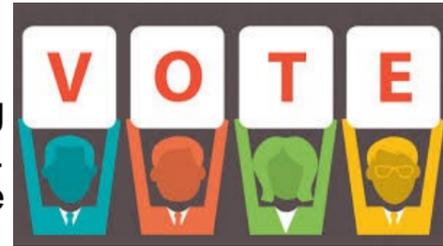


How do I vote?

The referendum is only open to people living within Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Parish. The question which will be asked in the referendum will be:



“Do you want Darlington Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

You can vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

What does voting ‘yes’ mean?

Voting yes means you agree to the planning policies set out within the plan and that you are happy for these to become part of the development plan. If more people vote ‘yes’ than ‘no’ then Darlington Borough Council will use the Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications.

What does voting ‘no’ mean?

Voting ‘no’ would mean that planning decisions are not subject to the policies in the neighbourhood plan. If more people vote ‘no’ than ‘yes’, then planning applications in the parish will be decided without using the Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan as part of the process.

Where can I get more information?

- The neighbourhood plan website contains all of the background information that has informed the preparation of the plan lowconiscliffeandmerrybentneighbourhoodplan.org.uk
- There is also more information available on Darlington Borough Councils website: darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-and-environmental-policy/neighbourhood-planning/



LOW CONISCLIFFE & MERRYBENT PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

It's time to vote on YOUR neighbourhood plan



Referendum
Thursday 23 May 2019



What is the referendum about?

If you are a local resident and your name appears on the electoral register, you will receive a polling card for a referendum on the Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan. This leaflet explains what the plan is and how you can vote.

What is a neighbourhood plan?

The opportunity for local communities to prepare a neighbourhood plan was introduced by the Government in 2011. It enables people living and working in an area to guide where and how future development happens. Neighbourhood plans are prepared by the local community through their town and parish councils, rather than being prepared by Darlington Borough Council.

If the Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent Neighbourhood Plan is supported by the local community at referendum it will be used to make decisions on planning applications, giving it genuine influence on the future of our area.

Who has prepared the plan?

The plan has been prepared by a steering group of local resident volunteers, working on behalf of the parish council. The local community have significantly influenced the content of the plan through three periods of engagement which took place during 2017 and 2018.

In September 2018 the parish council submitted the plan to Darlington Borough Council who undertook a further round of consultation.

An independent examiner was then appointed to assess the compliance of the plan with statutory requirements. The plan passed the examination, subject to minor changes and is now subject to referendum.



What does the plan include?

The plan sets out a vision for the future of the parish to 2036.

“Low Coniscliffe and Merrybent villages will maintain their individual identities as sustainable, thriving communities, accessible to people of all ages. The Parish will remain a gateway to Darlington, but visually distinct and separate from the conurbation. New development will be of a scale and design which respects the rural setting of the Parish, conserves and enhances its unique rural and riverside environment, open spaces and heritage, for the benefit of current and future generations”

The plan contains 19 policies covering issues such as: landscape, tranquillity, green infrastructure, wildlife, design, heritage, settlement boundaries, housing community services, infrastructure, tourism and accessibility. It also contains a number of community actions around the natural environment, local history, transport and community facilities.

Where can I view the plan?

The plan can be viewed in a number of ways:

Online:

- www.darlington.gov.uk/media/8602/lcm-np-neighbourhood-development-plan.pdf
- www.lowconiscliffeandmerrybentneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/

In hard copy:

- Darlington Borough Council, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT;
- Crown Street Library, Crown Street, Darlington, DL1 1ND;
- Cockerton Library, Cockerton Green, Darlington, DL3 9AA; and
- Low Coniscliffe Book Exchange, Gate Lane, Low Coniscliffe.

