



**Norfolk**  
Campaign to Protect Rural England

# NORFOLK VOICE

The newsletter of the Norfolk branch of  
the Campaign to Protect Rural England May 2016

## Challenging Government Housing Projections



Since the last edition of *Norfolk Voice* CPRE Norfolk has been very busy highlighting inappropriate and inaccurate housing projections which threaten our precious countryside. We have launched a #GreenBeltforNorwich petition online, held meetings with Heads of Planning in local authorities, been speaking to Norfolk MPs, held a training seminar on planning issues, provided evidence for a House of Commons Select Committee and met The Prince of Wales!

### Green Belt for Norwich

Our first-ever online petition was launched in March calling on Broadland and South Norfolk Councils to set up a Green Belt around the historic city of Norwich. Amazingly, Norfolk is one of the very few English counties to have no Green Belt to help protect our green spaces and open countryside from excessive, inappropriate and unnecessary development. We feel strongly that better protection is needed, hence the call for a Green Belt around our Fine City. Data on household projections by the Office for National Statistics demonstrates that the number of new houses provided for in local plans greatly exceed requirements. CPRE Norfolk believes that where there is a proven need for new houses, brownfield sites should be considered first as they are less damaging to the countryside, create less of a carbon footprint, plug into existing infrastructure, are more convenient places to live and help keep the local economy thriving. As our local

authorities begin the process of reviewing the recently adopted local plans for Norwich and its surrounding districts with the likelihood that they will have to accommodate even more growth beyond 2026 until 2036 on top of what we already consider to be excessive growth, it is now more urgent than ever that Norwich has a Green Belt in place to protect the setting of this historic city and the countryside from the onslaught of never ending development and the consequent urbanization of this rural county. If you have not yet signed our petition please visit [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) search for 'Green Belt for Norwich' sign and share! The petition has now reached almost 1,000 signatures and attracted headlines in the EDP plus an online EDP poll showing a massive majority in favour of our initiative. On the back of this petition we held a very promising meeting with the Planning Heads of Broadland and South Norfolk Councils—so watch this space!

IF YOU RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY POST BUT HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS TO WHICH IT COULD BE SENT, TO SAVE ON COSTS, WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD FORWARD THE DETAILS to [helenl@cprenorfolk.org.uk](mailto:helenl@cprenorfolk.org.uk). If we don't have your email address it also means you are missing out on all the newsletters, alert bulletins, information and invitations we send out in between our twice-yearly published *Norfolk Voice*. We NEVER share your email address. Don't forget you can follow us on [facebook.com/CPRE Norfolk](https://www.facebook.com/CPRE-Norfolk) and [twitter.com/CPRENorfolk](https://twitter.com/CPRENorfolk).

## Queen's Speech

CPRE Norfolk, along with other branches, provided written evidence on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) projected housing statistics which was fed into CPRE National Office's evidence to the Housing Select Committee. As a result, the new Housing and Planning Act announced in today's Queen's Speech appears to put neighbourhood plans back at the heart of planning although we await further detail on how the Government will make this process more transparent and how it intends to improve the process of reviewing and updating plans. On the other hand, there appear to be worrying moves in the Act to relax the conditions for environmental impact surveys to take place before development is allowed and little support for overstretched local authorities to insist on these.

CPRE Norfolk is due to have meetings with Brandon Lewis, the Housing Minister and MP for Great Yarmouth, as well as Sir Henry Bellingham, MP for West Norfolk, to discuss our concerns and positive ways forward. As Sir Henry recently and astutely pointed out '*.....there is not a housing crisis as such [in West Norfolk].....there are a very large number of houses actually for sale. The problem is the lack of Housing Association housing for rent ....*'

## Planning Training Seminar

In April we held our first Planning Training Seminar, courtesy of the very generous firm Architekton at St. Mary's Works in Norwich, which had also played host to BIMBY workshops as a precursor to its formal launch in February this year (see photo). The remit of the day was to provide the tools and information to know how to deal effectively with planning applications, plus an insight into how a Planning Committee operates and finally an introduction to the BIMBY online neighbourhood planning toolkit.

The day was a great success, packed with information, as a result of which we now have available the CPRE Norfolk Planning Resource, an indispensable guide for anyone wanting to know how to deal with planning applications. If you would like one of these please just email [helenl@cprenorfolk.org.uk](mailto:helenl@cprenorfolk.org.uk) (or telephone us on the number below) and ask for our Planning Resource. The whole day was filmed and is available to view on You Tube—just search for CPRE Norfolk Planning Training Seminar.

We are also building up a network of [CPRE Norfolk Planning Wardens](#) with the aim of empowering them to effectively deal with applications, as well as networking and learning from each other. If you think you might be interested in becoming a Planning Warden just contact us and ask for the form.

Two more planning training seminars are planned later this year, with a slightly different remit, so watch out for more details, or ask to be added to our Planning database.



HRH Prince of Wales and CPRE Norfolk Chairman Christopher Dady at the launch of BIMBY (Beauty in my Backyard) an online neighbourhood planning toolkit developed by The Prince's Foundation and launched in Norwich

## CPRE Members' Visit to Beachamwell

Our friends at Beachamwell; the beautiful Brecklands village, whose 'Connecting Threads' footpath project took first prize in the Boldero countryside category at last year's CPRE Norfolk Awards; have kindly invited members to a day in the village, including a talk and exhibition of the project, lunch, guided walk, free map and the option of a longer walk in the afternoon. Cost for the day, including lunch, only £5 a head. Places are limited to 30. SUNDAY 31st JULY.

For more information and to book your place contact [helens@cprenorfolk.org.uk](mailto:helens@cprenorfolk.org.uk) or telephone the office.

## 100 Club

There are a few vacant numbers available to purchase at a cost of £12 per year. This is a great way of supporting CPRE Norfolk for only £1 a month, plus the odds of winning are pretty good as 50% of the takings are given in prizes, which range from £25-£75 with twice-yearly draws. They also make a great present and are not restricted to CPRE members. For more information contact [helens@cprenorfolk.org.uk](mailto:helens@cprenorfolk.org.uk).

## This year's Annual General Meeting

Details of this year's AGM on Monday 18th July are included with this newsletter.