Traffic in Villages Checklist

Take this checklist out with you when you are gathering information about your village. It will help you identify roadside features which can contribute to the local distinctiveness of your village as often they are so commonplace that we take them for granted.

Photographs are a useful addition to record style, materials, location in relation to surrounding buildings and highway as well as condition. Don't forget to include the approach to and exit from your village.

Surfaces

☐ **Unusual materials or features** - Cobbles, old paving, local stone or brick, metal manhole covers from local foundries with maker's name, raised footways, steps within footways cattle grids.

Roadside Boundaries

☐ **Hedges** – ancient, new, uncertain date, hedge banks, field or garden hedge? Are they laid, flayed or coppiced? Does the hedge correspond with the parish boundary? Is it single species or mixed? What is its condition (good, reasonable, poor)?

☐ **Walls** – local stone, brick, flint, other, mortar or dry stone? Is there a particular local design? What is its condition (good, reasonable, poor)? Are there buildings that front directly onto the road?

☐ **Fences and railings** – metal, decorative wrought iron, timber post and rail, other. Is there a particular local design e.g. from enclosed historic parkland or local estate?

☐ **Gates** – galvanised, metal (decorative as above), wooden, church lych gate, kissing gate, stile.

Trees

☐ Free standing at junctions or village green, avenues of trees within or approach to village, trees within pavements or flanking footpaths. Note species, if any subject to Tree Preservation Order (ask Local Planning Authority) or are veteran trees. Are they coppiced, pollarded, maiden trees, other? Mini sketches of tree shape are useful. See http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/fepveterantree_tcm6-6492.pdf

Verges

☐ Note width, composition e.g. grass, and wild flowers, grass and cultivated flowers etc. Are verges part of SNCI's/SSSI's/Nature Reserves (www.magic.defra.gov.uk has national but not local designations mapped). Are any noted as "conservation verges" (is there a blue post or green metal sign?) or contain special species at certain times of the year? Many local authorities work with their local Wildlife Trust to identify and manage special wildlife –rich verges ("conservation verges") see http://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/roadside_verges_project.html as an example.

Water

☐ Streams, brooks, ditches, rivers, fords, ponds and lakes, wells, village pumps, water troughs, drinking fountains, historic features which used water e.g. sheepwash. Note wildlife and bankside vegetation of streams, rivers, ponds. Are parts of any waterways culverted? Are there flood level marks?

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Bridge designs, materials and name plaques

☐ **Bridges** – historic, modern, construction materials & design, footbridges.

☐ **Plaques on bridges or naming rivers** – material (metal, wood, other), information displayed e.g. name of river, date of bridge etc.

☐ **Railway bridges**

Other special historic features

☐ **Milestones** – sometimes they may be just outside your village, obscured by undergrowth or set into modern features e.g. wall or side of building. Are they made of stone or cast iron? What shape are they? Always record any wording. See www.milestonesociety.co.uk

☐ **Tollhouses**

Public Utility Furniture

☐ **Post boxes** – pillar boxes (uncommon in villages, mostly in towns), mounted (on walls, telegraph poles or on posts), design, colour and age (Victorian or modern). http://www.fingerpostsigns.com/save-our vintage-royal-mail-letter-boxes.php

☐ **Telephone boxes** – traditional red (iconic K6 type increasingly rare), other colour (some times green, cream or grey), modern design http://www.fingerpostsigns.com/help-save -our-gilbert-scott-k6-telephone-boxes.php

☐ **Bus Shelters** – design and materials, historic or modern. Do the design and materials contribute to the surrounding streetscape or detract from it?

☐ **Noticeboard** – design and materials. Is it in a place where people can easily read the notices or a hidden away corner?

Signs

☐ **Nameplates** - Does your village have a village nameplate at the entrance to the village? Design, size and materials, font used (standard highway or unique to village e.g millennium stones etc)? Any additional wording or illustration besides village name? Any other signs e.g Best Kept Village or other local significance.

☐ **Other signs** - Are there any other village name signs e.g on village green or other village location?

☐ **Traditional Fingerposts** - see http://www dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/rural-roads fingerpostproject.html for audit form to help record important details of fingerpost.

☐ **Other directional highway signs** – a modern sign may be mounted on an old fingerpost or have an old fingerpost roundel attached; old-style warning signs for school children and the like; old-style directional signs.

☐ **Street nameplates** – materials and style (cast metal old or new, modern, wood, other), how mounted (pole, wall, other means)

☐ **Fire plaques on buildings; historic pub or shop signs, etc**

Other roadside features

☐ War Memorials and commemorative plaques Market crosses and other scheduled or historic monuments or features

☐ **Level crossings, other railway features** - are they modern or historic?

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Features to celebrate particular events

☐ Millennium, accession of Queen Elizabeth the second, inscribed stones or other features.

☐ Anything else that is important, specific or locally distinctive to your village?

Other important information to record on your village sketch map

☐ Modern blister paving set within pavement, coloured road surfacing, road markings including words, arrows, hatching or directions, road humps (note width and shape).

☐ **Kerbs** - local stone, concrete, conservation, granite, others.

☐ **Bollards** – material, shape, size, colour, whether reflectors attached

☐ **Local vernacular building style** - Can often be seen in porches, windows, gables, doors, roof materials etc

☐ **Bus stops** - is there a shelter or bench? Sign?

☐ **Benches** – are the design and materials appropriate to its location or are they more suited to a town location? Is the bench in a location where you would choose to sit?

☐ **Litter bins** – Are the design and materials appropriate to its location or is the design more suited to a town setting?

☐ **Street lighting** –is there any street lighting? If so, what kind of columns and fittings – modern or traditional? What are they made from, what colour are the columns? Are there any wall mounted street lamps?

☐ **Tourism 'brown signs'** – or local business signs?

☐ **Cycle route or long distance trail signs**

☐ **Public Rights of Way network** - has a suite of signs to indicate routes, they may be simple wooden fingerposts, small tombstone shaped waymarkers with information chiselled onto stone, newer metal or plastic fingerposts, small metal or plastic discs mounted on existing structure or individual sign customised for location. In each case note details of design, materials, location and wording.

☐ **Clutter** – this term is most often applied to signs however it can extend to a range of features like street furniture or road markings. Are there spots in your village which you feel are cluttered? A separate audit may be needed to assess this.

☐ Now you have surveyed your village, are there any things which you feel detract from the local distinctiveness and character of your village? Note the top 5 things that you think make your village special and need conserving or enhancing and the top 5 things which you think detract from its special qualities. This will help identify special places and features to enhance your villages' sense of place.

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