

Damerham Conservation Area



Damerham is situated on both sides of the Allen River in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The conservation area covers North and East End, Court Farm and Mill End enclosing the water meadows and fields as well as the playing fields and the Church. This gives protection to the important relationship between the groups of buildings and the landscape by providing a foreground setting to the settlement. The major groups of cottages and farmhouses are at East End and on High Street. Mill End and Court Farm are linked to the rest of the village by narrow hedged lanes and footpaths.

The listed buildings include both dwellings and agricultural buildings. Two of outstanding importance, the Church of St George (Grade I) and Court Farm House (Grade II*) dominate the valley from their sites high on the east bank of the river. Many other unlisted buildings built of a variety of locally available materials contribute to the quality of the village scene. Until 1895, Damerham was part of Wiltshire. The Manor was one of the most important estates in south Wiltshire belonging to Glastonbury Abbey for nearly six hundred years. Evidence of this is clearly visible at Court Farm where there are the remains of the stone tithe barn. After the dissolution of the monastery, ownership of the land was gradually split between various neighbouring estates including those of the Earls of Shaftesbury and Sir Eyre Coote from West Park. The manorial court continued to be held at The Compasses until 1920.

These are key features in the conservation area:

- The **Church of St George** is a Grade I listed building which means that it is of exceptional interest. It may have been founded in the Saxon period when King Edmund held estates here. The building underwent considerable alteration at various times up to the Reformation but escaped with only internal changes by the Victorians. Few early churches are dedicated to St George and the 12th century tympanum over the entrance is one of many interesting features.
- **Court Farm** is all that remains of one of the two manors that made up medieval Damerham. The barn was the major collecting point for all the tithes from the Glastonbury estates in south Wiltshire. The farmhouse appears to date from about 1700 but probably encloses a building of an earlier period. It is of particular interest in having three 15th century two-light trefoiled windows.
- The **southern end of the High Street** is characterised by cottages in small plots built very close to both sides of the road, creating a narrow enclosed lane. Some replacement and new dwellings have been set

back from the building line altering the frontage and creating wide gaps which affect the special character of this end of the street.

- **Mill End** comprises a small number of unlisted houses and cottages grouped along a winding lane. The mill is now a private house; a stone on the wall gives a date of 1676. Some cottages have been demolished but the lane remains attractive.
- The **magnificent avenue of limes along West Park Drive** was planted towards the end of the 19th century. The trees form a significant feature across the fields to the east of the village.

These are some of the things that make Damerham special - they need to be looked after:

- **History**
The pattern of narrow lanes and paths linking the groups of buildings around the water meadows
- **Buildings**
The mixture of traditional local materials
Small chalk cob cottages with thatched roofs such as Royal Cottage with its clearly visible lift lines
Timber framing, infilled with brick or clad with weatherboarding on agricultural buildings
Brick, sometimes concealing an earlier material underneath, and frequently banded with flints
Roofs of clay tile, slate or corrugated iron
Small distinctive rustic pole porches on many cottages
- **Landscape/Townscape**
The flower-rich water meadows, the pastures and the playing field form the major open space within the area
The alignment of dwellings close to the roadside, especially along the High Street
The few remaining chalk cob walls such as that at Willow Cottage
- **Setting**
The Church and Court Farm dominate the views across the green heart of the conservation area as well as providing good vantage points themselves.
- **Potential for enhancement**
Removal of overhead cables throughout the area. Reintroduction of more appropriate front boundaries to properties along the High Street.

