

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan

Visioning Workshop – 25th February 2017

Introduction

Following two meetings of the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Neighbourhood Plan Group, this event aimed to start in earnest the work programme to develop the Neighbourhood Plan. Extensive publicity had been carried out in both communities with large notices at the entrance to both villages as well as on noticeboards and social media. The result was a large turnout by residents (sixty-two) for a workshop style event, many of whom had not taken part in earlier events, such as the last the Community Planning Event held in June 2016. Having spoken to some of the participants it was clear that some had come along believing the meeting was specifically aimed at addressing the issues raised by the Medway Local Plan event held the previous Saturday. However, they all stayed, listened and then took part in a two hour workshop, helping to create a series of Visions for the future of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods.

Presentation on steps to develop a neighbourhood plan

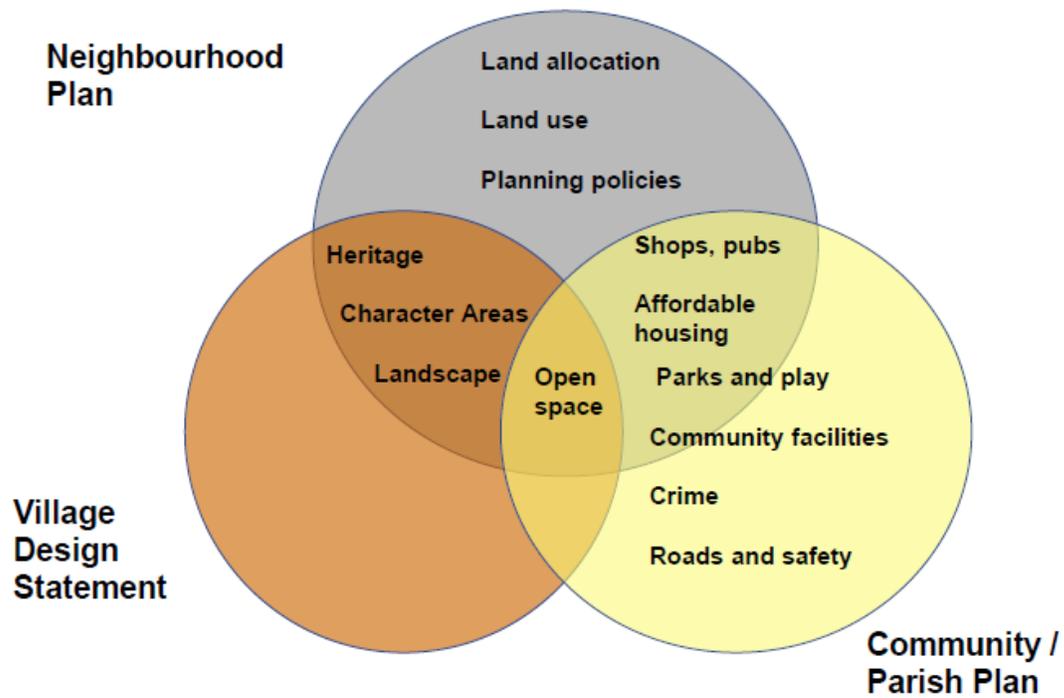
Following a welcome and introduction from the Chair of the Parish Council Sue McDermid there followed a short presentation re-capping on ‘What is a Neighbourhood Plan’ from Jim Boot, the Community Planner who is advising the parish council and neighbourhood plan steering group. The key points are repeated below (also see Appendix A):

A **Neighbourhood Plan** is a new way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work. It can be used to:

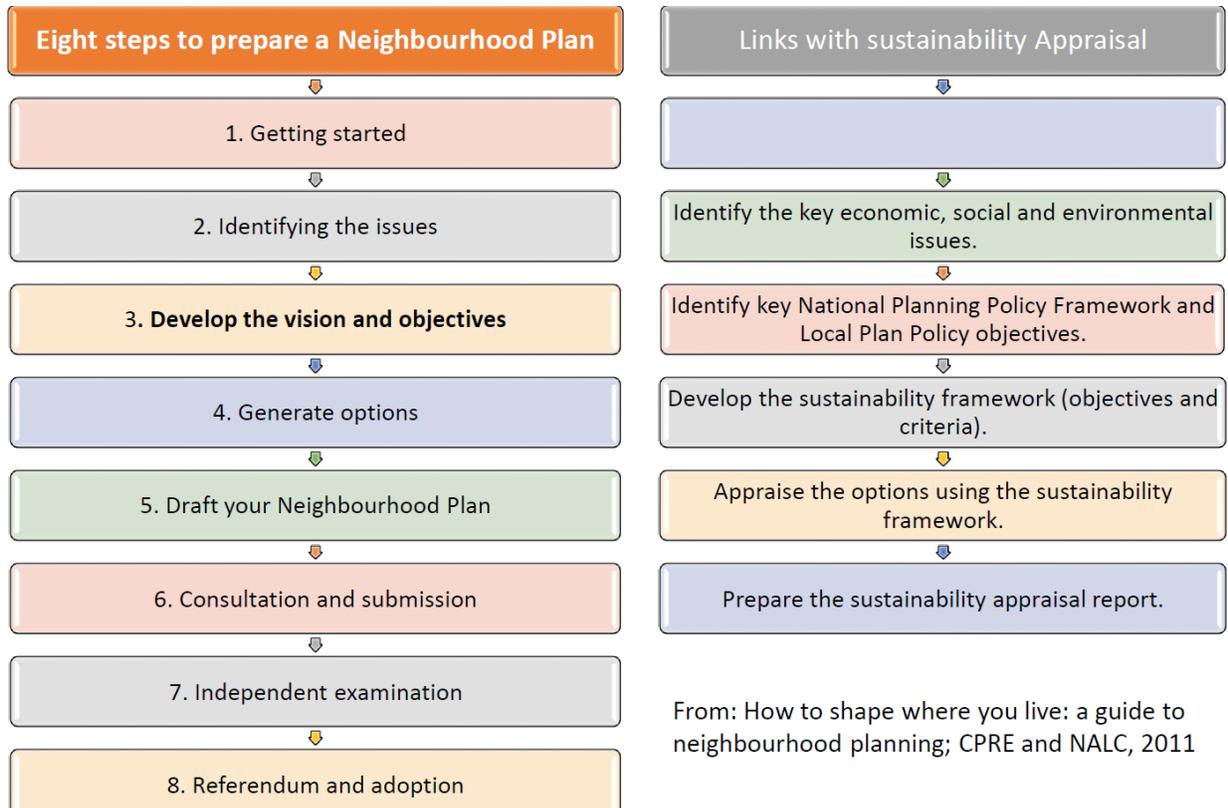
- Develop a shared vision for your neighbourhood
- Choose where new development should be built
- Identify and protect important local green spaces
- Influence what new buildings should look like.

Different issues need different planning responses. There might be other plans that meet your needs.

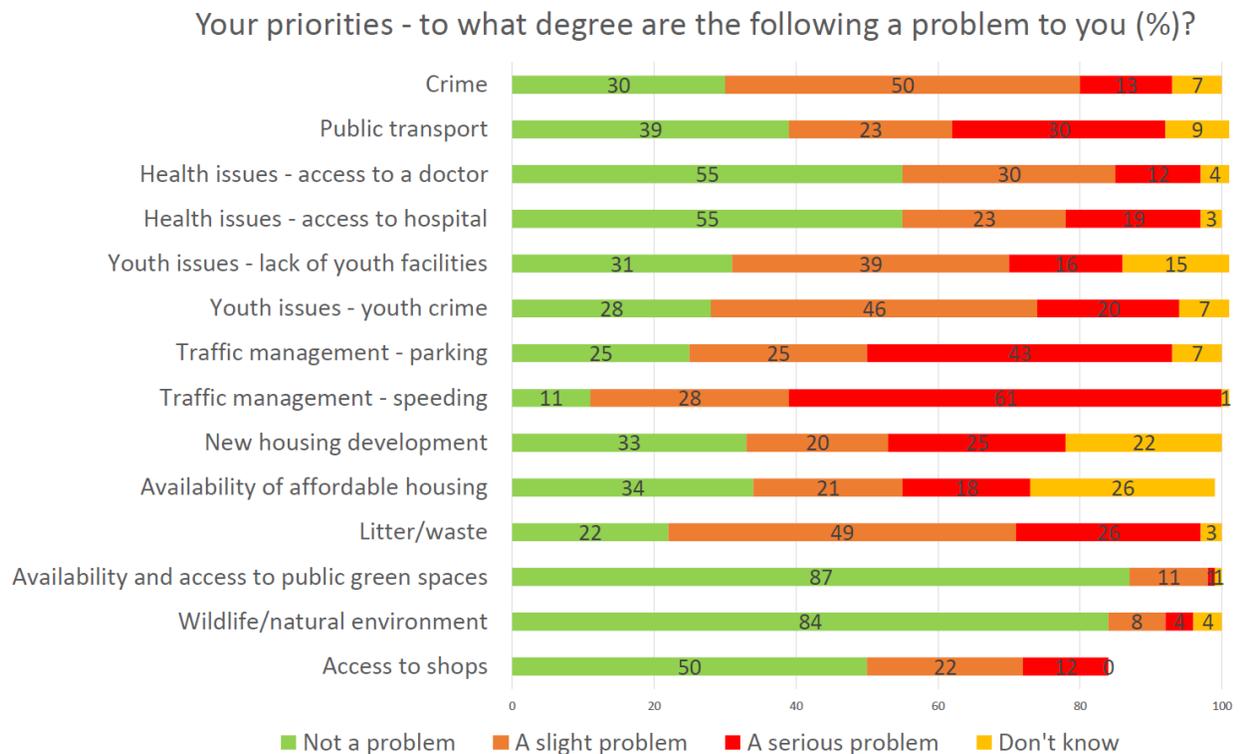
Jim then described how Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) followed on the heels of two well established community development tools Parish Plans and Village Design Statements (see below). While the focus of NPs was predominantly on land-use planning, they could and are being used to identify important projects for improving the day to day lives of residents. Also, the recent Government Housing White Paper was encouraging NPs to include strong design and character guidelines for future developments similar to [Village Design Guides](#).



Jim then set out the key steps required to develop a Neighbourhood Plan explaining that the whole process could take between 18 and 24 months.



Neighbourhood plans are built on evidence – both qualitative and quantitative. In 2015 the parish council undertook a survey of residents’ views on a range of issues from crime to shopping. The Clerk Chris Fribbins who co-ordinated the survey summarised the main points summarised in the chart below:



This shows that traffic management – speeding was the most important issue for residents, followed by parking and public transport. Litter/waste and new housing development were also problems. While NPs are primarily aimed at influencing the appearance and location of new development, these are important factors to consider when new development proposals are brought forward in the parish. The views of residents have to be balanced with statistical evidence and so key statistical data from the Census 2011 was also presented (see Appendix A). This showed that of a population of 5370, 30% are aged 24 years or under with 55% aged 25-64. This is similar to Medway (33% and 52% respectively) but a relatively young and active population to similar sized rural communities in Kent. In terms of household types the parish has a higher proportion of detached and semi-detached houses or bungalows (72%) compared to Medway as a whole (44%) and lower percentages of terraced housing (22%) than Medway (41%) and flats and maisonettes (6%) than Medway (15%). There are nearly half the rented properties in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods (18%) compared to Medway (30%). Car ownership not surprisingly for a rural community is much higher. Balanced against this is the amount of important landscape areas in the parish with the Cliffe Marshes RSPB Reserve and Great Chattenden Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) having the very highest landscape designations.

The presentation finished by recapping on residents issues raised at last summer’s workshop using two images in particular to get residents thinking about the future. These were a summary of residents’ dreams or visions:

As well as the views of adults, Dianne Forman, Chair of Governors at Cliffe Woods School has been working with local children including the primary school’s council and guides to find out their views using the same post-it note exercise as the adults but also encouraging them to send ‘post-cards to their future selves’. It is intended to extend this exercise to secondary school age students. These can be fed into a follow up series of themed workshops.

Workshop

Following the presentations, Jim gave an explanation of the next part of the morning session. This was to be a participative workshop where, seated around tables, the residents would have the opportunity to explore their visions for Cliffe and Cliffe Woods by answering the question:

‘What are the key words or phrases that you might use to describe your ideal/dream Cliffe and Cliffe Woods of 2035 (in 17 years’ time)’.

2035 is the same time period as the Medway Local Plan currently being developed by Medway Council. In six tables, residents supported by the NP steering group members brainstormed words and phrases initially onto flip sheets (see Appendix B). They were then asked to choose the most important words/phrases, put them onto card and attempt to sort in order (with filler words to help it read more easily) to create a sentence or paragraph. The following six Visions were created. Each vision was stuck to a pillar around the edge of the room (fortuitously there were six) and representative from each table then presented the results back to the audience. Following this, everyone in the room was given two sticky dots to choose their first and second choice visions (the results are in the right hand column).

Table	VISION	Score	
	<i>In 2035 Cliffe and Cliffe Woods will be ...</i>	1 st	2 nd
1.	Enhanced and preserved historic character to promote green and historic tourism with visitor centre, being a green lung with safer access and facilities for home working and artisan workshops.	11	11
2.	Maintain rural environment with wildlife corridors and agriculture using only sustainable development and brownfield sites with bungalows/chalet bungalows linked by traffic calming and roads and continuous footpath/cycle way.	18	13
3.	Sensible and sustainable housing development in Cliffe Woods, no extra large scale housing in Cliffe, adequate infrastructure, protect agricultural land, keep village feel. [Also] separation of the requirements of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. Keep rural views.	4	3
4.	Environmental protection, remain rural, education, medical, chemist services, sustainable development with renewable energy sources (solar panels), better transport – give us a train station and a decent service – leisure activities (cycling, golf, bowls, swimming pool, gym) [and] community spirit.	14	10
5.	Retain rural environment, protect agricultural land, improved roads, improve transport, medical centre, develop brownfield sites, use empty properties, retirement housing, another primary school, multi-use leisure centre, improved supermarket facilities, more police presence.	11	11
6.	In 2035 Cliffe and Cliffe Woods will have facilities for older people, if younger generation involvement will have over development unless environment[al] protection leading to village feel/outlook, more shops/on-line, better transport?	8	12

Table 2 was the clear front-runner and will be proposed (once some tweaking has been done) as the preferred vision for the NP moving forward. You will be able to find all the 'working-out' of the six groups in Appendix C. Due to the large numbers attending it wasn't possible to undertake the objective setting part of the morning session. Instead this will be picked up as the introductory exercise for each of the following workshop starting with Housing on 25th March. Follow up workshops:

1. Housing
2. Amenities and leisure
3. Environment and heritage
4. Traffic, transport and parking

Thanks to to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group who organised the event and the residents of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods who took part:

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Graham Powell | 22. Ray Robson (?) | 43. A Holland |
| 2. Philip Gower | 23. Jill Wright | 44. Stephen Holroyd |
| 3. Roger Tring | 24. Andy Hobbs | 45. Joan Darwell |
| 4. Keith Martin | 25. Stephen Thornton | 46. AP Baldwin |
| 5. Gillian Winter | 26. S Cloverly | 47. Dave Baker |
| 6. Mike Winter | 27. H Cooray | 48. Jan Baker |
| 7. Pauline Mortimer | 28. Wendy Mills | 49. Roy Smyth |
| 8. Steve Mortimer | 29. Sheila Evans | 50. Carole Smyth |
| 9. Tim Smith | 30. Colin Moore | 51. Sharron Hartnup |
| 10. Helen Smith | 31. Ian Starling | 52. Alan McCulley |
| 11. Jan Richardson | 32. S Ford | 53. Ellen McCulley |
| 12. Peter Moore | 33. Karen Ebbs | 54. Ray Styles |
| 13. Sylvia Wolfson | 34. Sue Powell | 55. Jan Styles |
| 14. David Wolfson | 35. Tom Bristol | 56. Frank Withers |
| 15. Steven Plummer | 36. June Bristol | 57. Jo Brown |
| 16. Melissa Kingham | 37. Sue McDermid | 58. Roger Brown |
| 17. Beccy Baker | 38. Chris Fribbins | 59. Chris Horsfield |
| 18. Mick Baker | 39. Sue Hibbert | 60. Ann Milton |
| 19. Kate Earley | 40. Diane Foreman | 61. D Milton |
| 20. Nicky Davies | 41. Dave Green | 62. L Davies |
| 21. Paul Carter | 42. Andy Martin | |

Jim Boot, Community Planner, 13th March 2017.