

*This leaflet explains what a conservation area is and how it may affect you. It shows the boundary of one of the 33 conservation areas and points out some of the features which make it special.*

# Sopley



New  
Forest  
Conservation  
Areas

The small village of cottages and farms that comprises Sopley is the focus of this large conservation area. The adjacent meadows of the flood plain of the River Avon are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. A small stream bisects the village passing beside The Woolpack before joining the Avon south of the church. The church occupies a prominent site on a small hill to the south of the village next to the 19th century mill. To the east, the site of the mansion in Sopley Park is now occupied by the Bible College. The northern end of the village contains some modern development but on the whole the centre retains much of its 19th century feel where a one way system helps the narrow lanes to cope with the heavy flow of traffic between Christchurch and Ringwood. There are a number of listed buildings as well as some important unlisted groups, such as Sopley Farm, which are very important to the character of the village. There are many mature trees singly in gardens, in groups in the Park and in the central enclosure of the village.



The Woolpack

The manor of Sopley - Soppa's glade - is traceable from before the Norman conquest but detailed records only exist for about the last 200 years. The manor house is believed to have been rebuilt by the Vicar of Sopley about 1790. After various changes of ownership the Kemp Welch family were resident squires at Sopley Park House from 1867 owning much of the village as well. They carried out many improvements and additions to the estate. After the Second World War the house was variously a nursing home and two independent schools. It was demolished in 1988 and Sopley lost a building that played a significant part in its landscape and history.

There has been a mill here since at least the time of the Domesday Survey when an annual payment of 10 shillings and 875 eels is recorded. The Avon eel known locally as the 'sniggle' is different to the common eel; a field name- snig end - in the water meadows recalls this.



St Michael and All Angels Church