

THE
LYMPSTONE
VILLAGE
DESIGN
STATEMENT

1. The Village Design Statement

The purpose of Village Design Statements is to describe the distinctive character of the village and surrounding countryside, and to draw up design principles based on this local character.

As the title suggests, they are concerned with design, with the visual appearance of villages. Their remit does not include social policy, which is the province of Parish Plans.

They exist to be consulted by the District Council, the Parish Council, and any individuals or developers who intend to erect new buildings or make alterations to existing ones.

The Village Design Statement does not discuss whether development should take place: that is the subject of the EDDC local plan. This Statement seeks to establish design guidelines, so that any development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the local environment.

This document is a collaborative enterprise, developed, researched and written by local people over a two-year period.

The Village Design Statement has sought to consult the views of the people of Lympstone in various ways:

- By inviting villagers to photograph the features of Lympstone that they care about most.
- By mounting a public exhibition, which demonstrated the issues of design with which the Village Design Statement is concerned.
- By publishing and making publicly available five drafts of the Statement.
- By taking into account more than 100 written submissions, and many verbal contributions. All the views that were expressed were carefully considered, and the Statement has changed and developed significantly over the course of its five drafts as a result.

The process has been aided by grants from Lympstone Parish Council.

2. Lympstone

Lympstone is a village of exceptional character, whose intricate and varied scale of development retains the distinctive atmosphere of a farming and fishing village.

It is a strip parish, winding its way down from the heights of Lympstone Common to the Exe estuary. The main part of the settlement lies on the north side of a valley, and the axis of the village is a long village street, originally laid down in Saxon times. It emerges between two cliffs of red breccia, a gravelly rock laid down by floods some 250 million years ago.

Farms and agricultural land have covered the upper reaches of the parish with their sandy and clay soils. Meadows and orchards lie beside the Wotton Brook, which together with Lympstone creek form an outlet to the sea. This outlet, with its surrounding red cliffs, formed the site for shipbuilding and fishing. Now it provides a shelter for leisure boats.

The railway line from Exeter to Exmouth runs on an embankment through the lower part of the village, parallel to the estuary. One of its three bridges acts like a mediaeval gateway to the fishing village.

Few of the houses look directly on to the estuary. Mostly they face each other across the main village street as it winds its way inland. Of recent years, some *cul-de-sacs* of stock estate houses have been created, leading off this street. To the north there is local authority and Ministry of Defence housing.

The architectural character of Lower Lympstone is determined by the fire of 1833, when 58 cottages were burned down. Cob and thatch gave way to brick and slate roofs. There are older cottages around the church, and further up Longmeadow Road. Larger houses were mainly built up Burgmann's Hill, away from the water, or further inland. The mill, which has existed since at least the 13th century, retains its 19th century machinery and wheel. On the other side of the valley from the settlement was the manor of Sowden, which is now part of the parish.

The church was originally Norman. The tower was built in 1409, but the rest was rebuilt in Victorian times. The Primitive Methodist Chapel, of stone with lancet windows, is dated 1883, and next to it is a charming brick-built schoolhouse. These are tucked away behind the main village street, adjacent to a terrace of three-storey Regency houses, and a Queen Anne house. The open space onto which they looked has of recent years been filled in with bungalows and small-scale housing.

The railway, which cuts through Lower Lympstone, makes its presence felt architecturally with three brick bridges. The station, hidden away up a hill, has lost its Victorian buildings, replaced with a glass and metal shelter.

The landmark building of Lympstone is Peter's Tower, a brick Italianate memorial clock-tower of 1885, overlooking the estuary.

Although Lympstone is a richly varied village, its unity and appeal comes from the use of natural materials and traditional forms. There is always room for imaginative designs which can contribute something new to the mix, if they respect the use of natural materials and complement the existing building forms in their size and proportion.

3. The Conservation Area*

The Lympstone Conservation Area was first designated in 1974, and within the boundary are 59 individually listed buildings. It comprises the early settlement connected with the port, mainly west of the railway, with most development either fronting or in short terraces running towards The Strand. Further inland is a more open pattern of settlement comprising Church, School, the Mill and Lympstone House, with a large proportion of open space and some fine specimen trees. Much intrinsic character survives, although there have been some large and incongruous post-1945 extensions to otherwise small dwellings. Also in some instances extensive loss of original frontage and roof materials has occurred, especially in the case of buildings fronting the estuary.

The Village Design Statement would support the recommendation by East Devon District Council's Conservation Area Appraisal that "consideration be given to extensions to the existing conservation area or to designation of additional conservation areas incorporating significant early development to the north and east of the current designation".

**Taken from the East Devon Conservation Area Appraisal of Lympstone, prepared by John Fisher, 1999*

Guidelines

- The Planning Authority should act to preserve the Conservation Area and to insist on the use of traditional materials within it.

Lympstone is made of cob and thatch, the Devon vernacular, of stone and brick, its other roofs of plain clay tile and natural slate. For modest buildings such as sheds or barns, corrugated iron can be appropriate in a village setting. The limekilns on the seafront are a reminder that that lime mortar was used, which is much more suited to most forms of masonry than the current widespread use of cement. Wood is the only appropriate material for window frames and glazing bars, and the use of uPVC is a blight on many old houses. An Article 4 would be strongly supported.

- The Authority is encouraged to act on the recommendation of its own Conservation Area Appraisal, that consideration be given to extensions of the Conservation Area, to include significant early development to the north and east of the existing designation.

4. Building forms

The old village sits at ease with its landscape, showing a transition of building form from farming to a fishing village. Intimacy is the key style. The buildings huddle together, and generally attach to an adjoining property. The successful unattached houses have walls or high hedging that maintain an enclosed and continuous street scene, although this is now being interrupted by the increasing use of front gardens as parking spaces, and the proliferation of up-and-over garage doors facing the road.

Lympstone is characterised by the number of small groups of domestic buildings, clustered mainly down the long main street that winds its way to the estuary. In short and irregular terraces, they front directly onto the road, resulting in a village of high-density development, although privacy is retained to a remarkable degree. There are many individual buildings of character, often in unusual juxtaposition, small-scale and intimate.

The three principal building materials are cob, stone and brick. Cob dates from the middle ages and was characteristic of Devon. Local sandstone and red breccia were used initially from local quarries, until better transport meant that limestone could be brought in from other parts of Devon. Brick was not used until the late 17th century, when it became widespread after the growth of nearby brickworks. It is of these materials that the vernacular cottages were built, as well as the grander houses. In many of the buildings the underlying material is obscured by painted smooth or roughcast render in white or pale pastel shades. There are some distinctive red brick houses, but many from the late 18th and early 19th centuries are stuccoed. There are

some classical features, such as Georgian bow windows and pedimented doorways and fine fanlights. Few mediaeval buildings remain, although there are several from the Elizabethan era.

Short terraces are characteristic of Lympstone: there are Victorian terraces at the top of Longmeadow Road, and older terraces of cottages. Georgian and Victorian villas are found within the street line and on Burgmann's Hill, and further afield within the parish boundaries. 20th century building has tended to come in the form of housing estates, including the Marine Estate and the Council Houses to the north of the main street. More recent developments have seen undistinguished private estates, some neo-Tudor houses, and the introduction of "Executive" housing. There are two newly-built large detached houses.

Lympstone has grown up around three major industries, farming fishing and boat building, and the evidence can be seen in the buildings. There are still two working farms in the village. Although no commercial fishing boats now sail from Lympstone, the old fishing village is still identifiable, as are the sheds and boat shelter that serviced it. A boat-building shed has become a joiner's workshop. Identifiable sail lofts survive, now used for other purposes. And the old net-drying poles are an evocative reminder, although it is clothes that hang from them now.

The former limekilns and the Mill, with its leat and pond and wheel, are evidence of a different kind of industry.

Lympstone had a large number of retail outlets, and in many cases the shop fronts are still in place. The Post Office and a shop survive, and there are four pubs, a hairdresser and a nursery.

Small industry can help a modern village to thrive, and there is no reason why it should not be successfully situated in adapted existing buildings, or in appropriate purpose-built ones. There is a recognisable tradition of village industrial building, which can serve as a model for any new structures.

With many architectural styles represented in the village, design guidance should arise from observing and respecting key elements that are present. A good example of this is the village school. It is clearly built in the style of Victorian schools, which sprung up all over the country with the passing of the 1870 Education Act. But this particular building has tall, pointed windows, a graceful local acknowledgement of the Gothic windows of the church that it faces across the graveyard. It is such good architectural manners that we would hope any new buildings would demonstrate, in order to complement the existing buildings of Lympstone.

Guidelines

- All listed buildings and structures should be maintained and retained.
- New development should not interrupt the existing street line.
- New buildings should be of individual design that respects local character. There is room for imaginative new design, sympathetic to the traditional buildings of Lympstone.
- It would help to maintain the variety of building that is characteristic of Lympstone if any new estate consisted of more than one house type. Identikit housing estates are not appropriate.
- Natural traditional materials should be used for alterations and extensions to old buildings, and preferably for new buildings.

5. Doors & windows

“God is in the detail,” said Mies van der Rohe; and so, it seems, is the Devil. Doors and windows are the details which give a building a human face. They are the principal accents that bring character to our houses. They are also the features that can be most easily altered, and all over England good buildings are being wrecked by insensitive alteration. Lympstone, alas, is not immune.

The unifying factor is the use of natural materials.

Doors

Cottages in the village have modest wooden doorways. Grander 18th and 19th century houses sometimes have pedimented doorways, usually with decorated fanlights. So far so appropriate. Unfortunately, there is an increasing tendency to ‘Georgianize’ doors, not from an 18th century pattern book, but from the mass-produced designs of the Superstores, whose ‘Period’ doors contain imitation fanlights, not above the door but within it. This makes a mockery of the genuine fanlights in the village, and is compounded when the doors are made of plastic. The integrity of the materials used is critical in a village context, and wooden doors and window frames are essential to the visual unity and character of Lympstone.

The increasing number of up-and-over garage doors, usually of metal, facing directly onto the street, is proving greatly detrimental to the appearance of the village.

Windows

Windows in Lympstone are richly varied: there are casement, sash and bay windows, with a variety of glazing patterns, including the late 19th century tripartite windows found in the three brick Regency houses in Underhill, in the Redwing Inn, at Sowden House, and at one time in the upper storey of the Post Office. A characteristic feature of many of the older cottages are the sliding windows with pegs. Shallow bow-window frontages are a particular characteristic of the village, and some appear to have originated as early shopfronts. Other traditional shopfronts have been retained, although the shops have long closed.

The increasing prevalence of uPvc windows is alarming. As government guidelines state: "The insertion of factory made standard windows of all kinds, whether in timber, aluminium, galvanised steel or plastic is almost always damaging to the character and appearance of old buildings." Listed building control should provide effective protection for historic buildings, but this should apply at least to all buildings within the conservation area. Original windows, if well maintained, should not normally need to be replaced. In Lympstone there are many windows in good condition well over 100 years old, and they can go on being maintained and repaired indefinitely. Traditional windows retain the value of the house.

Guidelines

- Original doors and windows should be maintained and retained where possible.
- New and replacement doors and windows in old buildings should be of wood, particularly within the Conservation Area. Their size, proportion and style should match those of the original, including the glazing bars.
- Fake 'Georgian' doorways and windows are to be avoided.
- Where they face the street, wooden garage doors, hinged at the side, are far preferable to the ugly and inappropriate up-and-over metal doors.

6. Roofs

There are various views to be had of the Lympstone roofscape: from the train, from Sowden Hill, from the path up to Cliff Field, for instance. It is an attractive jumble of pitch roofs in a variety of traditional materials, tiles, slates, thatch, pantiles, and even the occasional corrugated iron, which provides a splash of colour when it is corroding. Although varied, it takes its homogeneity from the fact that the materials are natural and sympathetic. The only false notes occur with the occasional artificial slate tiles, which don't weather like real slate.

Thatch, of course, is the oldest roof covering for cottages, and is strongly associated with Devon, mainly because of the widespread use of cob as a building material. Combed wheat reed is a speciality of the County and is known here as 'Devon reed'. There is not much thatch left in Lympstone, partly as a result of the great fire of 1833, but what there is contributes greatly to the roofscape.

The existence of pantiles is of particular interest. They are mainly to be found in the East of England, where they were initially imported, but they were also used in a few places in the South West that traded with Holland, and these included Topsham and Lympstone.

Lympstone houses have retained their old chimney pots, many of which are still in use, and this adds to the gaiety of the scene. Seaside settlements tend to have a greater variety of pots, as so many are blown down and have to be replaced. Pots themselves were first introduced in the reign of George III, and became popular when long pots could replace lofty brick-built stacks. Lympstone still has long stacks as well as pots – there was a need to take the chimney as far as possible above thatched roofs in particular. Chimneys built in the 17th & 18th centuries use old, smaller Dutch bricks, probably imported into Topsham as ballast for ships from Holland, and these can be seen on several Lympstone chimney stacks.

There are some well-placed examples of decorative Victorian bargeboards.

The increasing use of velux window lights is affecting the character of the roofscape. Modest wooden dormer windows are a far preferable solution.

The Lympstone roofscape is one of the most attractive features of the village, as well as reflecting its history, and it deserves to be rigorously protected.

Guidelines

- Thatch for roofs should be preserved on listed buildings and in the conservation area, and its preservation is encouraged throughout the village.
- New roofs should conform to traditional roof pitches.
- Natural, traditional roofing materials are appropriate to Lymptstone, where plain clay tiles, slates and thatch make up most of the roofscape. Concrete tiles and artificial 'slates' are out of place.
- Where roof light is wanted, dormer windows are far preferable to velux, and are a traditional Lymptstone solution.

7. Street furniture

There are some good examples of street furniture in the village, including the red K6 phone box outside the Swan, wall post boxes of different periods, the old hand water pump, patterned drain covers, and old lettering. On the surface of the streets, there are several excellent examples of pebble bed or other natural stone, and some old limestone kerbs.

Signposts are a muddle, and often inappropriately large. An ugly railing in front of the seat by the slipway near the Green is carefully placed to block the view of the Haldon Hills of anybody who sits there. The greatest blot is the proliferation of overhead wires, which seem to string the village together.

Guidelines

- Good examples of street furniture should be preserved, including old iron railings.
- Signposts should be discreet, of natural material & simple lettering.
- Overhead wires should be buried. To this end, a dialogue should be opened with the relevant authorities.

- Street lighting should always be designed to minimise light spill, light trespass and Skyglow. To this end luminaries should have full horizontal cut off using a white light source to improve visual acuity. It should be controlled, focused, and aimed appropriately.
- Pebble bed pavements & old limestone kerbstones should be retained.
- The repair of roads and pathways should be undertaken with care and sensitivity. Cobbled areas should be properly replaced.
- A refuse and recycling strategy for Lymptstone should be developed to avoid the use of wheelie bins, etc. that would clutter the street scene.

8. Boundaries

Two of the entries into Lymptstone are lined by impressive boundary walls, the castellated stone wall of Courtlands, and the long brick wall of Nutwell Court. These are the two building materials of the majority of Lymptstone boundary walls. Cob (the material of many of the houses) barely features. Stone is particularly prominent, and it is mostly hard pre-carboniferous Devon limestone, in various shades from pink through grey to almost pure white.

The most important boundary of Lymptstone, the cliffs facing the estuary, is of red breccia. Red sandstone was quarried in Lymptstone, and has been used in the most striking man-made Lymptstone boundary wall, that of Southerleigh garden facing onto Church Road. This wall, like several others in the village, has a topping of bricks on the stone base. In some cases, as in the high walls that line Sheppard's Lane, the bricks have been added at a later date to increase the height, but this often creates a pleasing patchwork effect.

There are walls of brickwork dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. The majority of these are in Flemish bond or Flemish wall bond. There are one or two examples of English bond, for example the boundary wall to The Firs, facing Church Hill. A piece of curved wall to The Manor House shows a pleasing example of the rarely-used header bond.

Coping is mainly created by header bricks laid on their edges on brick walls. Bricks are sometimes used as coping on stone walls, sometimes stone, and sometimes concrete. Often there is no coping.

There are no examples of Devon thatch, and only a glimpse of tile coping.

On the whole, walls have been repaired with appropriate bricks or stonework, although there are examples of inappropriate mortar being used. The rediscovery of the virtues of lime as a mortar should be particularly inspiring in Lympstone, where the sites of limekilns can still be seen. Occasionally machine-made bricks have been used to patch a wall of hand-made bricks.

Walls of natural material can also form a vertical garden, and the lichen and wild flowers, such as wall daisies, that grow on Lympstone walls are not only a delight in themselves, but evidence of the purity of Lympstone air.

Lympstone is fortunate in having escaped from much mass-produced wooden fencing as public boundaries. Some good iron railings remain. Surprisingly few boundary walls have been rendered.

There are one or two examples of Devon banking used as a boundary within the building line of the village. One is in Underhill, and part of that has recently been carefully planted with appropriate hawthorn bushes. For more Devon banks you have to look to Sowden, or to the other side of the A376, in Wotton Lane and Summer Lane.

Guidelines

- The boundary walls of Lympstone are a major feature of the village, and deserve careful protection.
- Traditional boundaries in the village are of hedge, stone or brick. Hedges should be of native plants, and in the Devon tradition.
- Repairs need to be sympathetic to the existing walls, & an effort should be made to match the colour of the existing brick or stone.
- Mortar should not be raised, & should be of natural colour – ideally lime mortar should be used in the repair of older walls.

10. Estuaryside

The estuary elevation of the village nestles comfortably between distinctive red stone cliffs on the East side of the River Exe. The frontage offers pleasing variations to the eye, and is predominantly residential behind stone flood defences.

Posts and lines on the shoreline, originally for drying fishing nets, are in use as domestic washing lines. The boat shelter and its wall beside Wotton Brook are attractive functional features.

At low tide the retaining flood defence wall complements the settlement with its variations in material mix, height and apparent mass. At high tide there remains a strong presence of stone in the two limekilns which rise to the level of adjacent properties.

Peters' Memorial Tower and the adjacent Victorian Harefield Cottages are of warm brick, and feature superb chimney stacks and pots, forming a significant homogeneous feature, balanced at the south by the fishing cottages and larger properties crowded round Quay Lane, which are mainly rendered and painted white.

The estuary frontage takes a clean line between these two, but is punctuated at frequent intervals by access points originally used for drawing up fishing boats and tenders. There are three wider slipways for the same purpose. There is some public utility lighting on the paths, but essentially the character at night is created by the diversity of interior domestic lighting only.

Variation in the building line, style and height of the housing offers pleasing variety. The resulting effect is one of gradual stepping up of height and mass from the estuary, with occasional glimpses of the village behind.

Building materials vary, but slate roofs predominate, and dormer windows of traditional scale are an attractive feature, although there is some use of velux. Window openings are still mainly of traditional scale for what is a very exposed elevation in winter, but with more modern and less appropriate intrusions.

Guidelines

- Mass or intrusive detail should be avoided at the water's edge.
- Windows should be of traditional scale, proportion & material.

- The dominance of the cliffs at each end of the settlement & Peters' Memorial Tower must not be compromised by excessive elevations or mass.
- Any infill development such as on limekilns, in gardens, etc is inappropriate.

11. Footpaths

There are many designated footpaths/bridlepaths in Lympstone, covering 3.8 miles. These small secret paths and lanes are a feature of Lympstone, and help to unite it. They are well used and, on the whole, well kept without being sterile. More wild flowers along the hedgerows would be desirable, and less ivy (especially on the paths from Hayes Raleigh to the river, and from Burgmann's Hill to Cliff Field). No doubt with increased sensitivity to environmental matters this will improve.

A few paths and lanes have been covered with tarmac, such as the lane leading from Longmeadow Road to the Mill, and part of the path alongside Southerleigh that continues up through Church Path.

The path from Tedstone Lane to Harefield Lane runs alongside farmland with a good stile and exit.

The path by the railway from Sowden Lane to Exmouth is part of the East Devon Way, and is quite well maintained, but could suffer from erosion. The section of it between Clay Lane and Sowden Lane needs considerable attention.

The path running by Wotton Bank from Longmeadow Road and Longbrook Lane to the Mill is very popular with children, and is well observed by residents whose property reaches down to the stream. The continuation of this path goes across Mill Field, along Underhill and through the car park, crossing the brook by a safe but insensitively designed metal/wire bridge, and branches out into two attractive small paths passing by the old cottages into the Strand.

The footpaths creating a network around the harbour are a distinct feature of Lympstone and its former fishing and boatbuilding industries, and should be cherished as such. Quay Lane was re-cobbled a few years ago.

The County Council has overall responsibility for the footpaths, and has recently signed up to a Public Service Agreement connected with Public Rights of Way. Their commitment is to ensure that all footpaths reach a high standard by 2005. This does not mean putting in

unsympathetic furniture, but undertaking the restoration and preservation of a footpath's character. They accept that the direction signs for paths in the village centre should be replaced by others far less obtrusive, as they already have been in some places.

The footpaths are a crucial part of Lympstone, giving us a variety of paths where children and pedestrians can walk safely, away from traffic. They should be jealously guarded.

Guidelines

- Villagers feel that it is essential to preserve Lympstone's network of footpaths, and to make them accessible.
- There should be no more use of tarmac on footpaths.

12. Views & open spaces

There is no natural centre to this linear village. Economic activity faced in different directions: fishing and boating towards the estuary, farming to the fields and the hinterland.

The lanes leading into the village have hedges and banks, and give you the feeling of wanting to explore. Coming down Nutwell Lane, you catch an inviting glimpse of the estuary.

There is high-density housing in the part of the village near the estuary, and narrow roads and lanes. Many houses have no garden to speak of. Maintenance of open spaces, including planting, trees and hedges, is vital to the life of the village, as well as to its attractiveness. They also provide a necessary balance to the buildings, the water and the cliffs.

There is no traditional village green, where mothers and children, the elderly and the general community can gather to talk and relax. There are some public open spaces, such as Candy's Field, which makes a good playing field for children, but it is at the top of a hill. The other fields open to the public are Cliff Field and Avenue Field, owned by the National Trust, which have views over the estuary and are much used by dog walkers and the football team.

The meadows on the flood plain bordering the brook are most attractive, and vital to the flood defences – they act as sponges. There are public footpaths across and around them. The ford is a play area for children.

The allotments are valuable open space, to be preserved at all costs. They enable people who do not have gardens to grow their own vegetables, and allow them a valuable retreat from narrow streets of the village.

Although traffic has increased noticeably in the past few years, Lympstone benefits from not being a through village, and children still feel confident to play out in the street.

Guidelines

- Development should respect existing views from public areas & rights of way.
- There should be no building on the flood plain meadow.
- The allotments should be preserved.
- Building should not detract from the skyline of Lympstone.

13. Trees & Hedges

Lympstone has both a rural and estuary backdrop to the village, and with access to Lympstone and Woodbury Commons. However, great trees within the village itself are important landmarks, as well as defining areas of the village and being vital for wildlife.

The impressive trees round about the church are defining features of Lympstone, and the recent loss of a major and ancient cedar in the churchyard itself has diminished the landscape.

There is a variety of large trees – Scots pines and holm oaks on the cliff tops, well-developed chestnuts on Candy's Field, handsome oaks in pasture, one remaining cedar in the churchyard, and many excellent ornamental trees in domestic gardens.

There are some fine garden hedges, containing mixed shrubs including escallonia, fuschia and roses. There is a number of rather neglected privet hedges, and sadly some leylandii hedges planted in recent years.

Hedgerows and banks bordering agricultural land contain wild flowers, as well as the usual trees. Many of these hedges have been well layered, but some show urgent need of renewal.

East Devon District Council offers a free sapling service, and applications can be made annually to the tree warden appointed by the Parish Council. A good example of this scheme is the planting of deciduous trees such as oak and field maple by the brook in Frog's Meadow.

Guidelines

- All good quality, healthy major trees in Lympstone should have Preservation Orders.
- Major trees should be examined by arboriculturalists selected by the District Council before a decision is taken to fell.
- The natural hedgerows of Lympstone should be preserved.
- Garden hedges should be planted with native species.

Conclusion

The intention of this Village Design Statement is not to recommend that no further development take place in Lympstone, nor to suggest that any future building should be in a pastiche style.

However, if Lympstone is to remain a special place, alterations and new building should respect its particular character. In the case of old buildings, this means that the existing proportions and materials should be observed. Lympstone derives its character from individuality and variety, and new building in the 21st century should continue this tradition. Stock housing estates by developers are not appropriate, and nor are architectural details from chain stores that sell the same bland design all over the country.

There are many examples of the ways in which modern buildings can respect the character of older ones, without resorting to feeble imitation. In Exeter, the Shilhay estate, a large housing development of the 1970s, was a refreshing departure from earlier public housing stereotypes. It is clearly modern, and yet it suggests the character of the nearby Quay, with its use of grey slate and red brick, the variety of its grouping, with staggered terraces broken by narrow alleys and well

landscaped garage courts, and the different heights and pitches of its roof line. More recently, the housing grouped around the new Maritime Museum in Falmouth bears a similar sympathetic relationship to its dockside surroundings, with imaginative use of wooden weather-boarding and slate-hung surfaces.

Lympstone would benefit enormously from an equally imaginative response from developers to the character of the existing village.

It is not within the remit of this report to make recommendations about social policy. Only a Village Plan, which would have to be an initiative by the Parish Council, could do that. But it is worth saying that the obvious and often-suggested need for affordable housing within Lympstone could fit appropriately into a village-scape of high density cottages of varying sizes. Sympathetic use of materials and sensitive design need not come at a prohibitive price.

The many people who have contributed to and commented on this survey of Lympstone agree that this is a special place. All of them, whether born and bred in the village, long-time residents or newcomers, share a common interest in making sure that its character is not lost.