



Descriptive Tour of the Village



Teffont – Magna and Evias – has many times been described as one of Wiltshire’s most beautiful villages and it is clear that most of us feel it is a great privilege to live here.

It is impossible to define all the elements which make up its unique charm, but the swiftly flowing icy chalk stream, along which most of the village is built, is intrinsic to its character. Although very low in recent years, it has never been known to dry out. The valley, with its many springs and richly wooded surrounding hillsides, is green and lush for most of the year. The landscape still prevails and is not dominated by the buildings.

There is a soft organic look to the settlement. In all lights and weathers, the buildings and linking boundary walls, with their living patina of greyish white, gold and terracotta coloured lichen, the gentle grey of the thatch and soft tones of the weathered clay tiles appear to have grown from the ground. On winter days the sun pays only a brief visit to the valley which is often hung with mist, but there is great beauty in the low shafts of early morning sunlight catching steam rising from the stream or frosty thatched roofs.

An abundance of wildlife is dependent on the stream, the lush valley and uncultivated areas,

the gardens, many trees and open outbuildings. In spring an almost deafening chorus greets the dawn and a wide mix of birdsong fills the air at most times. The “kiew” of buzzards circling above their prey, the chattering of house martins and swallows gathering the rich supply of insects, the laughter of a green woodpecker and rooks coming home to roost in tall trees on the hillsides are all familiar sounds. In the dark night skies owls and bats hunt the valley and we have a clear view of the stars. This describes only a small part of the unique identity of the village and the delicate balance between the natural and built environment. We have a precious jewel here which needs to be cared for so that future generations can enjoy living here as we do.

Six approach roads descend into Teffont. There is no ribbon development at any of these “gateways” and villagers wish to protect this rural quality.

A 30 mph speed limit applies throughout the village, much needed because of the passage of heavy vehicles.

Teffont divides naturally into three parts and we will start from the northern end which is also the source of the stream.

A far reaching panorama of chalk downland and wooded hills, uninterrupted by buildings, never fails to take your breath away as you leave the A303 and join the C277 approach road to Teffont Magna. The road crosses Teffont Down, turns left and winds gently down the hill between arable fields. In summer you are often greeted by a leaping hare and the sound of skylarks as you turn the corner to make your descent; trees clothe the valley below and the spire of Evias church piercing this green mantle is the only sign of a settlement.

The stream rises at Springhead, on the left as you enter the village, opposite a farm attraction and a group of agricultural buildings. It flows into a pond then crosses under the road and meanders roughly due south, through the length of Magna and into the Water Meadows.

A little further on behind a hedge on the left is the first pair of Pembroke Cottages, doubled in size to make a single house in the 1990s. It is one of

Teffont Magna Housing Restraint Area

three sets in the village, built in the mid-19th century by the Pembroke Estate (the principal land owners in Magna from 1552) as farm labourers’ cottages, using local stone with Welsh slate roofs. Their design and use of

“How the descent from the A303 makes my heart sing every time.....” Villager’s comment

quality materials were acclaimed for their excellence at the time. All have moved with the times, been extended and altered. There is another pair a little further along up a track to the left which still have their wash houses in the gardens.

Just round the corner on the left, Spring Cottage is one of the oldest in the village. Set back behind a stone wall and garden it dates back to the 16th century and has unusually large pointed thatched gabled dormers.

There is a small cluster of traditional, 19th, 20th and 21st-century dwellings nearby.

The next part of the village has a timeless and peaceful feel. Ducks often rest on the grassy verges which meet the road without kerbstone or pavement and to the left horses graze in the pasture, which is enclosed on the road side by mixed hedges and sets the foreground for the unspoilt group of buildings at Manor Farm. No longer a working farm, it is approached up a drive fenced with iron railings. The Georgian farmhouse is built with dressed local stone, has an attractive overhanging clay-tiled hipped roof and sash windows typical of the period. It was built by the Pembroke Estate. The farm was divided up in the latter part of the 20th century, leaving only a few paddocks around the house. The relatively complete group of model farm buildings and dovecote, which were built about 1870, have recently been sympathetically restored and converted for use as livery stables.



On the opposite side of the road all properties are set in open fields and bounded on the stream side by low natural stone walls. The delightful thatched Yew Tree Cottage is said to have been the mill for Manor Farm. It is built with dressed local stone and positioned gable-end to road with an old stone, cob and tiled boundary wall (originally thatched) enclosing its garden and bordering the stream to its north. There is a late 20th-century thatched stone garage which complements the scene.

From here there is a view of the little church to the south. On the right, set well back over a bridge, is Moon Cottage, a small baffle-entry thatched stone cottage. A little further on is The Malthouse, a 17th-century farmhouse altered in the early 19th century when it was also the "Hole in the Wall" local ale house. Now a private house, it has plain clay tile and Welsh slate roofs. The stream flows through the garden and part of its southern boundary is formed by the church.

The entrance to the old village pound, where stray animals were kept, is on the left. The road then passes through a very narrow gap between the Church and Wren's Cottage and in winter two mid 20th-century houses dominate the hillside ahead.

The C277 joins the old Salisbury to Hindon Turnpike road and to the left are three picturesque early 18th-century small stone cottages: Wren's and Old Turnpike remain thatched and Jasmine with its pantiled roof completes the group. An old wrought iron and wooden finger post points the way to Dinton and the tiny lane rises steeply out of the village, past a much altered and extended cottage on the left which was once the old toll house, and the former Black Horse coaching inn, which is still thatched, on the right.

About half a mile further on a track to the left leads to an outlying farm. The historic sunken lane then becomes dark and tree-canopied with one or two ancient coppiced specimens; the old Parish boundary stone can be seen in the bank and it is still easy to imagine the mail coach clattering by on its way to London.

Heading back down to the crossroads, a red post box is set into the wall of the graveyard. Across the road, the church stands behind the tiny village green and both are bordered by the stream. A huge slab of stone spans the stream here and once led to a medieval "A" frame building which was demolished in the mid-20th century. It now makes a launching point for ducks and

paddling children, while the seats on the green provide a tranquil meeting and resting place for villagers and weary passers-by.

St. Edward's Church is a small buttressed rubble and dressed stone building. It has a plain clay-tiled roof and a double course of stone slates at the eaves, a simple stone porch and no tower or spire. Dating from the 13th century, it is the oldest building in the village and replaced a wooden structure which burnt down, remnants of which were found when digging for main drainage. The unembellished interior, where sunlight streams through the clear diamond pane windows, provides a peaceful meditative space for all its visitors. Apart from its ecclesiastical function, it also lends itself to concerts. The tiny churchyard, enclosed by iron railings, is often visited by bantams from a nearby garden.

Continuing south, the former village school, closed in 1936, is now a thriving Village Hall, which has recently undergone extensive restoration and modernisation. It sits behind the stream in its own grounds, on a triangle where the roads meet. Designed by local architect John Harding and built in 1877 with local stone, it has typical schoolroom windows, large and south facing, high enough not to distract the children, but letting in copious daylight—a feature which greatly enhances its diverse use today. The steeply pitched half-hipped and gabled clay-tiled roof successfully reflects the thatched

proportions of its neighbours. The grounds are enclosed by low stone walls and mixed hedges and contain the village playground.

Looking back from here there is a delightful scene: the Church, with its golden cockerel weather vane glinting in the sun and the Wren's cottage group. It is a constant inspiration for artists and photographers and is a key visual point in the village.

Crossing Spark's bridge, which was built by the Fitz family in 1717, possibly to replace a ford, the "Old Turnpike" runs up to the right of the Village Hall and joins the B3089. Turning right, the road makes a steep ascent out of the village and climbs towards Chilmark. There are three outlying properties, including a horse stud, and nearby a listed milestone rests in the verge.

Turning round, as you begin the descent into the village from Chilmark, you notice the great height of the eastern hillside ahead, which is apparent from as far away as Fonthill Bishop. On the left there are impressive views in winter of unmarred countryside and the little (C277) road winding up to the A303. To the right are views across fields to a The Upper Holt wood and a magnificent line of lime trees.

The road passes through a steep, narrow cutting as you re-enter the village, revealing the Village Hall on its island ahead, then bends very sharply to the right.

Top left to right: Manor Farm, Wren's, Old Turnpike and Jasmine cottages, Moon cottage, St Edward's Church. Below left to right: Yew Tree Cottage, The Malthouse with St Edward's to the left.





This is the most densely populated part of the village. A pavement runs down the left or eastern side of the main road (B3089). Much of the development in the last 20 years has been along this main road down to Larkham's Farm. This has resulted in a significant loss of the defining open spaces.

On the corner on the right are the attractive rubble stone and thatched Post Office Cottages which hug the stream and date from the early 17th century. They housed the last surviving shop and the post office which sadly closed in the mid 1990s. The gardens and open fields behind the stream side of the road, rise gently to a ridge.

To the left, a field rises steeply forming a green backcloth behind

Central Magna

The Thatches, a late 18th-century thatched former farmhouse. Alongside it, a thatched stone and brick barn borders the pavement and within living memory the old grappling iron for dragging down blazing thatch was hooked to its walls. Nearby is the first of the little thatched and weather-boarded bus shelters and behind is Farleigh Cottage, a late 20th-century thatched and rendered building. The white rendering is probably a reflection of Barnmead opposite, before it was restored to its former appearance. This little surprise, now a dwelling, was a Methodist Chapel, built about 1820. Its brick front wall and stone sides had subsequently been rendered and painted white and the arches



of its chapel windows were hidden. Adjacent to Barnmead is the 1990's close of houses mentioned in the "New Building" section.

Opposite is Cook's cottage, where dormer windows and artificial tiles replaced thatch in the late 20th century. This has partly been used as a template for the "Barnmead" development.

The thatched 17th-century Teff Cottage, next to the stream on the right, has cob walls which have been rendered and painted. Next door and set right back in the former farmyard for Fitz House is Caister House, built in the 1990s, replacing a small stone barn.

Opposite, a listed red telephone box stands outside the small stone Reading Room which was built just after and to commemorate the First World War. It is now a village amenity and there are pleasing views from here up to Hillside—the third terrace of Pembroke Cottages, King's Orchard and the woods beyond. The paddock to its south and the protected lime trees which border the pavement here, provide a characteristic break, or breathing space, in the linear building development along the main road and foreground for Hillside Cottages above; also a setting for the historic

Fitz House group and Goodfellow Cottages opposite. This area of the village is collectively a valued feature and another key visual point.

The eastern side of the valley is steep-sided here, any harsh sound and the vibration of heavy vehicles reverberate across the valley. These green undeveloped spaces help to absorb this.

The attractive Fitz House group is arranged around three sides of a courtyard and includes a large thatched rubble stone 15th-century barn, its gable end bordering the stream, which passes briefly inside the garden alongside a gated stone

"Teffont is an island in a sea of over-developed villages. We have a duty to future generations not to destroy it. The villages have evolved gradually and in linear fashion. Backfill development has been kept at bay until recently. The rural identity of the village, especially the water meadows, is under threat and must be protected at all costs"
Villager's comment

wall. Fitz House was home to the prosperous sheep-farming Fitz family from the mid 1600s until the mid 1800s. They enlarged a smaller dwelling into the dressed limestone house as seen today and built the crosspiece as a wool barn in 1700. It was converted in the early 1900s and thatch on the house and cottage was replaced by hand-made clay peg tiles and pantiles around the same time. The little stone and clay-tiled cottage beside the stream has a half-hipped roof and was said to have been where they dipped and sheared the sheep. Goodfellow Cottages, a pair of



thatched late 17th-century cottages, set back a little from the stream, completes this scene.

Rooks roost in tall trees near Hillside Cottages and in the lime trees which command the ridge above Fitz House and were once partnered by ancient elms. Shy, grey wagtails launch from roofs here to snatch insects and enjoy the protection of the walls bordering the rushing stream for their nesting sites. Water voles live in the soft banks of the stream beside the road.

From here until Larkham's Farmhouse, there is piecemeal 20th and 21st-century development of houses and bungalows mainly along the left hand side of the road, half of them built within the last 10 years. Some do not reflect either the

vernacular or traditional building materials of the village.

In their midst is the unusual Read's Cottage, a partly timbered house. It was re-built in the early 21st century from the remains of, and in a similar style to, Read's Close, an early 19th-century building. Bathurst Cottage, almost opposite, which sits behind a quirkily sculptured box hedge, is also not traditional in style, even though it is said to date from the 17th century. The house, as seen today, is white pebbledashed brick. It has pleasing

*Top Left Post Office Cottages
Top Right: The Reading Room and its setting
Lower left: Fitz House
Lower right: Bathurst Cottage*





proportions and features, including pointed fanlight windows and a fish scale tiled roof. The stream flows through its garden and into the water meadows.

Opposite, an ancient, narrow, sunken bridlepath, Dark Lane, joins the old coffin path and leads eventually to Dinton Church. To its south two recently built houses are on the site of a former wooden dwelling. The Birches had to be placed further back and raised up owing to the presence of water at road level which was discovered during its construction.



The road narrows here and the pavement comes to an end. It continues on the west side of the road and runs above the water meadows, another defining open space and greatly treasured part of the rural character of the village. Still "drowned" within living memory to bring on early grazing for the sheep, it is a sanctuary for wildlife: the heron is often seen fishing and egrets perch in the bushes beyond. There are long views across the fields to the Upper Holt woods.

Further down the road is the second characterful bus shelter. The early 18th-century Larkham's Farmhouse occupies an imposing position on the corner, ideal for its transformation into the Black Horse Inn around 1843. The lease was transferred here from the Old Turnpike road after the building of the new road to Salisbury (now the B3089). It was struck by lightning and burnt down in 1915 and when rebuilt, handmade clay tiles replaced the thatch. The Inn survived as a business until the late 1990s and is now a private house. There is an old bread oven in the wall of the extension near the road.



The road bends sharply to the left around the recently built high stone boundary wall of Larkham's Farmhouse, opposite which stood the old village petrol pumps; this is a dangerous corner with a turning to Evias on the right. The pavement comes to an end outside Three Hands Cottage on the opposite side of this corner.

"Please don't turn Teffont into either a museum or mere pastiche..."
Villager's comment

The main road leads out towards Dinton and there is a scattering of late 20th-century houses and bungalows on this eastern exit of the village. Although none of them is in the vernacular of the village, they are all set well back from the road within ample gardens containing mature trees and shrubs, so their combined effect does not impose on the old meadows which surround them. The old charcoal burner's cottage nestles at the back of these meadows and further up the hill on the left, a large reconstituted stone barn, The Long House, built as a heavy horse centre in the 1990s, has been converted into a private house.

The road rises steeply through beautiful deciduous woods, passing the second listed milestone on the right. At its summit are two lodges: on the left a small stone and slate-roofed building was originally the lodge to Philips House in Dinton. It is here that we will turn right and take the most picturesque and much cherished approach into Teffont Evias.

*Top to bottom left:
Larkham's Farm, the 'Oaks',
The Lodge on the turning to Evias.
Facing page:
The Water meadows.*





You almost feel you are stepping back in time as you enter the demesne of Teffont Evias. Most buildings relate historically to the Manor and the majority remain under its single ownership. There has been little visual change for over a century and this is a major factor in its special protection under the Local Plan. All but two dwellings within the Special Restraint Area are listed and there is no pavement, which contributes to its rural character. Although like Magna it is a linear development, it is quite different; the valley here is more open and less steep and there are still many defining open spaces. The only recent development has been up Holt Lane which is outside the Special

Teffont Evias Special Restraint Area

Restraint and Conservation Areas, but nonetheless is a beautiful stretch of the landscape which features in views from many parts of the village.

The essence of Evias becomes apparent immediately after turning right. The little cottage, once lodge to the Manor, was built around 1816 of rubble stone and thatch in the “Picturesque” style, characterised by exaggerated dormers, steep catslide roof and gothic diamond pane windows.

There are fine views of the chalk downland here and shortly afterwards a lane on the left leads to Goldens, which belongs to the Manor and was built with stone from the mill house further along, soon after it was destroyed by fire in 1904.

The road descends steeply through parkland enclosed by iron railings and still feels like the drive to the Manor which it once was. As a beautiful and quintessentially English scene comes into view you realise you are entering an exceptional place. There is a serene lake with gliding swans, who have reared their young here for generations. Ducks, moorhens, a heron and little egrets perch in bushes at the water’s edge. To the right is a timeless view of

cattle grazing amongst specimen trees in the foreground, the Manor house, manor cottages and church behind, and the green backcloth of the Upper Holt woods beyond. To the left of this group, fields rise gently to a wooded ridge. This spectacular setting is possibly the most treasured in the village and has featured in guidebooks, films and planning guidance leaflets. It is generously loaned each year for the Village Show as there is no other appropriate community space.

The road crosses the lake and immediately climbs steeply up again

*Above: Teffont Manor and Church.
Below left to right: Evias finger post,
The road by Evias Lake.*



leading eventually to Tisbury. There is a leafy triangular junction on the right, from which a road runs down to Evias and a recently remade wooden fingerpost points the way. The tiny hamlet of Ley on the edge of the parish—three quarters of a mile along the Tisbury road—was once part of the Evias estate. It consists of a group of farm buildings recently converted to dwellings, a cottage, bungalow and a little further on Ley Farmhouse, a handsome square early 19th-century stone building with a Welsh slate roof, is still a working farm. Several of its outbuildings have recently been sensitively restored.

Returning to the finger post, the road into Evias takes a sharp turn to the left and runs down a little hill past the former coach house for the Manor. On the right is another view of the church, behind a low wall and approached over an arched bridge through impressive iron gates. This tranquil, streamside setting makes a perfect foreground for the Manor.

The small 15th and 16th-century Church of St. Michael and All Angels—some of which was probably reclaimed from an earlier church—was renovated and enlarged in the Gothic Revival style to designs by Charles Fowler early in the 19th century. This included the addition of the pinnacled two-stage tower and a little



later, the elegant spire, designed by George Gilbert Scott. It has a Welsh slate and fish scale tiled roof.

The Manor, owned by the Keatinge family for generations, was converted to flats in the 1950s. Extensions, including fanciful battlements, flamboyant chimneys, loggias (now gone) and follies disguising utilities were added to a large 16th and 17th-century house in the early 19th century. Both buildings include stone taken from the quarries in the woods opposite, above the small cemetery.

As you continue up the narrow road the grassy verges on the left are smothered with snowdrops in February. A box hedge, full of

character, winds its way along the far edge of the stream fronting the high stone boundary wall of the Manor’s kitchen garden, then gives way to a field. From here to the Old Forge, the fields run behind and between the buildings and slope gently up to woods.

Howard’s House, once Dower House to the estate is now a hotel. The main part of the house, built sideways on to the road, is a curious mix of styles. It carries a datestone for 1623 and was originally a smaller house. An attic floor was added around 1837, to include “Swiss chalet-type” wooden brackets on the deep eaves (now a home to swifts) inspired by its owner’s “Grand Tour” through Switzerland. At the same time, a new wing was added along the roadside and both include pointed gothic arched windows. A delightful cobbled courtyard, carriage house and stables date from the earlier period of the house and remain little changed.

A datestone for 1682 appears on the thatched Montague Cottage nearby.

Next is a group of buildings which collectively encapsulate the manorial history of Evias. The little school bungalow, over the stream

*Above: Evias looking south to Home farm.
Below: Howard’s House Hotel and
Enderley cottage.*





There are two traditional cottages up Carter's Lane, a bridleway much loved by walkers, which soon leads to open countryside. It links back in a "horseshoe" via a permissive track, to the Holt Lane bridleway further north. The old lime kilns which for centuries provided for the local building mortar can still be seen part way up the lane.

Continuing along the road, cedar shingles have replaced thatch on Rose Cottage, which still has a bread oven protruding from its wall. Greystones, opposite, built part way up the hillside and set well back in a garden behind a stone wall, is now thought to have originally been a barn for Home Farm. It is a tall, three-storey stone building, with a shallow pitched

on the right, with its high, arched stone mullion windows and the almshouses (now Acacia Cottage) up to the left were both built for the estate workers in the late 1800s. They are stone with ornamental roof tiles and decorative ridges. Ahead is the 17th-century thatched Home Farm house and completing the group across the stream to the right, the characterful thatched, weather-boarded, timber-framed barn of similar date.

House martins, swallows and sparrows gather and swoop at this junction and you may catch the bright blue flash of a kingfisher darting up the stream.

"New development should be proportionate and in sympathy with the character of the village"
Villager's comment

Welsh slate roof and it was recently discovered that the Georgian façade is "false" and probably added in the early 1900s. An attractive group of stone barns, set around a cobbled yard and including a listed 17th-century cowshed, borders Greystones to the north.



A short walk from here, Riverside a pair of simple, thatched stone cottages on the right, are the only unlisted dwellings in the SRA. The road crosses over the stream that has flowed from the southern end of the Water Meadows in Magna, behind Three Hands and Brooklyn and through the grounds of Bridges.

A mixed hedge borders a field to the right and behind a mature beech hedge on the left is Bridges — a farmhouse which was refaced and enlarged in a simple Gothic Revival style from 1841-2, probably by Moffatt, for its use as a rectory. Built

*Clockwise from top Left :
Howards House courtyard, Greystones,
Home Farmhouse.*



of local rubble stone with dressings of Bath stone, embellishments include castellated parapets and Tudor arched windows. The roofs are Welsh slate and clay tiles. It sits proudly within its open setting, with lawns rolling down to the stream and a sweeping gravel drive.

To the north of Bridges and over a little stone bridge is Holt Lane, a tarmac lane petering out into a track. On the left The Holt a small, early 18th-century dressed stone and thatched barn, which was subsequently turned into a cottage, has been extensively altered and added to in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Next door is the only



social housing in the village, a group of four unobtrusive and modest reconstituted stone retirement bungalows completed in 1977.

"...any large scale development would damage the character of the village..."

Villager's comment

To the right several late 20th—and early 21st-century dwellings have been built and opposite is the delightful 16th-century Holt Cottage, where a cruck frame is still visible, along with square-panelled timber framing with brick nogging, perhaps replacing earlier wattle and daub. It has a good example of well rounded thatch with a simple wrap over ridge. Opposite is a small recently built reclaimed stone studio, of good proportions, with a plain clay tiled roof and painted wood frame windows; the building is pleasing to the eye and complements both its built and natural surroundings. It was recently the subject of a Civic Society award "For the quality which had gone into the design and workmanship..."

Soon the lane becomes a bridlepath that enters beautiful countryside and leads eventually to Chilmark. This secret and spacious valley running between the Upper and Lower Holt woods, has outstanding southerly

views to the downs. When sun drenched in winter, it gives a great lift to walkers who live in the valley below.

Finally, returning to the road and turning left, the last village smithy was housed in a building to the right and before that in Forge Cottage. Three Hands Cottage and Brooklyn (both thatched) on the left are "Picturesque" in style, similar to The Lodge, with exaggerated deep eaves and arched diamond pane windows. They make a most unusual and decorative welcome to the village when entering on the B3089 from Dinton.

*Clockwise from Top left:
Bridges, Holt cottage, Brooklyn,
Montagu and Enderley cottages.*

