



The countryside charity
Norfolk



Road Rage - The Norwich Western Link

CPRE Norfolk remains opposed to the Norwich Western Link road (NWL) as it would cause irreparable harm to the environmentally protected and designated Wensum Valley and a nationally important and internationally protected super-colony of Barbastelle bats. The proposed mitigation measures, and indeed any mitigation measures would be insufficient to justify the damage this road would bring. In addition to these concerns, the cost of the road is increasing with every estimate, with the current price tag of at least £251,000,000.

It is also important to note and address the concerns of local communities in particular, which have suffered increases in traffic since completion of the Northern Distributor Road, now called the Broadland Northway. This was one of the major reasons why CPRE Norfolk objected to that road west of the A140, as we predicted that it would lead to increased 'rat-running' across the Wensum Valley.

Instead of building the NWL, resources should be focused on delivering the six Bus Rapid Transit Corridors in the current Local Plan (the Joint Core Strategy), along with other forms of public transport, and traffic reduction and calming measures. This would also contribute to meeting carbon-reduction targets, instead of increasing emissions as will be the case with construction and use of the NWL.

We are liaising with various partners including the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust, Stop the Wensum Link, the Norfolk Rivers Trust, Friends of the Earth, the Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group, and the Norwich Naturalists' Society. The latest public consultation is little more than a PR exercise which fails to address the environmental and ecological factors in any meaningful way.

At the time of writing, the project still awaits central government funding. If this road goes ahead, we risk losing the UK's largest and rarest bat colony, on top of the destruction of a mature, well-connected network of vital wildlife habitats. We'll lose woodlands, grassland, crystal clear chalk-streams and wetland floodplains. In the midst of a biodiversity and climate crisis, we cannot afford this.

By Michael Rayner

Note from our Chair

The recent government announcements, which read as an attack on our environment, have been frankly shocking. These policy announcements come during the period of mourning following the death of the Queen. She cared about the countryside as patron of CPRE. Her son, now King Charles III, has always been a vocal exponent of making sure the countryside remains protected and a benefit to all our communities both urban and rural. Make no mistake, any proposals to tear up the planning rule book, scrap agricultural incentives based on nature restoration, or opening up the opportunity to restart the fracking programme will damage our countryside, environment and our ability to stave off accelerating climate change.

We will be busy working to lobby for changes to the current approach, not simply attempting to target only short-term profit leading to long-term damage. Many other organisations will be doing the same, and if you have the opportunity to question your MP about the current policy proposals please do so.

Our future needs to be based on valuing our environment at least as highly as monetary gains. It is interesting to look at Bhutan, who have pursued a policy not looking to grow Gross Domestic Product, but instead to enhance Gross Domestic Happiness. The evidence is that with this approach they have still grown economically at a far greater rate than the UK over a sustained period, and at the same time poverty rates have reduced from 36% of the population to 10%. It shows what can be done, and we can learn from the achievements of others in many areas, including food production and transport initiatives.

The long hot summer has been a reminder of the changing climate. To recover from the drought, we now need double the usual autumn and winter rainfall to replenish reserves ready for whatever 2023 throws at us. Even after what has seemed like a very wet spell recently, we cannot be complacent about water conservation. At the waste disposal end of the chain, we have also seen the news that Anglian Water were awarded only two stars for their environmental performance, and it is quite shocking to think our rivers and sea are still being polluted to such a large extent.

'Our future needs to be based on valuing our environment at least as highly as monetary gains.'

Autumn is a great time to make the most of our beautiful countryside and green spaces. It has been shown that just a short walk is good for us, for our physical and mental health. There is nothing better for recharging our batteries, and it will go a long way in helping improve our own personal happiness index.



Chris Dady , Chair
CPRE Norfolk



We were fortunate in being able to support the Wild Ken Hill 'Gathering' which brought together a range of authors and speakers, all experts in their fields. Bringing together people in this way is vitally important if we are to find solutions to the issues we face.

East Anglia Green

A new proposal came to light in April to upgrade the electricity transmission lines, which is called East Anglia Green. This is planned by the National Grid to run from Norwich Main, just south of Norwich, to Tilbury in Essex via Bramford substation in Suffolk. The suggestion is for it to consist of new overhead power lines running between pylons, along a separate corridor to the already existing line of overhead cables and pylons just to the east of the proposed new route. Where it crosses the Dedham Vale AONB, underground cabling is being proposed.

CPRE Norfolk supports the increasing need for offshore wind to generate electricity, and for new legislation to ensure solar panels are placed on south-facing commercial and domestic properties. It is estimated there are already 250,000 hectares of south-facing commercial roof-space which could house solar panels. These new supplies of electricity will require upgrades and changes to the existing National Grid, not least through the introduction of offshore multi-purpose connectors or ring-mains. In addition, it is vital that strategies are introduced urgently to reduce electricity usage where possible, for example through better design and use of insulation in new developments, and for retro-fitting of existing housing.

To have an effective long-term strategy for the power network, it is essential that 1960s lowest-cost solutions are not the default setting. Instead, as has been the case for all recent East Anglian onshore cabling for offshore wind companies, underground cabling should be used for any new onshore National Grid transmission lines. This would help to ensure less harmful, long-term impacts for residents, the environment, settings of heritage assets, tranquillity and the countryside. It is encouraging to see that National Grid acknowledge the value of the landscape, views and environment of the Dedham Vale AONB, but we are disappointed to see that the rest of the valued countryside along the proposed route is not considered to be valued enough for underground cabling to be used. An even better solution would be for the power generated offshore to be transmitted via undersea cabling to the Essex coast or Thames estuary.

A campaigning group called Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylon Action Group is coordinating opposition across all three counties, while CPRE Norfolk has been liaising with Parish Councils along the route in South Norfolk and with South Norfolk District Council, which also opposes the current scheme.

The Government urgently needs to take control of forming a long-term strategy for power distribution, of which East Anglia Green is one part, but which would also include all aspects, including offshore multi-purpose interconnectors and/or Ring Mains, as well as local power networks for community-led schemes.

By Michael Rayner



What is a hedge?

By Sandra Walmsley, Vice Chair

I have two tall boundary hedges in my garden, one of beech, the other yew. Although a few intrepid plants clamber their way through or along them; holly, ivy and next door's clematis, they are pretty uniform. There are some holes where robins, sparrows and blackbirds emerge. They poke their heads out and look from side to side before descending to pick up a titbit then dash back. I believe hedgehogs use it as a corridor and the squirrel, which steals from my bird feeders, certainly uses it as an escape route.

These cultivated hedgerows are of limited use in the general scheme of wildlife habitat. But what is a hedgerow?

The definition used by the steering group for the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for Hedgerows is: "A hedgerow is defined as any boundary line of trees or shrubs over 20m long and less than 5m wide at the base, provided that at one time the trees or shrubs were more or less continuous."

I have not carried out a detailed survey of this local hedge. Most research on Norfolk hedges was carried out by Prof. Tom Williamson of UEA and Gerry Barnes in their survey of Norfolk hedges in "Hedgerow History: Ecology, History and Landscape Character". They found that more than 50% of hedges contained ash, hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, elm, roses and oak. My local hedge contains all these trees and more. There are also sycamore, hornbeam, mahonia, crab apple and hazel, which are less common.



I am still working on the history of my local hedgerow. There are some clues in the plant life in the verge, some of which show the hedge was a meadow boundary, others probably demonstrate a connection with the nearby bluebell woodland. Some hedgerow systems date back to prehistoric times, and most were well established by the Anglo-Saxon period. As permanent settlements grew and arable farming increased, living hedges provided permanent boundaries to keep stock in, although in the 12th century Richard the First issued an edict that hedges should not exceed 4 foot 6 inches tall to allow free range to the royal deer, and that he could chase them on horseback!

It is estimated that over 200,000 miles of hedge were planted between 1750 and 1850 and that this was as much as in the previous 500 years. Prof. Williamson estimates following the loss of hedges due to enclosure, and changes in keeping stock, that around 500 miles of hedgerow were grubbed out in Norfolk each year from 1946 to 1955, rising to around 2,400 miles per year by 1962, and reaching 3,500 miles over the next four years. This dropped to around 2,000 miles each year until 1970 and declined more gradually during the 1970s and 1980s. Since 1945, the UK's hedgerow network has shrunk by about 50%, with the annual net loss of hedgerows reaching over 11,000 miles each year in the early 1990s.



What is a hedge? - continued

Like many parts of our land, we have started to understand the importance of hedgerows. They are vital to maintain the biodiversity of the country. In Devon, a single hedge surveyed on a farm was found to benefit over 2,000 species, including many that are nationally scarce and some that are under threat. Endangered mammals, such as hazel dormice and hedgehogs, need hedges to survive. Hedges have economic benefits too. More coppicing could increase the amount producing biomass if we chose. Hedges help agriculture with pollination and pest control. They help control our water quality, help stopping flooding and improve air quality, especially in urban areas. Hedges are better than trees at filtering air pollution, they are a thicker barrier.



Hedgerows have a really important part to play in slowing Climate Change. Research by CPRE suggests a 40% increase in the UK's hedgerows would have a sequestration potential of 1.9 million tonnes of carbon. This is the equivalent of up to 7.1 million tonnes of CO₂. If we incorporate an average for below ground, soil carbon storage of hedgerows into this figure, the total rises to as much as 5 million tonnes of carbon - potentially the equivalent of 18.5 million tonnes of CO₂.

Despite the losses, across Britain, the Countryside Survey recorded almost 300,000 miles of 'managed' hedgerow still existing; enough to stretch round the earth 16 times. These are the hedgerows we see around much of the countryside. They are often managed by farmers, land owners and other land managers, such as in country parks.

In September last year, CPRE launched its report on hedgerows and its 40 by 50 campaign as proposed by the Climate Change Committee.

40 = We want to see the extent of the hedgerow network increase by 40%. This number was recommended by the independent Climate Change Committee. This means we need to create at least 120,000 miles of new and restored hedges to achieve a 40% increase in their extent - which is around half the length of our national road network.

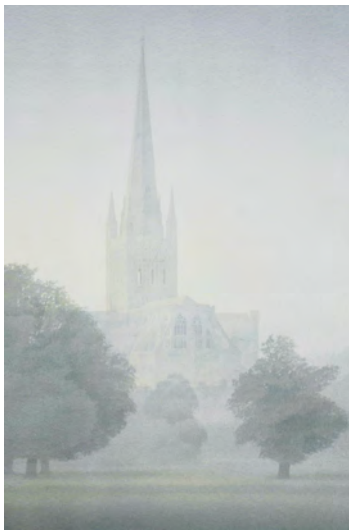
50 = This is the time frame. We need a 40% increase by 2050 at the latest. This requires adding over 4,000 miles of new and restored hedgerows each year. Even this would only take us back to the number of hedgerows we had in the 1980's.

Expanding our hedgerow network would be one natural solution to the climate and nature crises by increasing the nation's capacity to absorb carbon emissions, reducing air pollution and helping reduce flood risk from extreme weather.

What can, and is being done?

- Planning Authorities need to develop policies in local plans to ensure that hedgerow planting is integrated in new developments and that any damage to existing hedgerows is avoided (biodiversity net gain should never justify the removal of important hedgerows).
- CPRE Norfolk have written to all Norfolk MPs to ask them to become Hedgerow Heroes.
- Local people and Parish Councils have a huge part to play. We would like each Parish to have its own Hedgerow Hero too.
- Parishes could work with local community groups to plant hedgerows in urban, and urban fringe areas, enhancing green infrastructure and directing funding to help deliver Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Sign our hedgerow petition - <https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/hedgerows/>

CPRE Norfolk Christmas Cards 2022



Norwich Cathedral from the playing fields (above)



Norfolk Harnser in Winter (above)

Support your countryside charity this Christmas

Following their success last year, CPRE Norfolk will once again be selling its own Christmas cards.

Each pack will contain 5 high quality cards of a single design with white, diamond flap envelopes all contained in a biodegradable bag.

There are a choice of 2 great designs:

Design 1 - a photograph of a Norfolk harnser (or heron) captured by Norman Wyatt of Chet Valley Photography club

Design 2 - a print of the atmospheric watercolour of Norwich cathedral viewed from the playing fields painted by CPRE Norfolk Ambassador, Gerald Stamp

Both designs measure 120mm x 170 mm.

There are also a limited number of last years designs still available to buy online.

How to order

You can complete the order form enclosed in your newsletter and return it to us with a cheque , or pay by BACS.

Alternatively, you can place your order by visiting our online shop at - www.cprenorfolk.bigcartel.com

Please can you place any orders by **2nd December 2022**

100 club winners!

The 100 club draw took place in July and the lucky winners were:

£65.00	Terry Stanford
£40.00	Mr PA Warnes
£20.00	Mrs Gillian Ching
£15.00	Daisy Stocker
£10.00	Mr AGH Colman

The draw in December 2022 will be the final one for CPRE Norfolk's 100 club. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have supported the club, helping to raise funds to support the countryside.



Volunteering with CPRE Norfolk

Hi! I'm Jia and I'm a Social Media Volunteer at CPRE Norfolk. I'm pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia (UEA). Currently, I am working as an Analyst with Net Zero East as part of my degree's placement year.

Through my degree, I've had the chance to gain knowledge on climate issues and how important it is to take action at a local level to achieve national targets such as Net Zero by 2030. I first heard about this role through a university email about volunteering opportunities available to apply for. I was keen to join CPRE Norfolk as I am passionate about the environment and wanted to get involved with the community and improve my understanding of local environmental issues. I believe that volunteering with organisations like CPRE provides a wonderful opportunity to contribute towards their work in tackling environmental issues. My role is to handle social media channels, spread awareness about upcoming campaigns and events as well as engage followers in the organisation's activities. I've been able to enhance my communication and networking skills, explore social media features that an organisation could benefit from, learn about how an organisation functions and gain confidence in sharing ideas. CPRE Norfolk has in many ways inspired me to apply for my placement role to gain a better understanding of public and stakeholder interactions with climate issues and proposed solutions. At Net Zero East, I've had the chance to look into community engagement and how councils have immense responsibility in implementing climate action locally through action plans and collaboration with other organisations in the East of England.

My volunteering experience has been enriching and my interactions with the trustees and team have been wholesome and inspiring. In the future, I hope to attract a younger audience through CPRE Norfolk's social media accounts, so that these young people are made aware of the pressing issues in their area and can help contribute in building a better, healthier and greener countryside in the coming years.

By Jia Rohilla

'My volunteering experience has been enriching'

There are many different ways to volunteer with CPRE Norfolk - from litter picking to helping out at events, or by becoming a trustee.

If you are interested learning more about volunteering please visit our website or drop us an email at info@cprenorfolk.org.uk



Lighting the way

In May CPRE Norfolk held its AGM and annual lecture at the Memorial Hall in Dereham. We were lucky enough to hear award winning author, Patrick Barkham, speak about 'Wild Children, Wilder Norfolk'. Patrick highlighted the importance of experiences of, and in, nature for our children and how these are becoming increasingly rare. This event also saw trustee and pioneering light pollution and planning campaigner, David Hook, receive an award from CPRE's national office in recognition of his passionate and tireless voluntary work for the charity.



Events

This year CPRE Norfolk has been sharing the importance of protecting our gorgeous countryside at events across the county. In June, CPRE Norfolk had a charity stand at the Royal Norfolk Show which gave us an opportunity to find out what matters most to people in Norfolk when it comes to their countryside. We also gave out small, recycled paper envelopes containing wild flower seeds, perfect for scattering in gardens or under hedgerows on autumnal walks.

In September CPRE Norfolk were excited to attend the 'Gathering' at Wild Ken Hill in West Norfolk. This event included workshops, talks and guided tours from a number of well-respected speakers involved in conservation and farming. We were particularly pleased that a number of those attending the event signed up to volunteer with CPRE Norfolk.

Trustee and Vice-Chair, Sandra Walmsley, was invited to speak at a Friends of the Earth organised event held at St Peter Mancroft church in Norwich, as part of the 'Great Big Green Week' in September. Sandra spoke to the audience about biodiversity and climate change.

CPRE Norfolk AGM, 2023

We are pleased to announce that Nick Padwick, of Wild Ken Norfolk will deliver our annual lecture following CPRE Norfolk's AGM on 25th May 2023 at Easton College where he will give us a closer look at the future of agriculture. Keep visiting our website for further announcements and news.

People



Rosalie Monbiot 1935-2022

We were deeply saddened by the death of Rosalie in March this year. She had been a trustee of CPRE (Norfolk) for many years, and continued her interest in CPRE and its Norfolk campaigns by becoming one of our Vice Presidents. Over her lifetime she had donated her time, expertise and enthusiasm for many good causes, and was a long serving councillor for Norfolk County Council including being the cabinet member for children and young people. She was cheerful, positive and always had time to talk and give her advice.

We will be planting a tree in her memory this November at the chapel at Mannington Hall. Please contact us if you would like to attend.

Join in:
cprenorfolk.org.uk

CPRE Norfolk
15 Pigg Lane
Norwich
Norfolk
NR3 1RS

T: 01603 761660 | info@cprenorfolk.org.uk
Twitter: @CPRENorfolk | Facebook: CPRENorfolk



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