



The countryside charity
Norfolk

Norfolk Voice

CPRE Norfolk's Newsletter | Autumn | 2021



Planning challenges

CPRE Norfolk is very optimistic that following the latest government minister re-shuffle which resulted in the replacement of Robert Jenrick with Michael Gove in the newly titled Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the damaging planning reform proposals will be shelved.

We are hopeful that planning focus shifts to brownfield development, maintaining community involvement, protecting green spaces and looking to build greener and more beautiful - we shall see!

Locally there remain many planning challenges such as the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (SNVCHAP) alongside the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) as both seek to increase housing numbers well beyond what is required by central government.

Dispersal of housing will cause unnecessary loss of countryside and lead to greater car dependency and therefore greater carbon emissions in rural areas.

Additionally the proposal is contrary to the overarching aims of the GNLP itself, which stresses the need for good access to services and facilities for suburbs, towns

and villages - which is only provided for by settlements at and near the top of the settlement hierarchy. Read CPRE Norfolk's position statement about housing here:

<https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/resources/housing-position-statement/>

We have asked our Parish Alliance partners in Broadland and South Norfolk to support our approach to the GNLP examination: we believe the plans are both flawed and contradictory in many areas and so we will be challenging the GNLP at its Examination in Public which will probably take place in the New Year.

This challenge will focus on several areas, including the unnecessarily high housing buffer of 22% in the draft plan, when only a buffer of 5% is required. We are also concerned about poorly worded policies which could lead to development outside current settlement boundaries, the lack of a common-sense approach to the phasing of housing delivery so that existing commitments are developed before new allocations are permitted, the separation and different timeline for the SNVCHAP, the lack of sufficient consideration of a Green Belt for Norwich and perhaps most worrying of all, the absence of clear, measurable targets and actions to reduce the effects of climate change.

Chris Dady, Chair CPRE Norfolk



CPRE Norfolk Awards 2021

CPRE Norfolk's biannual Awards celebrated 16 fantastic projects at an enjoyable awards evening held in person at Dereham Memorial Hall in September.

Looking after the countryside, improving life for Norfolk communities and helping deal with climate change are all things where we need action. And every other year, the CPRE Norfolk Awards celebrate those who are doing just that.

After this unprecedented 12 months and more, 27 entries came forward to the Awards scheme, many highlighting the important role the countryside had played in local lives as a global pandemic challenged the world. Far from curtailing local action because of difficulties created by coronavirus, there has been a resurgence of interest in caring for and accessing the countryside.

CPRE Norfolk was pleased with the quality and scope of activities and schemes entered, demonstrating how much is going on at a local level to improve rural life in Norfolk.

CPRE President Professor Tim O'Riordan commented in his opening speech: "We have observed how many parish councils have been prepared to lead the way to set up schemes that will improve the local environment and benefit local people". Local farming businesses and schools also featured prominently in outstanding entries received.

Generous sponsorship from Brunswick Investment Management enabled CPRE Norfolk to celebrate with our winners in style, with locally sourced refreshments, and the presentation of certificates and plaques.

Winners

Rural Living Award

Wild with Nature (Winner)

East Harling Community Garden (HC*)

Countryside Champions Youth Award

Save the Bees – Coltishall Primary School (Winner)

Countryside Champions Award

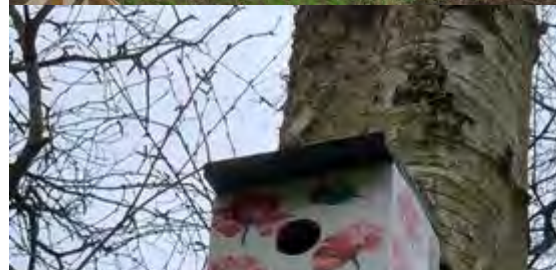
Chet Valley B-Line (Winner)

West Beckham old Allotments (Winner)

Boughton Fen (HC)

Hellington and Rockland Reserve (HC)

*HC = Highly Commended



Read more here: <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/awards-2021>

Winners (cont'd)

Digging deep Award

Kett's Heights (Winner)

Thetford Conservation Group (Winner)

Woodton Community Wood (HC)

Stations as Havens (HC)

Marty's Marsh (HC)

Good Lighting

Street-lighting policy (Swaffham Town Council)

Self-dimming platform lights (Greater Anglia)

Surgery lighting (Millgates Surgery, Hempsall)

Chair's Award

Wild Ken Hill

“We are incredibly fortunate to have so many inspiring projects and people to celebrate who are working to protect our rural life and biodiversity. And to have Wild Ken Hill of national significance in our midst, a real beacon of hope for ways in which we can mitigate against climate change and truly protect and enhance our biodiversity.”

CPRE Norfolk Chairman Chris Dady.



Seeing Stars

Norfolk's dark skies and dark landscapes which are amongst the least light polluted in all of England are important elements of our county's rural character and deserve greater protection.

Three local lighting projects - all very different schemes, showcasing different approaches and investment - were awarded certificates of good lighting practice at the recent CPRE Norfolk Awards:

Swaffham Town Council

Greater Anglia self-dimming platform lights

Millgates Surgery

Unnecessary and intrusive rural lighting both wastes energy and can cause distress. What could you do to reduce light pollution at your home or business? Get some great tips from the CPRE Norfolk website here: <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/topics/dark-skies/>

There are still many good places in Norfolk to see the stars. Places which have been nominated by local people as 'Dark Sky Discovery Sites (Milky Way)' are away from the worst of any local light pollution, provide good sightlines of the night sky, have good public access, including firm ground for wheelchairs and are generally freely accessible at all times. In Norfolk they include: Barrow Common; Titchwell Marsh Nature Reserve; Wiveton Downs; Kelling Heath Holiday Park; and Great Ellingham Recreational Ground. Find out more here <https://www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk/dark-sky-discovery-sites/map.html>

How dark is your rural night sky? You can view this year's CPRE Star Count results here <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/news/star-count-2021-results/> (next year's count will run in February 2022).

Adding hedges to reach to the moon

CPRE has launched a hedgerows campaign to raise awareness of the role these wonderful wildlife corridors play in the fabric of our countryside. CPRE is calling for 40% more hedgerows by 2050, which requires adding over 4,000 miles of new and restored hedgerows per year - enough to go halfway to the moon!

Download CPRE's hedgerow booklet here: https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/a_little_rough_guide_around_the_hedges.pdf

Sign the petition here: <https://takeaction.cpre.org.uk/page/85848/petition/?ea.tracking.id=cpre-web>

Check the health of your hedgerow here: <https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/healthy-hedgerows-survey> - a helpful free rapid assessment hedgerow health checker app for land managers.

With just a handful of questions, the hedgerow health-checker will help you understand where your hedge is in its natural lifecycle and provide management options. It has been designed for farmers and landowners who want to understand their whole hedge network and create a hedge management plan at the farm scale.



New group for West Norfolk

CPRE Norfolk is setting up a small subgroup covering the west of the county (the area covered by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk plus the western parts of Breckland District Council and North Norfolk District Council) to help ensure that this more remote area of Norfolk is well supported by CPRE Norfolk in planning and wider campaign issues as well as attracting further members.

The project has received a grant from National CPRE as they also recognise the importance of this part of the county.

The group will be chaired by a trustee local to the area and will work closely with CPRE Norfolk staff and planning consultant with meetings held virtually. If you are interested in joining CPRE Norfolk as a trustee to help establish this subgroup, please get in touch with the Chair Chris Dady or Vice Chair Kevin Jones for an informal chat in the first instance

chairman@cprenorfolk.org.uk.

Norfolk recycling

Norfolk recycles have launched a Swap to Save campaign, highlighting ways in which you can save money and the planet by swapping single-use products. To get you started there are 12 simple swap suggestions for you to use and share with others too. <https://www.norfolkrecycles.com/reduce-my-rubbish/swap2save/>

View CPRE Norfolk's Litter, Recycling and Deposit Scheme position statement here: <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/resources/litter-recycling-and-drs-position-statement/>

With Christmas on the horizon, it's the time for green acts of kindness to show your love for the natural world, save the plant's resources, and support your local countryside!

What will you do?

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/discover/10-green-acts-of-christmas-kindness/>

CPRE Norfolk members enjoy discounts to a number of visitor attractions :

Wells and Walsingham Light Railway
Stody Lodge Gardens
Raveningham Gardens
Plantation Garden

Mannington Estate
Holkham Hall
Fairhaven Woodland Garden

More details at www.cprenorfolk.org.uk

COP26 - Greenwash or a step in the right direction?

You will not have escaped seeing coverage of COP26 in Glasgow, the UN initiative to bring countries together to agree measures to limit global warming. We should be concerned to know the outcomes agreed, as Norfolk is very much on the front line of climate change, particularly vulnerable to sea level rises, surface water flooding, extreme weather events, coastal erosion, drought and impacts on nature and agriculture.

This year two themes have emerged, one is about the absolute necessity of agreements between countries to limit carbon and other emissions, and the other is about local action - we cannot tackle climate change without responsibility being taken with national and international governments and businesses, as well as with local and individual initiatives.

The news is not great, as it is generally considered the agreement reached to limit climate warming to 1.5 degrees C is unlikely to be achieved, with a more possible scenario of around 2.5 degrees C by the end of the century, and up to 4 degrees C if no action is taken. In simple terms we will see dramatic changes, and in the worst case living in Norfolk will be very difficult to impossible. The impacts of climate change are with us now with only 1 degree C of warming, and all our lives will be uncomfortable or even worse as a result even with no further warming. Simply put, it makes no sense not to take action.

What has emerged from COP26 are some useful agreements. Cutting methane emissions by 30%, the US and China agreeing to work together, pledges and agreements around becoming carbon neutral, reversing deforestation, phasing out coal, making greener investments, supporting agriculture to be greener coupled with protecting nature are all headlines. There will be an agreed text signed up to by most countries as well, which is binding, and that is to be welcomed. There is no doubt we should have seen much more, in a shorter timescale. Some of these agreements will turn into reality, and some will be 'greenwash' - words not actions.

A particular consideration is the world's burgeoning population, but this is the elephant in the room. Education programmes funded via the UK's overseas aid programme have been critical in helping to manage this big issue, and should be continued. Perhaps we should have also looked to learn more from the Pandemic to inform our approach on limiting climate change, as in many ways they are both very much about global cooperation. It is a pity that international businesses have not been targeted, many of whom have been shown to be concealing their lack of action.

What CPRE Norfolk would like to see happen within the UK and locally are measures that clearly set an agenda to help us play a major part in limiting climate change. We need to recognise the key drivers too, and that is not just the level of pollutants being created and released. It is also to do with waste, and we collectively have a shocking record as a wasteful throw away society.

On top of this a major factor is also demand, which is

Win with us!

Join the CPRE Norfolk 100 Club for the chance to win great cash prizes from £15 to £75 and help us raise funds! Each share in the 100 club costs just £12 annually and there is no limit to the number of shares you can buy.

Winners last month were: £75 to Professor Tim O'Riordan; £50 to Bodie Ward; £25 to Phillippa Fisher; £25 to Mr and Mrs R M and J Horner; and £15 to Mrs Gillian Ching. Our lottery is fully licensed, and shares make great gifts for friends and family. (It's worthwhile buying a few shares: you could win more than one prize!). Find out more here <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/get-involved/raise-funds/100-club-prize-draw/>

driven by our own expectations as well as our burgeoning population.

At a national level we have to change the rules around building anything, including houses, that is not absolutely future proofed in terms of its eco credentials, ability to last longer, and repairability. The promise of a bottle deposit scheme, banning of peat products, restrictions on the use of any non recyclable product, and promotion of local foods in season should all be enacted now. There must be no new oil exploration or coal mines. We must stop building on green field sites, and we need our agriculture supported to become regenerative. We must use the technology we have, and not kick the can down the road hoping for a magic bullet. Honesty is also an imperative - reporting our actual contribution to climate change would be a great place to start.

Locally our councils must lead. A transport plan not reliant on more roads, a housing plan that builds ecologically sound social rented housing, a plan for green spaces in towns, and listening to our communities are all vital. They must put pressure on the government to bring about the policies required to support a new approach. We need new initiatives to bring housing into town centres, by regenerating disused retail and office property, to keep our urban centres vibrant - and at the same time bring people close to jobs, services and transport while protecting the environment, fields, biodiversity and green spaces..

Turning the spotlight onto ourselves we must avoid waste of food, energy and materials, demand better standards in all we purchase and invest in, avoid flying and use the car less. Pressing our politicians for change to damaging policies that are not future proofed is vital, as well as avoiding voting for those who cannot step up to deliver. None of this needs to be about seeing a decline in our standards of living, but that will come if we do not urgently take these steps. It will mean valuing our own health and well being alongside just monetary wealth, which cannot be a bad thing especially if we are to leave the planet in the best state we can for the future, maintain a decent standard of living, and enjoying our own lives in the years to come.

Chris Dady, Chair, CPRE Norfolk

Commemorative trees

CPRE Norfolk commemorated Peter Forbes, Vice President of CPRE Norfolk who passed away earlier this year, with a tree planted at beautiful Mannington Hall Chapel Gardens.

Other generous supporters: Maurice de Soissons, Paul Woolnough and Martin Walton have also been recognised in this way and we are very grateful to Lady Walpole who has made this possible, and to Duckers Funeral Care of Aylsham for donating commemorative tree plaques <https://www.coop.co.uk/funeralcare/funeral-directors/aylsham/NR11-6HG/duckers-funeralcare/23-white-hart-street>



Hearing about climate change can feel daunting – but we have some ideas for small actions that countryside communities can take that can add up to a big difference.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/discover/ten-ways-that-your-rural-community-can-tackle-climate-change/>

Keep in touch: twitter.com/CPRENorfolk | facebook.com/CPRENorfolk
instagram.com/CPRENorfolk

Coming up

AGM

Our AGM next year will be on Thursday 26th May 2022.

Please put the date in your diary - we'd love you to join us! We'll send out further details nearer the time.

Watch keynote speaker Dr Asher Minns deliver this year's CPRE Norfolk Annual Lecture 'Life at the Edge' online here: <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/news/life-at-the-edge-a-recording-of-our-2021-annual-lecture-is-now-available/>

Website

Helen Steed at CPRE Norfolk has made a great job of our website refreshment. Amongst much new content, the charity has created or revised many position statements including solar farms, wind turbines, offshore energy and onshore works and many more - all available here: <https://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/resources/>

People

Alexandra Coupe

We welcomed new trustee Alexandra Coupe recently. Alex is a project manager working in the financial sector with a keen interest in conservation and preservation of existing green spaces in the county.

Kevin Jones

We welcomed new trustee and Vice Chair Kevin Jones recently. Kevin has a background in project management and environmental sciences and having moved to Norfolk 10 years ago has experienced at first hand the challenges faced by rural communities.

Sandra Walmsley

Sandra Walmsley is the latest to join the CPRE Norfolk trustee board. Sandra is a passionate advocate for the natural world and has extensive board level experience in the voluntary sector and local government. Welcome!

Garry, Jia and Neil

We are very grateful to our three excellent specialist adviser volunteers Garry, Jia and Neil. Garry and Neil help with our Vision for Norfolk Committee and Jia with the CPRE Norfolk social media platforms. Thank you!

We said goodbye and many thanks to Ella and Zara who stepped down as volunteers when they moved to employed environmental jobs - thank you and all good wishes.



Join in:
cprenorfolk.org.uk

CPRE Norfolk Trustees left to right: Keith Bacon, David Hook, Chris Dady, Kevin Jones, Faye LeBon, Tim O'Riordan, George Ridgway, Richard Turner. Front: Alex Coupe, Heather Tyrrell, Sandra Walmsley.

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