

OUTLOOK

November 2018

The newsletter of CPRE Northamptonshire

The current planning model is broken - reform is urgently needed

Shaun Spiers, the former Chief Executive of CPRE, has recently published this book, which argues that the beauty of the English countryside is compatible with reasonable growth if it is well planned and well designed.

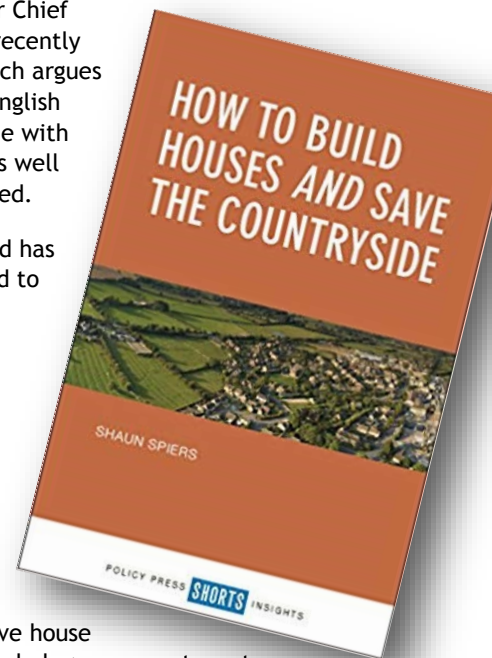
We all know that England has a housing crisis. We need to build many more new homes to house our growing population, but house building is controversial, particularly when it involves the loss of countryside.

Addressing both sides of this critical debate, Spiers argues that to drive house building on the scale needed, government must strike a contract with civil society. In return for public support and acceptance of the loss of some countryside, it must guarantee high quality, affordable developments in the right locations. Simply imposing development, as recent governments of all political persuasions have attempted, will not work.

Focusing on house building and conservation politics in England, Spiers uses his considerable experience and extensive research to demonstrate why the current model doesn't work, and why there needs to be both planning reform and a more active role for the state, including local government.

To that end he urges a new national conversation on housing and planning. This may sound lame, but the author argues that it is hard to exaggerate the sense of disillusion felt by those active in planning. They feel both that the odds are stacked against them and that those in authority are in denial about the failures of the system. When politicians insist that the countryside is safe with them, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, it is hard to have an honest conversation.

This is an important contribution to one of the most important social policy debates of our time.



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View from the old railway line, Denford
- courtesy of Suzanne Bowen

Community Awards 2018

The Community Awards scheme is run in alternate years to our popular biennial Town and Country Awards.

It focuses on community projects that have some impact on the quality of the environment in which we live. This year we had thirteen entries from across the county of which six have been shortlisted by our three judges. Those shortlisted are;

- Café Doris at Spratton Church
- Titchmarsh village shop
- Sulgrave village shop
- Weedon Bec Community Orchard
- The Friends of Eastfield Park Northampton
- Geddington Brickyard Community Garden

The wide and diverse range of entries will be judged during November. The awards will be presented at Carols by Candle Light at St Johns Church Cranford on December 9 at 4pm. Do come along to see who has been successful.

The National Planning Policy Framework

Alan Mayes

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published the Government response to the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework consultation on the 24 July. This was after almost a year of consultations in which CPRE, both locally and nationally, tried to influence the new planning policies that will shape our environment for the next decade or so, in particular those policies in favour of preserving our precious countryside. CPRE National Office's comment on the new document states:

'despite a promise to build attractive and better designed homes in areas where they

are needed, the NPPF continues to favour the delivery of any development, rather than development that meets communities needs, respects the environment and adheres to policies in the NPPF other than those which deal with housing delivery'.

Some gains have been made in terms of brownfield land use and the protection of those areas with special designations such as areas of outstanding natural beauty, of which we have none in Northamptonshire, and greenbelt. It looks as if there will be some challenging times ahead particularly where planning applications are taken to appeal.

If you share our beliefs about protecting the precious heritage of our beautiful countryside, please consider leaving a gift to CPRE Northamptonshire in your will. Your legacy, no matter what the amount, will help us ensure that developments are sensitive to the countryside, and that housing sprawl is kept in check. With your help, there will be a green,

tranquil and beautiful England for tomorrow's children to enjoy.

Yes, it's about pushing up daisies - much better than tarmac and concrete! Talk to your solicitor about changing your will to leave a gift to **CPRE Northamptonshire** and specify our **charity registration number, which**

is 1116687.

Whatever the amount, your legacy will ensure a better protected Northamptonshire countryside. For further information, please contact us on **01604 780000**, or write to us at The Wheatsheaf, Spring Hill Farm, Harborough Road, Pitsford, Northampton NN6 9AA

**Consider
leaving a
legacy**



Winners

January to March:

Peter Pollak of Sulgrave £50
Miranda Spooner of Pytchley £30

Muriel Gardner of Byfield £40
Alasdair Charlton-Jones of Geddington £30

April to June:

Wendy Jordan of Crick £60
Oliver Scarfe of Old £30

Brian Skittrall of Bozeat £40
Robin Jones of Brixworth £30

July to September:

Susan Banner of Upper Heyford £60
Sienna Watkins of Holcot £30

Gayle Robinson of Cranford £40
Paul Hayter of Charlton £30

Many of you will, I am sure, have heard of the Purpose Project and the approval of CPRE's Purpose by the National Trustee Board.

they might apply. Each group defined what it thought to be important and what they thought was missing. The overriding feeling was that everything was actually

Purpose, Values and Behaviours

Bill Heelan

It was important to understand the practical implications so work was undertaken to evaluate, define and agree the 'Values and Behaviours' that will guide how CPRE works in the future. To that end, on 14 August 2018, I travelled to Birmingham to represent the branch at a workshop run by National Office in conjunction with our partners, the Good Agency for the East and West Midlands areas.

The journey by train provided me the opportunity to reflect on the effects that development has in all its various guises. It reinforced to me the need to be involved in some way and the need for organisations, such as CPRE, to be the conscience of the nation, striving to nurture England's precious and finite countryside, for the benefit of all.

The workshop was, I felt, a very worthwhile endeavour. We formed two groups and discussed an initial eight values, explaining our perspective on them and how

always about people and how the behaviour of a person or group can have a positive or negative effect on the cohesion and effectiveness of any group or organisation. This was uppermost in our thoughts and deliberations throughout. The most challenging aspect was to reduce the original eight values and behaviours to the four that we considered to be the most important.

Once all of the workshops were completed the values and behaviours were reviewed by the Network Group, the National Group and the Strategic Steering Group. They in turn recommended them to the National Trustee Board, where the values: **Open, Connected, Trusted and Inspirational**, were finally approved for adoption.

The final outcome is, I believe, a very good basis for the way forward. The challenge will be to ensure that both individually and as a branch, we understand and adopt the values and strive to display the behaviours.

South Northants needs you

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

If you would like more information please call
Sally Hanrahan - 01604 780000
or Sally.Hanrahan@cprenorthants.org.uk

Sulby Gardens event

A warm summer's evening in a quintessential English garden is difficult to beat and that is what more than 60 of us enjoyed in August at Sulby Gardens. The hall was demolished some 70 years ago but 12 acres of garden remain. They are a tribute to the imagination and devotion of their owner, Alison Lowe. The gardens lie in the heart of the countryside on the Northamptonshire/Leicestershire border between Welford and Husbands Bosworth. They are a highly successful exercise in studied informality with fruit trees, a vegetable garden, a variety of ornamental shrubs and trees merging seamlessly with a woodland walk along a narrow stream past several ponds and leading ultimately to a large wild flower meadow - such a relaxing place to be and a splendid haven for wildlife.



Yvonne Dean relaxing
in the evening sun
- taken by Rosemarie Jarvis



Rosemarie Jarvis with
her daughter, Maya
- taken by Yvonne Dean

Pimm's and canapés were the natural accompaniment to our visit and Alison Lowe, to whom our grateful thanks are due, was there to explain how a neglected space had become what you see today. Thanks to the efforts of our fundraising team the event realised over £1,100.

Truly a win-win occasion.

The results of judging and the presentation of awards in our 2018 Litter Heroes competition just missed the print deadline for the last edition of Outlook. So, a little belatedly, here are the results and a précis of the judges' comments:

The **first prize of £500** went to the always impressive litter team in **Blisworth** - a commendable ad-hoc



Blisworth residents and school children gather after a successful litter pick

group of volunteers from the village primary school, the parish council and their year-round squad of citizen litter-pickers. Litter Heroes has become a major part of village life, with extremely good participation from the primary school and a well organised publicity machine which spread the message most effectively.

2018 Litter Heroes results

Brigstock was a runner-up with a **prize of £150**. Both the WI and primary school were heavily involved, and again a considerable level of organisation was evident. We particularly liked the "adopt a telephone pole" initiative.

Cranford have entered the competition many times previously, without success - until this year, when they were also runners-up with a **prize of £150**. Their entry showed that they collected a huge quantity of rubbish: there were many filled bags and fly-tipped items.

Little Houghton took the remaining runner-up **prize of £150**. They sent us a well-prepared report showing some excellent ideas: the judges liked their life-size bear "Tidy Ted".

Kilsby C of E Primary School, in conjunction with the Kilsby Parish Council, were worthy winners of the **£150 special prize** for the best entry from a school or youth group team. They mounted a full campaign in the village, raising awareness of the issue amongst village children.

It is logistically impossible for CPRE to attend every pick, so emailed entries

are the only basis on which to adjudge winners. It has become apparent that some highly commendable litter-picking efforts, sustained over the years, occasionally get overlooked. This can be unfair. Consequently, the judges decided that there should be a Special Award for Consistent Support of our litter campaign, comprising a **framed certificate and a cheque for £100**, which this year went to **Loddington**.

Both regular entrants and first timers took the 2018 Awards and cash prizes, and as a result their respective villages benefited enormously - environmentally and in terms of community.

What are your village's plans for spring 2019?

Date for your diary

♦ Carols at Cranford and supper

Sunday 9 December 4.00 pm , together with the Community Awards

By kind permission of Sir John and Lady Robinson



County's Food Heroes revealed

The 'Weetabix Local Food Hero of the Year' is just one of the categories in the Carlsberg UK Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards. They were set up ten years ago to celebrate all that is great about local food and drink, to recognise excellence within the county's dining venues and to give a public pat on the back to all those who work so hard within the culinary sector.

Sponsored by the Burton Latimer-based breakfast cereal company and supported by CPRE Northamptonshire, this category invites nominations from the public for those individuals or businesses which go further than most in promoting local food or keeping down food miles. The plethora of nominations from all corners of the county made the process of choosing the finalists a particularly tough one for the panel of judges.

CPRE Northamptonshire's Education and Development Manager, Sally Hanrahan, explained, "*The joy of this award is that those who are nominated are quietly going about their work, not really appreciating the significant impact they're having on maintaining the value of local food in our rural communities*".

The results, along with those in all of the categories in this year's awards, will be announced at the awards dinner at Northampton's Royal & Derngate on Wednesday 7 November, in the presence of special guest, chef, writer, restaurateur and Masterchef winner, Thomasina Miers.

This year's finalist are:

Natasha Caton of Sol Laug Havens CIC, Moulton
Green Acres Rural Enterprise Centre, Staverton
Dean Hoddle of Silverstone Circuits, Silverstone
Stan Roberston of Project 16:15, Northampton
Squisito Butchers and Provisions, Yelvertoft
Chris Twell of Neneview Dairy, Stanwick