



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Outlook

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Stop the Drop More villages than ever have been litter picking this spring



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The county's Litter Heroes have been out with a vengeance during this year's Stop the Drop campaign!

Over recent years, spring has become the season for spring-cleaning the roadside verges in and around the villages of Northamptonshire.

Community litter picking evokes a strange mixture of emotions: it is an enjoyable social event, which reinforces a village's community spirit and undoubtedly makes a place more attractive. Nevertheless, you are left wondering – why on earth would people treat our community as a dumping ground? The only answer to this conundrum is – encourage people to join an organised litter pick and you are helping to spread the anti-litter message.



Organisers have reported to us that many children have been among the pickers, and this really helps to get the message out. There have also been many octogenarians – and all ages in between.



Some of the comments received from litter pick organisers:

"It is a different-but-fun social occasion and a great learning opportunity for children. Once they have helped collect other people's rubbish they will always think twice before dropping litter themselves.....Who needs a BA in Social Anthropology? Operation Spring Clean teaches you more about your fellow man than years of study ever could! The stuff that people throw into the hedgerows of our countryside is jaw dropping" (Bringtons & Nobottle)

"It was obvious from the items we found in the ditches that the culprits are outsiders who have indiscriminately filled them with their rubbish, having no regard or respect whatsoever for our countryside" (Little Houghton)

"We had a good 'pick' and the village now looks lovely and tidy" (Hellidon)

"My cat appeared at one stage, but had to be banned as she insisted on running backwards and forwards across the road" (Syresham)

Some of the bizarre litter items reported by enthusiastic pickers: a large unopened canister of soup; some speakers; an old sign reading "Northants County Council - NO LITTER - PENALTY £100"; a salt and pepper pot; a snakes and ladder game; one dead toad and fox; a quilt cover; part of a speed camera; an unopened pack of beer; hard alcohol containers; morphine based over-the-counter drugs; pornographic literature; endless fast food wrappers and "stuff that shouldn't be mentioned before the 9 o'clock watershed"!

With 25 million tonnes of rubbish dumped in the UK each year, it was no surprise that the popular BBC One documentary Countryfile has featured this issue. On March 6 John Craven investigated what is being done to clamp down on the litter louts and fly-tippers who are ruining our countryside, and we expect the programme to give even more coverage to litter in the coming months.

Litter Heroes Awards 2011

Carlsberg UK have again sponsored the CPRE Northamptonshire Litter Heroes Awards. There is still time to enter your village: email the best 2 or 3 photographs to us (info@CPRENorthants.org), with a few sentences telling us what happened at your litter pick. We always like to hear about people of all ages waking up to the evils of littering and showing that they want to do something as a community to address the problem.

Judging for the Awards will consider the number of people from all sections of the community who have taken part in the pick. Yes, we like to see high bag counts, but this does not mean that the larger villages – and those with the greatest litter problems – will necessarily have an advantage over smaller villages, and those that are winning the battle against the louts. The Awards will be presented at our summer event, which is being held at Fermyn Woods Hall on Friday 15 July at 7.30 pm. An invitation to this event was enclosed with this newsletter.

50/50 prize winners to date



January: Clementine Harrison of Barnes, London (£25) and Sir John Greenaway of Lois Weedon (£15)
February: Michael Aubrey of Oundle (£25), Clare Pollak of Sulgrave (£15) and Sally Hanrahan of Holcot (£10)
March: Stuart Dickinson of Lincs (£30), Christopher Kay of Pitsford (£15), Gayle Robinson of Cranford (£10)
 Make sure that you and your family are stakeholders when the next random numbers are generated at the end of April. It will cost just £8 per stake for the remainder of 2011: click here, visit www.CPRENorthants.org, email 5050@CPRENorthants.org, phone 01858 43313 or see the enclosed application form. Remember, half of each stake goes to the prizewinners, half to protecting the Northamptonshire countryside.

Three Shires bluebell walk

You are welcome to join our guided walk and lunch on Wednesday May 4. The walk follows the Three Shires Way from Bozeat to Lavendon, passing through Nun Wood and alongside Three Shire Wood (both of which will hopefully have bluebells in flower) and through the meeting point of Northants, Beds and Bucks. We will stop for lunch at the Green Man at Lavendon (on the main A428), before returning to Bozeat.

The cost is £10, including pub lunch. For reservations contact Brian on 01933 663699 or Brian.Skittrall@CPRENorthants.org.

Meet by the stile in Fir Tree Grove Bozeat (NN29 7NQ) SP907586 at 10:45am. The walk is 3½ miles each way. If anyone wishes to walk one way only, please meet at the pub at 1:00 pm and we will ferry you back to the pub from Bozeat.

Attention all golfers

The CPRE Northamptonshire Charity Golf Day will be held at Wellingborough Golf Club on July 27 - tee off is from 1.00 pm. The day includes bacon rolls and coffee on arrival, a Stableford competition over 18 holes and a three course meal at Harrowden Hall. Prizes will be awarded for best team, best individual (men and ladies), longest drive (men and ladies), nearest the pin and the straightest drive.

For further information and entry forms, contact David Charlton Jones 01536 747164 or visit our website CPRENorthants.org.

High Speed Rail News update

We encourage everyone who lives in the south west of the county, or who has an interest in the way transport should be developed in the UK, to go along to a DfT consultation exhibition on HS2 (for details, see panel).

Ask them about your local concerns, the business case and the planned running speeds.

We support the principle of high speed rail, as part of the Government's welcome vision to make rail - as opposed to road or air - the long distance transport mode of choice. However, we do have very serious concerns about the way HS2 is being planned and consulted on, as well as the impacts of the proposed route itself. Moreover, 400 kph means straight line tracks, which means no latitude in routing, and probably too much noise, without any real benefits.

We know that those who see the issue in black and white – emphatically for or vociferously against – will want to accuse us of fence sitting. But the issue does require serious thought and analysis, which has always been CPRE's approach to contentious projects which aim to consume precious greenfield countryside.

Full details of the consultation are at <http://highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk>, where you can register your views in response to the DfT's questions.

HS2 consultation

The Department for Transport will hold series of public information events at locations along the proposed route. There will be an opportunity to view the proposals and a chance to speak to the HS2 team and officials from the DfT.

Northants venues are:

Tuesday May 17: Mobile Exhibition in **Greatworth** Sports and Social Club Car Park, Helmdon Road, Greatworth OX17 2DR

Tuesday May 24: Mobile Exhibition in **Chipping Warden** Village Hall Car Park, Culworth Road, Chipping Warden, Banbury OX17 1LB

Wednesday May 25: Mobile Exhibition in **Upper Boddington** Village Hall Car Park, Warwick Road, Upper Boddington NN11 6DH

Friday and Saturday May 27 & 28: Exhibition at **Brackley** Leisure Centre, Springfield Way, Brackley NN13 6JJ

All exhibitions are open 8am - 8pm.

Local Food Hero of the year 2011/12 In search of the 'best of the best'

Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards and CPRE are working together to recognize and celebrate our Local Food Heroes. The nomination form is enclosed with this newsletter and it would be wonderful if the members of CPRE Northants enter their favourite local producer, farm shop or local shop.



The Carlsberg UK Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards 2011/12 – designed to celebrate all that is great about the county's produce and drink, dining venues and the stars of the local culinary sector – are now in full swing! This year the competition has ten categories in which to take part, including the search for the county's best products, drinks, restaurants, pubs, chefs and of

course the category with which CPRE Northamptonshire is a partner, Local Food Hero of the Year.



For more details of the Awards, including information about last year's winners and finalists, please visit www.letyourselfgrow.com/foodanddrinkawards or call Rachel at The Mallows Company on 01933 664437.

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Comments to info@CPRENorthants.org

Roadside Clutter

Necessary information - or a confusing blight?

We in CPRE Northamptonshire believe that there are far too many signs cluttering up the county's roads. Do you agree? If so, we would like to hear from you.

Of course, traffic signs are necessary in the interests of road safety. But too many signs are counterproductive, and they eventually become an eyesore, blighting the countryside. Some signs have definitely outlived their usefulness. In addition, some may even add risk to road users, by distracting drivers and/or concealing dangers. So what we would like you to do is to tell us about excessive signage on country roads in your neighbourhood, and we will take up the worst examples with the highway authority.

Twenty years ago, the village of Spratton (some 1200 residents) had a 30 mph limit with a simple speed roundel. Ten years ago, an additional village name sign was added, although this was completely unnecessary, as motorists had already passed such a sign. Six years ago, with the advent of the 20 mph limit, the monster sign (picture) appeared. All that is required under Traffic Regulations is a roundel.

We will be inviting Northamptonshire County Council to take seriously examples that we raise with them, in the spirit of the Coalition Government's "Cut the Clutter" initiative to get rid of unnecessary road signs and street furniture. We invite



Why the redundant plea to drive slowly when the law says 20mph? And why the gratuitous images of young children and stooping oldies? (Spratton, Moulton)

Planning Roadshow addresses Localism

As we go to press, Parish Councillors from all over the county have reserved their places at this year's CPRE Northamptonshire Planning Road Show on Localism (at Great Houghton Village Hall, Thursday April 14 at 6.30 for 7.00 pm – just a few places are still available – contact details for Sue Baylis are in the panel, right).

The Localism Bill could greatly assist rural communities and give them real power to protect the countryside, because it sets out to give local people a genuine role in planning for their neighbourhood. **The Localism Bill** could also open the way for developers to ride rough shod over the countryside. The proposed Neighbourhood Plans are a good idea in principle, provided local communities have the skills and resources to prepare them and they able to counter the most controversial developments. The right to appeal is not at present included in the Bill. CPRE's National Office staff is lobbying ministers and MPs on these points as the Bill works its way through Parliament, so watch this space!



Why advise HGVs that the road is unsuitable when you have just banned them? (Middleton Cheney)

members of CPRE and their friends, parish councillors and local community groups to identify traffic and other signs visible from public roads in rural areas in the county, which are unnecessary, distracting or misleading. Send details of the signs with locations and photographs and your comments, to info@CPRENorthants.org by June 30. If you have already tried to have the signs removed and failed – or succeeded – please let us know what happened.

Summer dates for your calendar

Events: Sue.Baylis@CPRENorthants.org or 01858 433136

Saturday April 16

11.00 am to 1.00 pm - exploring the grounds of Great Addington Manor. Tickets £10 for a garden tour, wine or soft drinks, canapés.

Wednesday May 4

Guided walk with Brian Skittrall through the bluebell wood from Bozeat to Lavendon - £10 including pub lunch at The Green Man. For reservations please contact 01933 663699 or Brian.Skittrall@CPRENorthants.org

Saturday May 21

West Northants supper party, with choir, at Farthinghoe. Tickets £20

Thursday May 26 - 7.00pm

CPRE Northants AGM, to be held at the Four Pears (www.thefourpears.com), Little Houghton

Friday July 15

Summer event at Fermyn Woods Hall

Wednesday July 27

Golf Day, Wellingborough Golf Club - further information from David Charlton-Jones

Tuesday October 11

Fashion Show at Cranford Hall, organized by North Northants District.