

Cople Neighbourhood Planning Launch Event

The launch event is a key step in helping us share with you the defining issues and aims of the Plan. It is also the opportunity to give residents of Cople an opportunity to contribute to the overall vision and to start to create a sense of community ownership of the Plan.

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT -

Please have your say

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

- Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Government in 2012 - its aim is to involve people in decisions about their own neighbourhood.
- A Neighbourhood Plan sets out how a community would like local land and buildings to be used – what kind of development there should be and where it should be located..
- But Neighbourhood Plans must fit within the wider planning framework – Cople's Neighbourhood Plan would need to reflect Bedford Borough's assessments of housing and infrastructure needs.
- Although the Parish Council and other volunteers would develop the Neighbourhood Plan it would have to reflect the views of the community. The Plan will be developed during 2015 and 2016 and will cover development up to 2032.

Why should we do it?

The whole of Cople Parish is in the process of being designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area.

Developing a Neighbourhood Plan would –

- Give the people of Cople a clear say in the village's future – about what kind of development there should be and where in the village it should be located.
- Give a clear sense of Cople's future.
- Give Cople more influence with Bedford Borough Council in discussing housing and other development issues.
- Enable us to better maintain the varied rural character of the village.
- Give the Parish Council a clear steer about views within the community on a range of important issues for the future – not just housing and land development.
- Enable the village to retain 25% (rather than 15%) of any funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy, a levy that local authorities can charge developers to provide funding for infrastructure needed as a result of development, such as safer road schemes, green spaces, leisure facilities etc.

Planning for our future

Housing

- Cople currently has over 350 houses of varying ages, styles and sizes.

- Predicted housing growth in South East England makes additional housing development in North Bedfordshire inevitable.

- Cople cannot be insulated from such change – 'no development here' is not a realistic option. But we can influence the type and location of new development so that we –
 - maintain the character of the village
 - try to meet the needs of local people; and
 - minimise the adverse impact of development on local roads and facilities

- What kind of housing do you think would be most relevant to Cople's future?
 - Starter homes – to give local young people a chance to stay in the village?

 - Smaller homes for downsizers?

 - Sheltered accommodation – enabling older people to continue to live independently but with support where necessary?

 - More family homes?

 - A balanced mix of the housing types above?

 - Other types of housing?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Environment

Cople encompasses a number of different land types and uses which contribute to its rural character. These include –

- The Millennium Wood
- Dog Field
- Cople Pits
- Agricultural land
- Land used for equestrian purposes, as at Wood Farm, Middle Farm and Water End
- Village Playing Field
- Are there any other green spaces that should be protected?

The village has a number of public footpaths and bridleways that provide access to these areas as well as the surrounding countryside.

Further housing development will inevitably impact on some of these areas but it will be important to know as the Neighbourhood Plan develops which areas we value most.

Do you use these areas for leisure and, if so, how?

Are there any important views or landmarks (ie; old trees/hedges etc) that mean a lot to you?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Planning for our future

Getting about

If Cople takes a share of North Bedfordshire's housing growth there will be some increases in local traffic.

Like all rural villages we already hear complaints about parking, speeding, traffic densities and bus services.

Bus services connect the village with Bedford, Biggleswade and Sandy.

Tell us about your views on the village's roads? For example –

- Do people park inconsiderately in your part of the village?
- Do you think many motorists speed in specific parts of the village?
- Do you have views or ideas on practical and enforceable ways that these issues could be addressed?
- Are Bus services sufficient, particularly if there are to be new housing developments? Are they frequent enough? Should there be regular services to other destinations? If so, where?
- Are there other roads or traffic issues that need to be taken into account in the Neighbourhood Plan?

Should there be other provisions within the village for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Planning for the future

Schools

Cople has one school, Cople Lower School.

What might we need to provide additionally in the future?

> Schools – New Middle School? New Lower School?

- Current classrooms & facilities – the school has already had a new hall and replaced a temporary classroom, what else needs to be done?
- Getting to school & parking - the school is set on Willington Road with very limited parking and the area around this can get congested at the start and end of the school day. Are the current arrangements satisfactory? If not, what could be done to help the situation?

>Pre-school & nurseries

- there are currently no facilities in the village for pre-school or nursery care - should there be?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Planning for the future

Village facilities

Cople is a relatively small village, the only facilities we currently have are the pub, village hall, Sports and Social Club and the church.

- Do you consider the village has the right balance of facilities for a village of this size? Are they about right, too many or too few?
- What facilities may be required in the future leading up to 2032
- Are there any facilities missing or could be improved?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Planning for the future

Heritage sites

From the historic All Saints Church to the various thatched and period cottages in the village, along with various areas where Roman sites are believed to exist, Cople has a wealth of historic sites. Various footpaths wend their way through the area and many pass these historic places.

We have to consider the conservation and sustainability of these assets, as they help to form the character of the village.

In considering the future of the changing face of the village, we need to preserve our heritage.

- What should be done to enhance, and retain these sites?
- What more can be done to make these landmark attractions?
- What can be done to secure their continued future?

Planning for the future

Young People

Existing facilities and clubs in the village include the cricket team, football team and church choir. There is a play area on the playing field, with basket ball net and goal posts. These facilities are very limited at present.

What facilities is the village lacking for its younger residents?

- What else could be added for their involvement and enjoyment?

Please use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

Planning for the future

Employment

Cople is a small village and does not have a wealth of employment opportunities.

Existing employment is in the retail, hospitality, education, motor industry and agricultural sectors. There are also a number of small businesses sited within the village.

To ensure the sustainability of the village, it may be important to consider other employment, or encouraging growth within the employment already here. It may need us to consider provision of facilities for small businesses. This growth in opportunity may be a natural progression in the long term development of the village.

- What other employment do we need, if any?
- Should consideration be given to providing small business units for start up companies?
- What kind of business should we attract to the village to aid employment?

Use the 'Post it' notes to tell us your thoughts

All of your comments and suggestions are immensely welcome at today's launch event and throughout the process.

If you think we have missed anything, or if there is an issue or objective of particular relevance to you and our community, do please let us know.

YOU CAN ALSO DO THIS AFTER THE LAUNCH EVENT - PLEASE CONTACT

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