



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Standing up for your countryside

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE VOICE

The Newsletter of the NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BRANCH of
the Campaign to Protect Rural England May 2016

CPRE NOTTS PUSHES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

[Continued from column one]

One such area was Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. Parish councils and others were invited to an event in Grantham on 17 March which opened with a video message from Brandon Lewis MP, the planning minister. There were also presentations from local groups who have been involved in neighbourhood planning, representatives from local planning authorities and an official from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who are funding the programme of promoting neighbourhood planning.



Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Housing and Planning at the Department for Communities and Local Government

CPRE is working with Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)

CPRE wants to explain to local communities what they can gain by engaging with neighbourhood planning and to help overcome some of the myths about it.

Ten areas of rural England were identified where take-up of the opportunities provided by neighbourhood planning has been relatively slow. Rural Community Councils and CPRE branches, working in partnership with other local organisations, have been holding roadshows in each of these areas this Spring.

If You want more information about or help with Neighbourhood Planning

Please get in touch with the Nottinghamshire CPRE Policy Adviser -
Bettina Lange
bettina.t2000@btinternet.com
0115 922 8706

Dates for your Diary >

Friday 3 June 2016 **AGM**: : Details to be publicised soon.

6 July 2016 : **90 Years of CPRE - Event at Peterborough** See Page 3 for details

A CHARTER FOR TREES

In 1217, two years after Magna Carta was signed by King John, his heir Henry III signed the Charter of the Forest. The aim of this document was to protect the rights of people to access and use the Royal Forests. The Charter of the Forest provides a window to a time in history when access to woods was integral to life. Being denied access for grazing livestock, collecting firewood and foraging for food was a real concern for the people of the time.

Today, woods and trees continue to give us so much:

- timber for our buildings and furniture
- sanctuaries for our valuable wildlife
- places for us to unwind, refresh and recharge
- protection from sun, rain and pollution.

Why a New Charter is Needed

Trees are more at risk than ever before from:

- natural threats, including pests and diseases
- man-made pollution
- Infrastructure
- a lack of political interest.

We need to stop taking trees for granted, recognise and celebrate their huge contribution to our lives, and take responsibility for their welfare.

The Woodland Trust have invited organisations from across the conservation, environmental, business and social sectors to join a call for a new Charter for Trees, Woods and People. This charter would bring trees and woods back into the centre of public consciousness and political decision-making in the UK.

More than 35 organisations, including CPRE, have answered the call, and have been working with the Woodland Trust to create a national movement for woods and trees. We will establish a legacy of lasting change for the relationship between trees, woods and people.

The Issues

Why do we need trees?

- Trees and woods are hugely valuable for our health, happiness and our children's development
- Our woodland heritage is even richer and internationally more significant than we realised.
- The UK is one of the top consumers of wood products in the world

Trees in urban areas are essential.

They provide:

- Clean air
- Natural flood defences
- A mask for noise
- Improved physical health and mental well-being
- Mitigation against the Urban Heat Island effect (UHI)
- Pollution absorption
- Wildlife habitat.
- Recreational spaces in cities
- Contact with nature in cities
- Sensory outdoor learning resources.

What are the threats?

- Infrastructure development
- Pollution and climate change
- Pests and diseases
- Cuts to public investment for forest research and conservation
- 60% of wildlife species are in decline across the UK.
- Decline in enrolments in forestry education
- It is estimated that by 2050, 80% of the population will live in cities, and yet we are planting fewer trees than the number we are losing.
- Land development on urban woodlands.



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Brownfield sites are developed six months faster than greenfield sites

New research shows Government proposals to release more countryside are aiming at the wrong target. Research shows that brownfield sites are being developed more than half a year faster than greenfield sites. This follows on from CPRE research carried out in late 2014, which found that there are enough suitable brownfield sites for at least 1 million new homes.

The new research covered 15 local authorities across England between March 2012 and December 2015. Carried out by construction consultants Glenigan, the data reveals that the time between planning permission being granted and construction work starting is generally the same for brownfield and greenfield sites, but that work on brownfield sites is completed more than six months quicker.

While the Government has pledged to invest more than £2 billion in brownfield regeneration and establish a brownfield register, many of its proposed changes to planning policy are aimed at making it easier to build on greenfield land. These proposals include developing small sites in the Green Belt and a 'housing delivery test' that would force councils to release more land for development if housebuilders do not meet high housing targets.

This research illustrates that prioritising investment in brownfield sites is a highly effective way of building the homes we need. The research undermines claims that brownfield is either too slow or inconvenient to develop in comparison to greenfield.

Shaun Spiers, chief executive of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), comments:

"This Government has strongly supported brownfield development. Now it must show it has the courage of its convictions and usher in a brownfield revolution to tackle the housing crisis, benefit England's towns and cities, and save the countryside from inappropriate development.

"This new research shows that brownfield sites are developed more quickly than greenfield sites, giving the lie to the idea that developing a brownfield site must be difficult or unprofitable. What is needed now is for the Government to put all its energy behind getting houses built on derelict and vacant sites.

"Crucially, it must drop the idea that the way to get houses built is simply to make more countryside available. The evidence is that this will slow down house building, rather than speed it up."

CPRE is calling on the Government to:

- Amend the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to make the intentions of Ministers clear and prioritise the use of suitable brownfield sites in urban areas over greenfield - including empowering councils not to allocate greenfield sites in local plans and to refuse planning permission on greenfield sites where these would compete with suitable brownfield sites.
- Commit to seeing development started on 90% of suitable brownfield sites by 2020, rather than just aiming for planning permission on 90% of suitable sites by 2020.
- Make suitable brownfield sites the first priority for any public funding, and prevent public funding for greenfield sites where these would make competing demands. The Government should reform the New Homes Bonus to invest billions in regenerating brownfield sites.
- Make clear that planning and fiscal policies promoting brownfield development are focused on existing towns and cities, and damage to brownfield of high environmental or heritage value should be avoided.

CPRE IS 90

CPRE East Midlands and East of England invite you to

90 Years of CPRE: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

**Wednesday 6 July 2016, 10am – 4pm,
The Fleet, Peterborough**

Members and volunteers of branches in the East of England and East Midlands regions are invited to join us to celebrate 90 years of CPRE, our achievements, and how we go forward. This event will enable us to share information, learn from each other, get to know each other and find out more about CPRE, how we work and our priorities. The day will include presentations from keynote speaker Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE and Oliver Hilliam, CPRE Senior Communications and Information Officer, and co-author of "22 ideas that saved the English Countryside". There will also be a choice of workshops: Raising your branch's profile; Balanced Communications: Strategic Techniques to Improve Your Organisation and its Reputation; Planning in the Future: Does CPRE still have a voice?; Effective Campaigning – what makes a successful campaign? There will be plenty of opportunities to meet members and volunteers from other CPRE branches and staff from CPRE National office, and representatives from other organisations. There is no charge for attending and lunch and refreshments are included. There is ample, free on-site parking and transport will be provided from Peterborough station to the venue free of charge. To register your interest or to book a place, please contact Tracey Hipson at office@cprecambs.org.uk, tel: 01480 396698. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

A Book To Mark the Anniversary

22 Ideas that saved the English countryside is being published on 2 June to mark CPRE's anniversary year. The book has been written by former CPRE chairman, Peter Waine, and Oliver Hilliam (senior communications and information officer at national office), and features a stunning range of landscapes from some of England's finest photographers, complemented by rarely-seen archive imagery. It gives the historical context for the formation of CPRE and shows the enduring relevance of the big ideas CPRE has championed over the past 90 years.

The book is priced at £25 (with all royalties going to CPRE), but all members will be able to buy a copy for £15 (with free postage and delivery) using the details published in the forthcoming issue of Countryside Voice.

How You Can Help

- 1) Find out if your local Parish Council is a member of CPRE; and, if not, ask them to join.
- 2) If there is a local project in your area to improve the environment, suggest it enters the 2016 Valerie Gillespie Award Competition. Closing date 31 October 2016 and entry forms available from nottscpre@btinternet.com.
- 3) Persuade your village to enter the Best Kept Village Competition. Details have been sent to every Parish Council.
- 4) Let us know if there is a significant threat to the countryside in your area. We need your eyes and ears.
- 5) If you do online shopping, consider using Give as You Live to make free donations to The Campaign to Protect Rural England - Nottinghamshire. It will not cost you an extra penny.

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THE ROBIN HOOD LINE

We have made representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Department of Transport and to the local MP in support of proposals to extend the Robin Hood Line from Shirebrook to Ollerton. This would bring many benefits to the local area. Although Ministers have made encouraging noises from time to time, there has been a deafening silence of late.

DEVOLUTION

Proposals to create a Combined Authority covering Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, with an elected mayor, to cover a range of devolved issues agreed with the government have run into difficulties. A number of local authorities have decided that they do not wish to join the proposed North Midlands authority. Bassetlaw and some Derbyshire councils wish to join in with the Sheffield Combined Authority. Other Councils do still wish to proceed. We shall report developments in due course.

LOCAL PLANNING NEWS

Wellow Travellers Site Rejected

CPRE Nottinghamshire made representations to Newark and Sherwood District Council, the local MP and to the Department of Communities and Local Government objecting to a proposal for a travellers's site in a conservation area.

We recognise the need for travellers sites but this approval of this proposal would have created a precedent for allowing such sites in conservation areas. We believe that such sites should be small and set in appropriate places. The application was rejected.

Bilthorpe Incinerator

We have objected to a proposal to build a waste incinerator at Bilthorpe because the proposed development departs from the adopted Newark & Sherwood Local Plan and the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Waste Core Strategy. In our opinion, the proposed development probably conflicts with national waste policy and guidance and with national planning guidance. We do not think it has been demonstrated that the proposed development is needed to meet energy or waste processing needs arising locally or in adjacent areas. The volume of waste to be processed at the proposed development means the waste will have to be transported over long distances, causing significant additional road traffic and calling into question any benefits there may be from energy generated by the facility. The proposed development would have a significant and irreversible adverse impact on the landscape and amenity value of the area. Bettina Lange spoke against the application at a public hearing, which was much appreciated by local residents opposed to the proposal.

Sookholme Solar Farm

We objected to this proposal and the application has since been withdrawn.



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Chairman: facook@btinternet.com: 0115 841 5942

Secretary and Policy Adviser: bettina.t2000@btinternet.com: 0115 922 8706

Registered Charity No. 213481