

Outlook

Number 19 Winter 2009

PEOPLE NEWS

NEW VOLUNTEERS NOW ON BOARD

The second half of 2008 has been a most successful year for recruiting new volunteers to CPRE Northamptonshire.



David Montagu-Smith

is a successful businessman from the south of the county, now the chairman of the newly merged West Northants District. As well as protecting the countryside and (clearly) mountain trekking, David is interested in aviation issues. He was confirmed as chairman at our special public meeting on 14th January (see page 2).



Helen Mandel

is a young mother who is now our specialist adviser on Access to the Countryside. She and her husband have just moved back to England and she is keen to protect the countryside from some of the unwelcome changes that have occurred while she lived abroad. Helen is very interested in local foods and is pursuing her studies part time at Moulton College.

In the last six months we have also welcomed:

- Robert Herring – an energy economist and energy efficiency expert who is now our specialist adviser on climate change
- David Banner – a farmer, landscape contractor and expert on wild flower meadows who is our specialist on farming issues
- Brian English – a chartered building surveyor and expert on design and construction techniques, who has now joined our team of technical secretaries
- Sarah Wrightson – a young researcher who will be helping us to identify new sources of funding
- Richard Trasler – an experienced printer whose skills will assist us with leaflet design

Despite adding these valuable additions to our existing team of capable volunteers, we still need more help. Do you enjoy checking the local listings of planning applications, to see who intends to build what? If you would like to contribute a few hours each month, we would be delighted to hear from you - please contact info@CPRENorthants.org or 01858

Inside this issue

- History of the CPRE in South Northants 2
- News on Awards..... 3
- News on Hedgerows..... 3
- Dates for you Diary..... 4
- News on Local Foods..... 4
- Farmers Markets 4

Stop the Drop News

Plan your spring clean litter pick

Please join our spring campaign by organising your community litter pick during the period **20th to 29th March 2009**. We want to focus as much media attention as possible on litter, and this concerted campaign will help us to do so. Lobby your Parish Council, who have received a letter from us with information on organising a litter pick. Or else, go ahead and organise your own!

More details are on our website www.CPRENorthants.org.



433136.

HISTORY OF THE CPRE IN SOUTH NORTHANTS

ANNE USHER

The South Northamptonshire CPRE Area Committee has a long and distinguished history. It was formed in the late 1960s by Lady Birkenhead as the Brackley branch of CPRE Northamptonshire, partly in response to the proposal to build the third London airport at Silverstone, and also to monitor the proposed 1970 extension. The branch was renamed as the South Northants Area, as a result of the amalgamation of Brackley and Towcester District Councils to form South Northants Council. The CPRE County Executive decided that the existing Brackley CPRE Committee should become responsible for the whole of the area administered by SNC.

Public meeting at Towcester: 14th January 2009

At this meeting in Towcester's Chantry room, the West Northants and South Northants district committees of CPRE Northants formally merged themselves into a single district, the boundaries of which are those of the West Northants Development Corporation, WNDC. To reflect this, the new district is called West Northants, and is under the chairmanship of David Montagu-Smith.

The two former committees have lobbied and campaigned hard over the decades, and our warmest thanks goes to all who served on them. To mark this significant development in our organisation, we asked Anne Usher, who has worked tirelessly at both district and county level for many years, to write a brief history of the South Northants Committee.

On becoming the County Chairman in the 1970s, Lady Birkenhead was succeeded as South Northants Chairman by Mrs Dorothea Hill of Culworth, and then by Mrs Betty Coxon of Kings Sutton in 1982. Mrs Coxon had been very active in the successful campaign to keep the new M40 on the other side of the railway from Kings Sutton. She was an enthusiast for the countryside and for wildflowers in particular. She remained on the Committee until 1999, serving for over 30 years. Mrs Anne Usher of Aynho became Chairman in 1986 until 2003 when Mr Richard Bulman of Heathcote succeeded her until 2006.

What has South Northants CPRE achieved as far as planning matters are concerned? It is difficult to point out victories or great achievements but we have influenced many planning decisions and commented on various South Northants local plans. The proposed Tove Valley and Wappenham sites for gravel extraction were not included in the Minerals Plan. Flying hours at Turweston Airfield were partially limited, new houses were not built in Hardingstone Conservation area, new housing developments in many places have been

modified and reduced in number as a result of our representations. At Grimscote, an industrial development of farm buildings was withdrawn. The CPRE's role has added to the pressure of local opponents on the District Council to reject or modify these proposals, always working with local people and with the planning officers whenever possible. Many letters have been written to SNC who have given some attention to our views. Local councils' hands are tied by the expense of losing an Appeal to the Inspectorate. Applicants with funds can pay for lawyers and repeated appeals. Affordable housing projects have always been supported.

From the earliest days, Brackley and South Northants Committees have organised social activities to bolster existing membership and attract new members. These have included group outings to Rockingham Castle, Burghley House, Boughton House, Deene Park and Compton Wynyates. Once funding became a real issue, wine and cheese parties were held biannually in private houses all over the area, where owners were willing to offer such hospitality. We are very grateful to them. These parties were renowned for the delicious refreshments provided by the committee. Schools competitions, prizes for outstanding projects undertaken by farmers, perhaps tree planting or wildlife preservation, were instigated.

Latterly the committee has been diligent in keeping a watching brief on Village Design Statements, Local Development Framework, Sustainable Communities, and Landscape Character Assessments. Comments on planning applications are made by the county Technical Secretaries.

It has now been decided by CPRE Northants Executive Committee that a combination of West Northants and South Northants would be an effective way of dealing



with the plethora of applications, including the West Northamptonshire Urban Development Corporation, and national CPRE campaigns such as Bill Bryson's on litter.

A great debt is owed to the members of South Northants Committee for their constant support and longevity of service: some members have been active since 1982.

NEWS ON AWARDS

ALAN MAYES

Members and friends enjoyed a wonderful evening at Cranford Hall on 4th December, which marked the third annual CPRE design awards. The evening began with Carols by Candlelight in St John's Church, followed by a delicious supper in the Studio at Cranford Hall. Afterwards we had the presentation of our 2008 Design Awards, introduced by our President, Lady Juliet Townsend, and presented by Richard Zielinski, the Northampton architect who was our independent judge.

This year, out of twenty five varied entries, five awards were made. These recognised five very different projects which each display a high standard of design and add to our enjoyment of the environment:

- Upton Meadow Primary School, a key element of the Upton Development, a project in sustainable urban extension led by English Partnerships and the Prince's Foundation
- The extra care home at St Crispin's Village, which provides a whole range of care options for senior citizens
- Rushton Hall, a fine example of a country house hotel conversion
- Manfield House, the former home of Manfield family in Northampton, latterly a hospital and now first class apartments, and finally
- Swan Court at Lamport, a novel scheme of barn conversions, which provides office accommodation in the countryside.

Photographs of the winners and the award presentations are on our website, www.CPRENorthants.org.

Our thanks go to our judges Richard Zielinski, Keith Allsop and Peter Hopkins and special thanks to Sir John and Lady Robinson for generously hosting the event. Cranford Hall was prepared so beautifully and again made a wonderful setting for both carols and the presentation.

NEWS ON HEDGEROWS

LOUISE PYMM OF CPRE NORTHANTS PARTNERS, FWAG

CPRE Northamptonshire has secured funding to work with FWAG, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, on a hedgerow project for farmers, land owners and rural communities throughout the county.

A launch event will be held on Friday 9th October 2009. This will involve a morning indoor session looking at the importance of hedgerows for wildlife, the role that they play as part of our landscape and the stories they tell of our past. We will talk about practical hedgerow management techniques and surveying and recording

News on Transport

Bill Driver

Major road construction in the county is at present on hold until the new Regional Funding Allocation is finalised. All major transport projects are funded by the Regional Assembly and in the East Midlands we have a gross funding distortion due to the massive cost of dualling the A46 between Newark and Widmerpool. Central government has put forward an extra £175m to assist, but this is barely half the cost estimate: road projects now seemingly cost at least twice their estimates. The impact on Northamptonshire is delay to the sorely needed Corby Link Road and to both the Isham by-pass and its extension to Wellingborough. The only mitigation to this delay is that there is still a lot of empty warehouse space in the north of the county and construction of even more space is halted by the economic situation, so for the moment the lorry traffic should not get heavier.

The County Council has stated that there is as much warehousing constructed and planned as we can tolerate, and no more is wanted. They have formed a Scrutiny Committee to examine the impact of freight transport on the county. CPRE has a presence on this committee, so if you have any comments or issues that you would like us to present, please email them to info@CPRENorthants.org. We have already had a record response to a previous request for comments; the work is proceeding and further comments are most welcome.

Warehousing and freight transport has a very considerable impact on the county, but it also provides many jobs, which are sorely needed. Our geographical position makes us a natural choice for strategic distribution storage, so we have to do all we can to reduce the impact on the landscape and on light and noise pollution.

A review of part the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is just getting under way, and Transport will be considered once again. The RSS is a very important publication since all local plans must conform to its requirements. We will report progress where it affects us as and when it occurs.

the hedgerows, providing valuable information that will be fed back to Natural England. After lunch we will go to a local farm for a practical hedge planting demonstration.

After this launch event, farmers and other land managers will be invited to apply for hedge planting grants for gapping up existing hedgerows, planting new ones that will help biodiversity and the landscape, or restoring a hedgerow of historic importance.

FWAG, an independent Registered Charity, is a dedicated provider of environmental and conservation advice and consultancy to farmers. We were established in 1969 by a group of forward thinking farmers who were concerned about the dramatic loss of habitat and wildlife after the intensification of farming methods. FWAG has now grown into a network of 120 Farm Conservation Advisers across the UK: we assist people who manage the countryside with environmental management expertise, so that locally produced food, our countryside and our native wildlife can be improved and protected for our future generations to enjoy.

NEWS ON LOCAL FOODS

FROM THE CLASSROOMS OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

SALLY HANRAHAN

Wouldn't it be super if, wherever you live, you were able to walk into a shop, supermarket or restaurant and find high quality, affordable local food? Food that not only comes from the nearby countryside but is produced in a way that benefits the environment - or at the very least does not harm it.

Thanks to the funding from the lottery 'Awards For All', we have been working towards this vision. We have nearly completed our very successful first year of a food miles campaign. This campaign aims to raise awareness of CPRE and the food miles issue and to get primary schools and after-school clubs linked to their local food network, or equivalent (such as a local farm shop).

The Branch has designed an imaginative, fun educational pack as a resource for anyone working with children of primary school age. Included are colourful factsheets to build up knowledge of the issues surrounding food miles. There are also activity sheets so that children can enjoy themselves while they learn more about the impacts of transporting food over long distances. The pack is designed to fit into different elements of the curriculum, and links into key skills. We have a few packs left, so if anyone knows of a school or after-school club that would benefit from one, please

contact me at sally.hanrahan@CPREnorthants.org.

We will continue working on local foods and would like to hear from YOU – where do you buy your local produce?

FARMERS' MARKETS IN NORTHANTS

BRACKLEY Market Place

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

OUNDLÉ 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

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 21st April 2009 at 6.30 pm – Planning and wind farm update for Parish Councils at Great Houghton Village Hall. Free to member Parish Councils, non member PCs £27.00, which is convertible to annual membership.

Friday 12th June 2009 - CPRE Northants Summer Ball at Rushton Hall Hotel and Spa – 7.30 pm– 12.00. Champagne reception, live music and dinner. Tickets £45.00.

Date to be confirmed – Annual General Meeting **July 2009** (date to be confirmed) - Behind The Scenes tour of Rushton Hall Hotel and Spa with the owners, with afternoon tea and cakes. For members and friends.

Sunday 5th July 2009 - Castle Ashby Country Fair

Friday 9th October 2009 – Hedgerows event
Thursday 17th December 2009 - Christmas Carols by Candlelight at Cranford Hall, by kind



Outlook editors:

Sue Baylis, Sally Hanrahan.

Published by Peter Hopkins

Comments to info@CPREnorthants.org

Our apologies for the lack of clarity in some of the photographs in this and recent editions of Outlook. The problem occurs when colour photographs, which is to say all photographs these days, are reproduced in black and white. If you, or someone or some organisation you know, would be willing to sponsor Outlook, we could print in colour!