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# OUTLOOK

July 2016

The newsletter of the Northamptonshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England

## CPRE Northamptonshire's Countryside Design Guide will be launched in September

For the countryside to prosper at a time when there is considerable pressure in the county for expansion, some new development in the villages and small market towns is important. The new CPRE Northamptonshire Design Guide seeks to encourage the right kind of building in suitable locations so that our distinctive vernacular style is maintained. The text, amply supported by illustrations and diagrams, shows how to assess the existing character and settlement pattern, and indicates details of building design that will enhance rather than clash with the existing buildings.

We hope that it will be highly useful to those involved with producing Local Neighbourhood Plans, to Parish

Councillors assessing the details of planning applications in their area, to developers, both large and small, who wish to build on sites adjacent to existing vernacular buildings, and to remind planning officers of the important details which give the buildings their local character.

After the official launch of the guide on the 12th September we shall be distributing the Guide to those actively involved in these issues.

- David Edsall



## 90 years of CPRE - yesterday, today and tomorrow

In celebrations of the foundation of CPRE in 1926 a joint conference was held by CPRE East Midlands and the East of England on 6<sup>th</sup> July at Peterborough, attended by a number of Northamptonshire members. During the day the keynote speaker, Dame Fiona Reynolds, cut a celebratory birthday

cake and CPRE Communications and Information Officer Oliver Hilliam introduced his recent CPRE book '22 Ideas That Saved The English Countryside'.

The day concluded with an award ceremony at which David Edsall from CPRE Northamptonshire was presented with a CPRE long service medal for his work with the East Midlands Regional Group and CPRE Northamptonshire. We offer our congratulations too.



## Rail Central between Blisworth and Milton Malsor: CPRE's role in the consultation

- Steve Batterby

CPRE has been registered as a "technical consultee" for phase 2 of the statutory consultation about the Rail Central proposal for a new Strategic Freight Rail Interchange between Blisworth and Milton Malsor. The planning application is expected to be for 743,200 sq metres (8 million sq feet) of storage and distribution buildings, ancillary buildings and associated infrastructure.

Rail Central will comprise a "Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project" which means that there is a special planning procedure that must be followed. The inclusion of CPRE as a technical consultee ensures that our

views have to be considered in the planning process. The precise time-scale is not yet clear but phase 2 of the consultation will probably be during the winter of 2016/17.



*Part of the site of the proposed development between Blisworth and Milton Malsor*

Not surprisingly, this very large proposed development has proved very controversial. We are therefore hoping to hold a meeting for CPRE members, including local Parish Councils, to discuss the process, the technical proposals and our emerging views. It will give an opportunity for our members to provide local knowledge so that our response will be better informed. We hope to invite members in the area affected when the technical details of the scheme become available, so "watch this space"!

## Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards 2016/17



The Carlsberg UK Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards for 2016/17 have been launched, for what is expected to be the best year yet. The event was held at Mercedes AMG High Performance Powertrains in Brixworth. The awards celebrate all that is great about local produce and drink. CPRE Northamptonshire believes that a healthy rural economy leads to good countryside protection. Once again we will work together with commercial sponsors Weetabix to find the Weetabix Local Food Hero of the Year.

## Autumn Planning Roadshow 2016

Our next Planning Roadshow will be held on 27th October at 6pm at Great Houghton Village Hall. Our theme will be Strategic Planning and we will be pleased to welcome Andrew Longley who is Head of the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.

This event is aimed at Parish Councillors and Clerks and will give an overview of strategic planning in Northamptonshire. There will also be an opportunity to hear more about the new CPRE Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide and copies will be available at this event.

For details of the Planning Roadshow please contact [Sue.Baylis@CPRENthants.org.uk](mailto:Sue.Baylis@CPRENthants.org.uk).

- Alan Mayes



## Recent prize-winners

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| February: | Mary Shirville of Cotterstock £30, Sue Baylis of Gringley £20            |
| March:    | Jonathan Charlton-Jones of Geddington £35, Kate Harrison of Barnes £25   |
| April:    | Mary Shirville of Cotterstock £35, Tyler Clifton of Holcot £25           |
| May:      | Fenella Charlton-Jones of Geddington £35, Nigel Earle of Northampton £25 |
| June:     | Ann Craske of Gretton £35, Robin Jones of Brixworth £25                  |

Congratulations to the litter heroes of Northamptonshire. Throughout the spring, communities endeavored to make our county look even

and what they planned to spend the prize money on, if they were successful. They also sent six very good photographs, which

Brigstock told of the number of people involved, the amount collected and the community spirit shown within the village. Towcester has a 'Tidy-Up' project, which litter picks in areas of the town not covered by the Town or District council. We felt that it was good to recognize that community action is just as important in market towns as in villages.



A group of litter pickers from Little Houghton

## Litter Heroes Awards

smarter and a large number sent in a report and photos to the CPRE competition.

The first prize of £500 was awarded to Little Houghton. They submitted an impressive report which told the story of how the day was planned, how the school worked on litter posters, how local volunteers were organised, what was collected, which village groups participated

beautifully illustrated their hard work and achievement.

There were three runners up, Blisworth, Brigstock and Towcester, each receiving prizes of £150.

In Blisworth the pick started as a school poster project and was then extended to other villagers, who picked the main roads. The children not only picked litter, but discussed the problem too.

Prize money may be spent on any community-related project in the local area of the winning group, not necessarily litter related.

Highly commended certificates were awarded to

entries from Bozeat, Charlton, Crick, Grendon, Loddington, Sudborough and Yarwell.



## Highway advertising

- Gill Pawson's view

During the West Northamptonshire committee's recent discussions regarding litter, we strayed onto the subject of advertising posters. These posters are stuck onto 'mobile' trailers and positioned at the edge of fields in locations highly visible from the A14, M1 and M6. Because the display units are classed as mobile it seems that Local Planning Authorities can do little to require their removal.

Unless we want to see a proliferation of these units, I think that the time has come for national lobbying to get some changes to the Advertising Regulations. It should be possible to devise a new clause to prohibit any advertising within a set distance, such as 200m, of any

highway used by motor vehicles. A new clause could also take away any established use that individual signs might be able to claim because they have been in place for many years.

The justification for change would primarily be to improve highway safety, but would have the significant beneficial effect of tidying up the appearance of the countryside.

I intend to lobby National Office of CPRE on this matter. If you are prepared to support this action and especially if you have any good examples of the adverts that are cluttering our countryside, please will you let me know by sending me details via an email to [info@CPRENthants.org.uk](mailto:info@CPRENthants.org.uk)



## Rockingham horse trials

CPRE's stand at The Rockingham horse trials on 20th May proved a great success. It both raised the profile of CPRE Northamptonshire and realised an excellent income. Thanks to David Laing for his generous donation which allowed the event to happen. David and Jane Charlton-Jones were thanked for their hard work in organising the CPRE Ball and we recognise the contribution of the many members of the north district who manned it during the three days of the trials.



On 1st April 2016 the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee published its report on the Government's consultation on proposed changes to National Planning Policy. The report analysed and commented on the evidence collected by the committee, which included oral evidence from Shaun Spiers, Chief

*brownfield register and a mechanism to ensure that brownfield is taken up before greenfield.*

*CPRE National Office - yes - there is enough brownfield land for 950,000 new homes according to a CPRE study. Development of brownfield is a good regenerator for existing run-down communities.*

sites, which are sites that should only be developed as affordable housing - no guarantee that starter homes would stay as such.

**Question 19 - Should local communities have the opportunity to allocate sites for small scale starter homes development in the Greenbelt through neighbourhood plans?**

*CPRE Northants - Greenbelt should be protected at all costs*

*CPRE National Office - See combined response with question 20.*

**Question 20 - Should planning policy be amended to allow redevelopment of brownfield sites in the Greenbelt for starter homes through a more flexible approach to assessing the impact of openness?**

*CPRE Northants - No - only where existing structures can be converted - otherwise they should revert to agricultural use.*

*CPRE National Office - Do not support either 19 or 20. CPRE already has significant concern over the number of LAs proposing development in the Greenbelt and the Government are doing nothing about it.*

## The National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

- Peter Hopkins

Executive of CPRE. Shaun spoke about the proposal to introduce a housing delivery test for local authorities. He said:

*"When I talk to CPRE's branches they regard the system as totally developer-led. One in six appeals, even where the local authority has a five-year land supply, is going with the developer against the local authority. They've got Gladman and firms like that buzzing around lots of villages putting in speculative applications here, there and everywhere. They certainly don't regard it as a system that's stacked against developers, where the solution is to arm-twist local authorities to allocate more sites and give more permissions. So a housing delivery test, yes, but a test on the house-builders."*

Alan Mayes submitted a response to the NPPF consultation on behalf of CPRE Northamptonshire. Here is an extract of our responses to the questions asked, set alongside those of CPRE National Office:

**Question 7 - Do you consider that it would be beneficial to strengthen policy on the development of brownfield land for housing? Are there any unintended impacts that we should take into account?**

*CPRE Northants - yes, but with a requirement for all LAs to maintain a*

**Question 10 - Do you consider that the NPPF should set out that LAs should put in place specific positive Local Plan policies for assessing applications for development on small sites not allocated in the Local Plan?**

*CPRE Northants - Such policies would provide loopholes for developers at Appeal.*

*CPRE National Office - Should only apply to brownfield sites and should not encourage development adjacent to settlement boundaries.*

**Question 13 - What evidence would you suggest could be used to justify retention of land for commercial development or similar use? Should there be a fixed time limit on land retention for commercial use?**

*CPRE Northants - Concern that loss of commercial land could lead to a community being unsustainable.*

*CPRE National Office - Broadly agrees but should not lead to unsustainability.*

**Question 17 - Should rural exception sites be used to deliver starter homes in rural areas? If so should Local Planning Authorities have the flexibility to require local connection tests?**

*CPRE Northants - Rural exception sites can lead to poor design on sites that would otherwise not be available for development - it would not be appropriate to increase possibility by broadening the definition.*

*CPRE National Office - The question misses the point of rural exception*

### Dates for your diary

#### ■ CPRE Northamptonshire AGM and presentation of the Litter Awards 2016

12 September, 4.30 pm  
The Lings Wood Environmental Centre, The Wildlife Trust, Billing NN6 8BE

#### ■ Launch of the Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide

12 September, 7.00 pm  
Stanwick Lakes

#### ■ Planning Roadshow

27 October, 6.00 pm  
Great Houghton Village Hall

Tickets available from Sue Baylis  
[Sue.baylis@CPRENorthants.org.uk](mailto:Sue.baylis@CPRENorthants.org.uk)