

# Four Marks and Medstead Sustainable Future



Local Interim Planning  
Statement

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## **Introduction and Purpose**

1. The Council adopted the Interim Housing Policy Statement (IHPS) on 27 February 2014. The IHPS seeks to pull national guidance (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) and existing saved local plan policy together; it provides a local interpretation of sustainable development in East Hampshire (excluding the South Downs National Park). As such it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
2. On 8 May the Council adopted the Joint Core Strategy (JCS). The Council is working to achieve a five years supply and is accelerating work on bringing forward a Part 2 Local Plan to identify development allocations to meet the targets in the JCS. Until a five year housing land supply is achieved then the housing supply policies of the Council's existing Development Plan - i.e. JCS policies CP10 Spatial Strategy for Housing and CP14 - Affordable Housing for Rural Communities are not considered up to date by paragraph 49 of the NPPF. Therefore the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development takes precedence.
3. The Council believes that it is critically important for the future of the settlements in the District that democracy plays a central role in shaping future sustainable development.
4. The Council is undertaking public consultation events in the main settlements to seek views on sustainability issues affecting that settlement and which housing development sites might best meet local housing needs and place shaping aspirations. The results of the consultations are being collated and combined with an overview of the sustainability profiles of each of the settlements in Local Interim Planning Statements (LIPS).
5. The LIPS have two purposes. They provide a local supplement to the District wide IHPS. The LIPS will supplement Planning Officers' reports to Planning Committee in their consideration of whether proposals constitute locally sustainable development. Additionally, the LIPS are an initial options consultation under Regulation 18 of the Planning Regulations, the results of which will feed into the Part 2 Local Plan: Allocations.

### **Public Consultation Event Format**

6. The consultation events have followed a consistent format:
  - a. Flyers and posters distributed via District Councillors and Parish Council (appendix 1), Council website promotion and local papers informed.
  - b. Daytime and early evening event in local accessible venue
  - c. Display Boards containing
    - i. Explanatory Text
    - ii. Housing Target map of whole District (Appendix 2)
    - iii. Settlement profiles of Economy, Social facilities, demographics environmental assets (See Appendix 3)
    - iv. Strategic Housing land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Maps - included & excluded sites (Appendix 5)
  - d. Large scale aerial map of area (See Appendix 4)

- e. Large SHLAA Map for site preference choice - one person one round sticker.
  - f. Facilities list for infrastructure preferences - two star stickers per person
  - g. Signing in book to leave contact details and comments on the event/sites etc.
  - h. Planning and Community Officers present to give advice and monitor sticker preferences
7. The events have been very busy and overwhelmingly well received. The progress of the Part 2 Local Plan will involve formal stages with lengthier and broader consultations. As the events are an initial step in the Part 2 Local Plan Allocations work, for which there is no regulatory format to follow then they are valuable snapshots of community input. The progress on the Part 2 Local Plan will build on this together with future community consultation events and use the [large amount of up-to-date evidence](#) that already exists for the JCS e.g. transport capacity, Sustainability Appraisal, Green Infrastructure Strategy, housing needs, environmental assets etc.
8. These events have generated real and significant interest which provides a valuable kick off to the plan making process which will use traditional plus other innovative approaches as the Council progresses its Plan making. The results from the events are similar to those the Council would have received from a six week traditional consultation, the issues raised are largely the same and the preferences are what might reasonably be expected. The results therefore have value in both the plan making and planning applications processes.

### **Overview of Settlement Profile Data**

9. The Maps at Appendix 3 provide clear visual information on the key features of Four Marks and Medstead. These maps are an update of the [mapping and data profiles used in the determination of the development distribution targets](#) in the JCS. There is a difference in the mapping in that the JCS mapping focused on Settlement Policy Boundaries of Four Marks and South Medstead, whilst the Exhibitions have also included the wider Medstead parish and village. The fact that the spatial planning of the physically connected Four Marks and South Medstead areas crosses the administrative parish boundary has caused some local concern. Whilst it is acknowledged that Four Marks and Medstead are quite separate administrative parishes, planning is about place shaping and focuses on settlements rather than administrative boundaries. The focus for development in the JCS is at Four Marks & South Medstead with a specific housing target of a minimum of 175 new homes on new allocations (Policy CP10).
10. The story of Four Marks and Medstead that is shown in the maps and data profile is of a suburban/semi rural ribbon development settlement that straddles the A31/Watercress Line and focused on the relatively small village centre facilities of Four Marks. The South Medstead area is focused around the two small areas of Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB) along Boyneswood Road and Lymington Bottom Road. Together these three areas of SPB make up the Four Marks and South Medstead area. Medstead village itself is quite separate, there is clear countryside (500metres+) between the northern extensions of the South Medstead ribbon development and the historic village. There is no specific development target for Medstead village, it is one of the smaller villages along with Bentworth, Ropley Bentley

etc which have an overall target of 150 homes on new allocations.

11. Environmentally Four Marks and South Medstead is relatively free of development constraints. Whilst the South Downs National Park (SDNP) adjoins the eastern edge of the SPB there are no national nature designations in the area, only small pockets of county level Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's). Flooding is not a major issue as Four Marks is on high ground at 220m AOD, the main flood issue is surface water run off, particularly along Lymington Bottom. In terms of heritage, Four Marks as a significant settlement is relatively new; growing around the rail line and the road, achieving parish status in 1932. The character of Four Marks as a commuter location set in rural surroundings has continued ever since.
12. For an area with a population (2011) of 3,983 (603) Four Marks (South Medstead) has a limited range of facilities, e.g. Only an hourly bus service to Alton/Winchester, the rail station is a tourist/leisure facility, primary school with little capacity, a range of small shops, Petrol station, Village hall, churches, recreation ground, no pubs and limited employment. The village has grown steadily over the last 30 - 40 years with new estates in back land garden areas and intensification of ribbon development, however, the facilities have not grown commensurately with the new homes.
13. Four Marks and South Medstead is nevertheless well located on the A31 providing good personal motor vehicle access to employment and services in Winchester, Alton Farnham and access to the mainline train station at Alton with trains to London Waterloo taking just over an hour. This accessibility means that house prices are above the East Hampshire average. The housing market provides good quality larger non estate and lower density estate homes, with a rural/semi rural feel where car ownership is a strong requirement. Considering that there are relatively few environmental constraints and the attractiveness for a certain type of home owner (Home ownership is a particularly strong tenure) Four Marks continues to be attractive to housing developers who can sell homes at a premium.
14. In line with national demographics the Four Marks and South Medstead area is also attractive for retirement with its rural surroundings and private vehicular access to a range of facilities. One reason for this that is implied in the Four Marks Community Plan is that people are retiring to the area to be near to and support their family as family accommodation is the main type of existing and proposed housing . The Community Plan survey showed that respondents had predominantly lived in the village for less than 15 years, therefore would be less likely to have local roots.
15. The [Four Marks Community Plan](#) (2012) is a survey of residents to identify issues and an Action Plan for the future. The Community Plan shows that Four Marks has grown steadily over the last 50 years with around 100 dwellings p.a. being completed. There are concerns that the current emphasis on house building could result in that rate tripling. Such growth will impact on the infrastructure resources which have already lagged behind past growth. The survey showed that 92% of respondents thought the village did not need any more housing. Development pressure is one of the main community focuses, primarily from a negative perspective. The recent growth of Four Marks and the uncertain development future have been a feature of the village for considerable time. Back in 2011 the issue featured on the [Local BBC TV news](#). In January 2014 Local District Councillor Mrs I Thomas staged an event to gain views on

the SHLAA sites in Four Marks and Medstead similar to the Council's own event subject of this statement (see Appendix 9). That event took place at a time when a large residential development application was being considered at the MED004 Friars Oak site. The results of the event show that particular site to be considered the 'most unsuitable' of the SHLAA options.

16. Development in Medstead village has been much more subdued than in Four Marks and [the Medstead Parish Plan](#) (2008) tells a story of a future Medstead being 'not much different from the Medstead of today. The overwhelming majority of us like living here. We like the village atmosphere and the style of life, we treasure the tranquillity and the open space, we like the many activities that take place in the Parish, we value the community spirit and we would like to preserve those qualities for future generations'. The strength of the local recreation and leisure clubs and a traditional village pub are features of the community spirit found in Medstead.

### **Four Marks and Medstead Public Consultation Event - Feedback**

17. The Four Marks and Medstead event was held on Wednesday 14 May (5.30pm - 8pm) at the Four Marks Village Hall and on Thursday 15 May (2pm - 4.30pm) at Medstead Village Hall. The two events covered a good time period to take account of school pickups and commuters returning from the station. Approximately 360 people attended the events. The raw data from the exhibitions is shown at Appendix 6 & 7. In addition to the preference exercise written comments were made in the Comment Book, summarised at Appendix 8.
18. At each of the events maps and accompanying information for both Four Marks and South Medstead and separately Medstead village was presented. In terms of the housing site choices there are a large number of choices which is an indicator of the popularity of the area with developers and the relatively unconstrained nature of the environment. It can be seen from the data in Appendix 6 that there are two clear preferences in Four Marks and South Medstead. The site FM014 which is at the western edge of Four Marks with direct access onto the A31 has the highest preference level. With the second highest preference for MED 004, which is a site called Friars Oak located at the eastern edge of the South Medstead area. The only other sites with any significant preference are MED001 and MED 002, which are in effect one large area around the rail station.
19. In terms of Medstead village there was a clear preference for MED014, which is directly behind the historic core of the village and the most central and potentially sustainable location to meet the aspirations of the Medstead Parish Plan, if new homes are required in the village.
20. The community feedback on infrastructure and facilities showed an overwhelming preference for improved infrastructure to deal with flooding, telecoms and water/sewerage. Broadband speeds continue to be below national averages. The lack of high speed broadband is likely to hamper economic growth for small businesses and home workers. There have been sewer improvements in Four Marks over the last 15 years, however, the continued growth means the pipes and the Alton Sewage works are reaching capacity requiring upgrade. The high elevation of Four Marks also means water pressures are relatively poor. The water related issues are most

pronounced north of the railway line with smaller pipes being available or on site sewerage solution being required and water supplied from a pumping station and water tower. At the Four Marks event there was also a strong preference for community facilities. Some recent improvements have been made to the tennis and bowls facilities but the Village Hall is in need of updating and the recreation ground and associated buildings have been identified for improvement in the Community Plan.

21. The access onto the A31 and the traffic using the narrow roads in the Basingstoke M3 direction are a major issue for Four Marks and South Medstead, particularly at peak times. The A31 junctions at Lymington Bottom and Telegraph Lane are a safety issue, whilst the narrow rail line crossings at Lymington Bottom Road and Boyneswood Lane are bottlenecks for vehicles and a safety issue for pedestrians.
22. The current nationally driven push for more housing development, the step change in East Hampshire's housing target in the JCS coupled with the relatively unconstrained development opportunities in Four Marks and South Medstead means that the area is a focus for developer interest and significant new housing will be permitted. Four Marks and South Medstead is therefore potentially at a critical point in its future as a place. Is it sustainable to continue its growth as a commuter community with limited facilities or should the opportunity of the new development be taken to focus the development on mitigating infrastructure issues and generating some positive community spirit.
23. In this context the most sustainable housing sites will minimise traffic impact on the A31 and the rail crossing bottlenecks; provide mixed density high quality homes to meet generational needs to create a longer term community spirit; provide Improved water and sewerage infrastructure or have no negative impact on the existing situation; improved broadband; provide significant improvements to the recreation/leisure facilities and potentially improve retail, health and education facilities. Developments that do not have a positive impact on these features would undermine the community growth of Four Marks and South Medstead as a sustainable place to live.



# NEW HOUSING in Four Marks and Medstead

## WHERE DO YOU WANT IT TO GO?

Come along to an open exhibition,  
find out more and give us your views

### **Four Marks Village Hall**

Wednesday 14 May, 5.30–8pm

### **Medstead Village Hall**

Thursday 15 May, 2–4.30pm

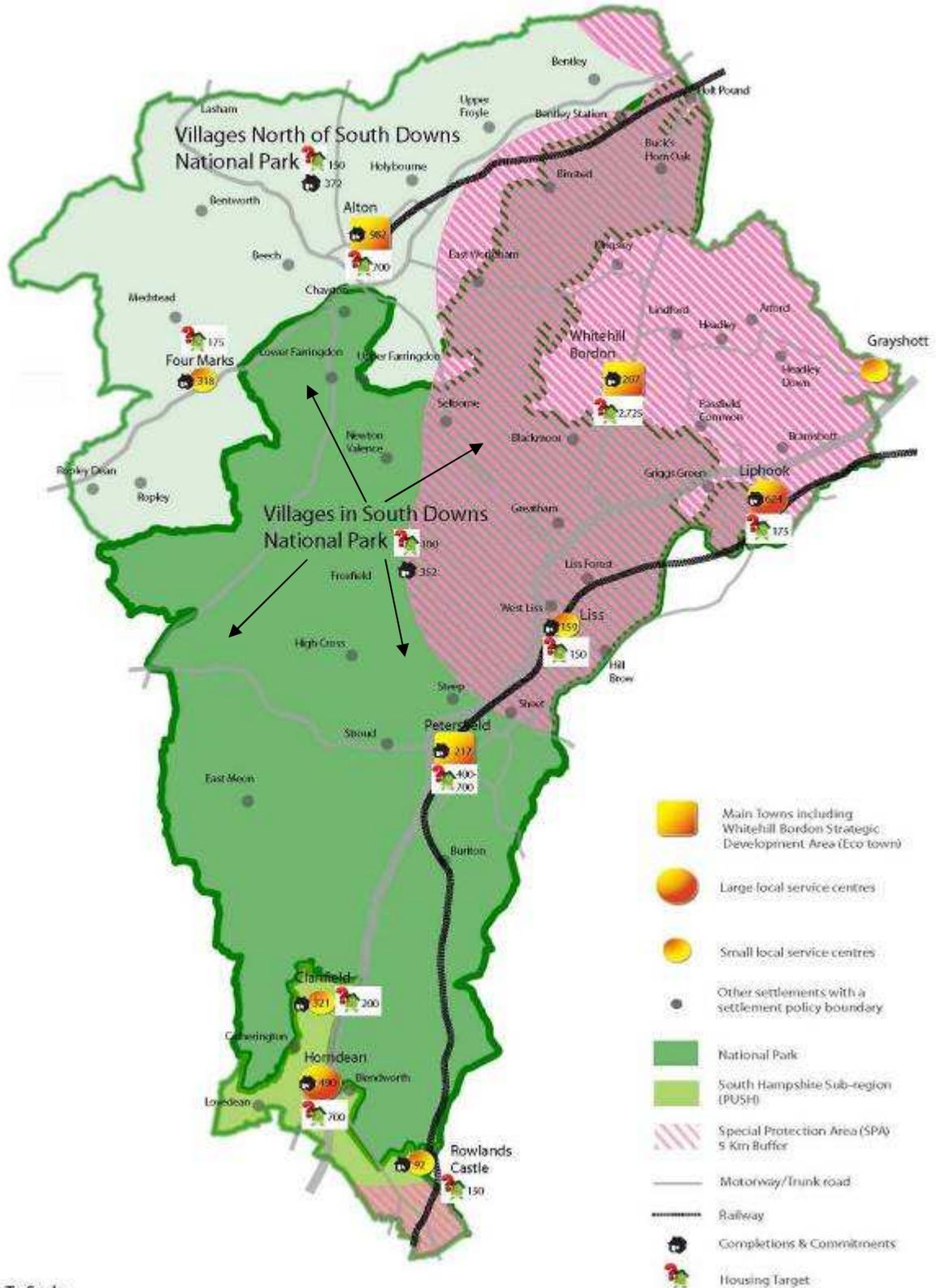
For more information visit

[www.easthants.gov.uk/newhousingfourmarksandmedstead](http://www.easthants.gov.uk/newhousingfourmarksandmedstead)

**East  
Hampshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Appendix 2 - District Housing Target Map

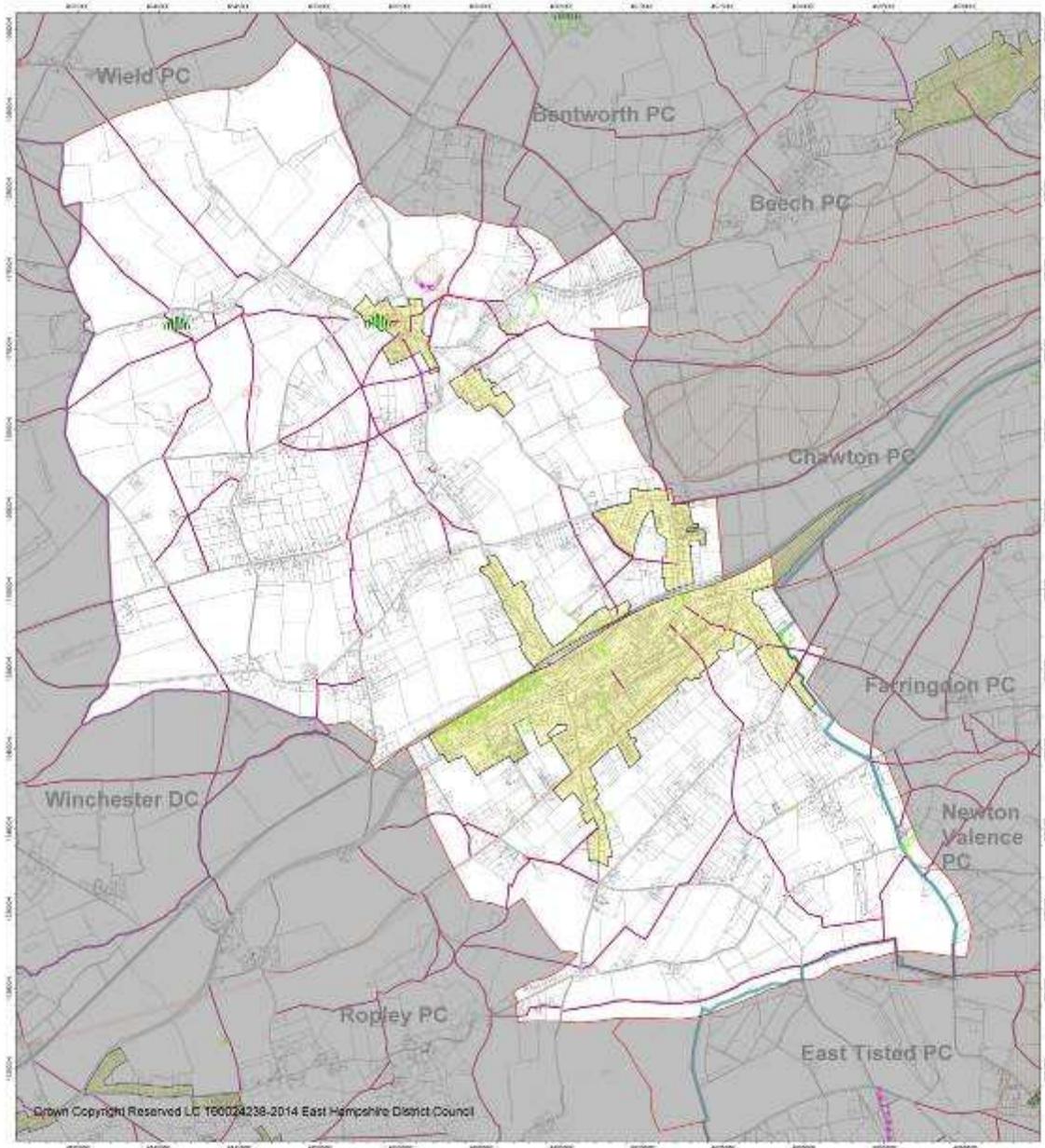
### Joint Core Strategy Settlement Hierarchy with Distribution of New Site Allocations



Map Not To Scale

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## Four Marks and Medstead - Heritage

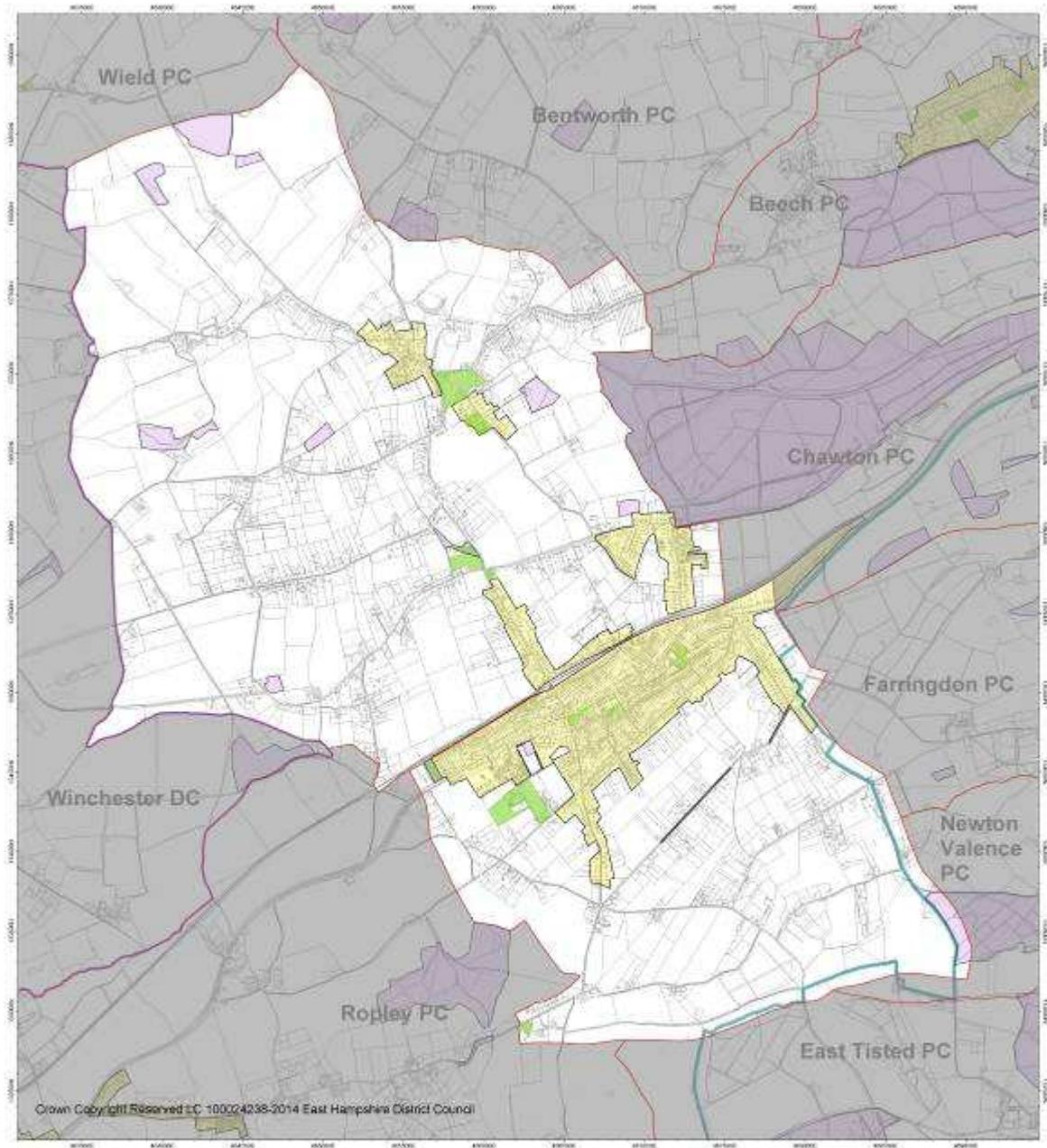


### Key

EHDC District Boundary		Archaeology Red Alert		Public Right of Way	
South Downs National Park		Archaeology Orange Alert		Historic Parks & Gardens	
Parish Boundaries		Scheduled Ancient Monument			
Settlement Policy Boundary		Listed Building			
Conservation Area		Tree Preservation Order (Area)			

**East Hampshire**  
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# Four Marks and Medstead - Conservation

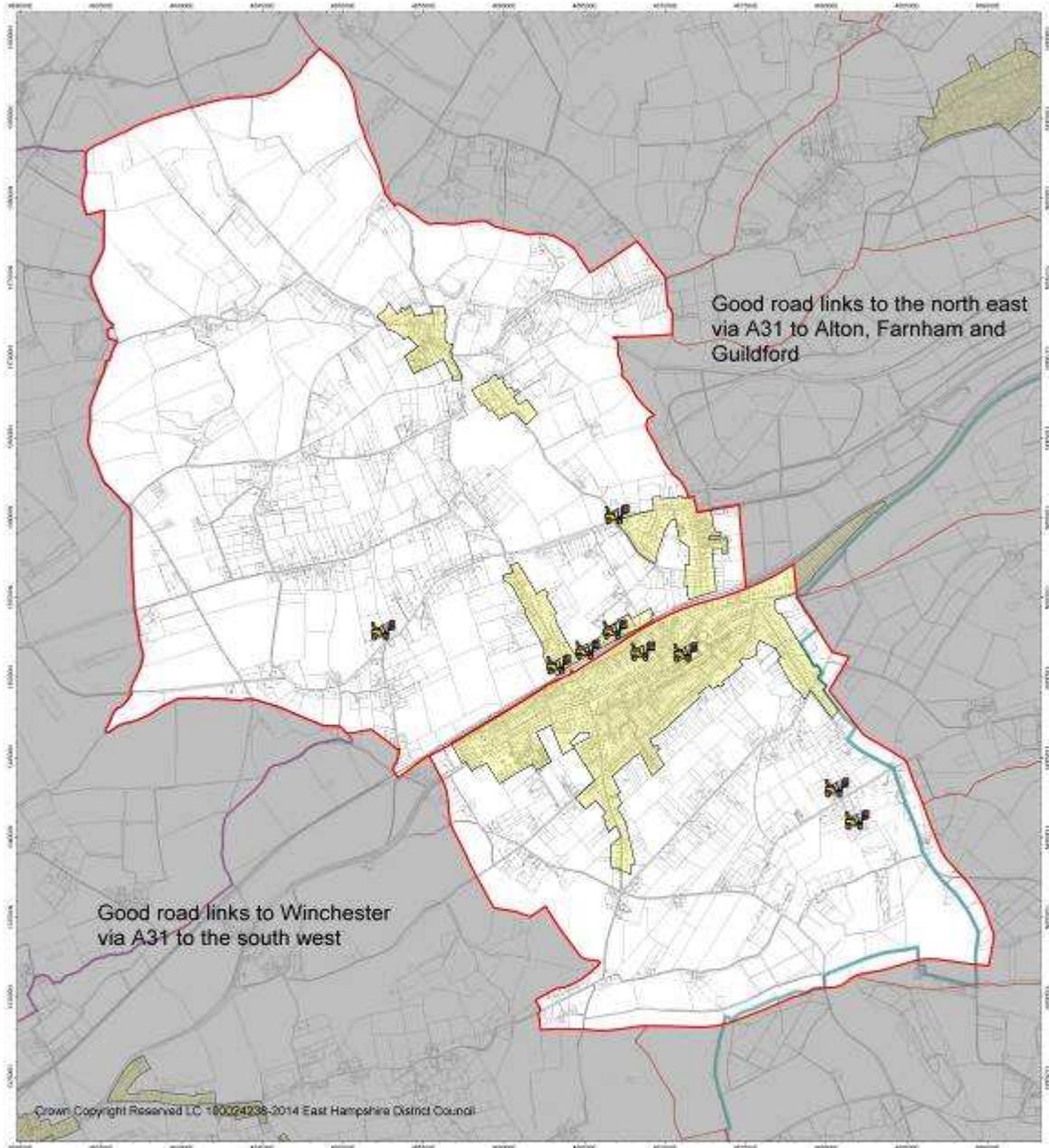


## Key

EHDC District Boundary		Open Space	
South Downs National Park		SINCs (Sites of Important Nature Conservation)	
Parish Boundaries			
Settlement Policy Boundary			

**East Hampshire**  
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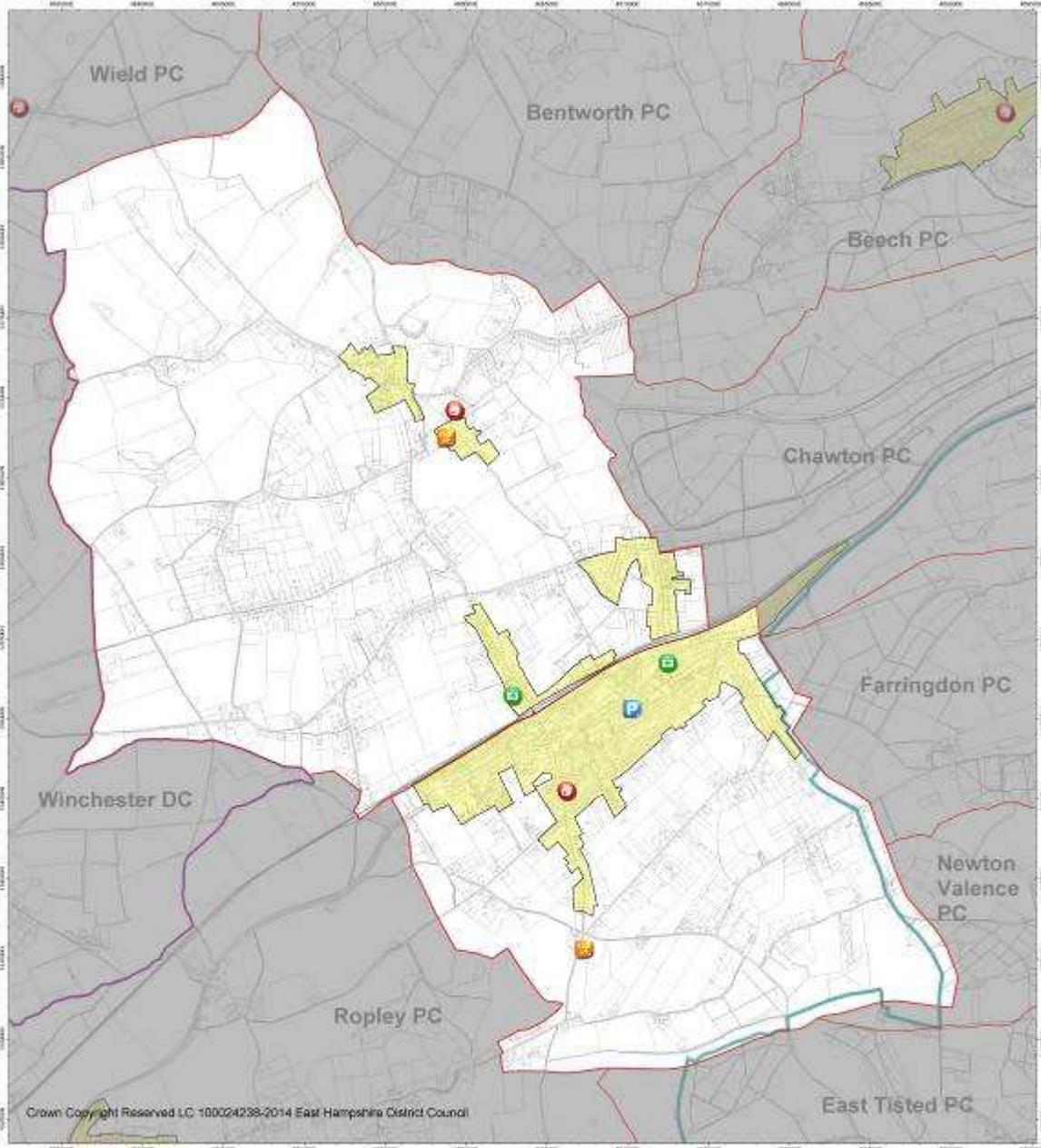
# Four Marks and Medstead - Economic



## Key

East Hampshire District Boundary		Settlement Policy Boundary	
South Downs National Park		Industrial Estates	
Parish Boundaries			

# Four Marks and Medstead - Social



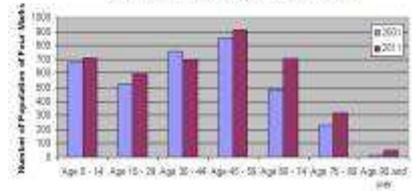
## Key

- South Downs National Park
- Settlement Policy Boundary
- Community Halls
- EHDC Car Parks
- Doctors Surgery
- School

Housing Need  
True housing need of all eligible applicants on the Hampshire Home Choice who want to live there are:

	Four Marks	Medstead
1 Bed	259	188
2 Bed	128	101
3 Bed	50	31
4 Bed	16	12
<b>Total:</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>332</b>

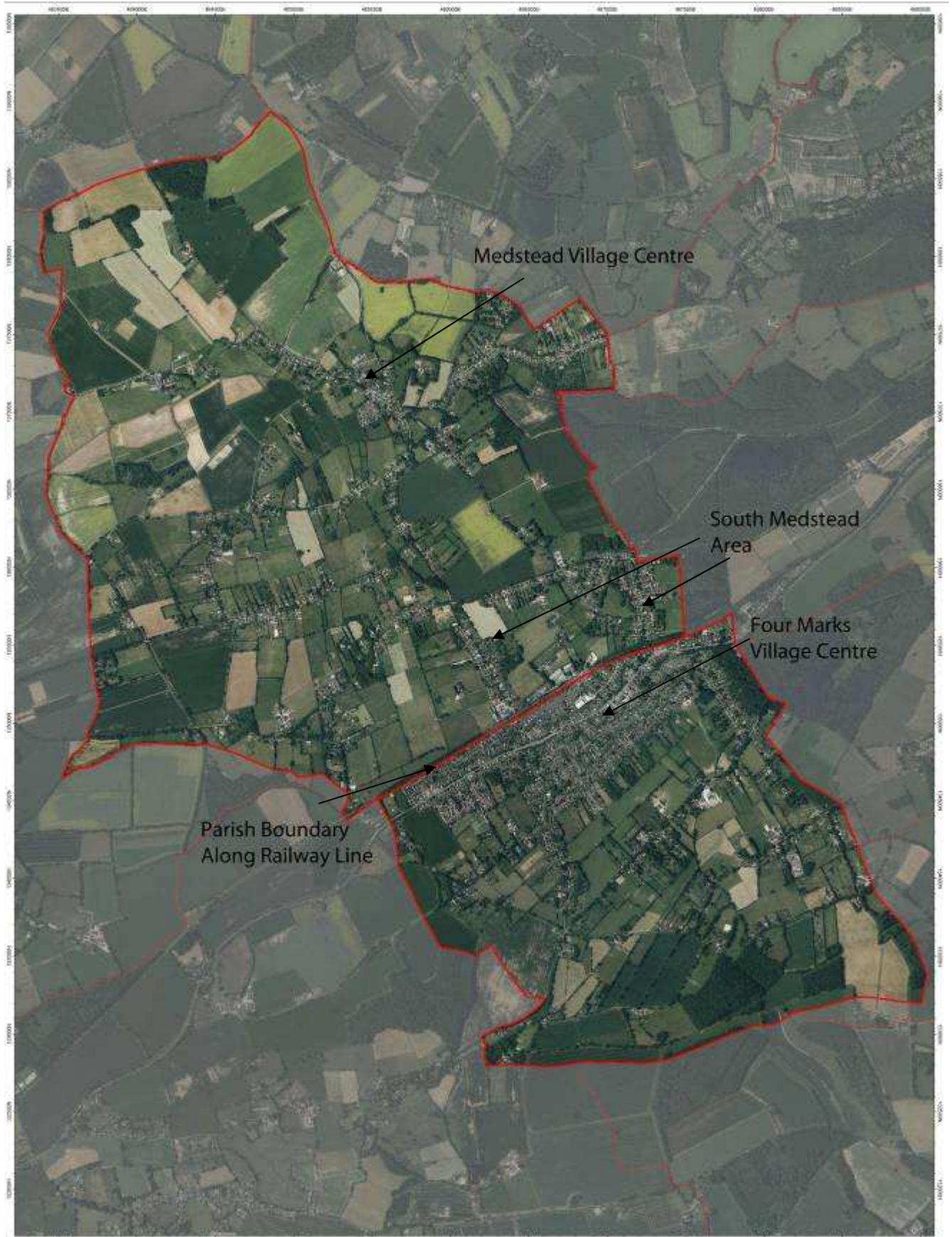
Population Change by Age Group 2001 to 2011



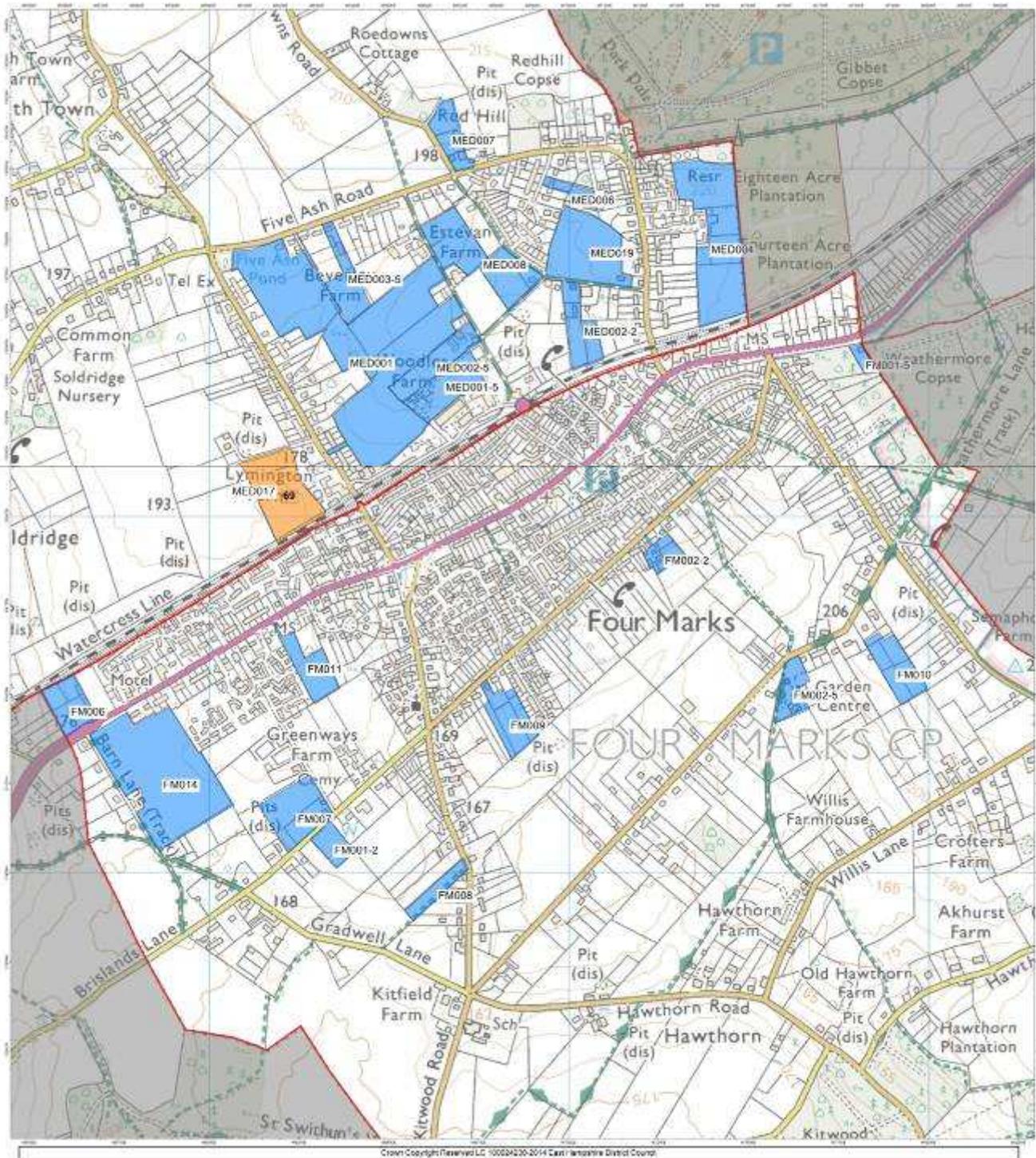
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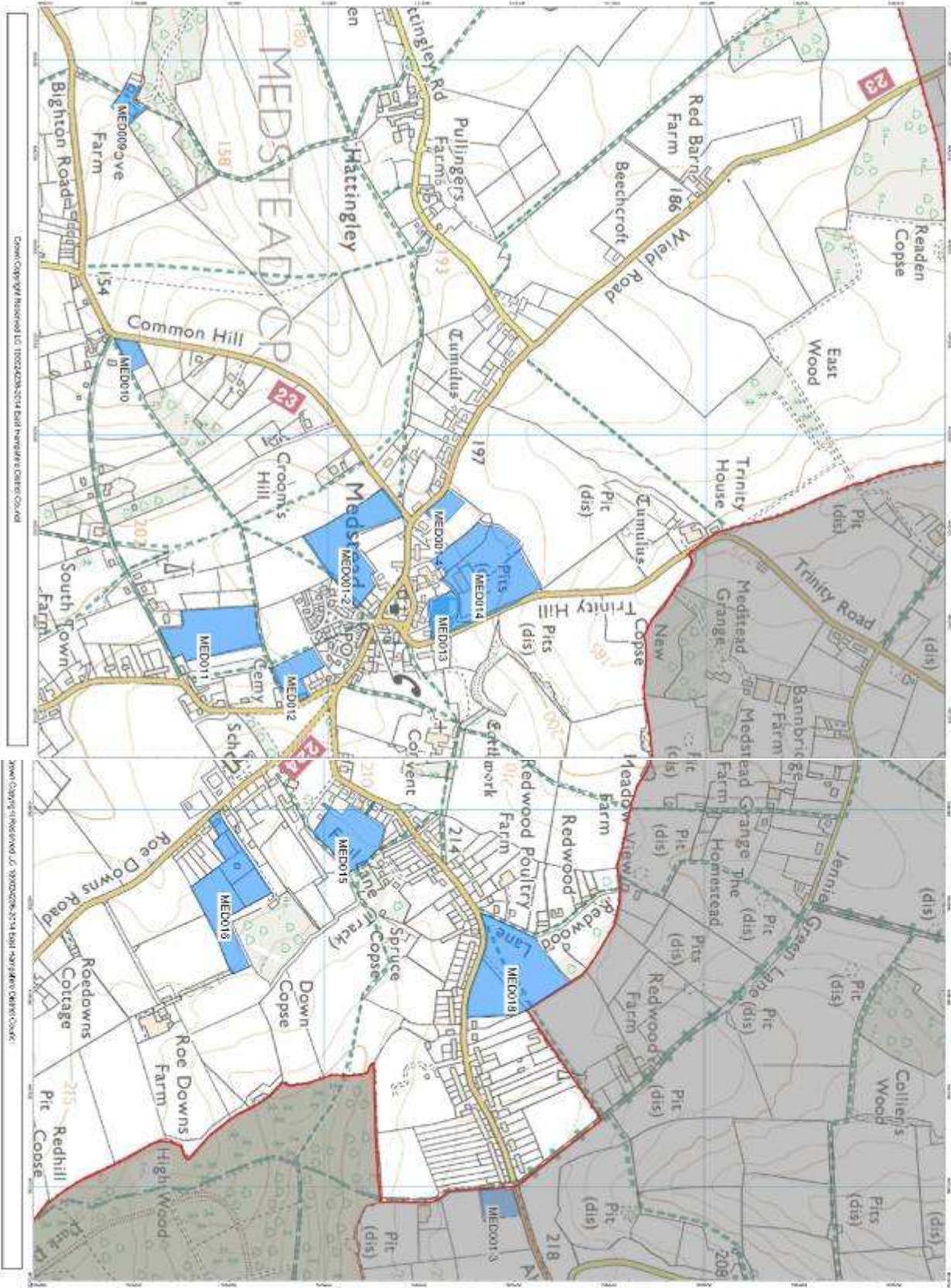
Statistical data selected from data from the Office of National Statistics, released under the Open Government Licence v 1.0

## Appendix 4 - Aerial Picture of Four Marks and Medstead Parishes



### Strategic Housing Land Availability Sites - Four Mark



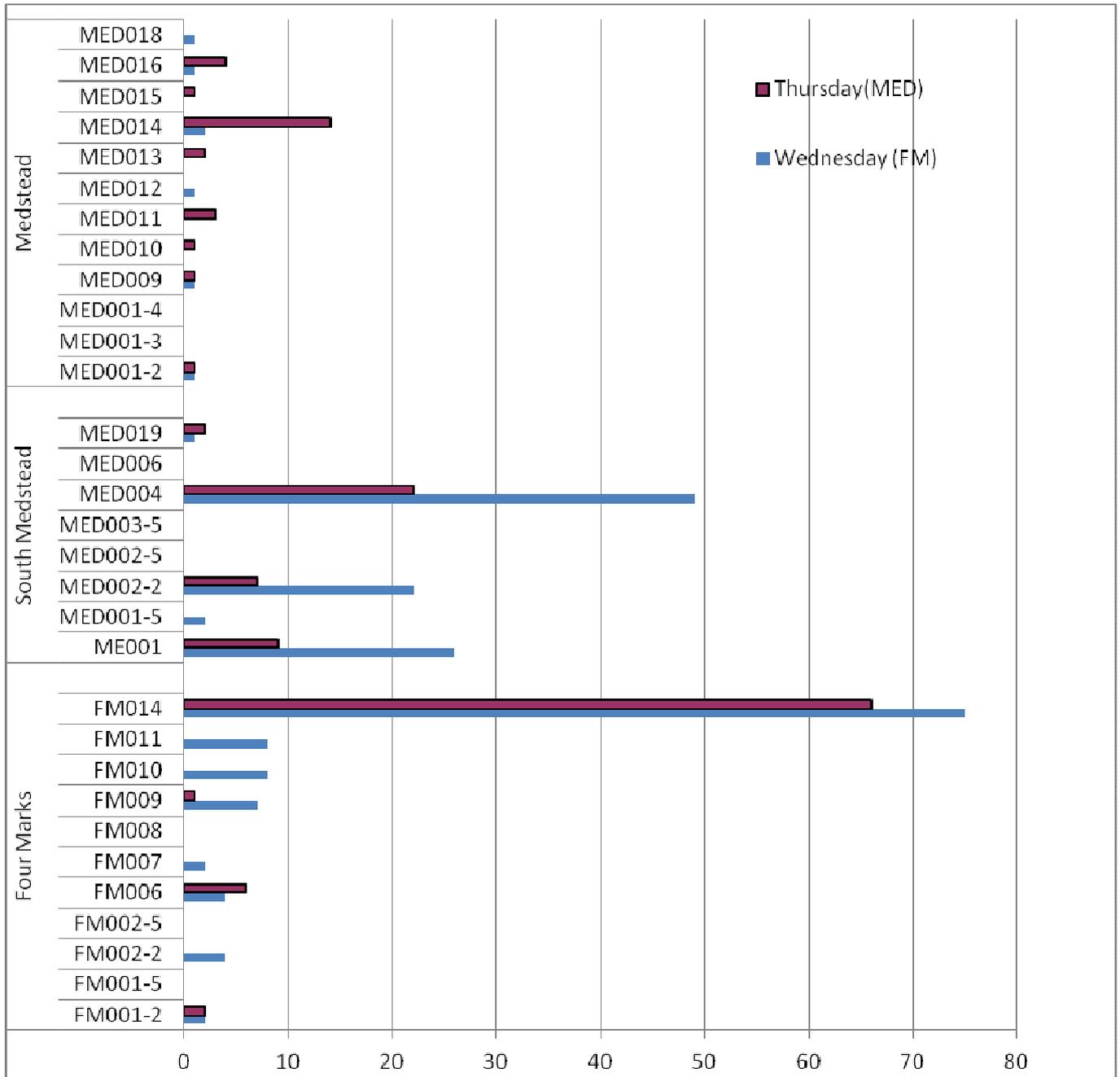


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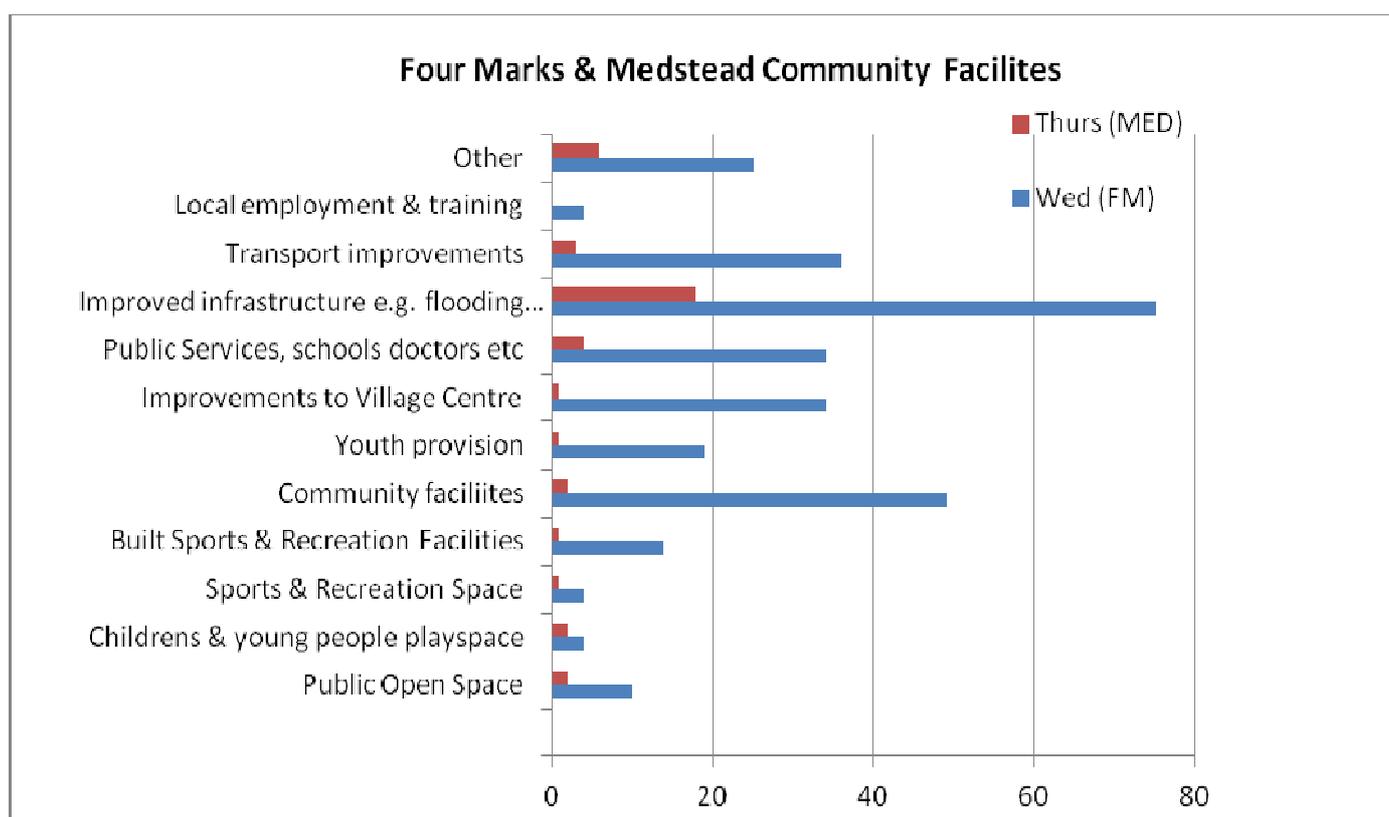
## Appendix 6 - Public Consultation event - Site preference Results

		Wednesday (FM)	Thursday(MED)	total
Four Marks	FM001-2	2	2	4
	FM001-5	0	0	0
	FM002-2	4	0	4
	FM002-5	0	0	0
	FM006	4	6	10
	FM007	2	0	2
	FM008	0	0	0
	FM009	7	1	8
	FM010	8	0	8
	FM011	8	0	8
	FM014	75	66	141
South Medstead	ME001	26	9	35
	MED001-5	2	0	2
	MED002-2	22	7	29
	MED002-5	0	0	0
	MED003-5	0	0	0
	MED004	49	22	71
	MED006	0	0	0
	MED019	1	2	3
Medstead	MED001-2	1	1	2
	MED001-3	0	0	0
	MED001-4	0	0	0
	MED009	1	1	2
	MED010	0	1	1
	MED011	0	3	3
	MED012	1	0	1
	MED013	0	2	2
	MED014	2	14	16
	MED015	0	1	1
	MED016	1	4	5
	MED018	1	0	1
Has Permission	MED017	1	0	1
	Outside SHLAAs	1	2	
		219	144	360



## Appendix 7 - Public Consultation Event - Community Facilities

Future of Four Marks Community Wish List	Wed (FM)	Thurs (MED)	Total
Public Open Space	10	2	12
Childrens & young people playspace	4	2	6
Sports & Recreation Space	4	1	5
Built Sports & Recreation Facilities	14	1	15
Community faciilites	49	2	51
Youth provision	19	1	20
Improvements to Village Centre	34	1	35
Public Services, schools doctors etc	34	4	38
Improved infrastructure e.g. flooding telecoms	75	18	93
Transport improvements	36	3	39
Local employment & training	4	0	4
Other	25	6	31
	308	41	349



## Appendix 8 - Public Consultation Event - Summary of Comments

- Roads around the village too narrow to cope with increased traffic.
- Traffic on A31 and rail line crossing bottlenecks are a capacity and safety concern.
- Must preserve space between villages otherwise urban creep will occur
- Need to protect rural characteristics of the village
- Western end of Winchester Road (FM014) Development would have least impact on the rest of village
- MED001 could create parkland style major development and potential for new village focus
- Style of building particularly roof heights needs careful consideration and 2.5/3 storeys avoided
- Estate style development not in keeping with village character
- Low density housing most appropriate to fit with character and landscape

Appendix 9 - District Councillor SHLAA Consultation Event Results (January 2014)