

CUSOP PARISH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REPORT OF THE DROP-IN EVENT 6th / 7th JULY 2013

INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the views of visitors to the Drop-In Event held at Cusop Village Hall over the weekend of 6th / 7th July 2013.

Early notice of the Event was given in parish council newsletters delivered to every house in the parish, in flyers posted on the parish noticeboards and on the cusop.net website. Detailed notice closer to the Event was given by the same means and by posters in prominent places visible to most passing pedestrians or drivers. The Event was open from 10am to 8pm on both Saturday 6th July and Sunday 7th July.

Visitors were asked to enter their names and addresses on a sheet. There were 55 visitors resident in the parish (and another 7 from outside the parish). This is about 20% of the total number of registered electors in the parish. They came from 34 different households which were distributed as follows:

	houses represented		Total houses in location	
location	number	percent	number	percent
Nantyglasdwr/Newport St	3	9%	32	18%
Hardwicke Rd	5	15%	31	17%
Lower Dingle	14	41%	47	26%
30 Acres/Church Lane	5	15%	27	15%
Upper Dingle	7	21%	28	16%
outlying houses	0	0%	13	7%

From this it can be seen that the Newport St area and the outlying houses were significantly under-represented and the Lower Dingle over-represented.

Age was not recorded, but it was apparent to the Project Group members who were present throughout the Event that attendance was by middle-aged and retired people, so the young adults in the parish were under-represented.

Fourteen boards were mounted on frames with space beneath for visitors to write comments. Each board was given a subject title and some introductory text which are reproduced over the following pages. Visitors could either write comments directly on the boards or endorse or oppose comments already made by means of stickers, green or red respectively. The following pages give a summary of those comments and stickers. The summary records the comments almost verbatim, but with some editing in order to consolidate similar comments. The comments are shown according to the boards on which they were made, except that where similar comments were made on different boards, they are consolidated under the board that most closely relates to the subject matter.

The total number of comments and stickers on each subject are recorded. Comments are grouped broadly in descending order according to the number of comments/stickers in support of an idea. This should make it easy to see it at glance those ideas that generate significant support (although there may be opposition too) and those, lower down, that only a few people support and/or most oppose. In some cases, closely related issues are listed together rather than in strict arithmetical order. Nevertheless, nearly all comments have been recorded in some way or another, however few people commented.

Cusop Planning Project Group
September 2013

1. MORE NEW HOMES?

25 new houses have already been approved, to be built opposite the Co-op. This more than meets Herefordshire's target for house-building in Cusop for the period of our Plan. So should we decide that is enough, and no more? Or should Cusop be a growth area, with more house-building?

25 houses sufficient for now / definitely not more (30 agree, 0 disagrees).

25 houses in that location just right (14 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: if we want a heart, build it in a core area around village hall, Lower Mead and B4348 (4 agree, 1 disagrees).

No blanket number; take it as it comes and let people of Cusop decide at the time (2 agree, 0 disagrees).

50 to 100 houses to make Cusop less a suburb of Hay (1 agrees, 11 disagree). Other comments: Cusop is a suburb of Hay whether we like it or not; more houses will only make it a bigger suburb (1 agrees) - what right do "locals" have to keep the place for themselves? (1 disagrees).

2. WHO SHOULD NEW HOMES BE FOR?

Whether we build a few or a lot, who should they be for? Houses for sale to anyone, or affordable houses for local people, or a mixture of both? Should they be detached, semi-detached, terraces or flats? What about special needs such as the elderly, or starter homes for the young?

A mix, given ageing population, and more jobs and affordable housing so that young people not forced out of area (16 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: is it true, up-to-date survey needed (1 agrees).

Homes should not be 'holiday homes' - local people need them (15 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: talk of incomers vs locals a shame, we are all Cusopian, less life if only "locals" lived here (11 agree, 0 disagrees) - yes, discourage second/holiday homes, but if we live here full-time we are locals (6 agree, 0 disagrees) - other comments call for more small business, but holiday homes are small business.

Starter homes for young families and homes for local elderly people, not retired couples from away (8 agree, 6 disagree). Other comments: a bit unfriendly, what's wrong with new blood, needs to be all ages (4 agree, 0 disagrees) - incomers spend a lot of money locally and employ people (1 agrees) - should be able to sell property for best price, not forced to accept lower price from local (2 agree).

Affordable houses for local people, not big houses for incomers (7 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: majority should be "affordable" housing so that locals can afford to stay in the area (4 agree, 0 disagrees) - no point if there are not jobs to go with them - then link in with business development and with Hay - plenty of locals can afford big houses.

Starter homes and small intimate energy generation on site (6 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: small intimate? cramped with small garden - wind, solar: no, ugly.

Houses to be designed to suit the elderly (6 agree, 0 disagrees).

3. WHAT SORT OF HOMES AND WHERE?

25 homes opposite the Co-op have already been approved: is that a good location, or should we try to get it changed? What other sites might be suitable as well / instead? Should new homes be built in one place, or spread around in ones or twos? (although detached houses in ones or twos are less likely to be affordable)

Co-op site for business, not housing (13 agree, 17 disagree). Other comments: commercial development should be close to existing commercial sites (5 agree, 1 disagrees) - Co-op homes should be self-build (1 agrees).

Opposite Co-op fine, possibly on Linda's field as facilities are nearby (4 agree, 5 disagree). Other comments: on Linda's field (3 agree, 5 disagree) - very poor vehicle access (1 disagrees) - only one dwelling as per deeds.

Village envelope should be scrapped or at least greatly extended (11 agree, 5 disagree). Other comments: should be kept to prevent urban sprawl.

Build on field next to village hall, much access to buses (7 agree, 7 disagree). Other comments: link new housing to public transport - why not other way round?

Develop a few mid to large houses in or near village envelope, rather than gardens infill (5 agree, 0 disagrees).

Build in Dingle Road / Cusop Dingle (3 agree, 3 disagree). Other comments: along edge of Road, not away from it - room for a few extra up the Dingle.

Affordable houses in one place: detached houses in ones and twos too expensive, all right for landowner, not for anyone else (3 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: in one place or ones or twos open for debate (8 agree, 0 disagrees) - affordable homes need to link with local jobs.

More terraced housing which is environmentally friendly, good use of land, and creates community spirit (4 agree, 0 disagrees).

More self-build instead of developers' expensive small houses and gardens (3 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: more spaced out instead of cramped (2 comments).

4. WHAT SHOULD NEW HOMES LOOK LIKE?

Traditional buildings in the local stone? Or modern styles and materials like steel and glass? Or maybe prefabricated low-energy homes?

Will have to be energy-efficient / meet code 5 standard (19 agree, 0 disagrees).

Traditional from outside but with eco aspects (5 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: perfectly possible and should be mandatory (5 agree, 2 disagree).

Keep them traditional in local stone (4 agree, 4 disagree). Other comments: stone looks nice but too expensive especially for affordable homes (2 agree, 0 disagree) - should be scope for really interesting architecture not rural pastiche - no prefabricated buildings - very loose term.

Develop a new vernacular with sustainable materials to rescue planet for our grandchildren (4 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: plan to make Cusop wholly sustainable energy-wise by 2030 (1 agrees).

[Photo of traditional stone terrace - without comments] 4 agree, 0 disagrees.

[Photo of modern red-brick house] Wholly out of keeping; modern yes if inspiring but not this harsh compromise (3 agree, 3 disagree).

5. COUNTRYSIDE AND VIEWS

Should we protect all the existing green land in our parish, or could we let some of it be built on? Does it matter if it is good agricultural land? Are there areas or views that we specially want to protect?

Try to protect existing green land but proposals need to be considered as they arise (21 agree, 0 disagrees).

We must protect our beautiful landscape, no new development should impact on it (10 agree, 4 disagree). Other comments: doesn't mean anything particular, can't avoid prejudicing someone/thing (1 agrees) - impossible - a house dotted here and there with green space in between is fine (1 agrees).

Must keep stunning view of Hay from across green, do not want urban sprawl, main resource for strolls etc (7 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: and we'll never create new jobs (1 disagrees).

[Photo of Mouse Castle wood - without comments] 7 agree, 0 disagrees. Other comments: link Mouse Castle woods to top Dingle woods to improve scale of habitat (4 agrees, 0 disagrees) - protect view of Cusop Hill from Hay - value view of Cusop Hill from Victoria Terrace (1 agrees).

No development on good grade agricultural land (5 agree, 2 disagree). Other comments: not realistic as all land is grade 2.

Consider case for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from Cusop to Ross (4 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: yes, pay more council tax and get nothing done (5 agree, 0 disagrees).

6. NATURE

Do we do enough to protect wild animals and plants in Cusop? Or too much? Are there sites you would like to see better protected or improved? What about the Dulas Brook? Or our roadside verges?

Dulas Brook very important habitat and should be left alone (21 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: dead trees and overgrown undergrowth should be removed (0 agrees, 4 disagree) - no, healthy woodland third new, third old, third dead - landscape and amenity value need to be judiciously managed: deadwood for invertebrates but more light where of benefit (1 agrees) - yes, keep Dulas natural but it needs to be managed to get best result for wildlife (3 agree) - what is natural? - keep it wild not suburban (1 agrees) - Brook needs more sunlight, once cut for firewood now overgrown which affects ecosystem.

Dulas Brook is frequently polluted, needs to be reported and people prosecuted (7 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: nonsense stemming from ignorance (1 agrees) - natural froth can be mistaken for pollution, facts not guesswork please (1 agrees).

Don't mow roadside verges too often (1 agrees, 1 disagrees). Other comments: yes on straight parts - sometimes trees need to be coppiced or cut back (1 agrees) - dangerous if view of traffic blocked.

7. LOCAL HISTORY

We already have several protected historic buildings: are you happy with the state of them and their surroundings? Are there other buildings or streets you would like to see protected as well? What about a parish history group?

We have enough old things, so let's cherish but move into 21st century (4 agree, 1 disagrees).

Make Castle site more accessible / more use of its heritage (4 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: church, castle and mill make historic group, look after them (2 agree, 1 disagrees) - churchyard yew trees should be considered a unique asset (3 agree, 0 disagrees) - church greatly loved and well cared for (1 agrees)

Would like to read more about people of interest who were born, lived or were buried in Cusop (3 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: Cusop history group fell apart due to lack of support - start another: lack of support not inevitable (2 agree) - put your name forward and organise it - people lack time for meetings, try a Facebook group - Hay has just started a history group.

Mouse Castle motte and bailey should be cleared and signposted by Woodland Trust (1 agrees, 0 disagrees).

8. ENVIRONMENT

Is our environment all right as it is, or are there problems: litter? light? noise? What about the footpaths network? How about renewable energy, eg a wind farm? or hydroelectric? or biomass?

A wind farm (on Cusop Hill) (14 agree, 31 disagree).

Solar farm (7 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comment: test efficiency (ditto wind farm).

More hydro / community hydro on Dulas Brook (7 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: and community solar/wind/etc - why not PV energy farm to avoid the clutter, organised by village for village (2 agree, 0 disagrees).

Cusop working together to become self-sufficient in energy from all sources by 2025 (6 agree, 0 disagree). Other comments: a wind farm run by a community interest company earning money as communal asset (6 agree, 14 disagree) - what about individual smaller turbines on houses (2 agree) - this sort of thing has worked for Talgarth.

Night sky beautiful - don't destroy it with badly-aimed lights (7 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: this includes lights outside houses.

Replace sodium lights with low-energy low-spillage white lights (3 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: sodium street lights dreadful and dark bits in-between dangerous - bin the lights altogether (2 agree, 1 disagrees) - some lighting for pedestrian safety (6 agree, 0 disagrees) - very dark without lights (4 agree, 2 disagree) - street light outside Dulas, very dark there (3 agree, 0 disagrees) - turn them off 2300-0500? - fought for years as parish councillor to keep our lovely lights, now people say 'light pollution', sodium lights are horrid - some of us walk up Dingle after dark and have to use torch.

Our environment just right the way it is, no more changes please (3 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: quiet enjoyment is historical asset so close to bustling Hay - no jobs or development, we can't be nimbies forever (1 agrees) - why not.

Need litter bin by bus stop (3 agree, 0 disagrees).

More dog-friendly gates on footpaths (2 agree, 0 disagrees).

Offer to host exploratory drilling for shale-gas (0 agrees, 9 disagree). Other comments: yes we don't have enough water pollution or ground tremors - don't recycle ill-informed gossip.

Dingle unkempt and uncared for, blocked drains, fallen trees etc - some of us cut verges and keep things tidy outside our houses (1 agrees) - please could roadman keep gullies etc unblocked - yes if tractors cutting hedges kept out of them.

9. ROADS & TRANSPORT

Are the roads and pavements good enough? Are there traffic problems? Is the public transport good enough? Do we even need it?

Dingle road in appalling condition, start filling the potholes (14 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: but poor surfaces slow down speeding cars (4 agree, 5 disagree).

Stop vehicles parking on Dingle pavement (7 agree, 2 disagree). Other comments: parking on pavement dangerous and illegal (3 agree, 0 disagrees) - not everyone has off-road parking, visitors and tradesmen have to be made welcome - right-hand Dingle pavement dangerous for visitors who cannot see drop in the dark (2 agree, 0 disagrees).

Traffic calming on Hardwick Road (6 agree, 2 disagree). Other comments: 'gateway' to identify village and reduce speeds (4 agree, 0 disagrees) - zebra crossing by Toll Cottage (2 agree, 0 disagrees) - extend 30mph (1 agrees, 1 disagrees) - Hardwick Rd resurfaced but has left large puddles that are menace to pedestrians and properties (5 agree, 0 disagrees)..

Hereford Council short of money, we in Cusop have no hope (5 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: petition the Council and claim for vehicle damage.

Put back traffic mirror near old parish room (5 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: mirrors are illegal (1 disagrees).

Village map at start of road showing all the house names (3 agree, 4 disagree). Other comments: houses should display their name or number (3 agree, 0 disagrees).

Cycle lanes to protect cyclists (2 agree, 0 disagrees).

Road sign with name 'Dingle Road' at start of Dingle (1 agrees, 5 disagree).

Estate agent signs should not be allowed - can rely on websites now (1 agrees, 9 disagree). Other comments: signs of limited size so hardly a problem - can't see websites in car.

More frequent bus services (1 agrees, 0 disagrees). Other comment: would help those looking for work outside Hay - [by photo of Lower Mead bus shelter] brilliant - more like this - yes but who pays (2 agree).

10. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Hay provides most of our facilities, but we have some of our own (eg the playing field and village hall). Should we keep them, or even expand them? Do we need any other new facilities of our own? more public green spaces? allotments?

Don't need any more (9 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: about right for population as it is (1 agrees).

New bigger playing field next to village hall (6 agree, 5 disagree). Other comments: few/no kids near village hall + how to explain to Heritage Lottery Fund - current playing field too small to play football (1 agrees, 1 disagrees) - big kids can walk to Hay pitches (2 agree, 0 disagrees) - a new village green below village hall?

Cusop Churchyard wonderful space for everyone to enjoy (6 agree, 2 disagree).

Conservatory on the end of the village hall (5 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: plus a gardening club (1 agrees) - larger room on village hall: good hiring opportunities now community centre closed (2 agree, 1 disagrees) - who will work to raise money for these?

Community cafe + meeting/social place / somewhere to drop in and chat at village hall (3 agree, 1 disagrees). Other comments: who will organise / run it?

[by photo of walks noticeboard] - info well out-of-date and needs to be changed (3 agree, 0 disagrees) - unable to open because of broken lock which will be repaired.

11. PUBLIC SERVICES & UTILITIES

Are you happy with the police? health service? schools? rubbish collection? the utilities (water, electricity and gas, post and phones)?

Rubbish collection and recycling great (21 agree, 0 disagree). Other comments: much better than Powys system with lots of boxes (5 agree, 0 disagree).

Co-op recycling facility excellent (8 agree, 0 disagrees).

Police response time lousy (3 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: get police commissioner to Cusop to talk about the issues.

12. THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Most local jobs and business are in Hay. Should Cusop tie in with Hay's needs? Or should we encourage distinct rural businesses of our own, eg tourism, food and agriculture, environmental work? Or should we just let the market decide?

How about a nursing home (5 agree, 2 disagree). Other comments: Hay already has Cartref, careful assessment needed before considering another one (2 agree, 0 disagrees) - competition - retirees may bring employment too!

Jobs for the young imply some kind of development, in Coop region? small tech firms? (4 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: think, where are jobs for the young? concentrate on retired persons who want smaller homes and on Newport St area - jobs in Brecon and Hereford, commuting by bus OK - no need necessarily to concentrate on the elderly.

Diversification could prevent imbalance, like too much "tourism" (4 agree, 0 Disagrees).

Work with Hay (2 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: how? different country now, their choice.

Village shop (0 agrees, 9 disagree). Other comments: Yes, the Co-op!

13. LAND FOR BUSINESS

There is already land set aside for business along Newport St: is this enough or do we need more? If more, what sort - for large businesses or small? for workshops or offices? or storage? or shops? on Newport St or somewhere else in Cusop? Or should we encourage more home-working and home/workshops?

Make more land available for (medium) business (6 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: to encourage job opportunities for the young / make use of local labour -should not be too restrictive on small businesses in Cusop: it used to be a busy industrial place.

More small units and offices to attract companies and jobs into the area (5 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: with affordable rents for start-up businesses - in the Co-op area - small businesses could provide jobs for the young - and poach from Hay too - small business possibly home-working means more traffic (3 agree, 1 disagrees).

Development corridor and link road from Lower Mead to bottom of Nantyglassdwr Lane (3 agree, 8 disagree). Other comments: the Dingle Field is too attractive to build on (3 agree, 0 disagrees) - not suitable for large vehicles.

14. FACILITIES FOR BUSINESS

What matters most for local businesses - faster broadband? better roads? what else? Can we do more to encourage new jobs in Cusop?

Herefordshire broadband very slow and expensive - makes working from home more difficult (5 agree, 0 disagrees). Other comments: is this true in Cusop? I get 6-7Mbps (4 agree, 0 disagrees) - comes from Hay exchange - need cheap SDSL with faster UP-speeds for home-working - working from home ideal in Cusop (1 disagrees) - but makes more traffic on narrow roads.

Business hub for homeworkers with internet and hot-desking (3 agrees, 0 disagrees). Other comments: facility already exists in Hay and works - ask locals with experience to act as advisors/mentors in a 'business club'.