

Autumn-Winter 2019/20

PROTECTING KENT'S
COUNTRYSIDE

Kent

Voice



YEARS



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contact us

www.cprekent.org.uk



We always love to hear from our members, so please feel free to drop us a line and tell us what's happening in your part of the county. We are especially eager to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer as a district committee member. If you want to help us keep Kent beautiful, then get in touch with us at info@cprekent.org.uk or call 01233 714540.

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Come on, have a look inside...

Foxes are, of course, a familiar sight to most of us, but it's worth remembering that for many people, whether in the countryside or in our towns and cities, this charismatic animal represents their most engaging contact with nature. The cub here was photographed in Thanet (Steve Ashton)



Hilary Newport

Director's Introduction

On Friday the 13th of September, we gathered in the lovely grounds and hall of Goddards Green in Cranbrook, home of our chairman John Wotton and his wife Linde.

The day was certainly a lucky one for us, as we enjoyed wonderful weather to explore the grounds and gardens, with a delicious cream tea waiting inside.

It was a delightful opportunity to celebrate and thank the wonderful volunteers who do so much to celebrate, promote and defend the Garden of England on behalf of CPRE Kent.

And, as with so many other significant anniversaries, it was a chance to reflect on current challenges and past successes (see our 90th-anniversary perspective on page 9) and to reflect on what the future holds for CPRE in Kent and beyond.

In parallel with our national umbrella organisation, we are rethinking our priorities for the coming years in the light of a myriad of new challenges. Climate change is just one of the issues that will impact on every aspect of what CPRE does, while the changing political and environmental climate will arguably be more critical than ever.

Local Plans and speculative 'off-plan' development applications all too often target inappropriate suburban development at countryside locations, where residents will be wholly reliant on cars to access the jobs and services they need.

Worse, when such speculative applications are successful, they prioritise low-density executive homes, not the affordable, sustainable and well-serviced homes so desperately needed by those households priced out of decent accommodation.

If we are to meet the challenges of climate change as a society, we will have to make major changes to the way we currently plan and build our homes, to our travel and to the way we generate and use energy.

All of these are at the forefront of the campaign work that we undertake and, with your support, will continue to undertake for as long as Kent needs us.

The countryside and the nature to which it is home is uniquely threatened by climate change but is also uniquely well placed to help us mitigate and adapt to the worst of the changes, provided we make the right decisions now.



Party time at Goddards Green: Standing, from left, Wendy Clarke, Hilary Newport and Linde Wotton. Seated, Graham Clarke and John Wotton

The heat is on



Earlier this year, chartered surveyor **Paul Mallion** enthralled CPRE Kent members with a talk on the principles of Passivhaus, a voluntary standard that aims to drastically cut energy demand in our homes. Here he explains further how we must improve energy efficiency across the building industry if we are to reduce carbon emissions to an acceptable level.

A low-energy house in east Kent built using traditional materials

Passivhaus “a building for which thermal comfort can be achieved solely by post-heating the fresh air mass which is required to achieve sufficient indoor air quality conditions without the need for recirculation of air”

Passivhaus in a commercial context near Canterbury

As party to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the UK must reduce greenhouse gas emissions (compared with 1990 levels) by 57 per cent by 2032 and at least 80 per cent by 2050.

The independent Committee on Climate Change reports, however, that, at best, current policies and plans will deliver only half the required reduction by 2030. To achieve even this lower rate of emissions, there needs to be a significant increase in the current building standards for energy efficiency for dwellings.

The Building Regulations set the minimum standards for buildings in the UK, covering new-build and refurbishment, extension and alteration projects.

The Regulations include Part L, which relates to the conservation of fuel and power and energy efficiency, and this part has not been updated since 2013. Local authorities do have power to set higher standards than Part L for new-builds through planning policy, although, since the government scrapping of the Code for Sustainable Homes in 2015, this power has not generally been applied.

Horror stories in the news about the poor quality of completed new dwellings in the UK are now unfortunately commonplace. What is often overlooked, however, in such cases is that substandard workmanship and design also extends to energy performance.

Studies into completed housing projects show that most fail to live up to the energy standards they were designed to meet, a phenomenon known as the performance gap (Rowntree, BRE, Leeds Met University).

This can be caused by a multitude of small failings, such as thermal bridges, gaps in insulation, air leakage caused by poor workmanship and design, poorly fitted fenestration, over-optimistic thermal calculations and inaccurate energy assessment methods such as Standard Assessment Procedure (from which Energy Performance Certificates are generated). Research into the performance gap in Germany and Sweden in

the 1980s led to the development of a new building standard, known as the Passivhaus Standard. The research demonstrated a link between energy efficiency and indoor air quality and comfort, establishing one of the key concepts of Passivhaus: that energy efficiency and fresh air supply cannot be separated.

The Passivhaus Institut in Darmstadt defines a true Passivhaus as:

“a building for which thermal comfort can be achieved solely by post-heating the fresh air mass which is required to achieve sufficient indoor air quality conditions without the need for recirculation of air”

This means that the primary design criterion for a Passivhaus is the supply of hygienic fresh air, something that hardly registers in most new-builds, as they rely mainly on accidental draughts for fresh air supply.

The design and calculation procedure required for the standard is rigorous but has proven to be statistically accurate over thousands of completed buildings across the world – greatly reducing the incidence of the performance gap.

Key principles of the Passivhaus Standard:

- Maximum U value for walls, floors, roofs 0.15W/m²K (or less if the building has an inefficient surface area-to-floor area ratio).
- Windows and doors usually need to be triple-glazed with a U value of 0.8W/m²K, averaged over the glass, glazing spacer and frame.
- All thermal bridges must be less than 0.01W/mK (known as a psi value); if greater, they must be included in the calculation.
- An efficient mechanical ventilation system with heat recovery is needed, supplying fresh outdoor air to each habitable room, extracting from wet rooms. Heat recovery efficiency of minimum 75 per cent. Fresh air supply at 30m³ per person per hour, or a whole house ventilation rate of 0.3 air changes per hour.
- Airtight construction (meaning no draughts when the windows are shut) tested to a maximum of 0.6 air changes per

hour using a blower door at 50 Pascals under both positive and negative pressure.

- Prevention of overheating, limited to 10 per cent of the year above 25°C.
- Heating may be provided by simply heating the ventilation air or providing a small heat source such as a woodstove or centrally located radiator or bathroom towel rail.

This will result in a building that will have a maximum heating demand of 15kWh/m²annum or a heating load of 10W/m². To put this in perspective, a typical three-bedroom British house uses some 180kWh/m²annum and still often fails to provide comfort and sufficient fresh air.

As Passivhaus is only an energy and comfort standard, there is no limitation on the type of construction that can be used. Owing to the greater levels of insulation material required, however, there should be a greater imperative to use sustainable insulations such as woodfibre, cellulose fibre from recycled paper, cork, sheep’s wool, recycled denim, hemp or flax. These materials contain only a fraction of the embodied carbon of petrochemical alternatives and generally perform much better in summer conditions to resist overheating.

The principles of Passivhaus can also be applied to existing buildings, in the form of retrofitting. EnerPHit is a slightly relaxed standard in terms of airtightness and heating demand criteria that allows for the nuances and restrictions of existing buildings and conservation issues. If successfully applied, the standard can reduce heating demand by up to 90 per cent.

The UK has been slow to adopt PH Standard, although there has been a marked upturn in completed projects across all sectors in recent years. Constructing to higher standards can have cost implications, although experienced Passivhaus designers in mainland Europe argue that once the market matures and has gone beyond the experimental stage, costs can become neutral.

Commercial buildings and schools can even cost less than conventional buildings as the need for complex heating and cooling systems and advanced building controls can be avoided. While it may not be possible to achieve PH certification on all projects, it can be beneficial to apply Passivhaus principles to a design or refurbishment wherever possible due to the rigorous assessment procedure.

Construction costs, which will be reflected in the purchase costs, of a Passivhaus will be higher than a house built to the minimum UK standards, currently averaging between 10 per cent and 15 per cent more expensive, owing to its higher quality. This additional cost could, however, be significantly reduced on larger developments where economies of scale can be exploited. What needs to be considered are the operational or running costs over the lifetime of the building and, of course, the carbon savings.

Cost and carbon savings on energy are typically 80-90 per cent (compared with minimum standards) and this saving will persist for the life of the building. With rising fuel costs and widespread environmental concern, homes built or refurbished to Passivhaus standards are likely to become sought after in

the property market and this will ultimately increase the value of such properties.

CPRE’s 2015 report ‘Warm and Green: Achieving affordable, low carbon energy while reducing impacts on the countryside’ focuses on using less energy and explores the realities of greening homes and communities in rural areas.

Practical examples of energy-efficient refurbishment projects are demonstrated, along with exemplar new builds. It includes recommendations for government, the construction industry and householders.

A change in VAT rating would also provide a significant boost for retrofitting, reducing VAT to zero for energy efficiency works for refurbishments that attain either Passivhaus, EnerPHit or the AECB (Association for Environment Conscious Building) low energy standard, along with a training incentive scheme for the building trades to increase understanding and skills in energy efficiency. At present, insulation-related work is VAT rated at 5 per cent, but this does not cover whole house refurbishment.

The construction industry has the skills, products and practices available to achieve these standards right now, but as the regulatory standards are so low, too many designers and contractors are happy to perpetuate the principle of building to the lowest acceptable standard (the race to the bottom). There needs to be a dramatic shift in attitude in the construction industry to meet the challenge of truly lowering carbon emissions.

Paul Mallion FRICS is a chartered building surveyor and certified Passivhaus designer; he is also director of Conker Conservation Ltd based in Canterbury.



Inset: Let’s hope we see more of these plaques across the county perhaps before the Passivhaus principle becomes the norm and doesn’t warrant particular mention



Free Will Month: February 2020

An everlasting gift

In memoriam:

What better way can there be to remember a loved one than by giving a gift to CPRE Kent?

Your gift in their memory will go towards protecting our countryside into the future. You could celebrate their life by setting up a fund with Just Giving or CAF Bank for mourners in lieu of flowers, or by making a one-off donation in your loved one's name.

Legacy gift

By leaving a gift in your will to CPRE Kent, you will be joining thousands of other people who want to stand up for the countryside and who care about the future of our wildlife and biodiversity and want to play a part in continuing to help preserve nature for future generations.

Leaving a gift to CPRE Kent will help to ensure we exist into the future to carry on the fight to protect our countryside. Please give the gift of the countryside and remember CPRE Kent when making your will. What an amazing legacy and tribute!

For details, please see our website or contact Vicky Ellis in strictest confidence on 01233 714540 (email vicky.ellis@cprekent.org.uk)

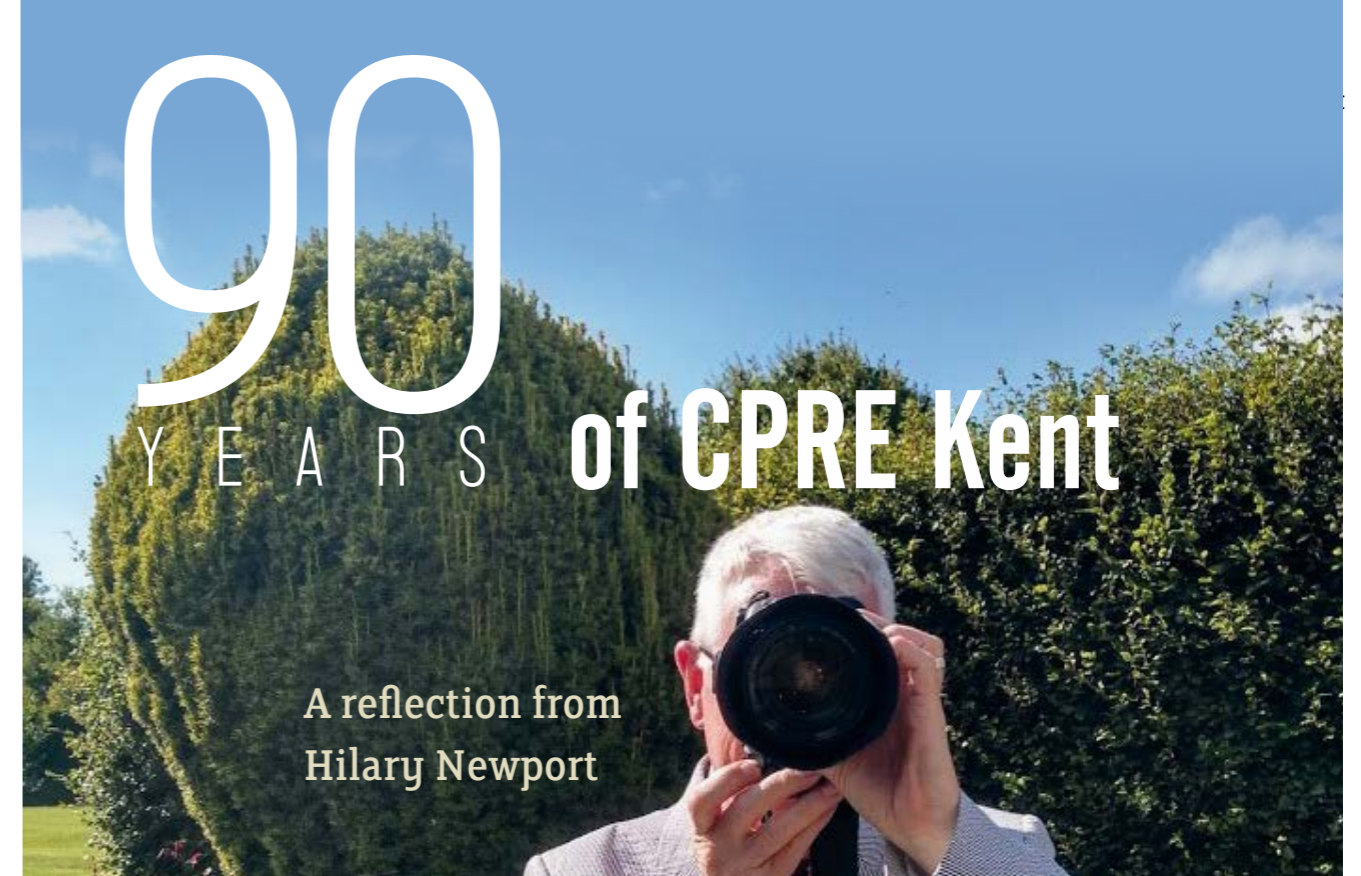
A gift in your will would help CPRE Kent protect our precious and fragile countryside and biodiversity into the future for generations to come; that is why CPRE Kent has teamed up with Whitehead Monckton to offer supporters the chance to have a simple will written for free during our Free Will Month in February 2020.

Here are some of the ways a gift in your will could help protect the countryside and the biodiversity within it:

- Taking part in examinations
- Commenting on planning applications
- Providing advice and support
- Paying for expertise in such areas as environmental law, heritage, landscape, air quality, transport, water and ecology
- Organising litter picks
- Raising awareness by attending events and visiting schools
- Supporting local communities, towns and villages

This offer is strictly limited. To find out more, please call Vicky Ellis on 01233 714540 in confidence, or email vicky.ellis@cprekent.org.uk

Offer limited to 10 wills only, on a first-come-first-served basis to anyone 50 years old and over. For more details, please visit our website: www.cprekent.org.uk Other solicitors are available for will-writing but not in conjunction with this offer. You are under no obligation to leave a gift to CPRE Kent.



Watching me watching you. Paul Buckley, a member of the CPRE Kent planning team, took many of the photographs from the party at Goddards Green (pic Hilary Newport)

The Kent branch of CPRE began its life in 1929 as a sub-committee of the Kent Council of Social Services, now known as Action with Communities in Rural Kent.

It recruited volunteer wardens, who acted as 'eyes and ears' and engaged with planning challenges, long before the planning system as we know it today had been established.

CPRE Kent closed its doors during the Second World War and in the following few years, when most development was concentrated on repairing the damage done during the conflict.

By 1952, CPRE was in operation again, heavily engaged in inquiries into Kent's development plan and dissecting the new proposals to turn Ashford into a growth area. Plus ça change!

In the following few decades, the branch was active in the preservation of hedgerows and of historic buildings that many owners wanted to demolish and replace with housing.

Dungeness nuclear power station generated its first electricity in 1965 and the landscape of Romney Marsh was significantly changed by the pylons that carried power to the National Grid.

Fast-forward to 1982, when CPRE Kent received a generous legacy from Miss Dorathey Lang and had sufficient resources to operate its own bank account and employ its own secretary, and then to 1985, when it moved from under the same Folkestone roof as the KCSS into its own offices at Wye College.

The 1980s saw the plans for the Channel Tunnel emerge, and a few years later the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. CPRE Kent played a pivotal role in bringing together affected communities and parishes along its proposed route to achieve real improvements to the way in which it limited its impact both on the landscape and on neighbouring communities.

As the pace of change and development in the county increased, in 1992 our local wardens were supported by volunteer district committees who helped spread the workload

and respond to the ever-growing number of consultations and the development of Structure Plans and Local Plans.

Another legacy, from Miss Elizabeth Mann in 1996, allowed the branch to take on paid staff, but by 2002 our funds were greatly diminished. Then news arrived of another generous legacy, this time from Arthur Ivor Read, which has allowed the branch to create a sound investment base that has transformed the level of campaigning we can undertake.

Ten years ago, during our 80th anniversary, we celebrated the abandonment of Imperial College's plans to put some 4,000 executive homes in the AONB at Wye. In 2016, we celebrated the overturning by the Court of Appeal permission to build more than 500 homes in the AONB at Farthingloe – a judgment upheld in 2017 when we successfully defended an appeal to the Supreme Court.

This year, our 90th-anniversary celebrations were made all the more enjoyable by the news of yet another Appeal Court judgment (see page 19), confirming the refusal of planning permission for housing development on the A2 at Newington, a village already subject to illegal levels of air pollution from traffic, on the grounds that the developers could offer no evidence that harm to human health would not be worsened. We believe this is a first in planning judgments of this type.

The constant, and escalating, development challenges to Kent's countryside are sometimes dispiriting but make the successes all the sweeter. And, although we are one of the strongest county branches in the CPRE family, there is so much more that we could do if we had the resources.

As well as the benefactors who have done so much to support CPRE Kent with their legacies, our trustees, members, volunteers and supporters are phenomenally important to us and, on our 90th birthday, I raise a glass to you all!



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Christmas Cards

Help to raise funds by buying CPRE Kent's charity Christmas cards. We have three designs: barn owl, robin and, new for this year, grey squirrel.

They cost just £3.50 for a pack of 10... which is excellent value for money.

They are available at our AGM, or you can call the office on 01233 714540.

And why not give the gift of the countryside and buy a gift membership for a loved one this year? Also available online or from the office.

If you tell us it's for a gift we will even throw in a few goodies to make it extra special!



You've got to hand it to Christine!

Christine Drury, former CPRE Kent chairman, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at this year's national conference.



Christine Drury, left, receives her award from national chair Su Sayer

Christine stood down from her five-year Kent role at last year's AGM, while her time on the national trustee board came to an end this year. She is now a CPRE national vice-president.

The Lifetime Achievement Award "recognises some truly exceptional individuals who have helped CPRE in extraordinary ways over long periods of time and made an indelible mark on their colleagues and friends who have nominated them".

Christine was one of three people handed the award by national chair Su Sayer at the conference, held in Birmingham in June; the others were Leslie Ashworth from CPRE Northumberland and Ben Nash from CPRE Herefordshire.

Warm congratulations to all (but especially Christine!) from CPRE Kent.



No time to waste... Christine never let pass an opportunity to consider strategy or policy

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Your letters



This is what I do to protect the environment. What about you?



Dear Editor,

So many CPRE publications tell members about schemes to protect the environment, save energy, avoid pollution, achieve clean air and so on.

We can read this and wholly agree, but there is no record of what members actually do themselves to achieve these important ends.

I suggest that members write down exactly what they are doing in this regard. The very exercise of sitting down and logging it under specific headings would be valuable and concentrate minds on how to do more to protect and enhance our environment.

Below is such a list showing what I do personally, and I invite other members to make their contributions:

Energy-saving

House: All electric heating. No fossil fuels. Secondary glazing (double glazing is not permitted on a listed building). Draft excluders on all external doors.

Vehicles: Smallest of petrol cars – zero road tax when bought. To be replaced by an all-electric VW when available in 2020. I also have a 20-year-old Land Rover Defender (2.5-litre diesel) for farm use; there is no alternative that is suitable or affordable.

Air travel: Never (now).

Green issues

Food: I eat mostly home-grown fruit, vegetables, fish (caught trout) and meat (shot ducks, geese and pigeons).

Trees: I have planted some 500 over the last seven years.

Land: I graze 40 cattle, April to October, on permanent pasture.

Water: I manage a tidal lake for carp, bream and wildfowl and have created five ponds – one for carp, one for trout and three for wildfowl. **NB:** an osprey visits the tidal lake in autumn for fish suppers on its return journey to Africa.

Nesting boxes: Two barn owl boxes (three chicks fledged last year).

Plastics: Minimal use. I use tap water for drinking and recycle whenever possible.

Public space

I am leaving in my will half an acre of land and a village pond to the parish council for public enjoyment in perpetuity.

Affordable housing

Land: I am seeking planning consent for seven affordable homes in the village centre (none for commercial speculation).

CPRE member, name and address supplied

Editor's note: So it's over to you, dear readers... what do you do to help protect our environment? We'd love to hear from you, so please feel free to share by emailing david.mairs@cprekent.org.uk. Of course, readers' views on all matters are welcome at the same address.



Keep it clean... and green!

The month: September. The event: CPRE's Green Clean. Members, partners and supporters of CPRE Kent pulled on their gloves and grabbed their litter-pickers as they joined other branches, community groups and volunteers to tidy up green spaces and countryside in a collective assault on rubbish.



Gift of Membership

Have you considered the gift of CPRE Kent membership?

CPRE Kent's membership is in serious decline.

Without our members we would not be able to protect the countryside from inappropriate planning decisions or campaign on litter issues and biodiversity at a time when there is unprecedented pressure on green spaces and protected areas. Nature is under serious threat.

Please consider giving a CPRE Kent membership when making a gift to a friend or family member.

Let us know it is a gift and we will send a card and small present to make it special.

You can write to us at:

CPRE Kent, Queen's Head House, Ashford Road, Charing, Ashford, Kent TN27 0AD; email info@cprekent.org.uk; or phone us on 01233 714540.



Evidence from the Green Clean will be used to highlight the urgent need for a deposit return system that includes drinks cans, plastic and glass bottles, cartons and pouches.

Last year, hundreds of bags of litter and more than 11,000 drinks bottles and cans were collected, demonstrating the need for an 'all-in' deposit return system (DRS).

This evidence helped make the case to former environment secretary Michael Gove, who gave his backing to an all-in system, stating it would give consumers "the greatest possible incentive to recycle".

CPRE will use this year's Green Clean to demonstrate that the problem persists and urge current environment secretary Theresa Villiers to pick up where her predecessor had left off, introducing the best scheme as swiftly as possible.

In Kent, litter-picks were held at Graveney and Folkestone, the latter by children from the town's Christ Church CEP Academy. Christ Church teacher Catherine Avery said: "It was really pleasing to be able to include CPRE's Green Clean as part of the Climate Strike."

"We had children from most year groups taking part and adults were fully on board, which was great. During a morning meeting before the event, we were all talking about what else we could do at our school to recycle and help the environment."

"During the event the children were excited to be out of school and helping the community but also felt shocked at the rubbish they saw around them."

"After the litter-pick, some parents were asking if we had been

involved in the Climate Strike and we received some really positive comments when we explained that we had taken part in the CPRE litter-pick.

"It was a really positive experience and one that we will build on for the future."

Volunteers at Graveney were joined by Sarah Merrington, CPRE's deputy director of volunteering who has just moved to the county, and her sons Oliver and Billy.

Sarah told Kent Voice: "Oliver and Billy are brand-new litter-pickers – and they absolutely loved it. It's one of the relatively few occasions I have kept them engaged in one activity for more than about 20 minutes!"

"They love being active in the countryside and litter-picking really helps bring to life learning about environmental issues and their own role in looking after our countryside. They worked really well together as a team – it was lovely to see."

Welcome to Kent, Sarah!



A tale of two counties



David Morrish, chairman of Thanet CPRE, reflects on the differences and similarities between his adopted county of Kent and his former home of Staffordshire

England has a huge variety of dramatic scenery and famous landscapes and it is all too easy to overlook the charm and character of the counties most familiar to us. Here I reflect on the links and differences between Kent and Staffordshire – respectively my current and previous homes.

These two, apparently contrasting, 'shire counties' some 150 miles apart share a common thread – the Roman Watling Street, which starts at the Saxon fort at Richborough (Portus Ritupis, founded by the Romans after their invasion of Britain in AD 43) and ends just west of Staffordshire at Viriconium, once the fourth-largest city in Roman Britain (showing how civilisation increased from south to north!) and where you can still wander the remains of the bathhouse at English Heritage's Wroxeter Roman City.

Roman roads criss-cross both counties and Roman names abound. Rochester is Kent's second cathedral city, while Rocester (pronounce it 'Roaster' to the locals) is a sleepy village in north Staffordshire next to the River Dove by the huge JCB plant at the foot of the Peak District.

The Dove Valley lies in the prettiest part of the national park – indeed, the Dovedale steppingstones pictured in CPRE's recent report 'Landscapes for Everyone: Creating a Better Future' are in Staffordshire.

Eighteen miles to the west, at the Cheshire border, the River Dane marks the edge of Daneland in Anglo-Saxon England (King Ethelred had tried to keep the Barbarians out of Kent with funds raised through the Danegeld land tax).

In the Peak Park lies the mysterious Lud's Church, a moss-covered chasm more than 1,000 feet long and 260 feet deep where Sir Gawain encountered the Green Knight in the medieval tale penned two centuries before Chaucer.

Above are The Roaches, an outcrop of millstone grit where a colony of wallabies survives after a mass break-out from a private zoo. Not far away, just south of Buxton, is Flash, the highest inhabited village in the UK.

The largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver metalwork ever found was unearthed 10 years ago near Lichfield, the spiritual centre of Mercia – one of the seven great Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England, alongside East Anglia, Essex, Northumbria, Sussex, Wessex and of course Kent.

Not far from the three-spired cathedral (a dull-red gloomy pile compared with the glories of Canterbury and Rochester) is the tiny 'city centre', one of eight civil parishes with city status in England and where Dr Sam Johnson compiled the first dictionary, ready for Charles Dickens, who himself had a soft spot for Staffordshire, often visiting Tong, where he composed Little Dorrit.

Kent is defined by 400 miles of coast, Staffordshire by 1,200 miles of canal. Kent is the Garden of England; Staffordshire carries the epithet The Creative County, despite harbouring Alton Towers – the second-most visited theme park in the UK.

If gypsy tart is the delight of Kentish folk (an honorary exception being Mr Keith Richards from Dartford), oatcakes are the staple for a 'full English' and an all-day snack around the Stoke potteries.

Both counties had a mining tradition – now all gone apart from a legacy of radical awkwardness – while they have always



Watch out for wallabies around The Roaches - a colony thrives in the area after breaking out from a private zoo. Above right: Doxey Pool, where Staffordshire legend portrays it as bottomless, never dry and home to a mermaid (both pics Keith Tolley)

been important farming areas: Staffordshire breeds 8 per cent of the country's beef cattle, while Kent gives us 50 per cent of our fruit and most of our hops for bitter beer, famously brewed in Burton-on-Trent, Stone and Faversham and now at microbreweries across both counties.

Kent was the front line of defence during the Second World War, many of the county's children being evacuated to Staffordshire via the intricate railway network developed during the Thirties that bypassed London.

Staffordshire did its share in the conflict by diverting Stoke's ceramic workers to munitions manufacture at a secret city in the west of the county – Swynnerton – where the UK's busiest-ever railway station was used by more people than any London terminus, although with only 19 trains a day.

Lovers of conspiracy theories consider that one of the country's secret 'regional centres of government' was, or perhaps still is, located in secret bunkers on the site.

In east Staffordshire a subterranean munitions factory in a cave referred to as RAF Fauld suffered a huge blast when 5,000 tons of high explosive and 500 million rounds of ammunition were detonated by an unwary smoker, causing the biggest man-made explosion in the world and leaving a monster crater almost a mile in circumference and more than 300 feet deep. A hundred people drowned through the obliteration of the reservoir lying over the cave.

The noise from the explosion was heard in London, but thankfully Staffordshire is today better known for its peace, with the National Memorial Arboretum established as Britain's national site of remembrance at Alrewas, near Lichfield.

A few miles south of Fauld, Cannock Chase is one of the smallest Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the country and the largest surviving area of lowland heathland in the Midlands.

The AONB has extensive areas of forest and woodland, along with areas of parkland, all part of a historic landscape dating back thousands of years. Wild deer still roam the Chase and are probably descended from the original herd introduced in Norman times to be hunted.



A great glacial boulder of granite sitting on the top of the Chase seems out of place on the moorlands, which are formed largely of sand and gravel. The boulder has been matched to the intrusive rock outcrop in Dumfries & Galloway, more than 180 miles away in the uplands of southern Scotland.

This granite 'erratic' is marked on the OS map as the Glacial Boulder. It was ripped from its parent mountain during the last Ice Age and transported by glacial action down through England to its present location, the journey taking perhaps 10,000 years, during which the edges of the rock were worn down, giving it today's rounded shape.

The Chase itself is the remnant of the glacial moraine Castle Ring Camp, an Iron Age hill fort high on the southern edge of Cannock Chase with views across the forest out towards the Weaver Hills. This is the highest point looking east for more than 1,800 miles before reaching the Ural Mountains.

Castle Ring was thought to have been occupied about AD50 by the Celtic Cornovii tribe – ancestors, it is believed, of my wife's family and their Corfield clan.

The Chase was a huge First World War trench-warfare training ground through which millions of conscripts passed and where 200,000 remain, killed by Spanish flu.

To me, much of the beauty of England lies in the working countryside and the variety and charm of contrasting counties. Staffordshire has only one 'oast house' but plenty of historic buildings, including Stafford's High House, the largest timber-framed town house in England.

Just outside Stafford is Shugborough House, given to Lord Anson with his peerage for his role as a naval commander after his epic four-year voyage of exploration and plunder around the Pacific and Spanish America when 90 per cent of the sailors died from scurvy and disease.

His most infamous descendant was Lord Lichfield, the society photographer renowned for his glamorous house guests and wild Sixties parties. Indeed, a former acquaintance in Stafford reputedly bears an uncanny resemblance to him!

Having spent most of our 50-year marriage in Staffordshire, we are delighted to be welcomed by the friendly folk of the Deep South in this lovely county of Kent, with the sea on our doorstep, rather than hours away, and close to our two strapping young grandsons – one a Man of Kent and the other a Kentish Man (I've finally learnt which is which!).

It's party time!

Our 90th birthday was all the excuse needed for CPRE members, supporters and members of staff to get together for a very special celebration in the September sunshine

As just a quick flick through this edition of Kent Voice makes clear, CPRE Kent is this year celebrating its 90th birthday. And we could have asked for no finer place to party than Goddards Green, the stunning Cranbrook home of our chairman John Wotton and his wife Linde.

Some 40 members and supporters gathered on a beautiful September afternoon to share memories, experiences and views but most of all simply to catch up and enjoy each other's company.

John gave a brief speech to the assembled throng, as did director Hilary Newport, who told how our landmark birthdays seemed to have the happy knack of coinciding with important victories for CPRE Kent in the battle to protect our treasured countryside.

A sumptuous spread of food was tucked into with gusto (by some more than others!), while bottles of sparkling wine added just enough fizz to ensure everyone had an unforgettable time. CPRE Kent is of course dependent on the efforts





of its members and supporters in so many ways but rarely gets the opportunity to show how richly appreciated those efforts are. Happily, though, the party at Goddards Green provided such an occasion.



“It gave us the chance to say thank you to our fantastic volunteers, without whom there wouldn’t be a CPRE Kent,” said Hilary.

“Words alone will never be enough to show our appreciation, but we hope this extraordinary event at John and Linde’s lovely home will go some way to expressing our gratitude.



“We are of course just as indebted to those who weren’t able to make it and we hope that in the not too distant future we can share the sort of fun and friendship we had at Goddards Green with them, too.

“Again, we thank all those who do so much for CPRE Kent.”



Hilary Newport, CPRE Kent director, reflects on a decision that yet again stresses the importance of air quality

In 2017 we stood at a public inquiry alongside Swale Borough Council in successfully resisting two applications to build up to 330 homes and other facilities right against the boundary of an Air Quality Management Area on the A2 in Newington.

The application was rejected first by a planning inspector, and subsequently by the High Court, both citing the failure of the scheme’s proposals to limit the worsening of air quality that would result from the development, and the inevitable harm to the health of current and future residents.

The scheme’s promoter, Gladman Developments Ltd, exercised its right to apply to the Court of Appeal to challenge the High Court decision but once again had that challenge refused in a judgment handed down in early September.

This is a potentially very important decision, since poor – and worsening – air quality still exists in many urban areas, despite the urgency of measures to comply with legally binding international targets, and we believe this is the first time a planning challenge has been refused

on air-quality grounds. The Appeal Court judges agreed with the earlier decisions and concluded that, although Gladman had offered payment to mitigate the worsening of air quality along with its application, it had not provided real evidence that those payments could be effective in translating into “actual measures likely to reduce the use of private petrol and diesel vehicles, and hence reduce the forecast NO₂ emissions...”

It is too soon to say how much impact this judgment will have on future planning decisions, appeals and court challenges, but it seems to me that this sends a clear message that promoters of schemes such as these will have to do very much more to demonstrate they are doing all they can to improve, or at the very least not worsen, air quality.

We simply cannot continue to allow ‘business as usual’ planning decisions that ignore the impact of unsustainable transport on the health and well-being of communities. Local and national government must act quickly to bring about significant changes in the way we plan for future homes, employment and travel needs.



Help protect the future of Kent’s countryside with a legacy gift

By remembering CPRE Kent when considering your will, you can help ensure we will be here protecting the Kent countryside well into the future

If you are thinking of having a will written, or have an existing will, please think about leaving a gift, no matter how small, to CPRE Kent.

To find out more contact Vicky Ellis 01233 714540 vicky.ellis@cprekent.org.uk





Chairman's Update

Welcome to Sir Robert and an invitation to our members

John Wotton

I start this update with the very welcome news that Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL has consented to become patron of our branch.

Sir Robert will be known to many of you from his devoted support for the branch as a vice-president, which has included making available his magnificent home of Allington Castle for events to promote our work.

Quite apart from his achievements as the founder of MORI polls, the breadth and scale of his voluntary work has been astonishing, including chairing the Magna Carta 2015 800th Anniversary Commemoration Committee, the role in which I first met him.

He has been a trustee or vice-president of many conservation organisations. In this county alone he has been a deputy lieutenant, chancellor of the University of Kent and a Kent ambassador, among many other things.

We could hardly have a more distinguished and committed patron, or a better role model for our volunteers, and I am honoured and grateful to welcome him to his new role.

After several years of devoted service as chair of our environment committee, Graham Warren has decided that it is time to pass over the reins to a successor.

Graham has brought all his formidable technical knowledge, gleaned during his long career in the water industry, to the role, benefitting not only CPRE Kent but also other branches to whom Graham has freely given his time and expertise.

His contribution to the debates on fracking in the South East has been masterful. I am grateful to him and to David Wood, who has kindly agreed to take over chairing the committee.

Our district and specialist committees continue to do sterling work and everyone who participates in their work is to be commended. The successful campaign to prevent housing development at Pond Farm, Newington (see page 19), led by Richard Knox-Johnston with the support of the Swale committee, is a good example of what can be achieved.



Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL has kindly agreed to be CPRE Kent patron

Every new draft Local Plan and major development proposal, however, accompanied by a growing and ever more complex array of documents, reminds us how stretched our resources are.

All our committees would benefit from new members and I do urge you to become involved, if you are not already a committee member. There is no better way of meeting other like-minded members and developing an understanding our work.

I am particularly keen that more members should join our Maidstone committee, to help share the unreasonable burden on the few current active members.

Work on developing a forward plan for the branch, to guide our campaigning priorities over the next few years, is coming on well and I am pleased that

so many members have participated in our open discussions of what the plan should say. We expect to launch it by the end of 2019.

One of the plan's priorities will, of course, be growing and broadening our membership and I urge you all to spread the word and encourage your contacts to join us.

Our presence at major events around the county, such as the Kent Show, brings in a consistent flow of new members and Vicky Ellis would greatly appreciate more volunteers to help her man our stand and engage with visitors.

Our campaigning against developments that harm the countryside takes place at the point of collision between two powerful forces in public policy: overcoming the housing crisis and combatting climate change and loss of biodiversity.

Growing public awareness and concern about the climate emergency and the need for urgent action to prevent disastrous and irreversible changes in our environment is, in my view, altering the balance of these forces and, to mix metaphors, the political tide may be turning in our favour.

We need not apologise for opposing inappropriate developments on environmental grounds, as the Pond Farm campaign has proved.

Both housing need and environmental protection start at the local level. Nationally imposed housebuilding targets are persuading local authorities to adopt policies and support developments that go way beyond any rational assessment of local housing need and would do untold harm to areas of countryside that absorb greenhouse gases and sustain biodiversity.

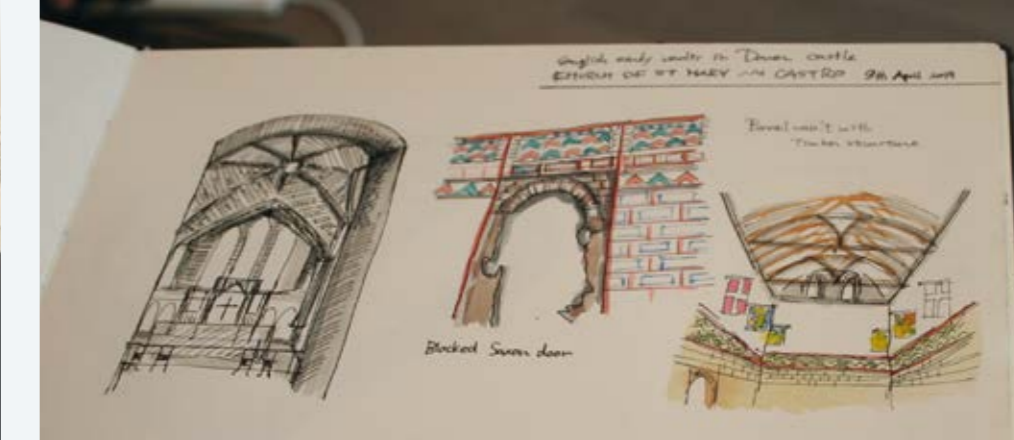
Our fight to protect our countryside is principled and moral and we can maintain it proudly.



Ayako Seki's Dover Castle portfolio saw her take the Gravett Award, given for the best observational drawings of buildings or structures produced over the past year by an undergraduate at Kent School of Architecture, part of the University of Kent at Canterbury.

The award is named after Kent historic buildings enthusiast Kenneth Gravett, who died in 1999. It both rewards excellence among students and encourages the recording of existing buildings through hand-drawing.

Historic England says drawings of existing buildings and structures are "used to aid understanding by observation and close contact with building fabric. They are particularly useful for vernacular buildings and architectural details crucial to the history of a building or site".



An eye for history

An architecture student is £300 better off after she won a prestigious award sponsored by CPRE Kent's Historic Buildings Committee

A total of 119 students had entered for the award, with just eight shortlisted.

Ptolemy Dean, one of the country's finest architects and a former Kent College pupil, chaired the judging panel, which was completed by Stuart Page and Clive Bowley.

It was cheers all round during June's award presentation, Ptolemy having been awarded an OBE earlier that month.

Graham Horner, secretary of the Historic Buildings Committee, said: "The entries were once again of a very high standard. The finalists all got to present their work in person and get feedback from the judging panel."

"Ms Seki impressed the panel with her passion for, and understanding of the functionality of, the castle structure."



Top left: Gravett Award winner Ayako Seki with Ptolemy Dean

Top right: Ayako's notebook shows the quality of her work

Bottom left: All smiles at awards night. From left, Historic Buildings Committee secretary Graham Horner, CPRE Kent chairman John Wotton, Craig Webster, judging panellists Clive Bowley, Ptolemy Dean and Stuart Page and Nikolaos Karydis of the Kent School of Architecture

Above: Just there! A student shows what's going on in one of her drawings

Below: Ptolemy explains all



Around the districts.

A quick catch-up with our committees – more extensive reports from our chairmen are on the website. Don't forget, if you would like to become more involved with CPRE Kent in your local area please contact us in the office and we will put you in touch with your district chairman.

Ashford – Christine Drury

- CPRE Ashford would love to have more volunteers bringing their local knowledge to help us make relevant and constructive comments on planning applications, large and small. We also now have a separate meeting looking at wider issues that may help us make early suggestions for the next Local Plan, as well as immediate issues. If you are interested in either, please contact the office on 01233 714540.
- Since the 38-minute high-speed train service to St Pancras started in 2009, the Ashford area has become a developers' honeypot. That has been good for the long-awaited regeneration of the town centre, although it has lost its M&S and will lose its Debenhams. Flats are being built, a cinema and brewery have arrived and restaurants, leisure and culture are the next priorities for the town centre. We support this brownfield regeneration.
- The Local Plan includes the development of large swathes of countryside to the south of the town, adjacent to the now-emerging Chilmington Green urban extension. Together these are now designated as South Ashford Garden Community. We have commented formally and are engaging to ensure these are well-planned developments including provision for cycling and walking, with 10-minute bus provision assured. Outline plans are too car-dependent.
- The pressures outside Ashford town are now huge. The borough is one of the largest in the county and, like most of Kent, is more than 75 per cent countryside. Houses in villages sell at a premium. If developments comprise fewer than 10 properties and are in a small plot they avoid the 40 per cent affordable requirement. Cumulative impacts are being ignored. In the absence of buses, shops and local school places, they are car- and delivery-dependent, putting huge pressures on rural roads as well as being against the direction in which we need to move to be climate-behaviour-compliant. Ashford CPRE generally supports small infill development, but in combination with allocated sites the cumulative strain on parishes is destructive. Some are outrageously opportunistic: Wates's proposal for a further 250 homes in Tenterden is not in the Local Plan and would destroy the character of a small town where the green spaces reach deep into its heart from the surrounding AONB. Tenterden already has a lot of approved development and an inadequate bus service.
- We collaborate wherever we can in the borough – currently with Rural Means Rural and the Limes Land Protection Group in Tenterden. Do contact us if you are part of a group not yet working with CPRE.

Canterbury – Nick Blake

- After Barrie Gore's report in the previous edition of Kent Voice featuring the city council's own application for a park-and-ride at Wincheap, it has reacted to a huge amount of objection but only by moving the edge back a few metres from the River Stour. This fails to recognise the impact on the Stour's setting in this edge-of-city location. The floodplain is fairly narrow at this point, but the presence of trees means the river setting survives the proximity of Wincheap Industrial Estate. It seems our city council has no passion or eye for detail. Members of the planning committee will be in the difficult position of voting on their own council's application. It is possible many might feel unhappy about the application but be compromised by the situation.
- The so-called heritage champion is now also the leader of the council, which we feel is a potential conflict of interest. He has not championed any heritage cause – all we get are meetings and strategies but no positive action. The city has what look like effective policies to protect the environment, but they are not implemented. We focus so much on well-written documents, driven by hours at the desktop rather than going out and seeing.
- Housing developments are stalled because of stakeholders not meshing together. At Sturry the council's 'green gap' highlighted in the Local Plan is ridiculously narrow and will not prevent the visual merging of that village with Canterbury. The adjacent woodland that is to be retained has wedges of housing thrust into it and no plan for its maintenance. No countryside protection there!
- The A28 Sturry relief road is short of finance and is set between planned housing developments. Have you noticed how much new housing is sited next to busy roads yet such locations have been shown to be bad for health? The nearby development at Hersden looks just like any other estate. Why do we have policies asking for local distinctiveness when we get the same mediocre housing all over the country?

Dartford and Gravesham – Alex Hills

- The Bean interchange public inquiry began at the start of October. The Highways England proposals will not achieve their objectives, having a greater impact on the environment and residents than they should. Creating an additional eastbound slip road at Bean on to the A2 will have a negative impact on the strategic road network. It is concerning that no peak-flow forecasting work was done for the project or analysis of what the impact would be if the new Thames crossing was built and one of the crossings was closed.
- It seems the only thing that will stop the new Thames crossing going ahead now is funding. This is totally wrong; however, now is the time to stop fighting the proposals and focus on making the project as good as we can. Getting as much of the road underground and minimising the impact on Kent roads must be our objectives. The crossing will have a large impact on Dartford, Gravesham, Maidstone, Tonbridge & Malling and even Dover.
- It is not possible for the crossing to include a rail link due to topography on the Kent side and the required larger tunnel bore would cause the tunnel to rise. There is a viable £3 billion project being developed that would see a new railway line linking HS1 with the London Gateway deepwater port in Essex. Having witnessed the problems CPRE has had over HS2 and how evidence has come to light showing the project is not in the national interest, I would urge caution with this scheme.

Dover – Derek Wanstall

- Dover District Council is progressing with its Local Plan review. At a recent meeting, concerns were expressed about infrastructure and the amount of traffic exiting Deal at peak times, which is causing frequent hold-ups at upper Deal roundabout and on the Dover, Deal and Sandwich bypasses towards Thanet. Of course, development on the edge of these towns exacerbates the problem.
- Lydden Hill racing circuit will soon be up for discussion, with new plans for expansion being submitted. Noise and access is a serious problem, in conjunction with the proposed increase in race days, along with concerns relating to the AONB.
- We await further news on Farthingloe and Western Heights. Nearby, The Citadel is up for sale as it is not being used for immigration detainees. With heritage refurbishment also on the agenda, perhaps the future of the whole area should be reviewed.
- Air pollution is a great concern, with more vehicles on the roads, engines left running in hold-ups and so on. Developers should plant more trees and retain them on development sites, improving the health of the nation. Sadly, the continual increase in the population only means an increase in the number of properties required.
- Members and non-members alike are invited to the Dover AGM on Tuesday, November 5 (11am), at The Royal Hotel, Beach Street, Deal CT14 6JD. Refreshments and nibbles will be available.
- Finally, at the Dover AGM I shall not be seeking re-election as chairman. With important issues in the area, hopefully a good turn-out will bring forth both a new chairman and a minutes secretary.

Maidstone – Gary Thomas

- The review of the Maidstone Local Plan is taking place, due to be in place for 2022. The responses to the recent Call for Sites are due to be publicised very soon. We have responded extensively to the review, both in writing and through meetings. The increased annual rate of building from 882 dwellings to 1,236 from the start of the new Plan in 2022 presents huge problems and is due largely to the government's 'adjustment factor' imposed on local authorities. This appears to just make a bad situation worse by concentrating development so heavily in the South East. The failure to match the need for improved infrastructure alongside the increasing population is obvious, but Maidstone Borough Council has no responsibility for most of what is needed (for example traffic, roads, health, education, waste disposal and public transport) so this severe mismatch is set to continue.
- Three proposals for large 'garden communities' are causing great concern. Two are from developers – one just north of the county showground, the other alongside Marden – and one apparently organised by the borough council (secretly!) for Lenham Heath. We will be responding more as the plans develop.
- Two new Gypsy and Traveller applications feature large built 'dayrooms' on each pitch. Gypsies and Travellers have policies not available to the rest of the population due to their culture of living in caravans in the countryside, allowing them to continue in this way. Building 'dayrooms' appears contrary to the reason for this policy and is a development we think should be challenged.
- The Glover review into national landscapes has, disappointingly, ruled out expansion of the Kent Downs AONB, at least for the time being.

Medway – David Mairs

- A petition with hundreds of names was sent to Medway Council urging it to reject applications for large-scale development in and around "the important green lung" of Lower Rainham and Lower Twydall, including a proposal for 1,250 dwellings in the Pump Lane area and housing plans to the north of Rainham. If the proposals are accepted, they will remove a significant part of the greenfield buffer preventing a continuous urban sprawl between Lower Rainham, Twydall and Gillingham.
- As with the rest of the county, Medway faces huge challenges if it is to retain substantial areas of countryside. CPRE Kent is, however, under-represented in the district, so we are keen to hear from anyone who lives in Medway and would like to get further involved with what we do. Please feel free to call the office on 01233 714540.

Sevenoaks – Nigel Britten

- We have embarked on the final stage of the Local Plan, the examination in public. The central question for the inspector is whether the plan is 'sound', meaning whether it complies with policy requirements in all respects. Within that, the key issue is housing. The government's formula for calculating housing need stipulates that 13,960 dwellings should be built during the 20-year Plan period, 2015-2035. Instead, the Plan proposes a total of 10,600, with the justification that in a district that is almost entirely Green Belt and two-thirds AONB there is nowhere to put so many houses. We have commented at all stages of the process and are grateful to our two professional planners at the CPRE Kent office, Paul Buckley and Julie Davies, who have given us invaluable support and been presenting evidence at the examination. One major purpose will be to challenge the intention at some future date to build some 2,500 dwellings on what is now Pedham Place golf course.

Committee members have been attending on as many days as possible over the four-week period, commenting in particular on proposed sites at Edenbridge and Fort Halstead.

- Threats to the countryside are everywhere. The committee is always ready to welcome new members, so we hope anyone reading this will think about giving a little time to help protect the district’s wonderful countryside.

Shepway – Graham Horner

- Folkestone & Hythe District Council planners have published an initial response to Folkestone & Hythe’s planning application for Otterpool Park. It echoes many of the concerns we have raised, including requesting the applicant to provide more information on and/or reconsider:
 - strategy for dealing with a major road (A20) cutting through the middle of the town
 - more detailed proposals for the town centre (“Tier 2’ design) and how it will integrate with the proposed public park, Westenhanger station, Westenhanger Castle and the A20
 - the rationale for the ‘overarching spacial concept’ (for example, heights, legibility and key views)
 - a ‘21st-century transport vision’ as opposed to ‘predict and provide’
 - better non-motorised transport links within the development and to Sellindge and Folkestone
 - merging of neighbourhoods planned south of the A20
 - clarity on strategy for delivery; definition of ‘master developer’ and long-term stewardship/governance
 - a more joined-up approach to green infrastructure and provision for leisure
 - the level of detail to be agreed at this stage, especially for later phases

FHDC has bought Westenhanger Castle after a long negotiation. Objectors have branded this a waste of money, but it will open opportunities to integrate it better into the public realm.

- I have, wearing my parish councillor’s hat, toured new developments in the Cambridge area (Alconbury to Saffron Walden) at FHDC’s invitation. The economy around Cambridge is significantly different to that in Shepway. We saw some high-quality housing but learned it comes at a price unlikely to be sustainable in our area. Letchworth is a model for what is now called ‘land value capture’; the town owns almost all the land and takes in £12 million a year from rents and other sources to be used for maintenance and community projects. FHDC will not own all the land at Otterpool Park. At all projects visited, there was a design code that could be enforced by mechanisms with more teeth than planning conditions (such as financial penalties).
- There is no news on the examination of the draft Core Strategy review, without which Otterpool Park should fail at the first jump.
- FHDC has just published for consultation a draft Gypsy and Traveller Strategy to address a shortcoming of the Places and Policies part of the Local Plan.
- Development of Princes Parade was formally given consent, despite a vote in full council to abandon the project.

Swale – Peter Blandon

- Swale’s administration changed after May’s local elections and a new alliance is now in control. Several of its members have a track record of opposing large-scale developments and, true to form, they have now refused planning permission for two large schemes. These are:
 - up to 675 homes at Wises Lane in Borden, with associated schools, surgeries and transport links. This is a deeply unpopular development that goes a long way to merging Borden with Sittingbourne.
 - up to 700 homes at Barton Hill Drive, Minster, on the Isle of Sheppey

Both these proposals are on land allocated for housing in the adopted Local Plan and both had been recommended for approval by planning officers. In January, the previous administration had resolved to grant planning permission to the Borden development subject to a satisfactory S.106 agreement. However, when the new committee considered the scheme, it voted 13-2 to refuse permission. The developers agreed to a short extension to the application (it was originally submitted in October 2017) and, when that expired, immediately appealed on the grounds of non-determination. The appeal is to be decided by the Secretary of State rather than a planning inspector. The Barton Hill development had almost been refused in February with an 11-4 vote against it. But, as happens in Swale, the head planning officer called in the application, effectively nullifying the vote. The proposal returned to the committee in July with a recommendation to approve but was refused.

The grounds given were harm to landscape, the setting of Parsonage Farm, a listed building, insufficient affordable housing and transport.

The developer has said there will be an appeal, but so far none has been lodged.

So, developments totalling almost 1,400 dwellings have been refused since the change of administration. This is about two years’ housing under the adopted Local Plan and against a background of Swale failing the government’s Housing Delivery Test, meaning it must now apply a 20 per cent buffer to its housing land supply. So more sites will need to be allocated for housing. As both planning applications seem likely to go through on appeal, Swale’s new administration might be playing a dangerous game.

Thanet – David Morrish

- Lots of valuable work done has been done for us by the team at Charing over the past six months; I and the committee thank them for their professionalism and dedication – we are fortunate to have such a good team to back us up.
- The last days of our two big inquiries (Local Plan and Manston airport) were enlivened by the shock news from RiverOak, the applicant for the Manston Development Consent Order, that Stone Hill Park Ltd had agreed to the Acquisition by Agreement by RiverOak MSE Ltd on July 2 for the purchase of all the land SHP had owned at the airport site. This effectively means that the largest obstacle to the potential reopening of the airport (the opposition of SHP to RiverOak’s bid for a compulsory purchase order) has apparently been overcome. However, at the DCO inquiry, it was apparent that little progress had been made with regard to the acquisition of the many parcels of Ministry of Defence-owned land covered by the DCO, including the navigational apparatus. There is also the question of who are the RiverOak backers, which will not be answered in public until Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport, has made his decision. Apparently, neither the counsel for SHP nor for RiverOak had been informed of any details of the purchase other than the price and the associated provision for SHP to retain all income from the ‘temporary’ lorry park at Manston should Brexit necessitate its use, so we await Mr Shapps’s considered judgement in the new year.

- In the meantime, Thanet District Council planners need to decide how to revamp the draft Local Plan now that the housing land originally planned by SHP has been taken out of the equation. Meanwhile, housebuilding flatlines in Thanet (and newly-built houses await buyers) as, presumably, building operatives flock to more profitable pastures elsewhere in Kent.

Tonbridge and Malling – Mike Taylor

- It has been a troubling time, largely due to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council’s deeply flawed draft Local Plan. It has fragmented the borough into areas that support parts of it but who are terrified that any revision will fall on them and areas that have been unfairly loaded with housing proposals. Despite lodging the Plan in January, there is no sign of the appointed inspectors accepting it, which has left the door open to the usual suspects like Gladman to attempt ‘windfall’ applications because of the swiftly diminishing housing land supply.
- The latest bombshell for TMBC is that the inspectors will split the examination into two phases, if it ever happens. Phase 1 will examine three issues – procedures, Green Belt and selection – while Phase 2 will not proceed until the inspectors are satisfied with Phase 1. We have long said that TMBC’s selection process was deeply flawed, allocating some 4,000 homes in the Green Belt while ignoring plots in the Call for Sites that were deemed ‘suitable and achievable’ and non-Green Belt, which could have provided 11,700 homes. This tends to explain the inspectors’ requirements for the Phase 1 examination.
- It has been difficult here because traditionally we have been composed largely of parishes in the north-west of the borough, one of the areas hit hardest by the Local Plan proposals, but we are aware it would be desperately unfair to use our position on the committee to push through an official CPRE response that has a strictly local benefit, and so we have limited the number of meetings held in recent months.
- While the government continues to swear it will protect the Green Belt, many refusals for Green Belt development are being overturned after higher intervention and so we have supported parishes in drafting a petition that demands the government properly defend Green Belt nationally: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/274179>

Tunbridge Wells – Liz Akenhead

- The draft Local Plan has at last been published, with Regulation 18 consultation to run to Friday, November 1. We are struggling to get to grips with its 518 pages, along with the 217 pages of almost unintelligible Sustainability Appraisal (in which the economic and social elements are generally held to outweigh the environmental) and hundreds of pages of other supporting documents such as the final Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), the Distribution of Development Topic Paper and the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- The Plan states that overall some 5.35 per cent of the Green Belt within the borough is to be de-designated and that “in accordance with the NPPF the Plan does not designate other land as ‘replacement’ Green Belt to replace that to be removed, but rather sets out how compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land can be made”. On a first reading, I have not noticed much evidence in the Plan that these improvements will materialise.
- In a borough where 70 per cent of the land is AONB, 22 per cent (some of which overlaps with the AONB) is Green Belt, 16 per cent is ancient woodland, 7 per cent is floodplain and almost all ‘rural fringe’ land has already been allocated, brownfield opportunities are limited. With a reluctance to build high-rise in historic town centres, there are no painless ways of accommodating the housing numbers required under the government formula. Surely if there is anywhere the government’s policy exception to the requirement to provide for the full Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing should apply, it ought to be Tunbridge Wells, with its protected areas such as Green Belt and AONBs. However, not only does the draft Local Plan aim to meet the full OAN, it proposes to exceed it by 9 per cent!
- As well as massive development at Paddock Wood (4,000 dwellings in addition to the 1,000 already allocated there but construction reported to be halted because of problems with foul drainage) and 2,500-2,800 dwellings proposed at Tudeley, up to 800 dwellings will be allocated in the AONB at Cranbrook and some 700 in the AONB at Hawkhurst. New secondary schools are planned on AONB and Green Belt land at Spratsbrook Farm/Ramslye Farm south of Tunbridge Wells (with more than 200 dwellings as well) and on Green Belt land containing ancient woodland on the edge of Tonbridge. The villages have smaller allocations.
- In addition to safeguarding land for the dualling of the A21 from Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst, three new roads are proposed to serve the proposed new developments, which will partly pay for them: an offline A228 Colts Hill bypass; a partly new, partly upgraded road (whose alignment remains to be decided) between Tonbridge and the new A228 bypass to serve the proposed Tudeley settlement; and a new road at Hawkhurst to partially bypass the Highgate crossroads. Very little information has been provided about the environmental effects of or justification for these new roads.
- We shall be responding robustly to these issues, but the draft Plan is not all bad: many of the proposed Development Management Policies deserve support and where this is the case we shall give it.

Environment – Hilary Newport

- The environment committee has a new chairman in David Wood, who took on the role after Graham Warren stood down after 16 years in the position. Graham was given a gift as a sign of appreciation for his contribution to CPRE Kent and, in particular, this committee.
- The main topic has been the proposed Cleve Hill solar farm and committee members have made a range of contributions to the ongoing CPRE Kent submission to the public examination.
- Other issues covered by the committee have included land use, food security, waste and water resources.

Historic Buildings – John Wotton

- The Historic Buildings Committee again partnered with the Kent School of Architecture and Planning to make the annual Gravett Award for Architectural Drawing. From a large field of entries on the theme of Norman architecture, the judges, chaired by architect Ptolemy Dean, chose Ayako Seki as the winner for her drawings of Dover Castle.
- The proposed development at Prince Parade, Hythe, between the Royal Military Canal and the sea remains a concern to the committee. We objected to the application and the council’s granting of planning permission to itself remains controversial, especially after May’s local elections. The branch will be supporting a campaign to save Princes Parade.

Local Plans: an overview

Our list gives the latest situation on Local Plans throughout Kent. In addition, many local authorities have an old-style Local Plan that has ‘saved’ policies still relevant when considering planning applications. These will gradually be replaced as new Plans are adopted. Details of currently ‘saved’ policies are provided on local authority websites.



Ashford

- Local Plan adopted in February 2019.

Canterbury

- Local Plan adopted in July 2017. A review of the Local Plan started earlier this year.

Dartford

- Regulation 18 consultation on ‘strategic issues’ for the new Local Plan (Core Strategy review) took place from June 8-July 20, 2018. A further Regulation 18 consultation is expected in November-December 2019.

Dover

- Regulation 18 consultation is expected to take place from January-March 2020.

Folkestone & Hythe (formerly Shepway)

- The examination hearings for the Places and Policies Local Plan took place from May 14-17, 2019. In accordance with the inspectors’ request, consultation has been taking place on the council’s preferred site allocation for Gypsy & Traveller pitches (September 2-October 14, 2019). Regulation 19 consultation on the Core Strategy review took place from January 25-March 11, 2019. Representations are being assessed.

Gravesham

- Regulation 18 consultation took place (April 25-July 11, 2018) on Site Allocations: Issues and Options (Part 1) and Development Management Policies (Part 2) documents. The next round of consultation is expected in November-December 2019.

Maidstone

- Local Plan adopted in 2017. Regulation 18 Scoping, Themes & Issues public consultation held from July 19-September 30, with adoption anticipated in April 2022.

Medway

- Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Development Strategy document ran from March 16-June 25, 2018. A revised LDS was published in August 2019. This confirms that Regulation 19 consultation on the publication of a draft Local Plan will take place by December 2019 (having been delayed pending the outcome of a bid for £170 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund). Adoption is expected in 2021.

Sevenoaks

- Following Regulation 19 consultation from December 2018-February 2019, the Plan has been submitted and an inspector (Karen Baker) appointed. The EIP will take place over four weeks in September-October and November.

Swale

- Local Plan adopted in July 2017. Regulation 18 consultation (scoping issues) for the Swale Local Plan Review 2022-2038 took place in spring-summer 2018. Issues and Options (Regulation 18) consultation is expected to take place in spring 2020.

Thanet

- Local Plan examination hearings finished on July 18, 2019. The council is awaiting the inspectors’ report.

Tonbridge and Malling

- Local Plan submitted to Secretary of State on January 23, 2019. Two inspectors (Simon Berkeley and Luke Fleming) have been appointed to carry out examination of the Plan. The council has responded to the inspectors’ initial questions and is awaiting hearing dates.

Tunbridge Wells

- Regulation 18 consultation on a draft preferred Local Plan is taking place over six weeks from September 20-November 1, 2019.

District	Plan	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan-Mar 2019	Apr-Jun 2019	Jul-Sep 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Adoption
Ashford	Local Plan 2030		Regulation 19					Adopted 21.2.19
Canterbury	Local Plan							Adopted 13.7.17
Dartford	Local Plan					Regulation 18		2021
Dover	Local Plan						Regulation 18	2021
Folkestone & Hythe	Places and Policies Local Plan			EIP				2019
	Core Strategy review		Regulation 19					2019
Gravesham	Site Allocations & Development Management Policies Local Plan					Regulation 19		2021
Maidstone	Local Plan Review				Regulation 18			Adopted 25.10.17
Medway	Local Plan 2012 - 2035					Regulation 19		2020
Sevenoaks	Local Plan 2015 - 2035		Regulation 19			EIP		2019
Swale	Local Plan 2022 - 2028						Regulation 18	Adopted 26.7.17
Thanet	Local Plan 2031			EIP	EIP			2019
Tonbridge & Malling	Local Plan		Regulation 19			EIP		2019
Tunbridge Wells	Local Plan 2033					Regulation 18		2020

KEY

- Regulation 18
- Regulation 19
- Submission
- EIP
- Adoption

Regulation 18 consultation: early stage consultation often with open questions and a wider remit for consultation input.

Regulation 19 consultation: views sought on whether the Local Plan is legally compliant and meets the tests of soundness set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Examination in Public (EIP): hearing held by a planning inspector to assess whether the Local Plan has been prepared in line with relevant legal requirements and meets the tests of soundness.

From the Frontline

Hilary Newport with the campaigns update



Cleve Hill Solar Park

Cleve Hill Solar is, at least for the moment, the largest-ever application for a ground-mounted solar-power installation in the UK. While we fully understand the importance of decarbonising our energy supply, we and many other objectors have been fully engaged in the six-month inquiry process to highlight the negative impacts of this intensely industrial installation on the North Kent Marshes.

Campaigners against the project met in Westminster on Monday, September 9, to attend an adjournment debate organised by local MP Helen Whately. Unfortunately, the debate was postponed until October as the result of the temporary prorogation of Parliament. Nevertheless, campaigners attended a discussion with Helen and then-Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Zac Goldsmith. The inquiry draws to a close on Saturday, November 30, and the inspectors will make their recommendation to the Secretary of State, who must make a final decision by Saturday, May 30, 2020.

Bean interchange

The inquiry into the project to improve the Bean and Ebbsfleet junctions of the A2 took place at the beginning of October. We recognise that improvements need to happen at the junction in the light of projected increases in road traffic and are working alongside residents' groups to secure the most effective and safe outcomes, including improvements to safety for pedestrians and cyclists.



Don't forget to keep up with our campaigns news on our website and via Facebook and Twitter @cpreakent



Helen Whately, MP for Faversham and Mid Kent, addresses campaigners at Westminster, their model showing the height of the planned solar park at Cleve Hill

Garden towns

We reported last time on the steady march of garden-town proposals emerging across the county, and the trend shows no sign of slowing, with outline plans for 5,000 homes to the east of Lenham under discussion at Maidstone Borough Council.

Thames estuary and Lower Thames Crossing

Last summer, Sir John Armit's Thames Estuary Growth Commission released its report outlining an "ambitious vision and delivery plan" that proposes a minimum of one million homes by 2050, on top of the already challenging housebuilding targets in Local Plans in north Kent and south Essex, to support economic development.

However, we contend that these proposals will continue to prioritise development in an already congested and over-stressed region, when economic growth and prosperity could be shared more equitably in the country. The Lower Thames Crossing proposals are currently delayed while ground investigations along the proposed route are under way, but this, too, is now billed as a means to 'unlock economic growth' rather than its originally-stated intention of reducing congestion and air pollution at Dartford.

One of the perks of CPRE membership is reduced admission to some of England's finest gardens, historic houses and attractions

The World Garden Lullingstone Castle



The World Garden is set in the beautiful and historic Kent countryside within the grounds of Lullingstone Castle, one of England's oldest family estates and offering a visit filled with heritage and horticulture.

The present manor house and gatehouse overlooking the 15-acre lake were built in 1497 and have been home to the same family ever since.

The vision of The World Garden came from Tom Hart Dyke, curator and modern-day plant hunter who triumphed through adversity to make his dream a reality.

Tom was kidnapped in Colombia in 2000 on an orchid-hunting mission; to help him endure his nine months in captivity, he began sketching out a map of The World Garden. On his release, he returned to his home at Lullingstone to start work within the walled garden to create the first World Garden of Plants.

The World Garden opened in 2005, and now in its 14th year visitors walk through the 19th-century moon gate to be greeted by some 8,000 plants, set out in their respective countries of origin.

There are so many garden delights to see, as well as the chance to explore undercover in Australis, The Cloud Garden, Orchis and two cactus hothouses.

The garden is home to the National Collection of Eucalyptus, comprising some 50 varieties, many of which are planted in a substantial arboretum along the River Darent.

Families can also enjoy a circular woodland walk and see the new orchid meadow and bulb island.

CPRE members can get 50 per cent off ticket price (excluding events); just show your valid membership card at admissions.

The World Garden opens Friday (not Good Friday), Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays, with special events throughout the season (April-October) – for opening details, please check the website, www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk

There is a café marquee serving light refreshments, with Kent produce, and a specialist nursery with a wide selection of unusual plants.

More details at www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk



All pictures Alan Graham



General round-up

Autumn 2019 with Vicky Ellis



Events

This year CPRE Kent attended many events across the county and spoke to an array of lovely people all passionate about our Kent countryside. By far the wettest event we attended was the East Kent Ploughing Match, closely followed by the Tractorfest. It was typical English weather: rain, sun and rain again. I loved the optimism of the great British people – every time the sun came out it was “Oh, it’s over now and it’s going to be lovely”. Then the dark clouds would descend once again and the wind would pick up and, boof, down it came! Still, the boardroom table came in handy to dry the tent on!

There is one event left for this year and that is the Green Christmas Market on Saturday, December 7, at Faversham up in the Guildhall. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a cup of tea, see inside this iconic Grade II*-listed building and buy fabulous Christmas presents at the same time.

If you would like to meet like-minded and friendly people with a love for our countryside, and to help at some of our events, please contact the office in the first instance. Help is always welcome in manning the stand, transporting the gazebo (if your vehicle is large enough) and helping with putting it up and taking it down.

If you have an event near you that you think might suit CPRE Kent, then please let us know.



Events for your calendar in 2020

AgriSouth	Thursday, May 14
Spring Fair, Belmont House	Sunday, May 3
Taste of Kent, Biddenden Vineyards	Sunday, June 14
Kent County Show, Detling	Friday to Sunday, July 10-12
Biddenden Tractorfest and Country Fair	Dates to be confirmed
Weald of Kent Ploughing Match	Saturday, September 19
East Kent Ploughing Match	Wednesday, September 30
CPRE Kent’s Green Clean	September, dates tbc
Green Christmas Market, Faversham	December, date tbc

Fundraising ideas

- For Payroll Giving, visit www.charitrustrust.org.uk/payroll-giving-individual/
- For the Lottery, contact Vicky in the office
- For raising money while you shop, go to easyfundraising and Amazon Smile and choose CPRE Kent
- Collect stamps and send them in to us at the office
- Buy a Gift Membership
- Recycle your old phones, foreign money and laptops by sending them off. Contact the office for a freepost label.

TO BE HELD AT:
FAVERSHAM SHOWGROUND
STAPLESTREET ROAD
FAVERSHAM
KENT ME13 9SP

To be run alongside NIAB TAG’s South East Open Day

14th MAY 2020

Showcasing NIAB TAG crop trials, research, innovation, technical development, practical demonstrations and the latest machinery, equipment and services available for farming businesses

www.agri-south.co.uk



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

National CPRE chief executive Crispin Truman is the guest speaker at this year’s Annual General Meeting of CPRE Kent.

It is being held on Friday, November 22, at the usual venue of Lenham Community Centre, starting at 10.30am and ending after lunch, which will be served at 12.30.

Please let us know if you would like to appoint a proxy if you are unable to vote, or if you would like to join us for lunch (the charge for lunch is £12 per person, cheques payable to CPRE Kent, to be received no later than Wednesday, November 13).

The agenda will be published on our website in due course.

Christmas lunch and an autumnal treat

Please be sure to join us for our Christmas lunch on Friday, November 29, at the award-winning George Inn in Molash.

We’re meeting at midday for 12.30pm; it’s a very special date by a log-fire in the cosy setting of this delightful 14th-century inn. Spaces are limited, so booking is essential.

Please see the insert in this magazine for details and booking form, or call me in the office on 01233 714540 (email vicky.ellis@cprekent.org.uk).

Another date to save is Thursday, September 10, when we’re making a fabulous trip to Potash Farm, St Mary’s Platt. More details will follow in our Spring-Summer 2020 edition.

PitchforkEvents
Part of the RAMSAK Group

KENT VOICE

THE FARMERS BALL & Farming Awards

Saturday 30th November 2019
at The High Rocks, Tunbridge Wells TN3 9JJ

4 Course Dinner
DJ, Charity Auction and Raffle,
Farming Awards Ceremony
Dress Code: Black Tie or Best Tweed

£48 per person* (£40 plus VAT)
Welcome Drinks from 7pm, Carriages at 2am

TICKET HOTLINE: 01622 815356 or go to www.ramsak.co.uk/events/

Advertising in Kent Voice

Placing an advert in Kent Voice not only reaches a wide audience across the county but also helps us to fund our campaigns. For more information and to place an advert, please call me in the office on 01233 714540 or email vicky.ellis@cprekent.org.uk

Lottery results: 2018/19

Here are the Lottery winners since the last edition of Kent Voice:

April 19	May 19	June 19	July 19	August 19	September 19
Mr J Baxter £50	Mrs P Hollington £50	Mr L Wallace £150	Mr R Love £50	Dr S Pittman £50	Mrs Mc Farlane £50
Mr M Loveday £30	Mr R Stickland £30	Mrs P Hollington £50	Mrs M Price £30	Mrs C Benfield £30	Mr S Lewis £30
Mrs C Ware £20	Ms C Sharpe £20	Mr Knox-Johnston £30	Ms J Barton £20	Miss H Butcher £20	Mr M Loveday £20
Mr M Dennis £20	Mr A Edwards £20	Mr D Page £20	Mr C Daniel £20	Dr F Simpson £20	Miss J Lushington £20

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