

CULWORTH IN TEN YEARS

Village Plan Day

July 15th 2001



Report produced by Michelle Koster
September 2001

INTRODUCTION

At the October 2000 Parish Council meeting, councillors were approached by a local resident with a proposal that the Parish Council should endorse the development of a Culworth Village Plan that will contain what the people who live in and who depend on the village think is most important. Culworth Parish Council endorsed this proposal and a steering group was formed.

This document is a summary of the ideas and information generated by the first event, the village plan day, held in Culworth Village Hall on Sunday July 15th 2001. There was a village gathering and display of aerial photos and maps of the village past and present, village history, a view of the village website, Culworth School work on Our Village, photo-montage of village houses and most importantly of all a chance for *everyone* to have a say about our village.

In compiling this report every effort has been made to express all the contributions made on the day. The plan is an ongoing process so there will be further opportunity to add your ideas towards the future of our village.

Everyone entering the exhibition had the opportunity to read the following information:


Why do we need a Culworth Plan?


- 📖 To promote a shared vision for Culworth that protects and improves the quality of life in the village.
- 📖 To have a plan for maintaining and improving the facilities in the village.
- 📖 To be prepared for funding applications that might be needed to attract new funding into the village.
- 📖 To be prepared for planning issues that might arise.
- 📖 To protect and enhance our investment in our village

What might be in a Culworth Village Plan?


- 📖 It will contain what the people who live in, and who depend on the village think is most important. **That is why you are asked to give your views today, which is the start of the process.**
- 📖 In other places where this has been done the plan has covered themes such as **transport and traffic**, **recreation spaces**, building or repairing **community spaces**, protecting the **environment**, creating **new jobs** for local people, increasing the use of local **allotments**, more **community events**, schemes for looking after the **elderly** or those too ill to shop for themselves.

How information from today will be used


 It will provide a better understanding of how Culworth people want the village to be in 10 or more years' time.

 We will use the information from today to prepare bids for funding to help us run more events that lead to a Culworth Plan. We have already registered the proposed Culworth Plan with the Countryside Agency, who are distributing grants. We have also registered our intentions with the SNC, which is recruiting six villages to develop village plans.


How to use this event and exhibition


 The exhibition is arranged under three headings:


THE PAST, THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE.

 Travel round clockwise and please make comments at each stage on the coloured sticky labels.

Who is responsible for today's event?

 In October 2000 the Parish Council agreed to support this process.

 A small group of Culworth residents have been meeting to plan today and make enquiries about what support we can get from South Northants District Council and Northamptonshire County Council.

 *TO CARRY ON WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE PLANNING GROUP, EVEN IF YOU HAVE NO EXPERIENCE OR VERY LITTLE SPARE TIME, YOUR ENERGY WILL HELP.*

If you are interested in finding out more or would like to help please contact:

Val Webster on 760 394
or email
culworth.village@virgin.net

RESULTS OF THE DAY

105 adults and 36 under-18s attended the village plan day. In addition, several villagers made comments to members of the steering group verbally, or used the additional questionnaires provided in the village shop later. Around 40% of households within the parish boundary are therefore represented in the views that follow.

There are 170 dwellings in the village, and the electoral register at August 2001 stood at 367 voters. It is estimated that there are an additional 120 under-18s, bringing the total estimated population of Culworth to 487.

How long has your family lived here?

Time	Number of families
Less than 1 year	4
1-3 years	5
4-6 years	11
7-9 years	7
10-14 years	6
15-20 years	6
21-30 years	9
31-40 years	1
41-50 years	3
51-60 years	1
61-80 years	4
160-170 years	1
200 years	1

People coming to the village plan day were asked to place a pin in the map to mark where they live. From this, it is clear that all areas of the village were well represented. The original map is held by the steering group.

People do paid or voluntary work at 26 different locations within the village, either at home or in local business premises.

Location	Number of people who travel there (mileage)	
Culworth	26	
Banbury	14	
Gaydon	1	
Daventry	4	
London	6	
Godalming	1	(106)
Oxford	1	(35)
Westbury	1	(13)
Bedford	1	
Abthorpe	1	
Byfield/Claydon	1	
Chipping Warden	1	
Towcester	2	(11)
Kidlington	2	
Southern England	1	(3,500 per month)
National	3	
International	3	

Use of the village

Amenity	Number of users
Village shop	43
Footpaths	34
Village hall	18
Church	18
Butcher	7 (+ 7 mobile van)
Pub	15
Bus(commercial services)	11
Cricket field	14
Football field	10
Allotments (10 holders approx)	2
Glebe field *	4
Churchyard	1
Garage (car repair facilities)	4
Green	3
Concrete/tank track†	3
Nursing home	1
Fish van	3

*The school also has use of part of the Glebe field for recreation.

†The concrete track is part of a footpath, but is also used by children in the village for roller skating/scooters/bicycles.

Eight villagers (with a sense of humour) indicated use of the sewage works.

Culworth School currently has 157 pupils
Numbers for the catchment area are:

Culworth	28
Moreton Pinkney	24
Sulgrave	24
Thorpe	18
Mandeville	

Pupils also attend from Greatworth, Eydon,
Aston-le-Walls, Cropredy and Brackley.

The school contributed some very eye catching
displays on work that year 1, 2 and 5 children
had been doing on Our Village. Below are the
year 2 children's ideas

What we would like in Culworth

Park (2)
Park with a zoo
Butterfly farm
Long grass for butterflies
Tarmac cycle place
Pond
Trampoline
Playground (2)
Swimming pool (3)
Museum with dinosaurs
Baby club (!)
Football field
Car racing

The comments made by villagers at the plan day have been divided into six sections:

-  Environment
-  Amenities
-  Community
-  Housing
-  Traffic
-  Recreation

Each of the following sections deals with dislikes, concerns, and suggestions for the future, for each of these six sections. There is some overlap between sections. The order of the sections, and of the comments, is arbitrary.

Please bear in mind that the comments recorded are those made by individual parishioners and do not represent the views of any group in the village.

Environment

It is clear from the plan day that the green spaces and trees of Culworth are valued by residents, in addition to its traditional character, both in terms of building, and in terms of the community spirit.

The issue of dog fouling was one of the most voiced specific concerns.

Concerns

Dog poo (5)

Flooding by Lindsay's Corner (1)

Loss of wildlife if farming practices become too intensive

Need to get rid of conservation area

Likes/To be protected

All green areas (no more building or huge conversions/extensions)

Trees and green spaces (6)

The shape and character of the village (2)

Traditional walls and verges

Peaceful, small character

People and countryside location (2)

Quiet small rural community (3)

Countryside, fantastic views,

Local character,

Butchers (3)

Lots of fields to play in

Countryside

Small, friendly community

Colour of stone

Walks

School

Friends

Shopping facilities better than some towns

Pub

Cricket team

Ideas

One villager was concerned to maintain the 'beauty of the village', and suggested cutting all grass verges throughout the village, the possible removal of power and telephone lines, and keeping road signs and markings to a minimum.

Removal of all street lighting.



Amenities

Villagers at the plan day overwhelmingly expressed their concern for the continued operation of the post office and village shop. What it stocked was mentioned by several, and a change of opening hours was proposed as a possible solution. Other local businesses were also identified as being in need of support, and green spaces also appeared in this category. The lack of public transport was raised specifically by four respondents.

Concerns

Lack of public transport (4)

Pub (5) - no specific issue was mentioned here

Shop (4) - the key issues were the opening hours, and concerns about the stock carried.

Two villagers complained about having to drive to Banbury for shopping, and one raised the issue of lack of sport, adult education, and cultural (specifically 'things like film club').

School size

Lack of facilities for the youth of the village (2)

To be protected

Maintaining the churchyard in its present condition

Village shop/post office (23 several mention stock)

Pub (2)

School (4)

Cricket field (2)

Concrete track and agricultural machinery
(another respondent wanted the machinery removed, saying it was potential dangerous)

Theatre productions in village hall

Woods

All green spaces

Butchers van

Fishman

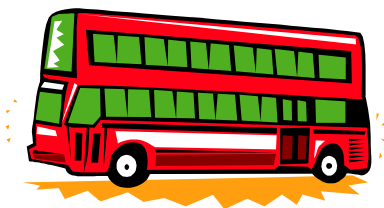
Ideas

Change shop opening hours to early in the morning and an hour later in the evening.

Existing businesses need support.

New or improved village hall/community resources.

Assessment of need for an increased bus service - the suggestion was made that the majority of people would still use their cars, but could there be a special shopping bus for people without their own transport?



Community

It is interesting that in this section, there is both complaint about apathy, and praise for a good sense of community in the village. The school, church and village groups were singled out as liked, as well as the general 'feel' of the village.

Concerns

Six villagers complained about apathy in some form, including the issue of 'residents who only reside here', people's unwillingness to join in, and the lack of a sense of community.

One complained that there were far fewer events for fun, as opposed to events for fund-raising.

Lack of community (1)

Would like to see a more accessible and democratic Parish Council

Likes/To be protected

'It's pretty and well cared for, people are friendly, we feel right here, we have been here long enough to feel part of the history'

'Friendly, neighbourly and enjoy the peace, quiet and countryside'

View across the countryside

Rural community (3)

Stone/buildings

Carols on the green at Christmas

The school as an important part of the community (3)
Keep the church open (2)
Present village organisations (2)
Sense of community (2)
Quiet enjoyment of our house
Lack of crime and delinquency (2)
Friendly people (8)
Quiet life (2)
Unspoilt character (2)
Location - not too far from motorway
Safe environment to bring up a family/safe cricket field to play in
'It is ours and we like it' - under which someone wrote 'seconded'
Small size and lack of large development

Ideas

One village suggested that we need industrial development - to which someone else replied 'please no'. In similar vein, another villager was concerned that the village should not become an extension of Banbury.
Use of church building for more village activities (large building not much used)



Housing

This was an area of particular concern to people attending the village plan day, which may in part be a result of a number of specific building projects that have taken place in the village recently. However, underlying the particular building schemes was a general concern that any future development should be in keeping with the village character, and of a type needed by the village.

Concerns

Three villagers specifically disliked the development of five houses on the nursing home grounds. One objected to 'sneaky building', and one to fighting planning when not supported by planning department'.

Insensitive development (2)

That the village doesn't become a dormitory village (this comment was also made elsewhere under dislikes)

Development

Too much building, but no provision for affordable family housing - two other villagers had written on the same note in support of this comment

Too many street lights and security lights

Development outside current village boundaries

Inappropriate housing, ignoring what villagers want in the way of development

Need large housing development

Lack of starter homes

To be protected

No more building (4)

Ideas

No building in green belt or on the cricket field

Affordable housing for young and old

The village needs to grow slowly as it cannot stand still

New estates, if any, should be a mixture of housing types, affordable as well as larger accommodation, with buildings in harmony with their immediate surroundings, help to maintain very old properties of character and strict control.

No infill



Traffic

This was another big area of concern to people attending the village plan day. The key areas are speed, parking and volume of traffic in general, which is to some extent linked with the school.

Concerns

Key areas:

Speeding: particular areas mentioned were Banbury lane, and the hill out of the village towards Eydon. One complained that speeding cars set off the car alarms. Total comments: 23
Inappropriate traffic speed (16)

Bad parking generally (ie on corners, pavements etc) (8), and parking for the school in particular (2).

Heavy transport, including lorries and buses (4).
A further dislike was traffic generally on school days (1).

Becoming a rat run between main roads

Congestion/traffic increases (5)

Parking on bends and at junctions

Straightening and widening roads will encourage traffic to go faster

Likes/to be protected

Good location close to the motorway

Ideas

Speed cameras

Creation of footpaths between Culworth and the neighbouring villages, using existing grass verges, to encourage cycling and walking rather than car use.

Recreation

Concerns over a lack of play facilities in Culworth have existed for a long time, but were raised by both children and adults at the village plan day. The idea of a specific play area with equipment was raised by a number.

Concerns

The lack of play facilities for children was raised by 12 villagers.

Two specifically complained of a lack of facilities for teenagers.

One suggested that the village was a long way from theatre and music facilities, and two said that there few community/group activities.

Too many children on the streets because they have nowhere else to play (2)

Likes/To be protected

Glebe Field (3)

Swing tree (8)

Cricket field (8)

Football field (5)

Cared for churchyard (2)

Allotments (2)

Tree house (2)

Fields generally

Children playing in safety

Quiet countryside

Ideas

A swimming pool, a park/children's play area

Conclusions

It is not appropriate to draw any definite conclusions at this stage. However, the Steering Group was pleased with the higher-than expected turnout. There was a good spread of people from all parts of the village, and a great deal of interest was generated in issues of importance to villagers. Several new people have signed up to join the Village Plan steering group to help take this forward, and any applications we may put forward for funding are strengthened by the clear whole community involvement. Areas for further work have been identified within six key areas:

-  Amenities
-  Traffic
-  Community
-  Housing
-  Environment
-  Recreation

In addition, a total of 40 people within the parish have asked to be kept informed via email of developments and to receive the newsletter via this medium. Interest was also generated in the newly established village website.

This is only the first phase of the project, and the Steering Group must now decide how to capture the enthusiasm generated by the village plan day, and turn it into action.

Thanks go the following for their help, support or contribution to the Culworth Village Plan Day:

Val Webster
Graham Woodward
Michelle Koster
Ken Webster
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Susan Amson
Shirley Trott
Carol Berry
Stan Bailey
Linda Mold
Valerie Whitaker
Culworth School
Culworth Parish Council
And all those who lent photographs for display on the day.

If you would like further information on this initiative, or have any comments to contribute, please contact:

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or email: culworth.plan@culworth.net

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