next to it are built within deep and narrow plots which extended northwards to Great Mead but are no longer legible. Further to east is a line of three timber-framed properties and on a narrow plot the Victorian Gothic Revival Primitive Methodist Chapel.



### Tadley

A further, smaller medieval settlement still known as Tadley developed around a ford across Hacca's Brook and was separated by about 200 yards from the first houses in East Hagbourne along the east-west section of Blewbury Road. From the 1930s ribbon development along Blewbury Road filled in the remaining orchard land between the two settlements.

Tadley comprises a loose cluster of houses and former farmsteads which survive to the south-east and west of the former fording point. Houses here face in diverse directions from their historic plots, suggesting a very piecemeal form of development. The houses and their plots along Fieldside were built within the 'stock funnel' extending from Parsonage Lane which widened out to enable the movement of livestock to and from Great Meadow to the east. 19th century houses in Tadley are in brick and rendered brick with tile roofs with earlier 16th-17th century houses being timber framed and thatched. Just to the north of the fording place, on Blewbury Road is a 16th-17th century former farmhouse, subdivided by the 19th century into farm workers' housing.

A small development along Fieldside comprises houses of diverse ages. On the east side of the Blewbury Road, three large modern houses have been built, set in large gardens including those of the former Spread Eagle public house.

### New Road

The area of New Road is of later, mainly 20<sup>th</sup> century development. New Road is shown as a trackway extending from the north of Lower Cross to Hagbourne Marsh, which became part of Didcot parish in 1935 and has been substantially developed with housing. By 1931, the west side had been developed with council houses along New Road and The Crescent, while the remaining length was devoted to smallholdings. Few houses had been built on the east side at this time, the majority being individual private builds dating from 1950 onwards. At the entrance to Bakers Lane is a garage which also houses the village shop and post office, run by volunteers.

On the east side, the 'Green Gap' south of the Northbourne allotments provides fine views through trees towards the Chilterns and into the agricultural landscape to the east. From here, the mostly single-storey detached houses are set back deep into their plots, with a consistent building line and long rear gardens. They include some distinctive 1920s-30s bungalows with hipped and half-hipped tile roofs at the southern and northern ends. Houses on some plots have been rebuilt since 1945, but in general there is a rich mix of architectural treatment and materials reflecting their development for individual owners from 1949 onwards. Ryman's Crescent at the southern end of the east side of New Road was built for Wallingford Rural District Council in the late 1940s, on former allotments. The single-storey semi-detached houses are built in a quadrant facing into an attractive green area.

Since the 1970s, further development has taken place along the west side of New Road. Higgs Close to the south, built on the site of Higgs Farm, has five detached single-storey brick and slate properties with attic dormers and detached garages. There is a strong sense of enclosure

within the development, front lawns and trees being a highly visible publicly-viewed feature from within Higgs Close and from New Road.

Bishops Orchard to the north of The Crescent, built around 1990, comprises a development of around 50 detached 2-storey houses built on the site of a mushroom farm. The houses are built in a mix of red and yellow brick with interlocking tile cross-gabled roofs and hip-roofed garages. The informal layout, with curving roads and closes, affords a variety of views within this development, enhanced by the use of small lawned areas planted with trees and shrubs set between the driveways to each house. Little Langlands to the north of Bishops Orchard comprises a small development of five two-storey detached houses of brick and tile which are distinguished by their Vernacular Revival treatment - with gabled dormers, chimneystacks, dentilled brickwork to the eaves and string courses which mark the floor levels.

New Road is distinguished by its wide, attractive grass verges backed by mature hedges, shrubs and trees.

### [Harwood Road, Windsor Crescent and Wilcher Close](#)

This area of council housing to the north of the historic village was developed by the former Wallingford Rural District Council (WRDC) after the Second World War, around two of the medieval routeways extending north from the village. Properties are set back in their plots, a distinctive characteristic being the sense of space as one moves through this area, generated by large open green spaces at Windsor Crescent and Wilcher Close. The architecture displays the simplicity of design and attention to landscape planning that typifies the period.

Harwood Road and Lake Road was developed between 1946 and 1952 as a mix of Airey and Unity type semi-detached houses, set behind pavements with lawned strips and a mix of low walls, fences and hedges set out as a strong line to the front gardens. The semi-detached houses in Lake Road are set back in deep plots, and have dormers set in tiled mansard roofs over brick walls to their ground-floors. Along the east side of Harwood Road, in Windsor Crescent, are semi-detached bungalows, with central gables, which are set around a square with a central lawned area open to the west side. Most of the immediate post-war houses along the west side of Harwood Road have been replaced by modern brick houses however a concrete-panel house built to the original designs survives to the south.

Wilcher Close was developed in 1965 as a mix of flats, small houses and retirement bungalows built of brick, to the designs of the Oxford practice Belcher and Stamford, probably best-known for Seacourt Tower in Botley. A plaque on Nos 21-2 notes that it was the 2000th house built by WRDC. Its simple treatment, with shallow pitched roofs, is typical of the period. The development uses 'double row' building, promoted at that time to avoid the monotony of ribbon development. A row of retirement bungalows are sited to the south of semi-detached houses, arranged around a courtyard with parking and lawns open to the east side and a close to the north. An additional five social houses were built in the last decade, replacing areas where garages previously stood.

### [Outlying Areas – Coscote and Hagbourne Mill](#)

The only areas of dispersed historic settlement outside the village are the former medieval hamlet of Coscote to the west, dominated by a 17th century farmstead, and Hagbourne Mill Farm in the south eastern corner of the parish.

The historic farmhouse, farm buildings and wall at Coscote are Listed Grade II and there are the remains of a larger medieval settlement in the vicinity. The scale of the farmhouse (since subdivided and now known as Coscote Manor and Yew Tree Farmhouse), as rebuilt in the early-mid 17th century, suggests that it developed to serve a large working farm by the 17th century. A very large farmstead, built to a regular form with multiple yards, is shown on 19th century maps. Unlisted traditional farm buildings make a significant contribution to the historic character and significance of the hamlet.

Hagbourne Mill is Listed Grade II\* and the house Grade II. The mill with its mill pond and related archaeology probably occupies a medieval site, the current house dating from the 18th century, and the mill with its rare surviving Hurst Frame, wheel and mill machinery from a rebuilding in 1828 and the large barn (now houses) from after the 1840 tithe map.

### Archaeology

An aerial survey of the Thames Valley, along the foot of the Lambourne Downs (notable in a national context for the survival of Neolithic and Bronze Age remains) and the archaeological watching brief and excavations for the Didcot sewerage scheme, has revealed a series of sites which indicate that the area between Didcot and the Downs - including East Hagbourne - was intensively farmed and settled in the Iron Age and Roman periods. Farmsteads and their field systems were scattered across the landscape, interspersed by the occasional villa with its estate in the Roman period.

Numerous finds from the Neolithic through to Saxon times have been made in the area between Didcot and the Downs and the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record notes occasional records within the parish, such as Roman and later pottery sherds (HER 16979) and Middle Bronze Age weapons (HER 16074). These records result from chance finds and it is likely that much more may remain to be discovered.

The NPPF (paragraph 128) makes it clear that ‘Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and where necessary, a field evaluation’.

The key characteristics which make East Hagbourne distinctive today are the direct result of its historic development from the medieval period. Medieval and later settlement earthworks and ridge and furrow complement the story told by its historic landscape and buildings. Areas with settlement earthworks and ridge and furrow have high archaeological potential. Surviving undeveloped historic plots, such as Lawson's Orchard are likely to retain the archaeology of medieval houses and farmyards.

The whole area around the church, Manor Farm and Church Close has very high archaeological potential, and may reveal significant evidence about the development of the late Saxon or early medieval church and manor. Hagbourne Mill is Listed Grade II\* and the house Grade II. The mill with its mill pond and related archaeology probably occupies a medieval site and is surrounded by pastoral fields along the Mill Brook. These potentially hold

evidence of water meadows and waterlogged archaeology. All three areas have evidence of long use and have high archaeological interest.

## Landscape

The characteristics which make East Hagbourne distinctive in a national and regional context mostly result from the action and interaction of human and natural factors in the period up to 1900, which includes the 1840s enclosures and the modest amount of buildings built in the second half of the 19th century.

Today, the landscape of East Hagbourne parish is dominated by its village, which was established by the 11th century. This nucleated settlement pattern has strongly influenced the pattern of routeways, fields and tree cover, along with the survival of curved and ridged plough strips called ridge and furrow. These all overly an earlier landscape of scattered farmsteads and their associated fields, that have been revealed through aerial survey and excavation around the parish.

Outside the village, the open agricultural landscape with few trees provides extensive views to the surrounding hills, giving a sense of space. At the same time views towards the village are softened by the green fringe and paddocks separating the built area from the wider arable land, giving the village a sense of place in its landscape. The surviving ridge and furrow within many of these former open fields and the varied arable/pasture uses provides interest and variety.

The embankment of the disused railway line forms a dramatic feature to the west of the village and is a popular route for walkers and cyclists. There are important views towards the village and outwards to the surrounding hills as well as towards the town. Over time, the industrial origins of the route have mellowed and there is a rich limestone flora, such as the bee orchid, which adds to the enjoyment of those using it.

The SODC Character Study for East Hagbourne, issued in 2000, covers only the Conservation Area. It notes that views out of the East Hagbourne to the fields around form a strong element in the village's character. Particularly highlighted are the views from the Fieldside footpath along the south edge of the village, the views towards the church from the west and those across Higgs Field paddocks. Applying the same principle to the wider Parish, views from the surrounding footpaths towards the Chilterns and the Downs provide important views to the east, south and west of the village. The former railway embankment provides a particularly good vantage point across the ridge and furrow of Manor Farm fields towards the oasthouse and church. The view from New Road across the 'Green Gap' provides an important view and break in the built urban line, providing a clear distinction between village and town.

As well as the broad vistas, more intimate habitats can be found along the waterways, where the paths and tracks are fringed with trees and shrubs, providing habitat for wildlife and a source of wild fruits for people and animals. Hops twining in the hedgerows provide a reminder of past economic activity. The Green Corridor to the north of the historic village provides a varied and accessible green area linking the Recreation Ground and playground with the Millennium Wood, Butts Piece and Mowbray Fields. There are views across fields to the village and from the village the green fringe provides visual separation from the town to

the north. Further to the west, the footpath along the norther border of the Parish affords extensive views to Coscote and the Downs.

Historic Routeways, most now used as recreational footpaths, are an integral and highly distinctive part of East Hagbourne. Numerous footways run between the houses in the historic village including Shoe Lane and Bakers Lane reminiscent of past activities. Routeways also extend out of the village into the former open fields around it and connect the church to West Hagbourne and to Fulscot Manor in the east. Routeways provided access to open fields subdivided into strips, which remained unenclosed until 1840-3, and to an area of meadow in the Alluvial Lowlands to the east (termed Great Meadow on a map of 1775).

Historic maps also show that orchards developed on the plots around the medieval village and to the south of the shrunken medieval settlement of Coscote. There is fragmentary evidence of the extensive orchards which extended to the south of Coscote and throughout East Hagbourne village including areas now developed, including Blewbury Road. These date from at least the early 17th century, when Harwell cherries are first documented as being exported to London. Lawson's Orchard on Main Road is the only surviving example of a whole orchard.

Evidence can also be found of activity along the waterways. Watermills - including Hagbourne Mill Farm and the site of the paper mill to the north east are a distinctive feature along Mill Brook to the east, extending southwards towards Blewbury Mill. There is evidence for damming and diverting of watercourses, particularly along the southern fringe of the Village for flood management and the growing of watercress.

## Green spaces

The SODC Character Study for East Hagbourne Conservation Area, issued in 2000 states that East Hagbourne is an extremely attractive and special place which has retained a strong rural character in spite of its proximity to Didcot. Nevertheless this character is under threat because the pressure for more housing means that gardens are being built on and even sites where development has historically been considered unneighbourly may now be approved. This trend towards more intensive development needs to be balanced by respect for open spaces where they contribute to the character and atmosphere of the village. The 2000 study has already identified many 'Important Green Spaces' within the Conservation Area, including all of the plotlands lying behind main Road and Blewbury Road and extending down to the Fieldside Footpath from the Church to Lower Cross Farm, Higgs Field and Orchard Holding paddocks, the bowling green and a number of gardens within the village. Following similar principles certain areas outside the Conservation Area are considered as 'significant Open Spaces' and are described below.

Please refer to the East Hagbourne Village Landscape and Character Assessment 2017 for more information.

### **Areas that protect or afford important views**

There are many places in the Parish where views to the open country or inwards to the village contribute strongly to the character of the area and all of these are valued. There are, however, specific areas where development would impact strongly on character, and these are highlighted here.

### **The 'Green Gap' field**

This parcel comprises a large area of arable farmland, which although managed as a number of separate fields, retains no internal hedgerow boundaries. It is the surviving remnant of one of the medieval open fields (Lower End Field) and it remains a very open landscape with distant views of the urban edge to the north and west and of adjoining open farmland to the south and east. It is important as it provides a green space between Didcot and East Hagbourne, making a clear demarcation between town and village along New Road, the main route into the village. Driving or walking from Didcot, it provides a first glimpse of open countryside with a view across fields to the Chilterns, indicating that one has left the town. A wooded footpath goes along the north of this area and around the fields to the east, before going south and joining Great Mead, making the area accessible to the town and village.

### **Pastures in Manor Farm Lane**

These pastures are bounded to the south and east by footpaths, the road to Coscote to the North and the raised Sustrans route along the old railway to the West. They provide pastures for cows or sheep and are bounded by hedges. With the Church tower overlooking the pastures, the area is very attractive.

The footpath to the south leads from the Churchyard, passes Manor Farm and the converted barns to the Sustrans route. The footpath passes across Hacca's Brook and follows a tributary to Shovel Spring, with a wooded area with wild plums along the south of the path. The footpath is heavily used by villagers, often walking dogs and cyclists.

Further along the footpath and from the pastures there are fine long views south across fields into the AONB and Berkshire Downs. The view from the raised old railway line (Sustrans route) across the pastures to the church and village is particularly important, providing an iconic view towards the barns, oasthouse and church. This area is where the East Hagbourne Annual Fun Run and Walk starts.

### **St Birinus Playing Fields**

This is a parcel of open land used since 1968 as a sports field of St Birinus School. It has developed from part of a field enclosed from one of the medieval open fields north of the village. Although surrounded by urban development on three sides, the communal value of its present-day use is enhanced by its location adjoining Millennium Wood to the south and the Sustrans route which links Didcot with East Hagbourne, West Hagbourne and Upton.

### **The Railway Embankment**

Since its development as a Sustrans route, the former railway embankment has become a major recreation resource for local people as well as harbouring a wealth of wildlife on its

chalky soils. It also affords extensive views over a wide range of countryside as well as the iconic view of the church and surrounding barns and oasthouse.

### **The 'Green Corridor' across the north of the historic village**

#### **Millennium Wood**

Millennium Wood is a community woodland within the East Hagbourne parish boundary, but owned and managed by Didcot Town Council. It comprises of trees a pond and a central standing stones feature. It was established to provide a natural greenspace for the benefit of the town and village and is laced with footpaths. A footpath runs along the southern edge from New Road in East Hagbourne and other paths lead from Butts Piece and from Didcot. Although young, the wood is maturing rapidly and provides an important space for wildlife and people.

#### **Butts Piece including parish allotments**

Butts Piece is a small section of land at the North end of East Hagbourne, close to the border with Didcot. It is owned by Hagbourne Parish Charities, ostensibly for the poor of the Parish, and it is leased by them to East Hagbourne Parish Council. Half of the area is allotments with a further quarter used as a general amenity open area, suitable for children's ball games. The northernmost patch is a wild area of scrub, largely covered by hawthorn, blackthorn and brambles, which provides a valuable habitat for a wide variety of woodland birds and insect species, together with pathways for walkers and is managed by Hagbourne Environmental Group

#### **Paddocks and fields to the South of Millennium Wood and along Bakers Lane**

These paddocks and fields provide an open area to the south of the Millennium Wood and include the Higgs Field pastures along Bakers Lane that are already designated in the SODC 2000 Character Study...

There are views from footpaths south from the Millennium Wood across the paddocks to the village and there are other well used footpaths through and around the area. Some of the paddocks are used for livestock. The area is attractive and adds to the countryside setting of the village from the north.

#### **The Recreation Ground and Great Mead Triangle**

The Recreation Ground, dating from 1922, is owned by the Parish Council and contains a football pitch and children's playground, updated in 2009, and is fringed by mature trees and some scrub. There is a smaller patch of ground to the north which is not actively used. A new Pavilion with changing rooms and a community room was officially opened in 2016 and a durable green surface has recently been laid in the car park. It forms a centre for a growing range of community activities, complementing the Village Hall at the other end of the village. From the 1950s onwards the remaining area was further subdivided into horse paddocks and a new farmstead, with a house and working buildings, at Cherry Tree Farm. The triangle of paddocks to the south of Great Mead are used for a variety of animals and provide a green



buffer for the houses on Blewbury Road as well as attractive views from Great Mead. The hedges around the area are tall and provide a good habitat for wildlife.

### **Mowbray Fields**

Although just outside of East Hagbourne Parish, Mowbray Fields are included for completeness and as a gateway to the footpath continuing west along the fringe of Didcot and along the northern border of the Parish. Mowbray Fields includes an open grassy area with trees, a wildflower area and the Local Nature Reserve which hosts a large population of orchids.

### **Important undeveloped areas within the historic village**

All those areas identified in the SODC 2000 Conservation Area Character Study are still considered important, but particular emphasis is placed on:

#### **Lawson's Orchard**

The field opposite Kingsholm house is the site of an old orchard planted with apple trees, hazel and more recently some specimen trees. It is full of daffodils in spring and hollyhocks grow along the fence in summer. The field provides a very attractive setting for the listed buildings in this section of Main Road and is the only surviving example of a whole orchard in the village. Along the pavement, a low fence allows views into the field so that the livestock, trees and flowers can be enjoyed by all as they walk along Main Road. It provides an iconic feature of the historic village and is included as an 'Important Open Space' in the SODC 2000 Character Study.

#### **Tudor House Allotments**

A tract of land along the south side of Tudor House, which used to be the site of old cottages, is now used by some members of the village as allotments for growing vegetables and flowers. The allotments make a particularly attractive setting for Tudor House and its thatched aisled barns and for the Upper Cross area. They contribute to a sense of openness around the medieval cross, which forms a centre of the old village. Pavements and a footpath along one side and a low fence allow views into the site. The area is included as an 'Important Open Space' in the SODC 2000 Character Study.

#### **Parsonage Lane**

The lane is a particularly attractive and unusual pathway alongside Kingsholm, formed of an island bed with the stream flowing on either side and lined by trees and shrubs. It is a footpath accessible to all, leading from Main Road to the wooded field edge. A seat is at the end nearest the fields. It is the site of the annual village duck race. Its historical significance as a former 'stock funnel' has been highlighted by the village Character Assessment. The trees along both sides of the path are included as 'Important Trees' in the SODC 2000 Character Study.

#### **Hacca's Brook stream and its setting**

Hacca's Brook runs to the south of the built up area of the old village and has several tributaries, one of which runs into the centre of the village for a short distance along Main Road in front of Lime Tree Cottage and into the stream through Parsonage Lane. Another tributary formed the old moat around the old manor house that is now Manor Farm. The wooded area along Hacca's brook forms a natural boundary between the village area and fields to the south and is followed for most of its length by a footpath. The brook then runs to the back of Fieldside under Blewbury Road and out through the fields to the east, its route is marked by trees and hedgerows forming a wildlife corridor.

### **The Cemetery**

The cemetery has two distinct areas. The triangle of graves managed by the Parochial Church Council and bounded by the railway line and the road is the oldest area and is wildflower rich, typical of cemeteries enclosed before grassland began to be 'improved' by artificial fertilisers. This area is undergoing management to control bramble and nettles, also to reduce shading by the yew trees.

The larger area of the cemetery is managed by the Parish Council and roughly half is presently a species rich wildflower meadow, sown in 1998 and holder of an award from the CPRE. Management is carried out jointly by local farmers and Hagbourne Environment Group. The whole area provides a peaceful green haven

### **Education**

Education provides another focus for community involvement. Hagbourne Church of England Primary School serves both East and West Hagbourne. The 2015 Ofsted report rated the school as 'Good' and noted that it is the school is smaller than average and pupils are taught in single-age classes. The teachers work hard to achieve high standards, through training, sharing of best practice and using resources that stimulate pupils' imaginations and inspire them to learn. The targets set for pupils' achievement are ambitious and pupils achieve well in comparison with schools nationally. Sports and physical education also have a high profile and pupils have won many trophies in local competitions. Pupils behave well in class and are polite, helpful and courteous. Crazy Crocs Breakfast Club provides pupils with a nutritious meal and a calm start to the school day. Staff provide a good range of purposeful activities that keep pupils busy and engaged before the school day begins.

There is an active governing body and a PTA which involve parents in fund raising and other activities. The school swimming pool, covered and with solar heating, is a great asset for the children, and is also available to the wider community.

Hagbourne Pre-School meets in the Village Hall, and has also established a strong and consistent reputation. Parents are again strongly involved and it aims to provide a fun, caring and stimulating environment for pre-school children from 2 years old to Primary School age. It was established in 1969 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It also has a 'good' rating from Ofsted.

The youngest children are accommodated through the Mother and Toddler group which meets once a week at the pavilion. They welcome babies and toddlers from 0-5 years accompanied by their parent or carer and provide a variety of activities to stimulate young children.

## Traffic and Transport

The village of East Hagbourne lies 2 miles to the south of Didcot. The shape of the village today is largely defined by three routes in and out which meet at a triangular junction known as Lower Cross (or the War Memorial).

- New Road, the B4016, to the North, links East Hagbourne to Didcot.
- Blewbury Road, the B4016, to the East and South passes Hagbourne Mill on its way to Blewbury where it joins the A417 for Pangbourne and Reading.
- Main Road, to the West – a narrow and winding unclassified road leading through the historic core of the village via Coscote to West Hagbourne.

Wantage and the A34 can be reached via Blewbury or West Hagbourne

New Road continues into Didcot via Jubilee Way and the Jubilee Roundabout. This is the main route to the railway station, supermarkets and shops and to Wallingford and other villages to the north.

The hamlet of Coscote lies on the western end of Main Road towards the edge of the Parish. From Coscote, Park Road leads north into Didcot town and the Station Car Park and southwards through the village of West Hagbourne to the A417. Mill Lodge and the properties around Hagbourne Mill Farm off Blewbury Road lie just inside the South East corner of the Parish on Blewbury Road. All three roads have a speed limit of 30mph within the village boundaries. Main Road is derestricted between the cemetery and Coscote. Blewbury Road is derestricted at the village boundary.

Although speed limits of 30mph apply through the whole built area, the narrow and winding nature of Main Road mean that lower speeds are needed to negotiate it safely. The junction at Lower Cross has poor visibility and needs great care to negotiate safely.

Roads are frequently congested at peak times, particularly along Main Road and at the Jubilee Way Roundabout. Traffic has been a concern for parish residents over many years and figures strongly in the 2011 Parish Plan and in the 2016 parish survey.

Didcot Parkway Station on the GWR main line is about 2 miles to the north, 10 minutes by car from the centre of the village. There are frequent direct trains to London Paddington via Reading with shortest journey times of around 45 minutes, to Bristol and South Wales and to Oxford in 12–18 minutes, linking with services to the north

The village recognises that it has a unique position in being close to a growing town and there are few other rural village locations in South Oxfordshire that can link as easily as East Hagbourne with national infrastructure such as railways, on foot or by bicycle.

In the summer of 2016, Oxfordshire County Council stopped subsidies for the two bus services which ran through East Hagbourne. These have been amalgamated into the 94 route as a trial by the bus company supported by Oxford CC school passengers and some money from the S106 Planning Obligations which are placed on developers. On weekdays there is a circular

bus route leaving Didcot roughly hourly going via East Hagbourne to the nearby villages of West Hagbourne, Upton and Blewbury and returning via East Hagbourne. A weekly community bus also serves Wallingford market on Fridays.

Before the Beeching cuts of the 1960s the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway ran through the parish on an embankment which is now part of the Sustrans Cycle Route 44 and is also enjoyed by many as a walking route with fine views.

## Housing

The Census of 2011 identified 486 dwellings within the current boundary of the parish of East Hagbourne. Compared with South Oxfordshire and the whole of England, East Hagbourne has a large number of detached houses, about the same semi-detached and a correspondingly lower proportion of terraced houses and flats.

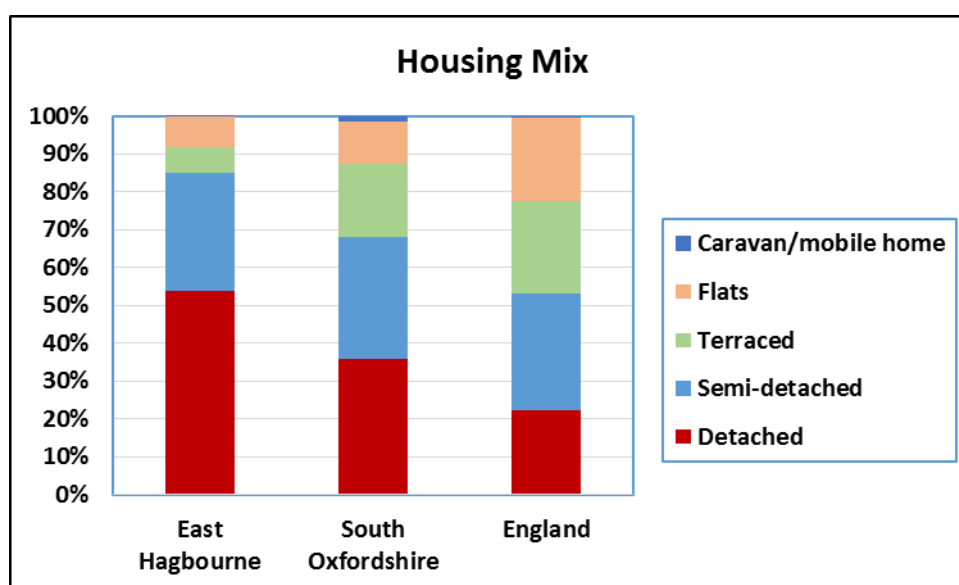


Figure 4. Housing Mix in East Hagbourne (current parish boundary)

The percentages of householders owning their own homes was 79.5%, more than half of which were owned outright, the remainder being mortgaged. The total owned homes in South Oxfordshire was 72.9% and in England as a whole 63.3%.

In 2016 the local housing association, SOHA, reported that they had a total of 64 properties in East Hagbourne, representing 13.2% of the total dwellings. The 2011 census reported a slightly higher figure of 70 social rented properties, representing 14.4% of total dwellings. These figures are higher than for the whole of South Oxfordshire (11.4%), but lower than for the whole of England (17.7%).

In the Parish survey of 2016, of 23 respondents who said they needed new accommodation, 12 said they wanted a 2-bed property and 13 more than 2 bedrooms. No-one said they wanted a one-bedroom property.

## Waste

South Oxfordshire run an efficient waste collection service with a collection each week of food waste and alternative weeks of Rubbish and recycling. A paid for service is also widely subscribed with a fortnightly collection of garden waste.

South Oxfordshire District Council was named the best recycler in DEFRA's annual recycling league tables for 2015/16, with a recycling rate of 66.6 per cent.

Organic waste is processed at a dedicated site near Benson, with garden waste producing compost for local farms and food waste producing biogas from which electricity is generated.

The nearest household waste recycling centre at Drayton is 11km away from East Hagbourne.

## Employment

At the 2011 Census 73.5% of people aged 16-74 were economically active, a figure higher than in South Oxfordshire (70.4%) or the whole of England (62.1%). Of these, 14.4% were employed part-time, 42.0% full time and 17.1% self-employed. This latter figure is higher than for South Oxfordshire or England.

2.2% reported they were unemployed, half the figure for England and slightly lower than for South Oxfordshire.

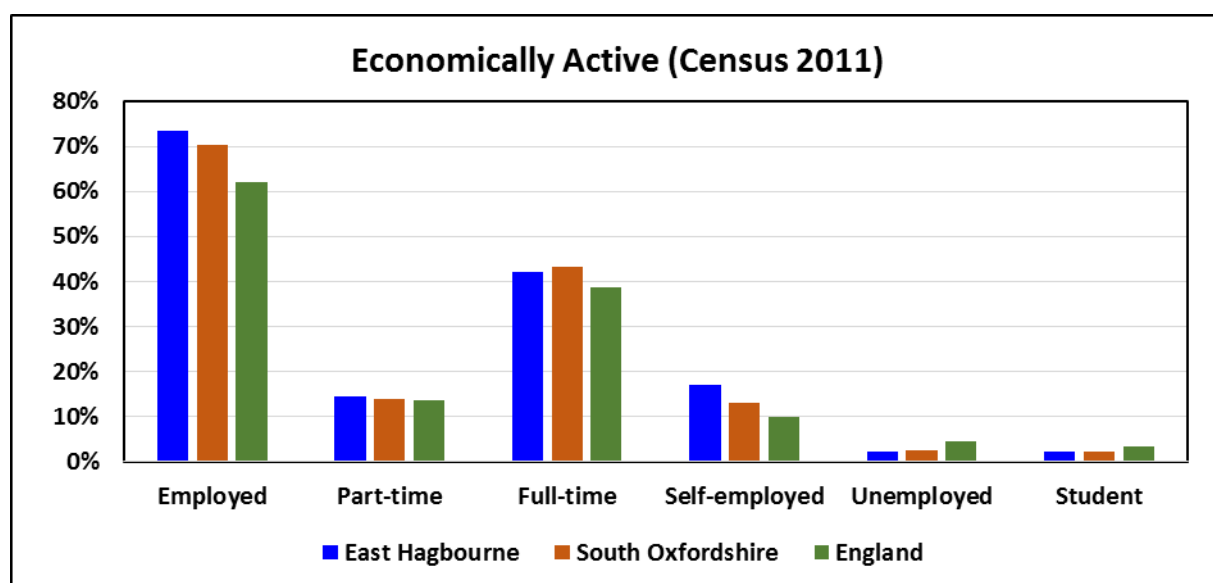


Figure 5. Economic activity in East Hagbourne (current parish boundary)

A lower percentage of people in East Hagbourne reported that they were economically inactive compared with South Oxfordshire and England. The numbers caring for home or family were similar to the wider regions, but a lower percentage described themselves as fully retired. A very low percentage of people reported long term sickness or disability compare with South Oxfordshire and England.

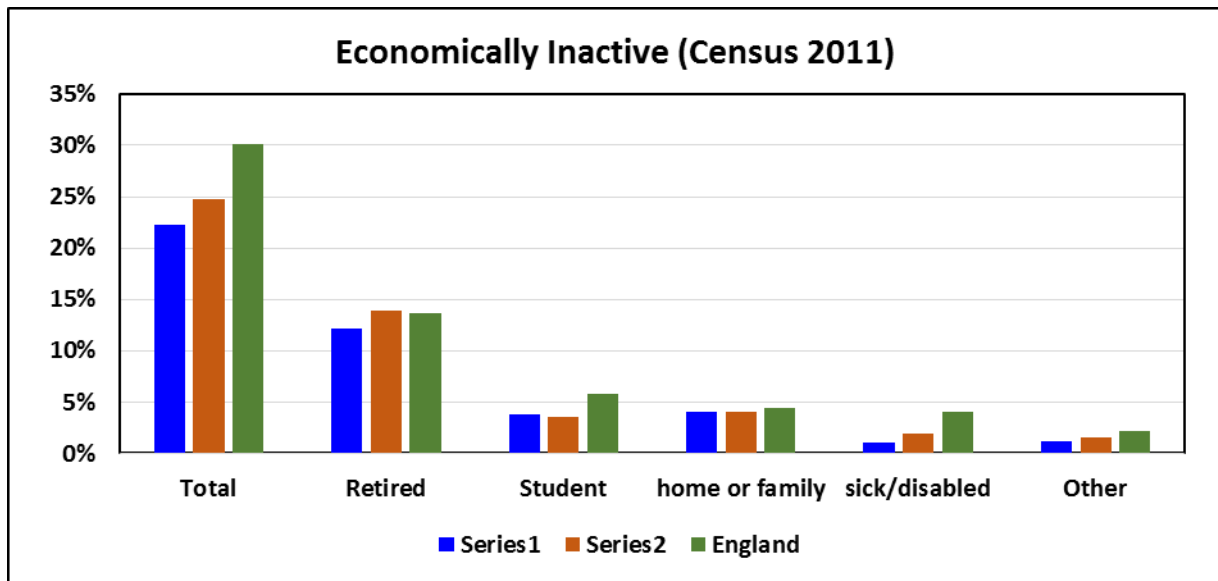


Figure 6. Economic inactivity in East Hagbourne (current parish boundary)

The percentage of people working from home in South Oxfordshire is 6.4% compared with 3.5% across the whole of England. Detailed figures are not available for the new East Hagbourne boundary, but figures for the old boundary area suggest this percentage is even higher in East Hagbourne.

*source OCSI survey.*