

# A presentation by Lucy Atabey

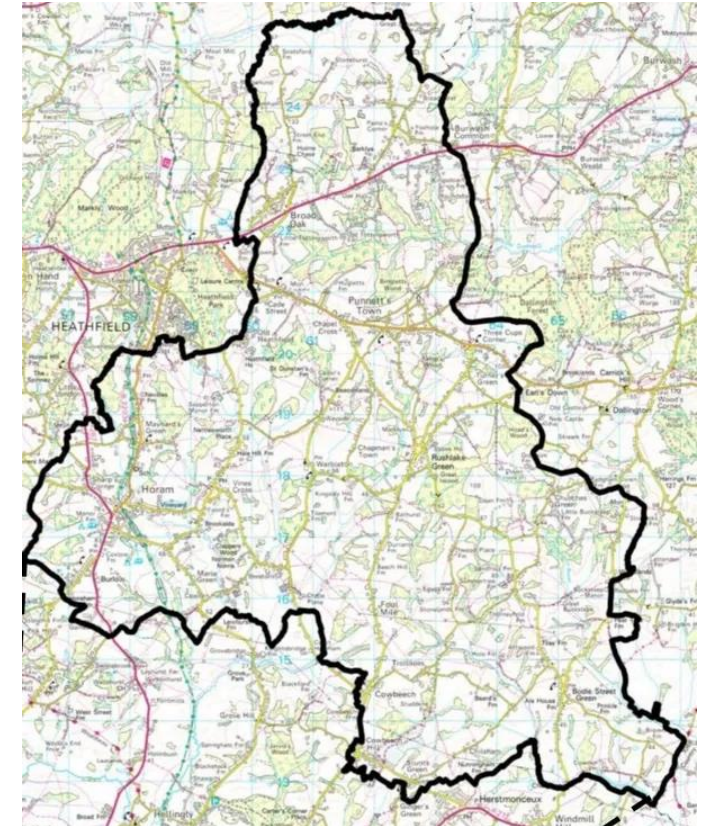


**Rosemead farm: before the diggers moved in**

Rural fields on a ridge overlooking ANOB.

- Lucy Atabey: Successes and disappointments in Horam (2)
- • **My path to activism**
- • **Horam local resident since 2002**
- • **Building of Merrydown Village in 2015**
- • **Rosemead Farm: application for 123 houses, Sept 2016**
- • **The campaign and how we fought it:** Leafleted every household, held a public meeting in local church where we talked about how to object to the application, created a residents mailing list so we could communicate updates, created news story by asking developer to house Afghanee refugees in the Rosemead House before it was demolished. Developer declined.
- Became joint editor of Horam & Vines Cross Village Diary in 2018 and used this platform to continue to communicate development issues locally to residents.
- Managed to get planning agent reprimanded by Association Of Town Planners for an offensive tweet about not attending a public meeting about the application because we were all NIMBY's.

Horam and Punnets Town Parish



- **Successes in Horebeech Lane**

Old Orchard house appeal rejected by Govt Inspector for being unsustainable & inappropriate in Summer 2020. Revised app came in Jan 2021, applicant withdrew 02/09/2021

Cauldavon – met with many objections, Planning officer recommended for refusal in Sept 2021. Though subsequent to this, neighbours have received fishing letters from developer about selling their homes for above market value.



**Rosemead estate built (L),  
application for extension for  
another 60 houses, Cauldavon (R)**

To stop this

- **The way forward?**

Wealden's rate of growth has more than doubled in the last 10 years compared to the previous decade AND is set to virtually double again over the next 10 years. It equates to over 45,000 additional population over the next 20 years. This is a 28% increase. (45200/162,733). The increase in dwellings is even greater. The above WDC report advises that the total number of dwellings in the district is currently just over 71,000. A target of 1,225dpa x 20 years = 24,500 dwgs - a 34.5% increase!

This is an extremely high rate of growth, especially for a largely rural District, even for the South-East. It can be questioned whether it is achievable, aside from whether it is desirable. Of course, the change of character of the District as a whole from such a scale of growth will inevitably be significant.



Regular flooding on Horebeech Lane after Rosemead was built

- **The way forward continued?**

For some places, notably larger settlements in the Low Weald ( i.e. without the protection of AONB status), such as Horam, development pressure will be greatest.

While WDC has said that it aims to retain the village character of Horam, the reality is that the level of housing built recently and in the pipeline is fundamentally changing the form and character of the village.

WDC advised that there were o/s pps for c200 dwellings in Horam in its last monitoring statement. The very unpopular Rose Mead site is now substantially built, but this has intensified pressure for fields opposite and to its east. Beyond the new estate south of the recreation ground, there are a plethora of sites being considered by WDC off Chiddingly Road, I think (but to be checked) totalling c150 dwellings, with a further 250 dwellings also previously proposed in WDC's now withdrawn Local Plan. All of these, if approved, would mean a consolidated built-up area from well to the south of the present extent of the village.

To create a better environment



View from bedroom window summer 2021.

And to preserve this

- **The way forward continued?**

However, there is already a groundswell of opposition from Wealden residents in the last few years. Organisations like WASP & SWOT are really challenging Wealden and the government on the saturation from over- development of the South East. Pressure from these groups has, I think, helped to persuade the leader of WDC, Bob Standley, to challenge the housing numbers assigned by government. In the face of the climate challenge something has to stop this loss of nature & biodiversity.

Horam Parish Council are working on a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. They have advised that it won't impact on numbers but will allow residents to contribute on design and where developments happen. Contact [clerk@horam.com](mailto:clerk@horam.com) to find out where they are with it and how residents can engage with it.

They key is to share the successes with local people to ward off the apathy that naturally sets in after several objection letters are sent by individuals and applications still get approved and to maintain the pressure on those in power.



Rosemead: picture from our bedroom window before Rosemead estate was built in 2017

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- Land put forward to Wealden District Council for development assessment

