



**Well-attended exhibition and presentation**

At least 80 people braved the cold on 3 February to visit the exhibition of the questionnaire results. There was a graphic display of the complete results, and extra information about roads, footpath and cyclepath issues: a 20 mph speed limit, parking problems, pavement widths and maintenance, and the cycle path to Elmswell. All these matters are being investigated by a working group, and some of their draft recommendations were on display.

**Landscape Sensitivity Study presentation**



Alison Farmer giving her presentation (photo C. Blomfield)

At the same event our consultant for the Sensitivity Study, Alison Farmer, gave a 30-minute presentation explaining the study which she has carried out into Woolpit’s rural setting and landscape features, which confer its distinctive character and make our village a special place. On both occasions (the presentation was given twice, in the morning and in the afternoon), an audience of about 40 listened intently and engaged with Alison afterwards in a question-and-answer session.

Alison explained the groundwork for the Sensitivity Study is now complete, and she expects to deliver the final report before the end of February. This report will be invaluable to the Neighbourhood Plan when it comes to assessing the capacity and suitability for development of sites around Woolpit, most of which have already been identified in the Call for Sites carried out last summer by Mid Suffolk District.

**Draft Business policies**

Since the last newsletter, the Policies working group has continued to draft policies for the Neighbourhood Plan. Policies applying to potential business and employment development have been devised, which were reviewed and approved at the last Steering Group meeting on 29 January. These policies cover four aspects of business development:

- Location
- Sustainability and commitment to the community
- Broadband provision
- Retail and small businesses

Policies on Environment will be discussed during February by the working group, and submitted to the Steering Group for review and approval at the end of the month.

A matter to be addressed by these policies concerns protective designations. Alison Farmer spoke a little about this issue in her presentation. Some existing designations, like Visually Important Open Spaces, and Special Landscape Areas, are local designations dating from Mid Suffolk’s 1998 Local Plan. As these may not survive into the new Joint Local Plan, we must give some thought to protecting green spaces in the village and larger areas in the surroundings.

All policies will be subject to review in the light of the findings of the Sensitivity Study (see left). When the package is complete, and the supporting text has been written, we will be on the threshold of the final consultation stage of Woolpit’s Neighbourhood Plan.