

P R E S S R E L E A S E: CPRE Norfolk Awards celebrate projects across Norfolk
Embargoed until 21:00 hrs Monday 19th November 2018

On Monday night at a packed ceremony at The Hostry, Norwich Cathedral the Norfolk Branch of Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) awarded projects across the County with awards. The CPRE Norfolk Awards scheme was launched in 1979 to recognise significant achievements in buildings and landscape. It is one of the longest running Awards schemes in the county and to date almost 500 projects have been given Awards.

The Guest of Honour handing out the prizes this year was Charles Barratt, Chairman of Barratt and Cooke, and a Patron of CPRE Norfolk. The Awards were sponsored by William Morfoot www.williammorfoot.co.uk and The West Norfolk Academies Trust www.westnorfolkacademiestrust.co.uk

Projects submitted this year have ranged from large-scale Passivhaus-standard housing projects to gentle litter picks working with vulnerable adults; from primary school children building impressive eco-hubs to armies of volunteers working long hours to bring back neglected areas of the countryside back to glory; from sensitive restoration of vernacular architecture to years of meticulous data and specimen gathering to bring vulnerable species back from the brink.

The categories and winners are as follows:

Green Build Award:

Winner: *Goldsmith Street Development, Norwich City Council* - a brownfield development in Norwich of 105 dwellings for social rent, built to high PassivHaus and design standards, and making it the largest PassivHaus scheme for social rent in the country.

Joint Runners-Up: (1) *Hill Farms Barns on the Holkham Estate* - derelict cattle barns converted into eco-efficient offices, using local labour and recycled materials, and keeping the vernacular to blend in with its surroundings. Now used by a local company and providing the headquarters for the Holkham Nature Reserve. (2) *Barley House, Rockland St. Peter* - a large family home built to PassivHaus standards, using local and recycled materials, including a large oak frame, straw bale walls, with lime render.

Special Mention: *Biergarten, Caston* - a timber-clad PassivHaus making the best use of a tight, awkward setting.

Thriving Countryside Award:

Winner: *North Walsham Conservation Group* - a large group of local volunteers look after hay meadows and woodland, have unearthed Honing Railway Station from under years' of debris, to make it part of Weavers' Way, brought back to life delicate wildflower habitats at Knapton and Felmingham railway lines, and completely transformed a large area into a beautiful habitat-rich resource for education, visits and relaxation.

Runner-Up: *Returning Grazing to Whitwell Common SSSI* - a project to bring Highland cattle to graze Whitwell Common. By eating up the nutrient rich grass

and choking weeds, the indigenous eco-system of the common, rich in rare and delicate bog-plants is once again thriving.

Engaged Youth Award:

Winner: *Colby Primary School Eco Hub* - largely run with ideas from the children themselves, designed as a resource for exploring the natural world, understanding eco-technology, innovative recycling ideas, raising their own vegetables, fruits, hens and insects, sharing their knowledge with other schools at workshops, acting as eco-ambassadors, building relations with local businesses.

Runner-Up: *Felbeck Trust Outdoor Classroom* - works with children from Aylmerton Field Studies Centre, and further afield from deprived urban environments, to provide a beautiful oasis in a relaxing atmosphere, which is often a new experience for some children. Learning to be calm, listen, learn, identify, explore, experience nature, build up their confidence, and use their imagination.

Successful Campaign Award:

Winner: *Norfolk Ponds Project* - A collaborative project with several organisations and farmers to recover silted-up, lost or 'ghost' farmland ponds across Norfolk, of which there are 23,000, more than any other English county. Results so far have been spectacular with volunteers clearing ponds to create a network of habitat stepping stones allowing species to thrive and encouraging back great crested newt, crucian carp, water vole, stoneworts, and several farmland birds and pollinators, plus many rare wetland plants.

Runner-Up: *Brecks Bat Project* - a five-year project of large numbers of volunteers in a 'citizen science' experiment to record bat movements using equipment supplied by Norfolk Bat Survey resulting in hugely increased knowledge of the movements and species of Norfolk bats.

Special Mention: *Assist Trust* - a litter-picking campaign helping adults with learning difficulties be mobile, build up confidence and teamwork skills, and feel a valuable part of their community.

Helen Leith, CPRE Norfolk Branch Director said:

'All our short-listed projects are worthy winners and the CPRE Norfolk Awards are our way of saying thank you and well done to so many people who work so hard to make Norfolk a beautiful and special place to live. We have seen some really wonderful things happening out there and the dedication, enthusiasm and expertise of so many volunteers and professionals is very encouraging and exciting.'