



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Outlook

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OUR AIMS WHAT CPRE NORTHANTS IS ALL ABOUT

Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of “Our Aims”. Please look at it closely. It is a new edition of the document which summarises what we, in CPRE Northants, set out to do. Our aims relate closely to the policy of CPRE nationally but they also have a local flavour. That is one of the strengths of our organisation.

The key section is the first part, which has been revised following discussion in the Executive Committee. It highlights our central aims: to protect and enhance the character and vitality of the countryside in Northamptonshire for the benefit of all. Everything we do should support this.

It then identifies four specific ways in which we will try to meet these central aims. The first, **climate change**, is new. It recognises that global warming is going to change rural England whatever we do, maybe dramatically; our policies should take account of that fact. For example we should advocate policies to reduce carbon emissions, and we should be vigilant to protect wildlife and the ecosystems on which mankind ultimately depends. Secondly we should put more emphasis on **collaboration with farmers** and land managers whose role is crucial for the long-term welfare of rural England. Thirdly we should encourage **access** to the countryside for everyone, but do it in a way which avoids damaging the beauty and tranquillity which make rural England so precious. Fourthly our attitude to **development**, which is a major focus of CPRE’s energy, should be guided by the principles listed.

All in all, our aims should be positive. Rural England needs friends. Let us do all we can to help.

Paul Hayter

YOUR VIEWS

RESULTS OF NORTH DISTRICT QUESTIONNAIRE

All members of the CPRE in North Northamptonshire were sent a CPRE Christmas Card in December 2007, enclosing a questionnaire giving them the opportunity to express their views on the CPRE's priorities for the future – Vision 2026. Some 150 cards were sent out and 32 replies were received (a response rate of over 20%).

Clear priorities are the preservation of Green Belts and minimising the use of good agricultural land for developments. Overall, Green Belts scored 127 and preserving good agricultural land scored 121 points – very little difference. Protecting farmland and working landscapes was third with 90 points, in spite of achieving only one first place.

Other issues that members raised were litter, flooding, campaigning for the review and amendment of the Government's housing targets, noise pollution from roads and airports, light pollution, minimising the use of good land for landfill and waste disposal, improving design standards on new buildings in the countryside, saving village Post Offices and shops, keeping huge lorries off minor roads, empty properties before new housing, second homes and questioning increased population growth.



The full results are on our website www.CPRENorthants.org, News & Events page.

Nancy Jefferis

Joint Chairman of North District

RENEWABLE ENERGY REVIEW

BRIAN SKITTRALL'S VIEW OF RECENT GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENTS

The Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (formerly the DTI) is launching a review of Government renewable energy strategy. This is timely because the current policies are having some unforeseen consequences. The original idea was simple - produce electricity from renewable sources, burn less fossil fuel and so reduce carbon emissions. Electricity production accounts for over a third of national carbon emissions and so the potential carbon savings are huge.

Renewable electricity generation cannot directly compete with fossil fuels and so it is subsidised through the Renewables Obligation scheme. This effectively increases the value of electricity generated from renewable sources. There are already moves afoot to offer different levels of subsidy to different technologies, but current proposals will not address the disproportionate profits available to some technologies – particularly onshore windfarms.

This review is an opportunity to rebalance the support for different technologies, to reflect their desirability as a source of renewable energy. There are several factors that should be considered, not least the actual level of carbon savings (deducting carbon costs), the local impact of the project, the reliability and usefulness of the output and the level of support needed to make it viable.

It is also recognised that there needs to be a mix of technologies – particularly with a long term target of 60% of electricity from renewables. If we continue with the current proportion of wind power, we will end up with a power system that collapses when there is a high pressure region sitting over the country – weather that produces the coldest weather in winter and the hottest weather in summer. At the very least

there needs to be a cap on the proportion of technologies that cannot be relied upon to deliver electricity when it is needed.

We need an intelligent system that promotes genuine carbon savings, ensures a spread of technologies and recognises the desirability and wider impact of projects. Let us hope that this review will deliver the solution that we need. To participate in the review, send an e-mail to renewable.energy@berr.gsi.gov.uk.

Brian Skittrall

OUR LOCAL FOODS AND FOOD-MILES CAMPAIGN WE NOW HAVE LOTTERY FUNDING

CPRE Northants has received a £7,900 grant from the lottery funding programme 'Awards For All'. It will cover the cost of this important project.

It will be an awareness-raising education project about the importance of reducing food-miles and the impact of excessive food-miles on local communities. It will be aimed at primary age school children, their teachers and after school clubs.



A Primary Activity Pack will be produced with fact sheets - how to map my food miles, why are food miles important to me? how my school/club can reduce its food-miles. Also included in the pack will be information of how to grow your own fruit and vegetables, as well as quizzes and games.

Information on the project can be found on the CPRE Northants website.

Sally Hanrahan

HOW MANY DISTRICTS WOULD WORK BEST? WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS?

Last year we completed the merger of the Corby, Wellingborough and Kettering District with the East Northants District of CPRE Northants. It had been mooted a number of times over the years, but there was always a concern that we might be losing local connections; Oundle is a long way from Wellingborough and villages close to Peterborough are quite different to villages close to Leicester.

Nevertheless, after a meeting to consult with members, the merger went ahead; by any measure it has been a success. We now have more active volunteers in the north of the county, it is our only District with a growing membership, meetings are now well attended and therefore there have been more people to help with the recent Examination in Public and other important planning issues.

Fly tipping: littering on an industrial scale

If discarded drinks containers and food wrappers spoil the countryside, what about lorry loads of builders waste?

If you know of a piece of Northamptonshire farmland, roadside verge or open countryside where there are old cars, tyres, piles of refuse sacks and the like, please send photos to info@CPRENorthants.org. If you don't have camera, just let us know the location.

Likewise, a merger of the South and West Districts has been proposed several times, the first occasion being before the establishment of the West Northants Development Corporation, the boundary of which almost coincides with our two Districts. The most onerous planning work now on our plate is responding to the massive developments which are always handled by WNDC rather than South Northants and Daventry District Councils. Additionally these two local planning authorities, together with Northampton Borough, have formed a Joint Planning Unit to address all but the most local planning issues.

Currently at the planning stage are major developments around Daventry, inside Northampton, Towcester and Brackley; the county's largest project is

at Silverstone. The sad fact is that we have been able to do little or nothing on many of these developments.

It is clear that we have to look again at how we organise our planning work in the south and west of the county: we cannot continue as we are at present.

West District's committee is currently inactive. In the South District, Jo Rowling chairs an experienced committee which is working well on social events and local planning matters; this work is invaluable and must continue. We have never had a functioning District in Northampton.

What we need is a group of knowledgeable volunteers to supplement the valiant efforts of John Day in his current joint roles as West District chairman and Technical Secretary. We must do justice to the examination of the major strategic proposals that urgently need CPRE scrutiny and match more effectively the geographical spread of the WNDC. Our aim is a pool of technical expertise and a vigorous volunteer corps in the south of the county, to match that in the north.

So, should we follow the excellent northern example, pool our resources and endeavour to produce the same success in the south: consolidate and then recruit? Or does the desire to retain more local boundaries override these considerations?

The Executive Committee has discussed this proposed merger, and is endorsing it. Nevertheless, we are very interested in your views: if you would like to comment on this proposal, particularly to share your ideas on how to respond to the development challenges in South and West Northants, please do so before the end of April. Send your thoughts to us at either info@CPRENorthants.org or PO Box 7939, Market Harborough LE16 9XW. Thank you.

Peter Hopkins

DESIGN AWARDS 2008 THIS YEAR'S FOCUS IS ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Have you made your nomination yet? Do you know of a well designed building or other project in the county that is worthy of wider recognition? We would love to hear from you: we are looking for ideas from a wide cross section of the county.

Full details on how to nominate are in the leaflet recently sent to members, which is also available on our website www.CPRENorthants.org.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday May 9th 2008 at 6.30pm – CPRE South Northants Summer Party at Charlocks Farm, Abthorpe near Silverstone

Thursday May 15th 2008 at 7.00 pm – CPRE Northants Annual General Meeting at Great Houghton Village Hall

Friday May 30th 2008 at 7.30 pm - Annual Ball at Highgate House, Creaton. This year we move back to the traditional summer date

Thursday December 4th 2008 at 7.30 pm – Presentation of Design Awards 2008 and Carols by Candlelight at Cranford Hall

FARMERS' MARKETS IN NORTHANTS

BRACKLEY Market Place
3rd Saturday of each month
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

OUNDE The Market Place
2nd Saturday of each month
8:30 am to 1:30pm

DAVENTRY High Street
1st Saturday of each month
9:00 am to 1:30 pm

TOWCESTER
Richmond Road car park
2nd Friday of each month
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

HIGHAM FERRERS
Market Square
Last Saturday Monthly
9:00 am to 2:00 pm

WELLINGBOROUGH
Market Place
Last Thursday of each month
9:00 am to 1:30 pm

KETTERING
Wicksteed Park
3rd Sunday of each month
8:30 am to 1:30pm

