

# OUTLOOK

November 2019



The newsletter of  
CPRE Northamptonshire

## And Now for Some Good News

- Robin Jones

When the village shop or post office closes, that's usually that. We bemoan its disappearance and accept that we'll just have to travel a little further to buy those bits and pieces or send that birthday present. But it's much worse than the inconvenience and the larger carbon footprint. We've lost yet another important meeting place, somewhere that helped bind our community together. And there it usually stops.

Not so in Creaton. When faced with the closure of the village shop and post office in November 2017, some enterprising villagers formed a 'Save our Shop' group. The enthusiasm their survey revealed led to the founding of the Creaton Community Benefit Society, a not-for-profit organisation pledged to open a community shop. In October 2017 the Society raised £80,000 through a share issue and £70,500 from other sources including £57,000 from the European Union. A

plot of land at a peppercorn rent and the generous support of a local property developer in the design and build phase meant that the shop was able to open for business on 23 August 2018.

The post office counter is staffed by three part-time paid employees (currently supported by a grant from the Prince's Countryside Fund). A group of thirty or so volunteers runs the shop, does the cash and carry run and keeps the building and flowerbeds shipshape. A management committee deals with general policy, finances, marketing and PR. The shop itself, now over a year old, is well stocked. Not just with basics like newspapers, milk and bread but with a whole range of items, many of them local, bearing out its claim that it champions local producers. Most importantly it is a friendly, welcoming place for villagers to meet and exchange news. The villagers of Creaton are doing their best to ensure that their community continues to thrive. Good luck to them!

*Tell us your village shop story—is it good news or bad?*  
[info@CPRENorthants.org.uk](mailto:info@CPRENorthants.org.uk)



Northamptonshire  
Campaign to Protect Rural England

[www.cprenorthants.org.uk](http://www.cprenorthants.org.uk)

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## Dates for your Diary

### ◆ Carols, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

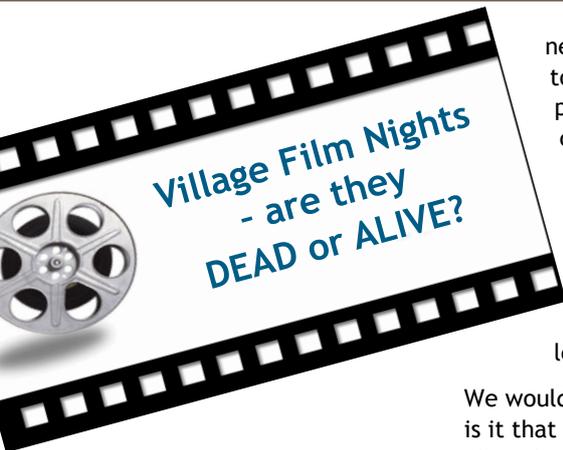
14 December 4.00 pm  
Easton Neston Church  
See enclosure and note the change of date

### ◆ Chasing Ice

Saturday 2 May 2020,  
Northampton Filmhouse

### ◆ Musica Choir

16 June 2020, 7.30 pm. Venue to be decided



Remember the clattering projector and flickering monochrome images of yesteryear? Do you miss them? Or does your village hall now show digital films with crisp images and high-quality sound?

Despite 4K HD televisions at home, and huge libraries of

new and classic films to stream, some people still enjoy the cinema experience in the company of others. But if you live in a village, making a long round trip to a multiplex can be less than appealing.

We would like to know: why is it that in some villages Film Night continues and is considered a valued community asset, whereas in others it has long since ridden off into the sunset?

We would love to hear your thoughts, views and experiences.

If your village holds regular film nights:

- Who supplies the equipment?
- What is the financial aim?
- Who selects which films to show?
- How are they publicised?
- How frequent are these events?

If your village does not have film nights, what do you think are the reasons?

Whether or not you are a Film Night village:

- Does all or most of the village have access to broadband, so that on-demand film watching is possible for those who want it? If not, when do you

expect it to be available?

- How long does it take to travel to a commercial cinema showing newly released international films?
- Have you ever estimated what the total cost would be for travel, admission, snacks and suchlike?

Please email your thoughts and views to [info@CPRENorthants.org.uk](mailto:info@CPRENorthants.org.uk), or post to Film Night, CPRE Northants, The Wheatsheaf, Spring Hill Farm, Harborough Road, Pitsford, Northampton, NN6 9AA. If we get sufficient feedback to show that there is interest in the subject, we will let you know the results. Thank you.

## 2019 Litter Awards -

- Peter Hopkins

The panel met in June to complete the selection of the winners. There were two additional judges, reflecting the increased quantity and quality of the entries received. It became clear that comparing the activities and resources of the residents of a large suburban housing estate with those of a small village was somewhat unfair. Therefore we grouped the entries into those from large, medium and small settlements, based on the population.

The awards fund doubled this year, thanks to the generosity of the president of our charity David Laing. Given that some villages have previously found difficulty in spending their prize, the panel thought that making more rather

than bigger awards was the preferred option.

Comparative judgements required very careful consideration, because virtually all entries showed lots of enthusiasm and a level of community spirit that was quite humbling. The final verdicts of the judging panel were as follows:

**Large community award:**  
Winner: **Warmington** £450  
Runner-up: **Blisworth** £300

**Medium-sized community award:**  
Winner: **Ecton Brook** £350  
Runner-up: **Little Houghton** £200

**Small village award:**  
Joint first prize  
**Tiffield** £200  
**Hinton-in-the-Hedges** £200

**Highly commended:**  
**Grange Park**

One entry was ineligible for the community awards, but the efforts of young professionals **Fergus Clarke & Shannon Sweeney** in picking along an A14 approach road were highly commended and the panel awarded them £30 each towards the money they have spent on high visibility clothing and equipment.

## Midsummer Memories



Midsummer seems a long time ago but the memory of a most enjoyable June evening lingers. Over seventy of us relaxed in the beautiful gardens of The Old Rectory, Quinton, listening to the Musica Choir going through its repertoire - something for everyone as the invitation rightly put it. The spacious terrace was ideal for such an event and so was the weather. For those seeking tranquillity the gardens beyond the terrace were the place to go. The event raised over £1,300 and our thanks are due to Alan and Emma Kennedy, the creators of this attractive space, for kindly allowing us to share it with them.



The Warmington Litter Heroes



Representatives of Glapthorn receiving their Best Overall Village award from David Laing

Over 70 people gathered for the annual Northamptonshire Village Awards evening in July at the Hunsbury Hill Centre. It is a chance for people living in rural communities to showcase what is great about them, and why people should visit. The awards also identify what is being done to ensure that all residents are able to participate

## Northamptonshire Village Awards 2019

- Elaine O’Leary, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire ACRE

in village life and to achieve a sustainable future. The judges were very impressed by the wide-ranging and different initiatives, activities, events and services they encountered during their visits.

This year’s awards are sponsored by CPRE Northamptonshire and were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, David Laing, President of Northamptonshire ACRE and CPRE Northamptonshire. The winner of

the Overall Best Village award was Glapthorn, who also took home the Newcomers Rose Bowl and the Best Small Village Cup. A fantastic achievement. Congratulations also go to Braunston, voted as the Best Medium Village and to East Hunsbury who won the Best Large Village award.

During the evening, the David Laing Litter Heroes awards (see page 2) were presented to communities who had gone that extra mile to tidy up their area.

### Celebrate your community with Northamptonshire Village Awards 2020

CPRE Northamptonshire is for the second year sponsoring Northamptonshire Village Awards. Any parish council or community group can enter. Full details are available from Northamptonshire ACRE at [www.northantsacre.org.uk/northamptonshire-village-awards](http://www.northantsacre.org.uk/northamptonshire-village-awards) or call 01604 765888. The application form is simple - the prestige of winning is great! The closing date is 28 February 2020.

## Planning Roadshow 2019

- Alan Mayes

Over 50 people representing parish councils across the county gathered at Great Houghton Village Hall on 10 October for CPRE’s annual Planning Roadshow. Our first speaker was Felix Beck, planning officer from CPRE national office. Felix covered a wide range of planning issues including updates on the National Planning Policy Framework, the new National Design Guide, affordable housing and, at a more local level, local and neighbourhood plans.

Our second speaker was Brian Skittrall from CPRE Northamptonshire. Brian is well-known to many CPRE members and he gave an illuminating presentation on the forthcoming process of the county of Northamptonshire becoming two unitary authorities. Both presentations raised some lively discussion and can be found on CPRE Northamptonshire’s website.

At the Roadshow an appeal was made for anyone who felt that they could help with planning matters dealt with by the CPRE Technical Secretaries Group, within their area of Northamptonshire. Please let us know if you would be interested or would like more information. See adjacent panel.

South Northants Needs You

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Are you passionate about your locality?

Do you like to keep a watchful eye on the area where you live?

Do you have concerns about issues such as footpaths, developments and hedgerows?

CPRE Northamptonshire is looking for volunteers to help keep an eye on issues in the South Northants area. A few hours per week is all that is required. No previous knowledge is necessary as you will work with a team of volunteers.

If you would like more information please call **Sally Hanrahan 01604 780000** or email [Sally.Hanrahan@cprenorthants.org.uk](mailto:Sally.Hanrahan@cprenorthants.org.uk)

Instead of mourning the loss of hedgerows and trees in our countryside it's worth celebrating some initiatives on greening our cities which should inspire us to do the same in Northamptonshire, whether in town or

beneficial for health, by taking up carbon dioxide and other pollutants, but it can be surprisingly effective in slowing traffic. Drivers not only see and appreciate the efforts in greening areas but also slow down as they don't write-off through roads as bland corridors.

## Greening our High Streets and Towns - Yvonne Dean

countryside. Worth noting is the concept of 'biophilia' which refers to the connection of human beings to nature. This has prompted a worldwide movement of 'biophilic cities' - that include Birmingham. According to Paul Chatterton in 'Slate' magazine, our second city now has projects 'promoting dark skies, co-existing with animals, creating nature soundscapes and maximising natural light...'. It aims to 'develop an inter-connected network of blue and green spaces'. Northampton is well placed to do the same by revitalising the watery areas of the Nene, lost in a web of industrial estates. The success of Stanwick Lakes, for instance, can extend back into the heart of Rushden town.

It is possible to put back green lungs into our most built-up areas in towns and villages, which often have to endure quite heavy traffic. Not only does the greening of places become

outside individual houses. Members of the Welford Action Group, which is primarily concerned with traffic and road issues, took the initiative here. Eventually the idea is to link the Pocket Park at one end of the village with well placed trees and flowers all the way through to the village entrance, so calming the High Street.

Examples can be found at all scales. They can be vertical plant systems on buildings as well as smaller interventions such as those in Welford High Street and outside shop doorways in Northampton, where local traders have filled shoes with small plants - an obvious reference to the town's history. Anything we can do in greening to enhance our places of living or working at any level is welcome.

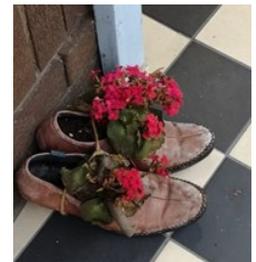
*(Yvonne Dean is a local architect and currently acting chair for CPRE West Northamptonshire)*



Welford High Street



Central London Public house



Northampton shop entrance

## Northampton Gateway and Rail Central SRFIs

- Brian Skittrall

We were disappointed that the Northampton Gateway rail freight terminal, to the west of J15 of the M1, was approved. CPRE Northamptonshire submitted a detailed objection, which raised a number of significant concerns. Nevertheless the examiners and the secretary of state considered these to be insufficient to outweigh the benefits of delivering additional rail freight capacity.

In the light of this decision it is not surprising that Rail Central withdrew their proposal because it now has to assume that it would have to be in addition to Northampton Gateway. The developers may not wish to

submit another proposal, although they will probably press on after analysing the reasons given for approving Northampton Gateway. The decision helps Rail Central because it was unconcerned that national distribution warehouses undermine the very principle of a strategic rail freight network in which freight is sent long distances by rail and only short distances by road. However Rail Central could be stopped in its tracks, so to speak, because of a lack of further rail capacity. The landscape and visual impact of the Rail Central scheme would also be immense, unlike Northampton Gateway which will have significant screening to disguise it. Another hurdle for Rail Central to clear is mitigating the cumulative impacts of the two schemes together.

The only consolation is that of the two schemes, Northampton Gateway is the least harmful and it is now less likely that Rail Central will go ahead than if Northampton Gateway had been refused.