

OUTLOOK

June 2021

The newsletter of CPRE
Northamptonshire



The countryside charity
Northamptonshire

Plant a Tree for the Jubilee

- Paul Parsons

2022 will see a truly unique event in our nation's history, the celebration of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. To mark and celebrate this event and to thank the Queen for her exceptional service, across the United Kingdom, The Queen's Green Canopy campaign has been launched under the patronage of HRH The Prince of Wales.

All across the UK, people will be encouraged to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee" through the QGC initiative creating a network of individual or specimen trees, avenues, copses and woodlands in honour of the Queen's 70 years of service to the nation. In addition, existing woodland will be dedicated to the QGC by erecting commemorative plaques and so preserving forests for the future in the Queen's name. The campaign will see communities, charities, schools, youth groups, councils and landowners planting trees across the four nations to create a lasting legacy that will enhance our environment and the landscape for generations to come. Throughout her reign, the Queen has planted more than 1,500 trees all over the world and has spoken alongside Sir David Attenborough of the importance of trees in the earth's future.

The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly changed the lives of all British citizens and generated a much greater public awareness of the need for green space. The QGC will

encourage people to come together with the common purpose of "greening" their local and national environments.

What might this look like in Northamptonshire?

- One or more Platinum Jubilee Avenues of medium-sized or large trees
- Platinum Jubilee Copses on private land or land allocated by local authorities
- Platinum School Trees
- Platinum Jubilee Community planting project for youth groups, parishes, residents' associations
- Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees will be preserved through dedication to The Queen's Green Canopy
- Focus on supporting urban and the most disadvantaged communities to plant trees

I am confident that this wonderful initiative is one which will gain overwhelming public support. By planting trees we will enhance the beauty of our county and do some good for the environment and conservation in the process. So please get involved, either as an individual or as part of a community project.

More information is available on The Queen's Green Canopy Website:

www.queensgreencanopy.org

www.cprenorthants.org.uk

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Yardley Hastings cottages

Photograph by kind permission of Martin Fletcher

Unitary Council Planning Structures

- Brian Skittrall

One of the concerns, when the unitary councils were being created, was that if there was a single unitary planning committee, few members would have sufficient local knowledge to make the best decisions on the planning

applications that came before them. We are pleased to say that both councils have addressed this concern by creating area planning committees, alongside a strategic planning committee. The area committees cover the same areas as

those covered by the former district and borough councils, whereas the strategic committee covers the whole unitary area. The strategic committees will determine proposals that would have previously been determined by the county council and, additionally, they will determine large scale developments such as the allocations in the Core Strategies.

North Northamptonshire

West Northamptonshire

Strategic				Strategic		
Corby area	East Northants area	Kettering area	Wellingborough area	Daventry area	Northampton area	South Northants area

Meet Our Two New Trustee Volunteers



Mary Miller

I was brought up mostly in Staffordshire where my father, Peter Giffard, was President of the CLA and adored

his woodlands. I have always ridden and spent a lot of time in the country, which I love. I have worked at the Marlborough Gallery - leading contemporary art dealers - for over 40 years and still do this part time. In 1991 with 3 small boys we bought a ruined farmhouse near Towcester and once it was made habitable, it has been home and the eldest will be having his wedding reception there this summer. I have supported many charities over the years, organising fund raising events locally, am secretary of Slapton PCC, became president of the Northants Red Cross in 2019 and a governor of Wootton Park School in Northampton. I love gardening and planting trees. I think CPRE is worth supporting in many ways, particularly with the onslaught of vast warehousing developments that are creeping across our landscape.

Mary joins the board as a trustee and as the events organiser

Peter Aiers

Working with CPRE Northamptonshire is a great privilege and will provide me with the opportunity of further understanding the challenges rural life faces. I hope to be able to offer some of my skills and knowledge

I work for the Churches Conservation Trust, the national charity that saves historic churches no longer needed for regular worship. The CCT has a collection of 356 church buildings and rising, the vast majority of which are in rural areas. I am passionate about finding the most effective way of managing this huge cultural resource and supporting communities to use and love historic places of worship into the future. I have been Chief Executive since 2017 having been with The Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) since 2007. During this time I invented Champin[™], camping overnight in historic churches. (www.champin.co.uk). Several



of my projects have won national awards.

After a career start at English Heritage, I worked in a local authority as a conservation officer and worked at the Diocese of London. I am a trustee of Heritage Alliance, Goodwill Solutions CIO and have a seat on Peterborough DAC as well as being a fellow of the RSA. I hold a degree in heritage conservation and am a member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

My leisure pursuits include spending time with my family, walking the dog, cycling and digging my allotment.

Peter joins the board as a trustee and as the volunteer coordinator

CPRE PARTY

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY 15 OCTOBER 2021, 6pm

Abthorpe Old School Village Hall, Near Towcester
NN12 8QT

Paul Parsons, Chairman CPRE Northamptonshire, and his co-trustees invite you to a Drinks Party in support of the work of CPRE in the county.

The evening will start with a talk by David Laing, President, and Christopher Prout about their collaboration on *Belonging - Seasons*. A beautifully written suite of words by David, illustrated by Christopher, both inspired by our beautiful Northamptonshire countryside. Copies of the book will be on sale.

This will be followed by a Drinks Party with ample refreshments. Tickets £25 per person. An invitation will follow but you can pre-book places via Mary Miller.

If you are happy to receive email information about other CPRE social events, please email Mary: maryfrances54@gmail.com

See what we are doing in the county and, if you would like to help, PLEASE join.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/groups/northamptonshire/>



New Website and Facebook Page Up and Running! - Robin Jones

We decided late last year to replace our previous website. It had begun to look a little tired and, as significantly, had lost touch with CPRE nationally in both branding and content. After extensive research into what other branches do, we decided to develop our own distinctive website rather than using the CPRE National Office model. We believe that the new website will enable us to speak with a voice that is genuinely Northamptonshire's.

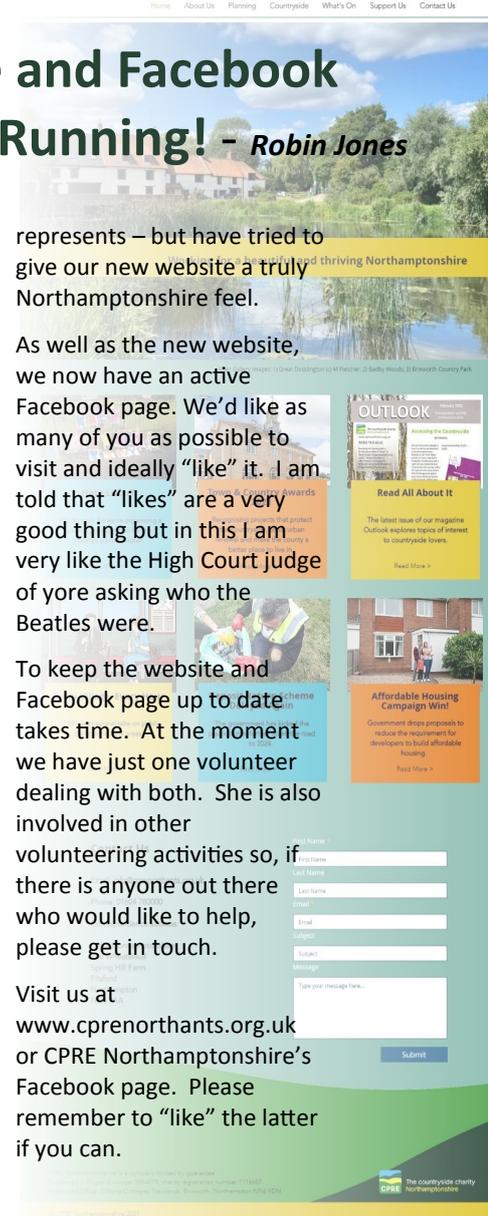
Developing the website has been a time-consuming and, for the volunteers involved, an unfamiliar process. We used a freelance website designer for the technical aspects, but the structure and content is very much home grown. We still retain close contact with CPRE National Office via various direct links to its website - it would be foolish to ignore the huge resource it

represents – but have tried to give our new website a truly Northamptonshire feel.

As well as the new website, we now have an active Facebook page. We'd like as many of you as possible to visit and ideally "like" it. I am told that "likes" are a very good thing but in this I am very like the High Court judge of yore asking who the Beatles were.

To keep the website and Facebook page up to date takes time. At the moment we have just one volunteer dealing with both. She is also involved in other volunteering activities so, if there is anyone out there who would like to help, please get in touch.

Visit us at www.cprenorthants.org.uk or CPRE Northamptonshire's Facebook page. Please remember to "like" the latter if you can.



Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - AONBs - Andrew Powles

AONBs are some of the UK's most distinctive and cherished landscapes. They play a key role in promoting and protecting the countryside, which is a main thrust of the recently published CPRE Northamptonshire branch strategy.

Although living in a county which is clearly full of beautiful places, we have always found it strange that it's bereft of any nationally protected landscapes such as National Parks, greenbelts and indeed AONBs. For this reason we were keen to engage you, our members and supporters, to help develop the case to secure an AONB for Northamptonshire.

The email, sent out in late February this

year, generated one of the largest responses we have ever had. We received lots of nominations for possible contenders for AONB designation, as well as many replies simply supporting the idea and providing encouragement.

Many suggestions referenced the Northamptonshire Uplands, the Nene valley, and the Welland valley. The woods of Weekley and Fermyn received a mention as did the forests of Salcey and Rockingham, and areas around Alderton, Aldwinckle, Badby and Kilmarsch.

Unfortunately it is not our decision. A process needs to be followed, with Natural England the sole organisation that

can designate an AONB and then only after local authority agreement has been secured as part of this process.

To ensure we follow the right steps, at the April Trustee meeting it was decided that the next stage should be for our Chairman Paul Parsons to contact the relevant officials at the new Unitary Authorities to share our enthusiasm for an AONB designation, to find out if any work on AONB status was currently happening within the County and to also ascertain their appetite for collaboration with us.

Over the coming months we will update you on the progress being made.

Like many other counties in the UK, Northamptonshire has a litter problem. Whether it is the motorway, slip roads, A-roads, B-roads, country lanes, roundabouts or parks, litter has been a concern in Northamptonshire for a number of years and it has only been getting worse. It seems as though the

village community litter picks and encouraged primary schools to feature the subject in their teaching. In addition, the wider world has begun to take more notice of the environmental impact of modern consumerism. Many are now saying that enough is enough. Local residents across the county have now

pick groups that feed into the umbrella group. Already, and in such a short space of time, the group has recorded over 17,500 bags of litter collected in and around Northamptonshire since the start of the year, has over 2,400 members and has galvanised a large section of the public to don hi-viz jackets (many of



The Rise of the Northants Litter Wombles - David Baker



ban on single use plastic bags has had little effect, with drinks cans, coffee cups and plastic bottles continuing to make up the largest proportion of litter. A lack of accountability and responsibility on the part of the general public, significant funding cuts by councils at all levels and the imposition of a myriad of agencies with differing responsibilities and oversight - with their own lack of accountability - have all contributed to this blight on our wonderful county and its environment.

In Northamptonshire, we at CPRE have been campaigning on litter for many years. We have fostered traditional

taken the matter into their own hands and decided to do something about it under the umbrella of the recently established **Northants Litter Wombles Facebook Group**.

The group was established in January of this year and comprises members of the public *"who care about their environment and who are passionate about making a difference"*, with the stated aim *"to raise awareness of the litter issue and to encourage folk to go out there and clear up their local areas."* The Facebook Group has generated a huge amount of interest and now comprises about 40 "wombling" litter

which were donated by CPRE (Northamptonshire) and clean up the county.

CPRE Northamptonshire is in touch with the group to explore opportunities to work together to make Northamptonshire a cleaner and litter-free environment for all to enjoy. Whilst litter picking by the public should never replace, or be seen as a substitute for, the responsibilities of the local councils, the work of the Wombles is an excellent example of how like-minded members of the Community can come together so that we can all enjoy our green and pleasant land!

Why Warehousing?

- Alan Mayes

As you drive around Northamptonshire you may ask that question. With major road and rail links running north/south and (in the case of roads) east/west as well, our county is in a pivotal area for distribution throughout the country. In many cases the land used for these large structures is allocated at a strategic level, that is when the Core Strategies for North and South/West Northamptonshire were drawn up over 10 years ago. Although, in some cases they were opposed at that time, the allocations were approved and carried forward into the Local Plan allocations for employment land.

CPRE Northamptonshire has been approached over the past year by concerned groups in various parts of the county, where planning applications have been lodged for large warehouse developments, for example Weekley Hall Woods near Kettering and the A43 and A5 approaches to Towcester. In certain cases, the policy adopted with the land allocation

calls for a mix of employment uses, which do not all require large scale warehousing. It is at this level that challenges can be made against planning applications weighted in favour of warehousing. Sadly, in certain instances, land which was not even allocated in the Core Strategies has been granted permission for warehousing, such as Cowthick Pastures on the edge of Corby and the Rail/Freight interchange adjacent to junction 15 of the M1.

With the establishment of the two unitary authorities, the Core Strategies in both the North and the West will be coming up for review within the next year. At this time a vigilant eye will be needed to check all land allocated for employment uses, that may end up as warehousing applications.

Warehousing needs to go somewhere. Sites that do not interfere with wide vistas and which can be appropriately landscaped may be acceptable. Over-provision needs to be checked and account taken of available brownfield sites - areas of disused warehousing that could be appropriately redeveloped.