Character Statement

Population

1.1 At the time of writing (March 2014), 1,735 people live in 475 households in Lubenham Parish. Of these 76.9% are owner occupied 9.7% social rented 2.76% rented from the council 10.1% private rented 1.1% living rent free
There are approximately 185 children under 16 and 205 people over 65. There are just over 1300 working age adults, 20 lone parent families and 50 single pensioner households.

1.2 Further details of the population are as shown in the tables below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pensioner households (2011)</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lone pensioner households (2011)</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student households (2011)</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One person households (2011)</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married households (2011)</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting households (2011)</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 The majority (85.8%) of the population of Lubenham is of white British origin, slightly less than Harborough 92.8% but more than England 79.5%.

1.4 58% of the Lubenham population aged 16 – 74 are economically active
26% full time
14% part time
9.3% are self employed and 4.7% work from home
40% aged 16 - 74 are economically inactive.

1 Acre Rural Place profile – 2011 census
1.5 Occupation types of those aged 16 – 74 living in the Parish are categorised below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment type</th>
<th>Percentage of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Agriculture,</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector:</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Construction</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Retail (2011)</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Transport &amp;</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector:</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Information</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Financial &amp;</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Real estate</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Professional,</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector:</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Public</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Education</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Human</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees by industrial sector: Other</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Housing**

1.6 The parish is made up of a variety of houses and building types – a proportional breakdown is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House types</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi detached</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terraced</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converted or shared houses</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan or mobile home</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 The main settlement of Lubenham has a variety of building styles including Victorian terraced houses, Georgian farmhouses, and 1980s and later detached and semi detached houses, and bungalows. The main building material is red brick.

1.8 There are also interesting listed buildings and structures some in private ownership, including the Tower House, Manor Farm, Gore Lodge, The Old Vicarage, Rose Cottage, and The Old Hall. These incorporate a variety of architectural styles including some thatched roofs, cruck and interesting gables.

A full list of structures can be found at Appendix CH 2 and on Map 8
1.9 Gartree is made up of a mixture of semi detached, terraced and detached houses built during the 60’s as prison officers’ quarters, but now mostly in private ownership.

1.10 Bramfield Park is situated on the western edge of the village, it is a registered caravan park providing 28 pitches (although registered for 38, there are space constraints preventing this number) originally registered in 1981 reissued with new conditions in 2009*. The occupants are mostly over age 50.

1.11 Greenacres is designated as a gypsy and traveller site, with various registrations between 1996 and 2006. It has undergone some development in the past. This part of the Parish on the northern edge is linked by a footway to Market Harborough with links to the main settlement by footpaths across fields.

1.12 Further demographic details can be found in the Rural Place profile at Appendix CH1

**Business**

1.13 Market Harborough is the main centre providing business retail and employment services to the residents of Lubenham. Lubenham itself has no large private enterprises. Small businesses including the Coach and Horses public house, car wash, service industries and local builders, are well supported and provide opportunities for employment and self employment, as well as supporting community activities. Offices e.g. Deichman have also provided employment for local people as has Gartree Prison. Farming and equestrianism ensure that well used agricultural land surrounds the village and contributes to its rural nature. There are also some small groups of industrial units in converted farm buildings which offer opportunities for small start up business.

1.14 There is one well supported Public House (Coach and Horses) and one shop (formerly selling household goods and food and last used for the sale of antiques and now recently opened as a tea room)

1.15 A business on the edge of the village provides alternative therapies, hairdressing and beautician.
1.16 Gartree Prison is a major employer for the area although the majority of employees travel into the area.

Infrastructure and Services

1.17 The main Lubenham settlement is situated on the A4304 the transport route that links Market Harborough and Lutterworth, and while the village benefits from its direct route to Market Harborough and access to the M1 and beyond, the road cuts the community in two and has been responsible for some fatalities over the years. Bramfield Mobile Home Park is also situated on the A4304 but outside the development limits of the settlement.

1.18 Four village roads access the A4304 from the south and five from the north with additional access from Bramfield Park on the north side beyond the village boundary.

1.19 Side Roads
   Foxton Road is a weight restricted road that leads to Gartree and Foxton, the B6047, and the A6, providing access towards the north. It is a busy road that is often used by vehicles that are bypassing Market Harborough. Old Hall Lane, School Lane, Rushes Lane, and Westgate Lane although mainly used for access to particular areas of the village can all be used by vehicles taking short cuts from south of Harborough to reach the A 4304.

1.20 Welland Avenue and Stuart Crescent serve the houses at Gartree – both roads are un-adopted with Stuart Crescent belonging, in part to the Ministry of justice, both roads are therefore the responsibility of the residents and owners for upkeep. Roadside gulleys in this location are the responsibility of home owners and in some cases there is joint responsibility with the Ministry of Justice. Welland Avenue is sometimes used as a cut through between Gallowfield Road and Foxton Road.

1.21 Parking within the village is frequently an issue that causes concern, in particular parking around the school and in Rushes Lane and School Lane. There is one small public car park in Lubenham – this is to the rear of Connell Close – it is generally only used by residents of Connell Close who park there mostly at night and weekends. There are 2 areas of garages, formerly for residents of council properties one is now owned by a Housing Association, the other is owned by Harborough District Council and has been registered as an asset of community value. Most other vehicles are either parked within residents own property or at the kerb.

1.22 At Gartree there are car parks for Prison staff and visitors and also some parking areas for residents, a block of garages, formerly rented out but now mostly derelict, belong to the Ministry of Justice.

1.23 Speeding - The speed of traffic on village roads, particularly the A4304 and Foxton Road is of particular concern to residents and speeds are monitored using a mobile vehicle activated display sign. Around 16,000
vehicle movements per week are recorded in one direction on the Main Road 50% of which are exceeding the 30mph speed limit.

1.24 Transport - The main means of transport currently used within the parish is the private car, with some cycle usage, mainly for recreation; the use of electric buggies for local trips provides a useful means of transport for older people who may use the footpath to Market Harborough to access services and facilities there.

1.25 The daily bus service running along the A4304, linking Market Harborough and Hinckley, runs Monday to Saturday to the bus station and serves both Lubenham settlement and Bramfield Park. The number of buses per day has recently been cut so there is no longer an hourly bus service. In addition a Rural Rider bus service runs through the village once a week from Arnesby to Market Harborough and returns later the same day. Gartree is served by an hourly bus service linking it to the train station and town centre. Community transport schemes can be accessed by people from the Parish on a request basis and subject to availability.

1.26 School children use the general service bus to access Welland Park College and Robert Smyth School. Children from outside the village who attend Lubenham Primary School are generally brought to school by parents with the exception of children from Theddingworth from where a taxi service is provided.

1.27 Superfast Broadband is available in the main settlement but the outlying parts of the settlement have poor Broadband connectivity.

Sewerage

1.28 Removal of sewage is the responsibility of Anglian Water Services. Sewage from the main settlement is pumped to Market Harborough Sewage treatment works in Weston by Welland? from a pumping station in Old Hall Lane. This pumping station experiences frequent malfunction and inability to cope with the capacity, particularly at times of high rainfall or melting snow when outflow can occur into the river. The sewerage system from Bramfield Mobile Home Park is sometimes responsible for smells towards the west of the village.

1.29 Any further developments within the Parish should provide for enhancements to the current inadequate sewerage systems.

1.30 Flooding is a problem particularly in the area that stretches from The School in School Lane to the Church gates in Rushes Lane and around
Old Hall Lane. Floods stretch under the old railway bridge into Farndon Road as well as causing flooding to some buildings on Old Hall Lane. This can lead to a back up of sewage with some overflow experienced into the river.

1.31 Sewerage at Gartree is linked to the prison systems which sometimes causes difficulties. Sewage from Gartree flows into the sewers through Foxton village.

**Water supply**

1.32 Water supply is the responsibility of Severn Trent Water.

**Education**

1.33 Children from the village generally attend Lubenham All Saints Primary School from where they move on to Welland Park College at the beginning of year 7 and those from Gartree attend Foxton Primary School from where the move on to Kibworth High School at the beginning of year 7. From year 10 children have traditionally all attended Robert Smyth Academy however changes will come into force in 2015 that will allow children to attend Kibworth High School and Welland Park College from year 7 through to year 12 and Robert Smyth Academy from year 7 to year 12 and beyond.

1.34 Further Education Colleges are based in Kettering, Leicester, Northampton and Wigston

**Natural Environment**

1.35 The landscape of the Parish is characterised by the low lying land surrounding the river Welland that rises to the north towards Mill Hill and beyond with some very attractive green field sites that provide substantial views. The rising land and spinneys towards the east and Market Harborough provide a strong and important buffer from the Market Town.

1.36 There are numerous features and historical aspects and heritage aspects to the landscape that can be identified as important to local people, among them the views into and out of the parish.

1.37 The Conservation Area Character Statement (see Appendix CS1) identifies that the village green is an important open space fringed by dwellings but does not identify any key views out into the surrounding countryside. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to rectify this situation in
order to incorporate the important issues identified through recent
neighbourhood plan consultations.

1.38 Lubenham benefits from being in the Welland Valley with its rich fertile
grazing land that has supported agriculture, equestrian activities and
associated occupations for many years. In addition to the river Welland, a
number of small streams and water courses and ponds are important to
the parish's biodiversity, as are the hedges, small woodlands and trees.

1.39 Footpaths and bridleways cross the
farmland and provide some links to the
various parts of the parish; one
particularly important one is Undle which
is believed to be a part of an old drover’s
road. A series of heritage footpath walks
published by Leicestershire County
Council with assistance from the local
heritage group are very popular with ramblers and support the local tourist
industry as well as in some cases supporting local business (e.g. local
hostelries).

1.40 The Grand Union Canal runs to the northwest corner of the Parish and
provides recreational activity for many; its hump backed bridge is an
important feature.

1.41 Meandering along the parish’s southern boundary,
the river Welland with a semi derelict 'wash pit' is an
important feature, the road bridge and footbridges
provide access towards Northamptonshire. Wildlife
frequents this area and kingfishers can often be seen
along the river bank.

1.42 The disused railway track running alongside it to the
south of the village is regularly used as a recreational
walk, with parts of it supported by bridges, including a double arched road
and cart bridge which is now listed. Washpit Lane is a green lane.

1.43 Various small spinneys, woodland areas, ponds and watercourses are
important for wildlife; these include Undle spinney, the spinney on
Lubenham Hill, two off the former airfield concrete road and one to the
North West of Bramfield Park.

1.44 In a recent survey carried out for the proposed wind farm the following bird
species that are either on the BoCC red or amber list have been identified
within the parish, Golden Plover, Lapwing, Skylark, Starling,
Yellowhammer, Linnet, Grey Partridge, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Tree
Sparrow, Yellow Wagtail, Merlin, Red Kite, Kestrel, Dunnock, Meadow
Pipit, Reed Bunting, Stock Dove, Swallow, Whitethroat, Curlew, Snipe,
Kingfisher and Woodpecker. The Golden Plover uses the land to the north
of the parish as overwintering ground and this site provides one third of the overwintering ground for Leicestershire.

**Historic Environment**

1.45 All Saints Church is Grade 1 listed, and is surrounded by a large churchyard that is supported by a dry stone wall with railings. All Saints Church is first mentioned in 1109 although the earliest part of the present building dates from around 1150 and almost certainly replaced an earlier, possibly, wooden structure.

1.46 Lubenham School is a Victorian building that was once made up of a school plus a school house. The school now occupies the whole building and it has a large playing field and a School Hall Opened in 2007.

1.47 The ‘Village Green’ or ‘Township’ as it was known, is held in trust and includes 5 parcels of land which was divided into allotments at the time of the enclosures and includes what is now the main village green, 3 parcels of allotments and an area planted with trees. The Green was still divided into gardens in 1958 but in the eighties was gradually made into one large open area.

1.48 Undle Big Field has been field walked by the Upper Welland Archaeological Group² and was found to be very rich in archaeological finds from the Upper Palaeolithic through to the post medieval period.

1.49 The early prehistoric finds mainly consist of flint scatters, including many tools such as blades and scrapers. Later prehistoric and Roman pottery shards are also represented along with a large amount of Anglo-Saxon pottery, which would suggest an occupation site somewhere in the area.

1.50 The site of the mysterious Papillion Hall (next to Papillion Fields Farm) built in 1622-1624 and extensively redesigned by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1903 with a Gertrude Jekyll garden, still holds a few reminders of the Hall which was demolished in the early 1950s

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² Source Lubenham Heritage Group
1.51 The heritage assets of Lubenham contribute strongly to the character of the parish with many efforts made to preserve and restore various areas, as well as make them accessible to visitors.

1.52 The majority of the village is in a conservation area which incorporates The Green and the War Memorial and its surroundings as well as many of its principal streets (including Rushes Lane, School Lane and Old Hall Lane which all have a north to south alignment and framed vistas northwards towards Mill Hill). The existing conservation area statement mentions many, although not all, of the important buildings. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to rectify this.

1.53 There are 12 listed properties within the village as well as some listed structures e.g. railway and cart bridge see 1.8 above, Appendix CS2 and Map 8.

Health and Wellbeing –

1.54 2.3% of the population claim disability living allowance; 17.5% of all ages and 16% aged 0 – 64 have a long term illness. 11.8% of the population claim attendance allowance\(^3\).

1.55 3.4% of the population live in overcrowded housing and 11.6 % are estimated to live in fuel poverty; 19.5% of children are estimated to live in poverty and 20.8% experience economic income deprivation\(^4\).

1.56 The road distance to the nearest GP surgery is approx 4 km (10mins travel time by public transport). The travel time to the nearest hospital (small) is approx 11 mins. While specialist treatment is available at hospitals in Leicester, Kettering and Coventry (travel time between 35 and 70 minutes).

1.57 The open spaces in the village contribute to the character and amenities of the village and include the large Village Green that is used for events and on a daily basis as an amenity area by local people, children and dog walkers. The Green also occasionally doubles as a car park for events held in other parts of the village.

\(^3\) Source OCSI Acre Rural Place profile – 2011 census

\(^4\) Source OCSI Acre Rural Place profile – 2011 census
1.58 The Village Playing Field, purchased by the village following WW2, is held in trust. It is a site of approx ½ acre with play equipment (swings slide etc) well used by young people and families from the Parish and surrounding areas, with a garden area and kick about area. The field has recently been updated (2014) with additional equipment and fitness equipment for adults.

1.59 To the rear of the war memorial, now situated on Main Street, opposite The Coach & Horses and surrounded by a garden area, is a small woodland area. The memorial, originally erected at the end of Foxton Road following WW1, was moved to its current position which was previously the village pond, in 1949. A small seating area and a flag pole are also adjacent to the memorial.

1.60 The Village Hall built in 2004 is held in trust for the community; it is an important asset as a meeting place. A number of activities for residents take place in the Village Hall, including short mat bowls, art classes, Tai Chi, dance classes for children, heritage group, one off events, quizzes and meetings.

1.61 The Coach and Horses is a popular meeting place that is important to the community, serving alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks and food and offering a venue for private parties and functions as well as providing weekly musical entertainment and special priced lunchtime and early evening meals.

1.62 There are 38 Allotments in the village, none at Bramfield or Gartree, 28 of the allotments are let to village residents 9 to people from Market Harborough and one to a resident of a neighbouring village. There is currently a short waiting list.

1.63 Gartree, Bramfield and Greenacres do not have such communal spaces or buildings although there are some open areas where people can congregate there are no communal buildings or designated open spaces in community ownership.

1.64 All parts of the parish are surrounded by open countryside with some public rights of way providing access to and from the settlements.

1.65 Market Harborough provides for most further education, retail and health needs of residents and can be accessed relatively easily access by car via the A4304, however current cuts to the bus timetable means that access by public transport is more difficult.

1.66 The town is a thriving town with a good range of shops but experiences high levels of traffic and congestion throughout the day which also results in high levels of CO2 emissions.
1.67 Health services are available through GP services in Market Harborough with acute care available either in Leicester or Kettering or sometimes Coventry. Residents often report difficulty in getting GP appointments.