You are invited to help create the

Cople Parish Green Infrastructure Plan

at a Stakeholder Workshop

Wednesday 20th July 7.30-9.30pm

at

Cople Village Hall

Green Infrastructure (GI) Plans identify proposed enhancements for an area's public access, wildlife, heritage and landscape. Strategic, large scale GI Plans exist for Bedfordshire as a whole but little at a parish level and none for the Bedford Borough area. These large plans, although of great value for large scale projects, lack local input and local detail. Cople will be the first Bedford Borough parish to produce its own, parish-scale, GI Plan – and we believe the time is now right to produce a Cople Parish Green Infrastructure Plan.

Working with the Cople Neighbourhood Plan Group and Cople Parish Council, BRCC is assisting in the production of a GI Plan for Cople which will give the whole community a 'grass roots' say in the future of the local environment. The GI Plan for Cople will have close links with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan which is being developed at the moment .

The above workshop will be followed by a drop in session (**Saturday 10th September, 10.00 am– 12.00pm**) and a 2nd Stakeholder Workshop (**Wednesday 28th September, 7.30 – 9.30pm**) at which residents will have further opportunities to input into the Plan. However, we are particularly keen that all interested residents are able to attend this first workshop to help shape the Plan, representing your interest in the future of Cople Parish and its environment.

Cople Neighbourhood Plan Group

Cople Parish Council

Further information
on **Green Infrastructure** is attached.

What is Green Infrastructure?

Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and managed network of accessible greenspaces and access routes, landscapes, biodiversity and heritage which will meet the needs of existing and new communities in Central Bedfordshire by providing:

- *an essential environmental foundation and support system;*
- *a healthy and rich environment;*
- *attractive places to live and visit and a good quality of life;*
- *a sustainable future*

The green infrastructure network will be protected, conserved, enhanced and developed, and widely known and valued. It will be of high quality and an example of best practice and innovation. The network will be multi-functional and meet a wide range of social, environmental and economic needs. It will connect urban and rural settlements and the countryside, and provide a spatial planning framework to guide sustainable development.

Green Infrastructure Assets

GI consists of public and private assets, with and without public access, in urban and rural locations, including

- *Allotments*
- *Amenity space, including communal greenspaces within housing areas*
- *Green corridors, including hedgerows, ditches, disused railways, verges*
- *Brownfield and greenfield sites*
- *Urban parks and gardens*
- *Registered commons and village and town greens*
- *Children's play space*
- *Natural and semi-natural habitat for wildlife*
- *Playing fields*
- *Sports pitches and facilities*
- *Cemeteries*
- *Pocket parks*
- *Country parks*
- *Woodland*
- *Historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes*
- *Nature reserves*
- *Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments*
- *Locally designated heritage sites, including county wildlife sites*
- *Waterways and waterbodies, including flooded quarries*
- *Development sites with potential for open space and links*
- *Land in agri-environmental management*
- *Public rights of way, cycleways and other recreational routes*

Green Infrastructure should

- Contribute to the management, conservation and improvement of the local landscape
- Contribute to the protection, conservation and management of historic landscape, archaeological and built heritage assets
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity to ensure that development and implementation results in a net gain of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats
- Be delivered through the enhancement of existing woodlands and also by the creation of new woodlands and forest areas
- Create new recreational facilities, particularly those that present opportunities to link urban and countryside areas
- Take account of and integrate with natural processes and systems
- Be managed and funded in urban areas to accommodate nature, wildlife and historic and cultural assets, and provide for sport and recreation
- Be designed to high standards of quality and sustainability to deliver social and economic, as well as environmental benefits
- Provide focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning

Benefits of Green Infrastructure

- Well-designed and integrated GI can deliver a range of benefits, often in combination:
- Improve health and mental well-being
- Promote a sense of community
- Help reduce crime, fear of crime and antisocial behaviour
- Provide opportunity for exercise, sport, active recreation, spiritual well-being and quiet contemplation
- Improve health as a result of increased physical activity, such as walking
- Provide community resources for learning and training
- Provide opportunities for community involvement
- Provide a leisure focus and attraction for people of all ages from the existing and the growth communities
- Help establish local identity or sense of place
- Improve environmental quality, e.g. better air and water quality, local climate control and noise attenuation
- Contribute to sustainable drainage and flood mitigation
- Provide the opportunity to protect, recreate and rehabilitate landscapes and habitats damaged or lost by previous development or agricultural change
- Help maintain and enhance biodiversity
- Contribute to the protection, management and enhancement of historic and natural sites and areas
- Improve and sustain land values
- Reduce land management costs
- Provide an enhanced environmental backdrop that will assist in attracting business and inward investment

Please do come along and give your input to help create a high quality Green Infrastructure Plan for Cople Parish.