

# Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework

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## *From here to 2026* Core Strategy: Issues and Options Report

### EVENT RECORD Workshop 6 March 2007



# Introduction

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council carried out extensive consultation for the Issues & Options stage of the Core Strategy. As part of the consultation, a workshop was held. This document is a record of the workshop held on 6 March 2007.

The aim of the event was to make sure that all the main interested parties had the opportunity to exchange views, explore the key issues and make an informed decision prior to the preparation of Preferred Options for the Core Strategy.

There were 70 attendees, representing a wide range of organisations.

The event took place at the Camden Centre, Royal Tunbridge Wells. The agenda for the day can be seen in this record. The event included a presentation by Jim Kehoe, Head of Planning Services, which again can be seen in this event record.

The results from the day, as well as from other consultation, are being used to assist in drawing up the Preferred Options. This will be the subject of further consultation, during October-November 2007.

Following a public examination and binding Inspector's report, the Core Strategy will then be revised and adopted by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

This document contains the outcomes of the event as well as all the material presented. It is intended mainly for those who attended the event and those responsible for shaping the draft document over the coming months. It may also be a useful reference for others too. It is available in both paper and electronic (pdf) format and can be accessed via [www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk).



## List of Participants (name/organisation/group)

<b>Title</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Mrs	E	Akenhead	Regional Access & Bridleway Officer	British Horse Society (South East Region)
Mr	P	Allen		Weald of Kent Preservation Society/CPRE
Ms	J	Arnott		The National Trust
Mr	C	Barrow	Chairman	Tunbridge Wells Ramblers Association
Dr	D	Bech		Telephone House Neighbours Association
Mrs	K	Bell	Clerk to the Parish Council	East Peckham Parish Council
Mr	P	Blockley	Chairman	Benenden Parish Council
Mr	C	Blythe		Lidl U.K. GmbH
Mr	R	Brazier		Pepenbury
Cllr Mrs	A	Bunyan		Cranbrook Parish Council
Mr	P	Carter	Partner	Broadlands
Ms	P	Chatfield	Scheme Manager	Home-Start South West Kent
Mr	B	Cherry		Kent Fire and Rescue Service
Miss	C	Cogdell	District Manager, Adult Services	Tunbridge Wells District Office, Kent County Council
Mr	M	Coggles	West Kent Area Representative	National Federation of the Blind
Mr	I	Coupland	Acting Planning Manager, West Kent	Kent County Council Adult Services
Mr	D L	Daniell		Church of Christ (Cambrian Road)
Ms	J	Davis		Judith Norris Ltd
Mr	J	Denny	Managing Partner	Cripps Harries Hall LLP
Mr	P	Donovan		Cranbrook and District Local History Society
Mr	M	Doyle		Hawkenbury Village Association
Mr	T J	Duncan	Chartered Surveyor	Lambert & Foster
Mr	P	Dye		Dye Tabrett Architects
Mr	J	Edge	Head of Planning	Knight Frank LLP
Mr	P J	Emberson	Chairman	Hawkhurst Village Society
Mr	R J	Fisher		Speldhurst Village Society
Mr	M	Gilks		Eversheds
Mr	G	Goddard	Estates Development Director	Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Mr	J	Goodfellow		Banner Farm Residents Assoc; Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells Hospitals PPI Forum; SW Kent PCT PPI Forum, & RTW Town Forum member
Mr	A	Gower		Target Follow (Tunbridge Wells)
Ms	E	Hawkes		Barton Willmore Planning
Mr	A	Hawkins		Bell Cornwell Partnership
Ms	S	Heron		Rydon Homes Ltd
Prof	M	Holman	Chairman	Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association
Ms	A	Hooker	Parish Clerk	Marden Parish Council
Mr	J	Hopkinson		Churches Social Responsibility Group
Mrs	B	Howell	Chief Executive	Compaid Trust
Mr	M	Hull		Kember Loudon Williams Ltd
Mr	A	Hume		Hillreed Developments Ltd
Mr	N	Ide	Head of Planning and Development	Batcheller Thacker

Ms	C	Ison	South East Senior Investment Officer	Housing Corporation
Mr	N	Jarrett	Public Relations Manager	Southeastern Railway
Ms	H	Lucking		Kent Bat Group
Ms	L	Lynds	Planning Officer	Maidstone Borough Council
Mr	M	Mann		Kent County Neighbourhood Watch Association
Cllr	P	Nicholls		Paddock Wood Town Council
Mr	T	Parker		Langton Green Rural Society
Mr	K	Perry		Benhall Mill Road Land Association
Mr	T	Phillips	Community Liaison Manager, Sevenoaks & Tunbridge Wells	Kent County Council
Mrs	JA	Podbury		Speldhurst Wednesday Club
Mr	M	Powell	Clerk to Brenchley Parish Council	Brenchley Parish Council
Mr	J	Rutland		Federation of Small Businesses
Rev	B	Senior		St Philip's Church
Mr	A R	Shaw	Policy & Research Officer	High Weald AONB Unit
Mr	B	Simpole		Kent County Council: Children, Families & Education
Mr	D	Sims		Southern Water
Mr	K	Sinclair		Paddock Wood Residents Association
Mr	A	Stevens		A S Planning
Mr	A	Tod		RTW Civic Society
Mrs	I	Veness		High Brooms Townswomens Community Affairs Group
Cllr	D	Wakefield		Friends of the Commons
Mr	P	Waller		Bloomfields Ltd
Mr	R B	Walsh		Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee
Ms	J	Watson	Planning Policy Manager	Wealden District Council
Mr	L	Webb		Hawkenbury Village Association
Mr	C	Weller		The Calverley Park Association
Dr	P	Whitbourn	Chairman, Planning Committee	Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum
Mr	N J	Wickham		John Wickham (Cranbrook) Ltd
Ms	L	Williams		Home Group Ltd (formerly Warden Housing Association)
Mr	P	Woodcock		Tunbridge Wells Gospel Halls Trust

# Agenda

## ...From here to 2026

**Tunbridge Wells Local Development Framework  
Core Strategy: Issues and Options Report**

### **WORKSHOP PROGRAMME**

**6 March 2007, Main Hall, The Camden Centre**

2:00pm	<b>Registration and refreshments</b>
2:15pm	<b>Introduction</b> Cllr Mrs Thomas
2:20pm	<b>The Borough's Context – Issues / Constraints / Options</b> Jim Kehoe (Head of Planning Services)
2:35pm	<b>Facilitated Workshops – Examining Broad Options</b>
3.20pm	<b>Feedback Sessions</b>
3.55pm	<b>What happens next?</b> Jim Kehoe (Head of Planning Services)
4:00pm	<b>Close</b>

# Welcome and Introductions

## **Cllr Mrs Thomas summary**

- Welcomed people and thanked them for travelling / making time in busy schedules.
- This event is part of the comprehensive consultation currently being undertaken on the Core Strategy: Issues & Options Report (Jim will explain during his presentation what the Core Strategy is).
- Representatives from a diverse range of organisations, businesses, community groups and other concerned agencies are represented. (We have house builders; infrastructure providers; voluntary bodies; Parish Councils; residents associations, to name just a few).
- The Borough faces many challenges. We need to provide sufficient housing and much of this should be affordable; we want to maintain a thriving economy; we need to ensure that people can easily access jobs. However, we also know that the Borough has a high quality built and natural environment.
- There is no single, correct way to deliver the development needed in Tunbridge Wells Borough. Difficult decisions will need to be undertaken.
- We want people who care about Tunbridge Wells Borough to help us move the Borough into the future without harming its historical past and the purpose of today's event is to help us find out what people think.
- The views of all stakeholders will play a vital role in helping us. No decisions will be made until all suggestions have been heard.
- I'll now hand over to Jim, who will explain what the Core Strategy is; what the issues facing the Borough are; what constraints there are in the Borough and what options there are to accommodate the development required.



# Presentation

## From Here to 2026: Workshop Programme

- Registration and Drinks
- Introduction 2.15pm – 2.20pm
- The Borough's Context – Issues/Constraints/Options 2.20pm – 2.35pm
- Facilitated Workshops – Examining Broad Options 2.35pm – 3.20pm
- Feedback Sessions 3.20pm – 3.55pm
- What happens next? 3.55pm – 4.00pm
- Close 4:00pm

Introduction

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## Local Development Framework

- The Local Development Framework (LDF) together with the Regional Spatial Strategy (draft South East Plan) provides the **framework for planning** in Tunbridge Wells Borough
- The Local Development Framework is a **collection of planning documents**, that will eventually take over from the current Local Plan and the Kent and Medway Structure Plan
- The **Core Strategy** is one document within the LDF.

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## The Core Strategy

- Why 2026? Draft South East Plan provides regional context for planning to 2026
- Core Strategy, produced by TWBC, must conform with the Regional Spatial Strategy (emerging South East Plan)
- Core Strategy will:
  - ◊ be **visionary**, not detailed
  - ◊ **show broad locations** for development, not specific sites
  - ◊ **contain broad policies** to deliver the development required
- Issues & Options stage is the first stage in the process of producing the Core Strategy

Introduction

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## Key Issues for the Core Strategy

- The need to provide **5,000 new homes by 2026**
- The need to **protect and enhance the natural environment**
- Recognition that the **high quality and built natural environment** encourages tourism expenditure
- Need to ensure that the Core Strategy considers other plans, programmes and strategies, such as the Sustainable Community Plan

Introduction

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## The Themes

1. **Safeguarding our Environment**
2. **Maintaining a Thriving Local Economy**
3. **Enabling People to Take Part in and Enjoy Leisure Activities**
4. **Transport – Getting Around the Borough**
5. **Meeting the Need for Housing**
6. **Maintaining Community Safety and Reducing the Fear of Crime**

Themes

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## Safeguarding our Environment

### Land Constraints

- Landscape designations
- Nature conservation and biodiversity designations
- Flood risk
- The built environment

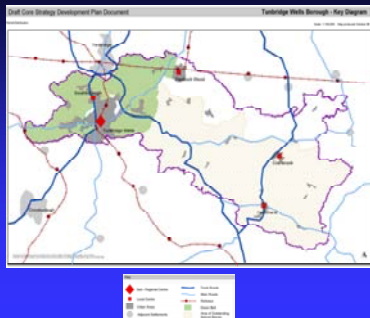
### Environmental Protection

- Renewable energy
- Air pollution
- Waste

Themes

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## A Spatial Strategy for the Borough



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## The Potential Options

1. Concentrate at the Main Urban Areas – Royal Tunbridge Wells (RTW), Southborough
2. Focus at the five towns – RTW, Southborough, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst
3. Disperse development throughout the Borough's existing settlements
4. Locate development at a new / expanded town

Options for a Spatial Strategy

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### Option 1: Concentration ...

- **Strengths**
  - Maximises RTW Regional Hub status
  - Maximises opportunities to re-use previously developed (brownfield) land
  - Focuses on town centre regeneration
  - Most sustainable in terms of jobs, services and infrastructure
- **Weaknesses**
  - High density development more likely
  - Pressure to review Green Belt boundary and for "garden grabbing"
  - Impact on built and natural environment of the town

Options for a Spatial Strategy

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### Option 2: + Small Rural Towns ...

- **Strengths**
  - Still opportunity to capitalise on Regional Hub status
  - Majority of new housing would be accessible to most jobs, shops, services
  - Likely to result in less greenfield land take at Royal Tunbridge Wells
- **Weaknesses**
  - Cranbrook and Hawkhurst are within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) landscape
  - Paddock Wood subject to flood risk
  - Higher greenfield land take

Options for a Spatial Strategy

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### Option 3: Dispersed Development ...

- **Strengths**
  - Opportunity for greater housing choice in rural areas
  - Possibility of improved services
  - May promote stronger rural communities and support the rural economy
- **Weaknesses**
  - Very significant greenfield land take in AONB
  - Majority of new housing development would not be in close proximity to most jobs, shops and services
  - Scale of development in any settlement may be insufficient to make new services/facilities viable
  - Weaker incentive to regenerate urban areas and brownfield sites
  - Detracts from Regional Hub status at RTW

Options for a Spatial Strategy

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### Option 4: New / Expanded Settlement

- **Strengths**
  - Less impact on designated landscapes than other Options
  - Scope for mixed use development and a range of employment opportunities
  - May allow for greater delivery of affordable housing
- **Weaknesses**
  - High greenfield land take
  - Need to travel by car for higher order services
  - Adequacy of local road network?
  - Detracts from Regional Hub status at RTW

Options for a Spatial Strategy

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### Purpose of Workshop Session

- Your task is to **plan for where new development will be located in the Borough by 2026**
- Need to Work as a **group**
- Please read and follow **instruction sheet**
- Need to **justify reasons** on provided record sheet
- Need one person to **feedback** to all other groups (3 minutes max)

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### Instructions

- On your table you have been provided with a range of materials
- Your task is:
  - To **locate** the **REQUIRED** elements of development (housing and retail) on the map of the Borough
  - To **locate** the **OPTIONAL** elements of development (large and small office premises and large and small industrial premises) on the map of the Borough
  - You need to **justify** your plan using the recording sheet
  - One person** from your group should **feed back** to all the other groups – **maximum of 3 minutes** per group
- Officers from TWBC are available if you require assistance

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# Groups



## Group 1

1. Mr J Hopkinson, Churches Social Responsibility Group
2. Mr M Hull, Kember Loudon Williams Ltd
3. Mr J Rutland, Federation of Small Businesses
4. Ms J Arnott, The National Trust
5. Councillor D Wakefield, Friends of the Commons
6. Mr A Hume, Hillreed Developments Ltd
7. Mr P Emberson, Hawkhurst Village Society
8. Ms P Chatfield, Home-Start South West Kent

## Group 2

1. Mr P Allen, Weald of Kent Preservation Society, CPRE
2. Ms S Heron, Rydon Homes Ltd
3. Mr M Mann, Kent County Neighbourhood Watch Association
4. Councillor P Nicholls, Paddock Wood Town Council
5. Dr P Whitbourn, Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum
6. Councillor P Blockley, Benenden Parish Council
7. Mr C Blythe, Lidl UK GmbH
8. Mr R J Fisher, Speldhurst Village Society

## Group 3

1. Mr I Coupland, Kent County Council Adult Services
2. Mr A Stevens, A S Planning
3. Mr K Perry, Benhall Mill Road Land Association
4. Ms E Hawkes, Barton Willmore Planning
5. Mr C Barrow, Tunbridge Wells Ramblers Association



## Group 4

1. Mr J Edge, Knight Frank LLP
2. Mr M Gilks, Eversheds (assisting Mr Edge)
3. Mr P Waller, Bloomfields Ltd
4. Mr A Tod, RTW Civic Society
5. Mrs J A Podbury, Speldhurst Wednesday Club
6. Ms A Hooker, Marden Parish Council

#### Group 5

1. Mrs E Akenhead, British Horse Society (South East Region)
2. Professor M Holman, Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association
3. Mr N J Wickham, John Wickham (Cranbrook) Ltd
4. Mr P Carter, Broadlands
5. Mr Webb, Hawkenbury Village Association
6. Ms L Lynds, Maidstone Borough Council
7. Mrs B Howell, Compaid Trust

#### Group 6

1. Mr T J Duncan, Lambert & Foster
2. Mr P Woodcock, Tunbridge Wells Gospel Halls Trust
3. Mr M Doyle, Hawkenbury Village Association
4. Ms L Williams, Home Group Ltd (formerly Warden Housing Association)
5. Mr M Coggles, National Federation of the Blind
6. Ms J Watson, Wealden District Council
7. Mr J Denny, Cripps Harries Hall LLP
8. Mr N Jarrett, Southeastern Railway



#### Group 7

1. Mr N Ide, Batcheller Thacker
2. Mr R B Walsh, Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee
3. Dr D Bech, Telephone House Neighbours Association
4. Mrs I Veness, High Brooms Townswomens Community Affairs Group
5. Mr K Sinclair, Paddock Wood Residents Association
6. Mr M Powell, Brenchley Parish Council
7. Mr P Dye, Dye Tabrett Architects
8. Ms C Ison, Housing Corporation
9. Mr B Simpole, Kent County Council: Children, Families & Education

#### Group 8

1. Ms J Davis, Judith Norris Ltd
2. Rev B Senior, St Philip's Church
3. Mr A R Shaw, High Weald AONB Unit
4. Mr C Weller, The Calverley Park Association
5. Mr R Brazier, Pepenbury
6. Councillor Mrs A Bunyan, Cranbrook Parish Council
7. Mr G Goddard, Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust



#### Group 9

1. Mr T Phillips, Community Liaison Manager, Kent County Council
2. Ms H Lucking, Kent Bat Group
3. Mr D L Daniell, Church of Christ (Cambrian Road)
4. Mr T Parker, Langton Green Rural Society
5. Mr P Donovan, Cranbrook and District Local History Society
6. Mr D Sims, Southern Water
7. Mr J Goodfellow, Banner Farm Res Assoc; Maidstone & TW Hospitals PPI Forum; SW Kent PCT PPI Forum
8. Mr A Hawkins, Bell Cornwell Partnership

# Group Records

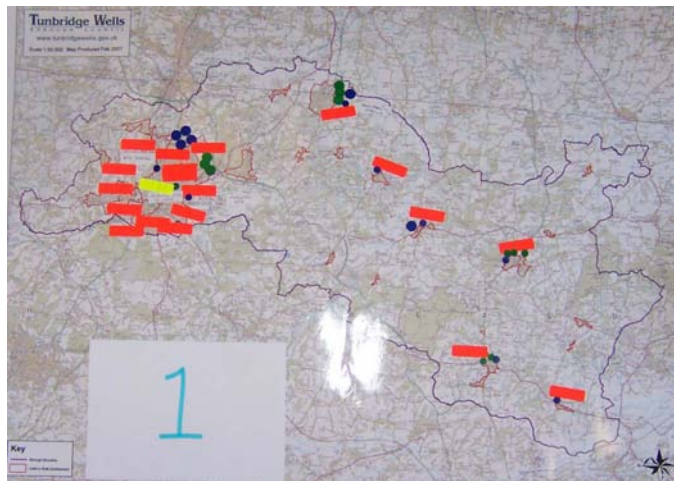
## Issues & Options Workshop Feedback Sessions - 6 March 2007



### Key to plans

- Red rectangular stickers represented housing
- Yellow rectangular stickers represented retail development
- Green dots represented large and small office premises
- Blue dots represented large and small industrial premises

### Group 1



Opted for centralisation because this is more likely to provide low cost housing (over 15 dwellings) and would reduce the need to travel, thus creating more public transport to higher density housing.

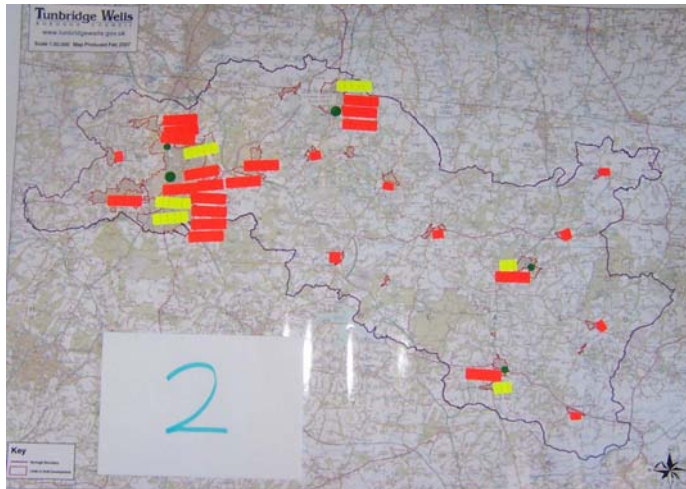
Considered some dispersal of housing in the rural areas to address need.

A criticism was that there had been no talk of infrastructure and thus questioned how sustainable this was.

Retail should also be concentrated in Royal Tunbridge Wells, with some additional in villages where there are good transport routes (A21).

The group felt the same for offices – should take advantage of communication routes.

## Group 2



The group disagreed on a number of issues concerning housing, but had good discussion. They chose to distribute housing development throughout the Borough, with the villages having a small percentage. None of them thought Option 4 was a realistic option.

They saw Paddock Wood as an area with more scope for development than Cranbrook and Hawkhurst. There was disagreement over how much development should go in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, but it was agreed

that using garden sites was not a good option.

Affordable Housing: to provide development in rural areas we need to overcome the current 15-unit threshold. The Group cited Ashford Borough Council as having introduced a policy where one in three houses must be affordable.

There was no discussion of other uses.

## Group 3



Tried to emphasise that most development should be in Royal Tunbridge Wells, where there was the best infrastructure and brownfield sites.

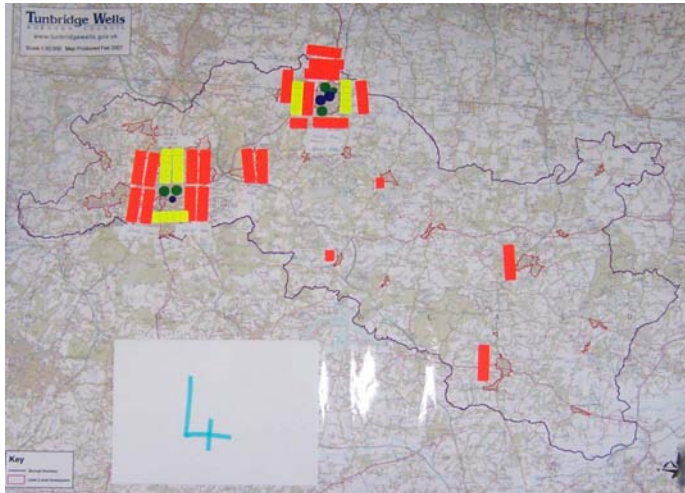
Retail and mixed-use sites should be provided in Royal Tunbridge Wells, with new hospital development at Pembury taking some houses.

Paddock Wood would be an option: there appears to be scope near to the railway station.

Hawkhurst – Consider the bus station to be an eyesore, and ask if there is potential to develop and enhance it, possibly as a retail or outlet site or some kind of tourist attraction.

Cranbrook was not considered to offer much potential, although the Cranbrook Council Office site was an opportunity for redevelopment.

## Group 4



The group reached consensus. They identified two main centres of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood to take most of the new development.

- 2000 houses in Royal Tunbridge Wells
- 1850 in Paddock Wood
- 500 in Pembury

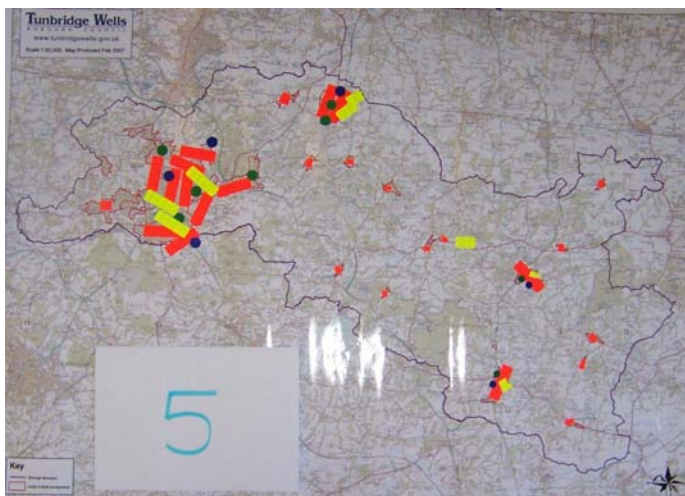
Villages: Some housing should be allocated, but at a modest scale. Hawkhurst and Cranbrook should take most.

Retail: A Paddock Wood and Royal Tunbridge Wells split should be

sought, feeding off new housing development. Identified a need to increase retail of Royal Tunbridge Wells to regenerate Town centre, otherwise this may be overshadowed by Sevenoaks and other town centres. With this comes the need for new schools and other services. Considered secondary schools and thought a location somewhere between Paddock Wood and Royal Tunbridge Wells would be the best option if one were needed.

Hoped that enhancement of infrastructure would happen in conjunction with this.

## Group 5



Felt they were constrained by the limited information provided.

For sustainability reasons, they would put major development in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.

Were not sure about the status of Pembury as this has not been highlighted in any of the options: however they had decided that they would treat this as part of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. Account should be taken of the fact that the Green Belt has already been rolled back

at the rural fringe sites to accommodate further development. Group 5 considered these sites would offer the best opportunities for housing, including affordable housing, and mixed use development.

They considered Paddock Wood in the same way but, as the outcome of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was not known, weren't certain how credible this was.

Acknowledged that Cranbrook and Hawkhurst needed some new development and this was important to sustain schools and other local services. The villages would probably get a few houses from infilling/redevelopment, in any event.

The Retail Needs Study would dictate where new retail should go. They thought that retail need in the more rural villages and small towns was constrained, and that most major development would be located in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pembury and Southborough. However, small towns and villages will need some additional retail. Office and industrial development should be concentrated at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood, with small-scale provision at Cranbrook and Hawkhurst to sustain local communities.

## Group 6



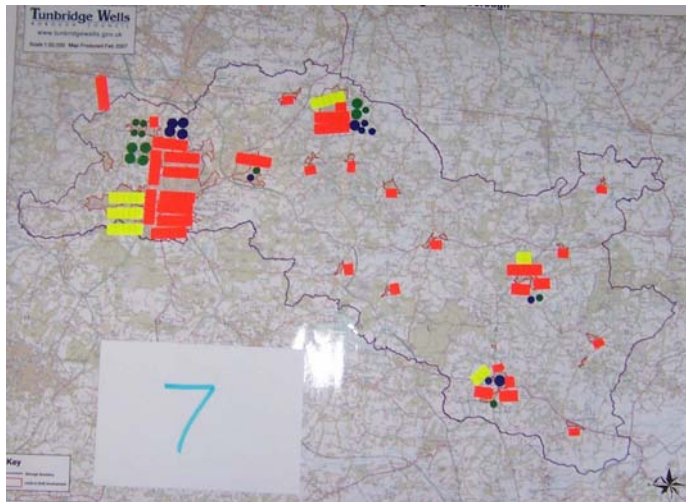
Couldn't reach conclusions in the time allowed, so an ad-hoc approach of dispersing development throughout the Borough was taken.

They agreed with Group 4 that Paddock Wood could be used as some areas are outside the flood plain and it is not in the AONB. Included some development in Royal Tunbridge Wells, but this would be limited, as this was considered to be 'built out' already.

The villages would hold small amounts of development, with 50-100 houses in places such as Hawkhurst and Cranbrook. They considered that Goudhurst could have some development but they highlighted the need to do something with the road, which runs through the village.

The group identified that retail development should be located at Paddock Wood, Royal Tunbridge Wells and North Farm Industrial Estate. Employment space should be located in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood, where there is scope for more offices.

## Group 7



The group highlighted that infrastructure is very important and that lack of infrastructure is now causing a significant problem. Infrastructure should be provided in advance of, and not after, development. Acknowledged that the South East Plan, when adopted, could change the number of houses the Borough is required to provide.

The group questioned how realistic Option 4 was and whether it was actually viable.

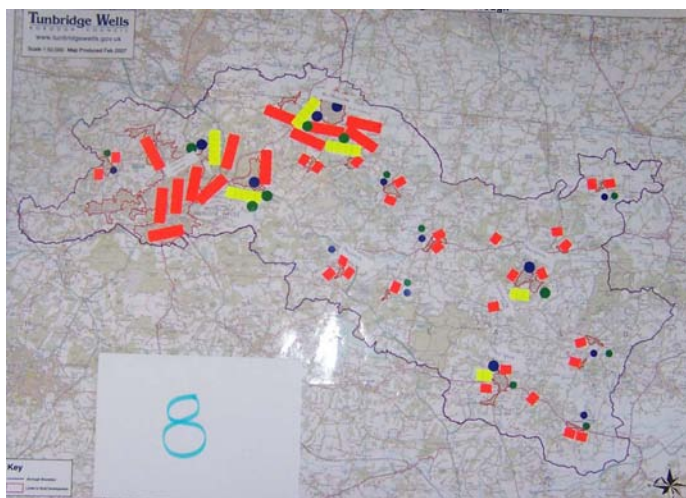
The group complimented the Council on the workshop. The group said that discussions on affordable housing and infrastructure take place all the time and questioned how this particular discussion will change things. They felt the key issue was implementation and the need to ensure brownfield sites are brought forward for development. They stressed the need for affordable housing, infrastructure and accessible services so that people are not alienated.

Sustainable issues make it difficult to predict changes. Considered that Royal Tunbridge Wells is shrinking as a settlement and needs more investment to keep pace with competing retail centres such as Maidstone and we need to reduce the number of out commuters.

They decided that half the housing should be located within Royal Tunbridge Wells and spread the remainder throughout the rest of the Borough, especially at Paddock Wood. The difficulty of accessibility constrained opportunities at Cranbrook and Hawkhurst. The group also decided to locate most of their retail in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

The group questioned whether there was any innovation in this process. They urged the Borough Council to be more innovative and asked what would make this particular exercise different to other planning exercises.

## Group 8



This Group decided on a hybrid solution, concentrating development at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.

The group discussed Pembury hospital, and the need for housing and shops to serve the 2,500 staff.

They have allocated a large amount in Paddock Wood, but felt road improvements were needed at Colts Hill.

The remainder would be dispersed around the Borough and this would happen 'organically'. The group agreed that Ashford's approach to affordable housing was a good idea.

The group felt that Lamberhurst had better links and could be viable. Health and ambulatory care needs to be put back into Royal Tunbridge Wells to replace the hospital and at Paddock Wood.

## Group 9



The Group considered the constraints and questioned whether there was room for 5,000 new homes within the Borough, so they provided fewer. They thought there might be a need to consider some of the 'lower quality' rural fringe/greenfield sites. The group also agreed that there should be a more strategic and informed process. The large urban areas such as Royal Tunbridge Wells need green links to the countryside and through the town to be maintained/improved. Paddock Wood and Five Oak Green are considered to be good areas for

development due to the railway line, including the location of industry. Smaller amounts of housing could be provided in the villages.

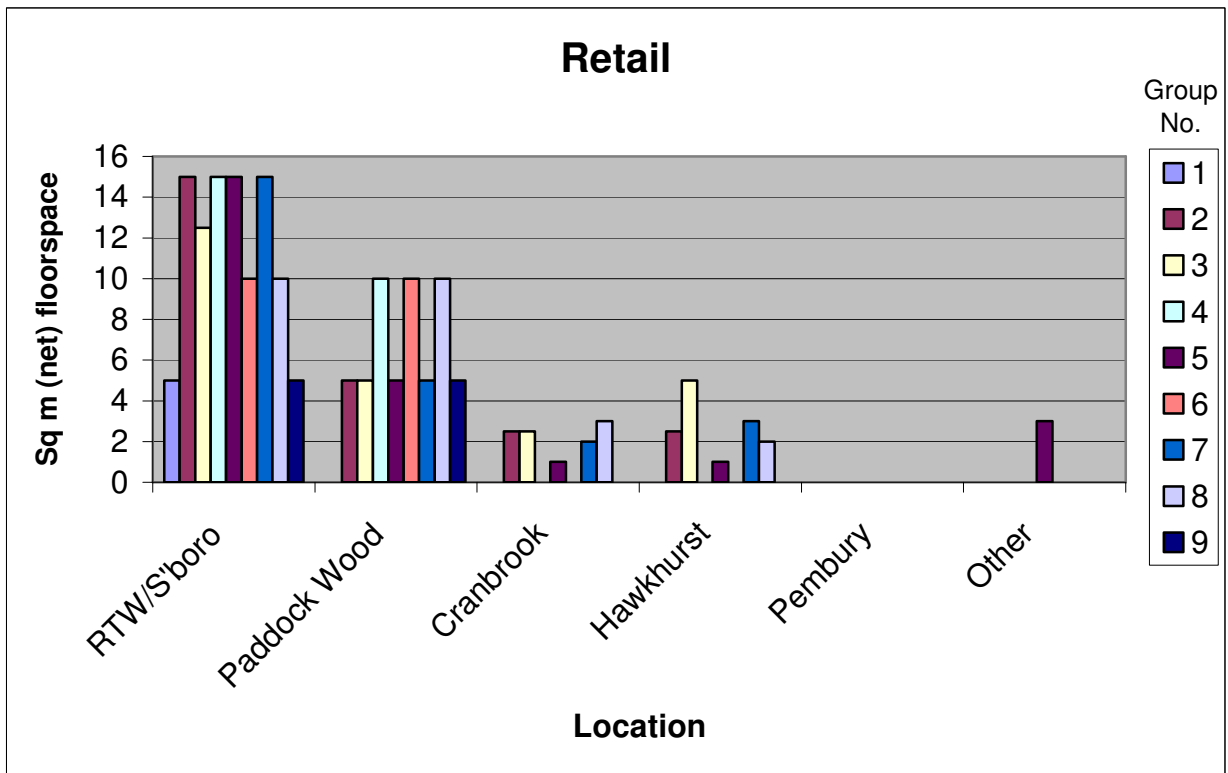
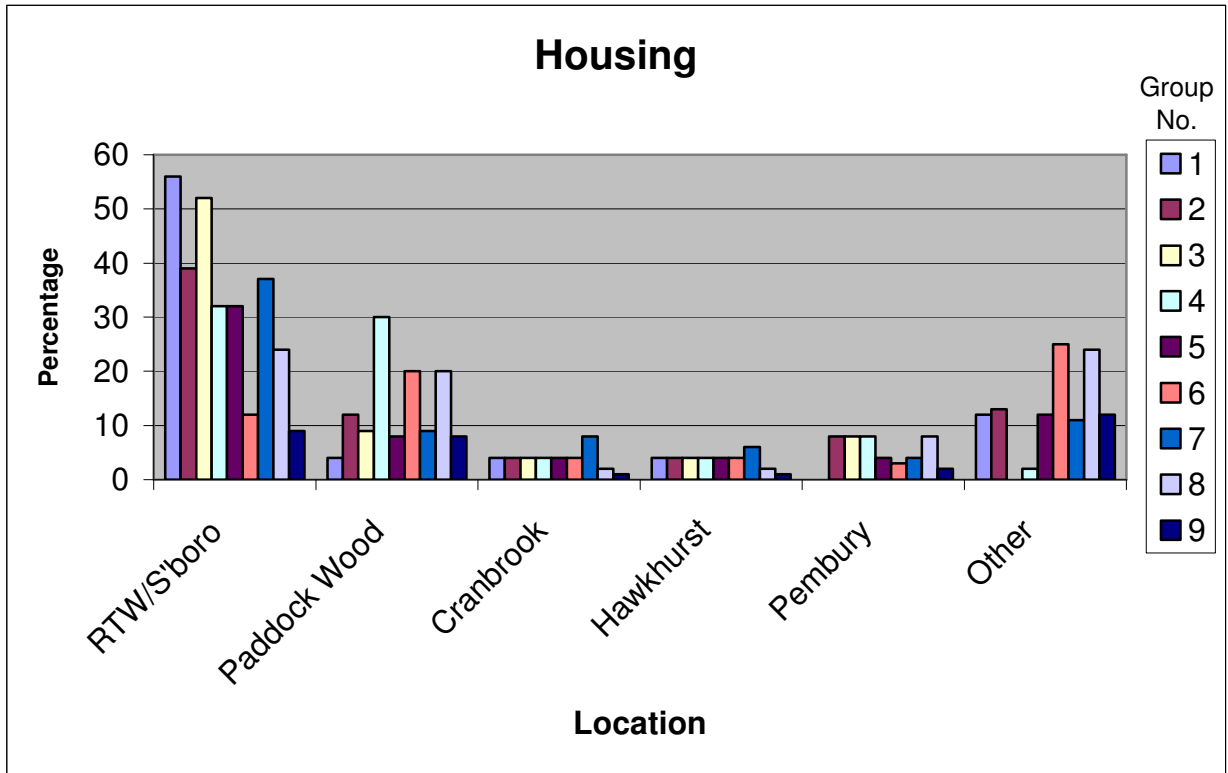
There was a need for more office space for small entrepreneurial office space in the smaller settlements. Rusthall and Cranbrook, for example, could do with small businesses.

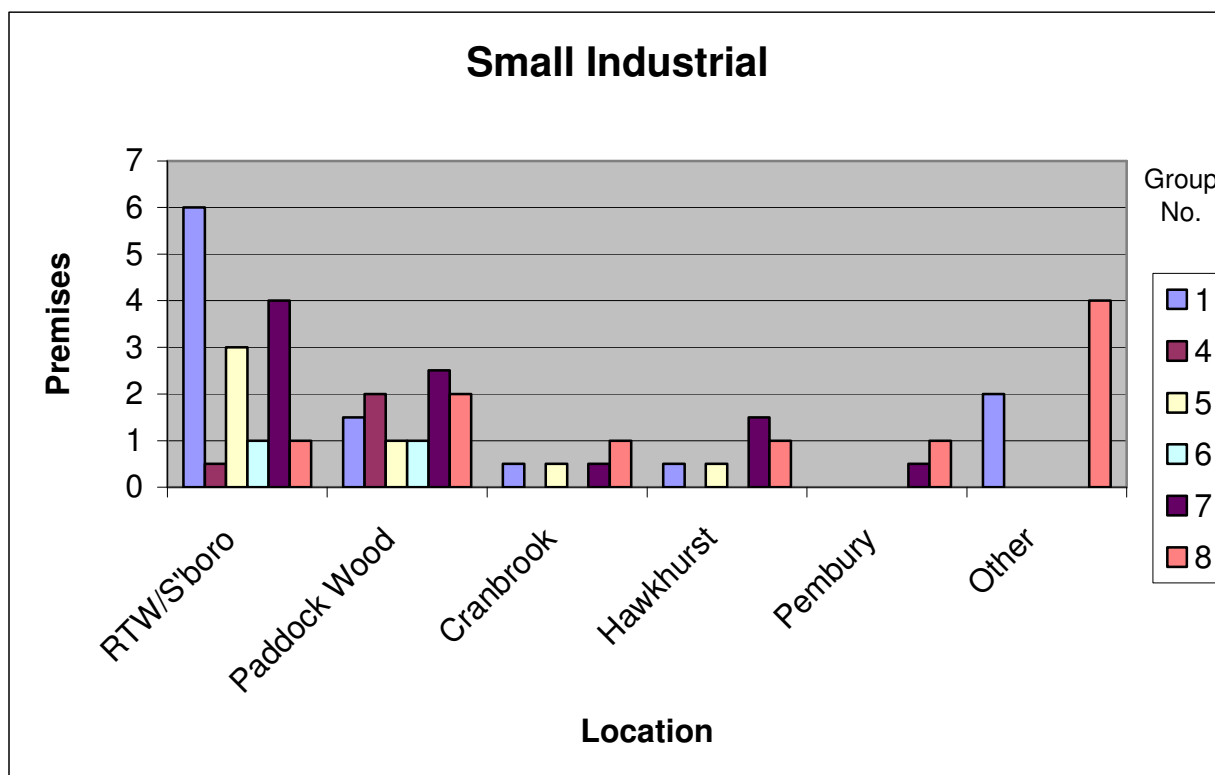
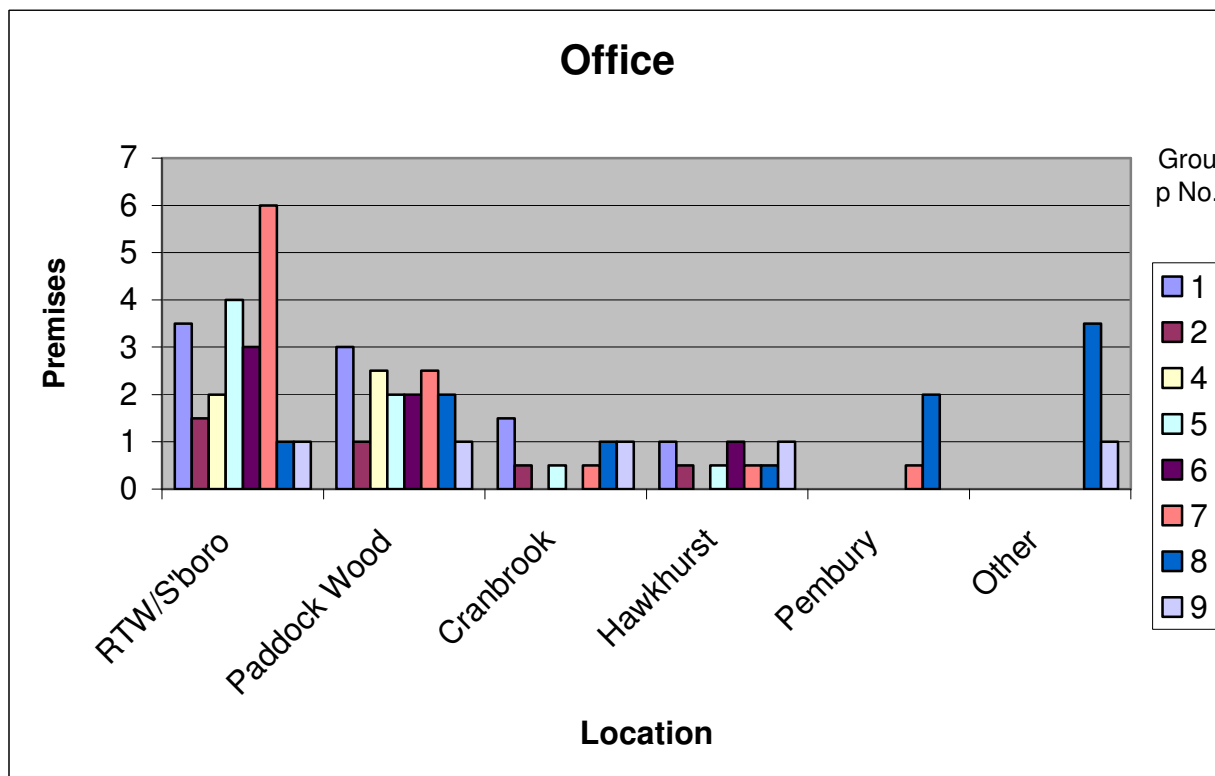


(nb. Some groups did not use all stickers)

(nbn other feedback matrix sheets available)

# Summary





Disclaimer: All the comments in this report are from the participants in the event and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council are not responsible for the comments made.