

CPRE Gloucestershire Views

Campaign to Protect Rural England
Standing up for your countryside



Issued each Spring and Autumn. For the latest information see our website

www.cpreglos.org.uk
President Charles Martell

**AUTUMN
2019**

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CPRE The Countryside Charity: new vision, new energy, new impact ...

THIS IS an exciting time for CPRE. Both an exciting time for CPRE nationally

and an exciting time for CPRE Gloucestershire. Nationally, we are on the threshold of what may be the most significant change for CPRE in decades. We have a new strategy and a new exciting brand. We are now CPRE 'The Countryside Charity' as illustrated in this newsletter.

This is not a change that has happened overnight. The process to get to this outcome has been lengthy, with consultation of CPRE members across the national network of charities, every step of the way. It has taken several years of hard work to generate the evidence, those vital insights about

*Professor Patricia Broadfoot CBE
Branch Chair*

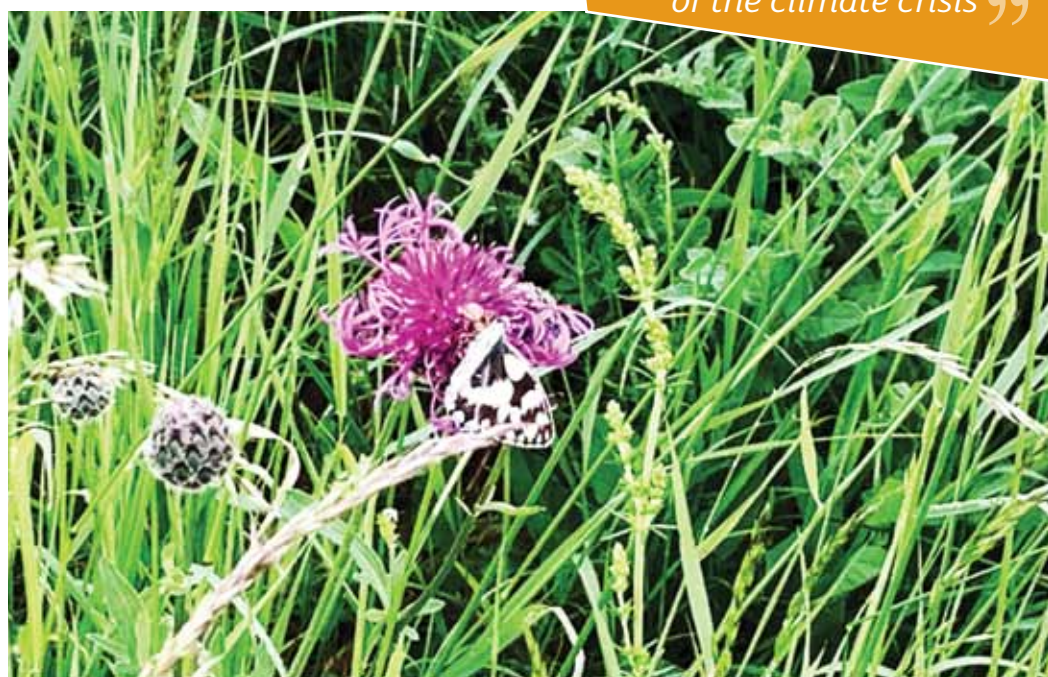
what people care about in relation to the countryside and what they will support, that underpins the new strategy and brand. I have been involved with this process as a national 'strategy champion' and will continue to be closely involved in bringing the strategy to life as a newly-elected member of the National CPRE Board.

Never has the role of CPRE been more important. With the intense and potentially excessive pressure for new housing frequently prioritised over the preservation of our Green Belt

and AONBs from the inroads of development, there is an urgent need for CPRE to up its game. We must gain new members, supporters and many more volunteers; people who understand the importance of the countryside to rural life and our environment.

But if the impact of large scale, often inappropriate housing developments, new roads and environmental degradation was not enough for us to be concerned about, there is also the unprecedented threat to our countryside of the climate crisis. CPRE will be playing a key part, locally and nationally, in highlighting

“the unprecedented threat to our countryside of the climate crisis”



the impact such changes are likely to have on farming and rural life. We will be lobbying for urgent Government action to address this hydra and all its many heads, particularly changes in the weather and the loss of biodiversity.

Gloucestershire CPRE is fully behind the new national strategy. We are looking forward to raising our public profile across the County; attracting enthusiastic new volunteers and working with partner organisations to fight for what matters in our rural way of life. We are moving into a time when it is becoming increasingly

clear that people need the countryside for their mental health. There is growing recognition that the countryside has a key role to play in providing access to beauty and recreation for urban and rural dwellers alike. For this reason, there is growing support for our cause of protecting our very special rural environment from unnecessary, and all too often, inappropriate, development. We need the right homes in the right places, not amorphous housing estates driven by the desire to make money at the expense of our

beautiful countryside.

CPRE Gloucestershire will be working hard this autumn on revising our own strategic plan in line with the new national vision and I look forward to sharing the outcome of these discussions with you all in the next newsletter. Meanwhile, we are delighted to be welcoming our new staff team - our Director, Louise Williams, and our Project and Marketing Consultant, Ashley Smith. Together with our trustees and our amazing committee members across our Districts, they will be helping us to

shape and deliver our future priorities for protecting and enhancing our beautiful Gloucestershire countryside.

Thank you for being a member of CPRE Gloucestershire. Your support is incredibly valuable to us. Please let us have your views and suggestions at any time. And please do sign up for our e-newsletter so that we can keep you up to date with the exciting new developments at CPRE Gloucestershire. Our Contact details are on the website.

Meanwhile, watch this space!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW DIRECTOR!

FIRSTLY, HELLO to all members – my name is Louise Williams and I have been newly appointed as your Director for CPRE Gloucestershire. I have lived in Gloucestershire all my life, attending school at King's and then Pates Grammar. I grew up in rural areas of the county, but in my adult life I have lived in Cheltenham and more recently in Gloucester, although I am currently in the process of moving to the Forest of Dean. I got married in 2015 to Tim, who is a plumber by trade and we had our little boy, Samuel George, in October 2018.

I arrive at CPRE at a time of positive change with a new chapter in its long history of campaigning for our countryside. With a new CEO at the helm of our national office there has been an overhaul of our branding and logo, plus a challenging yet forward thinking strategic plan to see us to 2026. Not to mention the current, overdue and much needed emphasis on our environment, CPRE Gloucestershire has much to do by way of achieving the aims of the Strategic Plan, but with the combined expertise, knowledge and passion from all of its collective members I have no doubt that we can achieve all that we strive for.

“I have been championing a cause I believe strongly in”

I bring with me around fifteen years experience of working in the third sector in Gloucestershire. I started out working for a young people's homelessness charity, arriving from the financial services sector I wanted to do something more meaningful. From there I have worked in various roles from front line service delivery to strategic development and leadership in areas such as drug and alcohol related problems, childhood bereavement, mental health and more recently violence against women and girls. You may wonder what all this has in common with a charity concerned with the countryside? Each area I have worked in, I have been championing a cause I believe strongly in. I have worked hard to achieve positive outcomes, I have worked hard and advocated for those that have no voice, and I always strive for excellence in the work I perform and that of my colleagues.

My particular skills and strengths lie in operational and people management; bid writing; strategic development and oversight; and getting the job done. I am full of energy and drive and will be using all of those skills to take CPRE Gloucestershire to a new platform: more members, more volunteers, increased profile, programmes and projects to include raising awareness and recruiting new members and participants in activities across the county.



Our Director - Louise Williams

I have been in post only a couple of weeks but I am already impressed at the amount of knowledge and expertise that sit around the table. I am fortunate that I can learn from those that support CPRE and I am already in debt to all who volunteer tirelessly and go above and beyond, without whom I wouldn't have such a strong foundation to work from.

I look forward to updating you in the Spring of 2020 but in the meantime please do ring, call in or email me with any information, news, tips or just to put a face to a name. I have a lot of learning to do and I can only do that with your help.

Enjoy all that nature has to offer in its most colourful season.

Louise Williams
Director, CPRE Gloucestershire

2019 AGM CPRE NEEDS TO ENGAGE A WIDER AND YOUNGER AUDIENCE

David Bayne



AROUND 85 members and their guests turned out for CPRE Gloucestershire's Annual General Meeting, held this year at Rendcomb College on 30th May, and to hear CPRE National President, Emma Bridgewater. Beforehand they were able to wander the handsome College grounds, appreciate the impressive views of the Churn valley and admire the delightful adjacent Rendcomb parish church.

The meeting itself was held in the state-of-the-art Griffin Theatre where Branch President Charles Martell welcomed everyone and especially CPRE National President Emma Bridgewater CBE. Before the AGM business, Emma Balfrey, the current Head Girl of the College, gave a moving personal account of her experiences at the school, stressing the wide range of opportunities it afforded. The MP for the Cotswolds, Sir Geoffrey Clifton Brown then spoke briefly of his support for CPRE, dwelling especially on the importance of achieving an environmentally-acceptable solution to the A417 'missing link'.

In her Chair's Report, Professor

Patricia Broadfoot reported on the wide range of activities and achievements of CPRE Gloucestershire over the past year. A keynote among these had been an alternative environmentally sensitive vision for Gloucestershire to challenge the economically-driven approach advocated by 'Gloucestershire 2050'. More detail is available in the branch Annual Review for 2018 which was sent to members in April.

The Branch President, Vice-Presidents, Chair and other Officers were all re-elected unopposed while Colin Evers was elected as a Trustee in place of Charlie Watson who was standing down after many years' service including as a previous Chair.

An important item of business was a proposal by the Branch Trustees that CPRE Gloucestershire should change from being a simple unincorporated charity to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), a status supported by National CPRE. The benefits, and likely costs, of making this change were discussed. The meeting approved the change in

principle; the Trustees have now started investigating in detail all the details that making the change will entail.

In her keynote address Emma Bridgewater said how impressed she was by the clarity of vision, the passion and the energy of CPRE which addressed challenges in a practical and business-like way. But, while the organisation had at its heart a simple mission, it was failing to get this across to a wider audience – in particular to a younger age-group which shared its views. The forthcoming rebranding of the organisation would be a major step forward in getting all a CPRE to deliver a common message of protecting the countryside to a wider and willing audience. In taking this forward, branches like CPRE Gloucestershire had a key role to play.

We are most grateful to members who supported this important annual event and to all those who organised and contributed to it. A special thanks goes to Rendcomb College for making available its excellent facilities and for laying on a delicious tea to round off the meeting.

Trees in this condition in Gloucestershire have become increasingly evident in the past 12 months



ASH DIEBACK

Now a major concern in Gloucestershire

Richard Lloyd

FOR THE spring 2013 issue of Gloucestershire Views I wrote an article about ash dieback. The first paragraph ended "If the worst fears about this disease are realised it could be very bad news for Gloucestershire's landscape." Six years on and signs of ash dieback are becoming widely evident and it is full extent is likely to be extremely damaging.

This article summarises the current position and reports on action beginning to get underway in our county to mitigate the impact of the disease.

Ash dieback is a deadly fungal

disease. It was first identified in the UK in 2012 and is now spreading rapidly across the country. There is no cure for the disease and in coming years it is expected to kill most of the ash trees in the UK. Given that ash is the third commonest tree in the UK both in woodland and outside woods in hedgerows, on roadsides, in parkland and in gardens, the landscape in many areas will be changed for ever. There will also be serious implications for wildlife with ash an important habitat and food for many insect species, some specific to ash, for bats which use ash trees for foraging and hibernation, for birds as

nesting and roost sites, and for small mammals.

In Gloucestershire, ash is a particular feature of the Cotswolds landscape and is also frequent in the Severn Vale.

Young trees succumb to the disease quickly. Older trees die back (hence the name) and may survive for some years but are likely to be lost eventually. Such trees are a safety hazard and will have to be felled where adjacent to roads and rights of way. There is hope that some ash, perhaps 5%, will show some genetic resistance to the disease and can provide the basis for recovery in the ash population long term.

A Gloucestershire response

The Forestry Commission is providing practical advice to anyone with responsibility for the management of ash in woodland.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board has taken the initiative to convene a partnership of organisations to offer advice and help to address ash dieback in areas outside woodland. Members include our local authorities, Woodland Trust, National Trust, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, NFU, FWAG and not least CPRE Gloucestershire. The partnership has come together under the banner of the Cotswolds and Vale Ash Dieback Forum. Its aims are to:

- focus principally on trees outside of woodlands
- raise awareness of ash dieback and its impacts, and coordinate a response at a landscape scale across the Cotswolds AONB and Vale of Gloucester
- promote best practice approaches to mitigate the impacts of ash dieback on landscape, biodiversity and people

- raise awareness with farmers, landowners and other tree owners how ash dieback should be managed in a responsible and timely manner including when intervention is essential

- coordinate the planting of successor trees to replace ash, principally outside woodlands, ideally before trees are lost.

- develop a coordinated communications approach to manage ash dieback.

In August the Cotswolds Conservation Board published an article about ash dieback in its Newspaper Cotswold Lion and on its website. The article invites help from the public with fund raising to support the work of the partnership (public donations may be made), encourages business sponsorship, and seeks photographs of ash trees which are notable features in the landscape. The article has also been published on our website. There will be wider promotion later in the year.

In May 2019, we received an invitation from national CPRE to bid for funding to run one of a number of pilot landscape

enhancement projects. These projects will feature as an element of the new CPRE national Strategy 2020 – 2026. A submission has been made for a project focussing on ash dieback building on the previous successful Gloucestershire pilot project “Planting Successors for Iconic Trees” which was run by our South Cotswolds and Tetbury District group and featured in the spring 2018 issue of Gloucestershire Views. The main partner is the Cotswolds Conservation Board and the bid, if successful, will provide £5000 in funding to help kick start the efforts of the local partnership. The outcome of the bid is expected later this autumn. Fingers crossed that the bid will be successful.

Proposed replacement tree species to be planted under the project include oak, beech, lime, field maple and hazel, trees which reflect the character of the area, and are considered to provide the best benefits to the landscape and wildlife long term.

“It is expected to kill most Ash trees in the UK”

IT ONLY TAKES A LEGACY

... to help save countryside



COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING

Colin McDonald, one of the Community-Led Housing Enablers for Cotswold and Forest of Dean District Councils

ACROSS THE country there is a growing movement delivering new housing to meet the needs of the local communities, homes that will be owned or managed by the community. Community-Led Housing involves local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving local housing problems, creating affordable homes and stronger communities.

Such schemes provide good quality homes for rent, sale or part-buy which are affordable for local people. In rural areas this means houses which not only meet identified local needs but also fit well with the local character in terms of overall design and finishes. It means that new housing schemes are proportionate in size, helping villages to grow organically without losing their intrinsic qualities.

Councils and Housing Associations have been building small schemes geared towards very local needs in rural areas for many years now, often using exceptional planning permission which would not be available for market-led schemes. These so-called 'rural exceptions sites' have often involved the local community, usually through a local survey which gathers the evidence on otherwise unmet need (vital evidence needed to justify the exception permission) and often seeks opinions (for and against).

Community-led housing (which can also occur in urban areas) takes this a stage further by directly involving willing volunteers in more detail, and not just at the pre-planning stage but looking at the longer term future to ensure that the resultant housing remains a valuable social asset for the community.

When it comes to Community-Led Housing, there is no 'one size fits all' approach. It could be on land owned by a Community Land Trust; it could be a housing co-operative or a co-housing scheme; it could be a group self-build scheme; it could be the expansion of an existing Almshouse trust; it could be provided in partnership with an established landlord, such as a Housing Association, or a private land owner but in all cases, it is housing for local people where the community itself remains in the driving seat.

**Can local residents afford to live and stay in your area?
Are enough suitable homes being built for younger people or for those who wish to downsize?**

Community-Led Housing is a real alternative to developer-led housing through empowering communities to meet their own housing needs.

The core principles of Community-Led Housing are:

- The community having meaningful involvement in key decisions throughout the development process and beyond
- The community determining the way in which they will hold the homes in stewardship, including ownership or management
- The benefit to the community being clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity

Every Community-Led Housing scheme starts off with different first steps. Usually local people come together to identify what type of housing is most needed and determine which members of the local community aren't already being catered for in the local housing market. This could include providing housing for themselves, such as with cohousing or group self-build, or it could be providing for others in their community such as through a Community Land Trust. So much choice can be confusing, but help is available for community groups to make sense of the various options when deciding what's right for the group and the type of housing they are hoping to provide.

My job-share partner, Lois Taylor, and I work for the Forest of Dean and Cotswolds District Councils, employed via Publica, as Community-Led

Housing Enablers to help with bringing forward community led schemes in our districts. Chloe Maliphant is the Community-Led Housing Enabler for Stroud District, employed via the GRCC. A number of organisations, including ours and the CPRE, are working together to bid for Government funding to bring together a county-wide service by establishing a Gloucestershire 'Hub' for Community-Led Housing, part of a planned national network to support newly emerging community-led housing groups.

There's already some successful community-led housing schemes in Gloucestershire such as the Nailsworth Community Land Trust, the Stroud Harbour Community Mutual Homeownership Society and the Eastington Community Land Trust. There's also a rich history of local rural exception housing schemes delivered by Housing Associations in villages across the County which have been initiated by local communities, often the Parish Council. A community led housing scheme involves a local independent not for profit organisation (such as a Community Land Trust, a co-ownership society, a co-operative or an Almshouse trust), democratically controlled by its members, having a lasting role ensuring that the homes are kept available for local people at a cost they can afford into the future. Having a very local organisation ensures that the key decisions are made by

“The countryside may often appear to offer a peaceful, rustic charm, but for all its picture-postcard appeal to the outside world, it's an increasingly challenging place to find affordable housing”

*The Village Survival Guide
(The Prince's Countryside Fund; August 2019)*



Dorset County Council

Affordable rural housing in Dorset delivered through the Powerstock Community Land Trust

“Community-Led Housing is a practical and rewarding alternative and we’re here to give any advice or practical support you might need.”

the community – from identifying a suitable site, the design process, through to how the new homes should be allocated.

Lois, Chloe and I are working with a number of communities across our three districts, most of whom are looking at the Community Land Trust model. We’re working with groups, often initiated by the Parish or Town Council, made up of keen, enthusiastic people who care about preserving the essence of their community and trying to help others find decent housing they can afford. Some of these groups include people with very relevant skills or professional experience that can come in handy at different stages in the process; but the important thing is that the group has enough energy and time – we can help find the professional help and technical expertise as and when it’s needed. In some cases they’ve chosen to work with a partner Housing Association, whilst retaining as much control as possible over the key decisions.

RAISE FREE FUNDS FOR CPRE GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH WITH YOUR EVERYDAY SHOPPING!

IT’S TRUE, you can raise money for us and it won’t cost you a penny! We have signed up to ‘Give as you Live’. This means if you shop online at over 4,000 major retailers, like Amazon or Tesco, or use a reloadable in-store card, you can raise money for CPRE Gloucestershire every time you do. It is very simple to sign up. Here are the steps:

How to sign up?

- 1 Go to www.giveasyoulive.com
- 2 Choose Sign up for free
- 3 Choose a charity to support
- 4 Search for our charity (make sure you type **Campaign to Protect Rural England Gloucestershire Branch**)
- 5 Click on charity details
- 6 Support this charity
- 7 And then sign up!

Give as you Live™



How to give as you buy?

- 1 Before you buy, go to the Give as you Live website and sign in
- 2 Then search for the store you want to use
- 3 Once you have found the store you want to shop with, click on the “Shop and raise” button. You will be redirected to that store and shop as normal
- 4 The good news is once you have shopped a donation will come to us!

So next time you shop online or use a reloadable card, shop to help save our Gloucestershire countryside.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Richard Lloyd

BACK IN 2014 in the Spring Gloucestershire Views I reported that the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Owen Patterson, was promoting the concept of biodiversity offsetting as a mechanism through which developers would compensate for habitats that are lost to development by creating or improving existing habitats elsewhere. Reaction to the idea was cautious, with fears that “it was a licence to trash nature” and the Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee saying “the assessment processappears to be little more than a 20 minute box ticking exercise.”

Biodiversity Net Gain seeks to go beyond this approach to enhance local and national biodiversity.

In January 2018, the Government published *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan* to Improve the Environment. Among the many commitments was “Embedding an ‘environmental net gain’ principle for development including housing and infrastructure”. The document noted that current policy was that the planning system should provide biodiversity net gains where possible. The requirement would be strengthened and there would be a consultation on whether net gain should be mandatory. The consultation, in December 2018, was led by Defra.

The Government response to the consultation submissions, published in July 2019, stated an intention to include legislation in the forthcoming Environment Bill to mandate net gains for biodiversity. At the same time the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published updates to its Planning Practice Guidance on the natural environment. These included some details on how net gain could be delivered.

How is net gain defined?

Net gain is defined as an approach to development that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. It is an umbrella term for both biodiversity net gain and wider environmental net gain. It aims to help

address the plethora of environmental crises we are facing, from declining wildlife populations to increased air pollution and the climate emergency.

Biodiversity net gain is about delivering measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. The net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures. Examples include creating new habitats, enhancing existing habitats, providing green roofs, green walls, street trees or sustainable drainage systems.

The key elements in outline

Biodiversity net gain will be applied across all categories of development other than for permitted development and small householder applications such as extensions, and a number of narrow exemptions for the most constrained types of development.

The legislation will require development to achieve a 10% net gain for biodiversity, but there will be scope to plan for more.

Local planning authorities will be required to produce local nature recovery strategies which will include identifying sites where compensatory habitat can be provided. Where suitable local sites for habitat creation are not available,

Gloucester Services on the M5: designed with the natural environment at its heart

there will be the option for investment in nationally strategic habitats through a government offering of ‘biodiversity units’.

Ongoing maintenance will be required to ensure that habitats reach their required condition and that the 10% gain is achieved. A minimum maintenance period of 30 years has been specified.

All this will place additional burdens on already stretched planning authorities. The Government claims it is working to quantify any additional burdens as a result of the biodiversity net gain requirement, and says it will work with local authorities and professional organisations to make sure that planning teams have access to the right training, ecological expertise and systems to deliver biodiversity net gain.

This is a complicated and challenging new area and there is much preparatory work to still to do. National CPRE is supportive of the principle but says that many devils lie in the detail. Biodiversity net gain must be linked to clear evidence, work to avoid harm in the first place and any compensation/gain habitats should be secured effectively and permanently for the future.

“aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand”

SEVENTY YEARS OF SUCCESS

David Brooke

“thank heavens it is there”

SOME OF us over the summer months will have visited one of our nearby National Parks – the Brecon Beacons, perhaps, or Exmoor. Many of us will live, work or visit our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in Gloucestershire, enjoying gentle uplands of the Cotswolds, the picturesque of the Wye Valley or the grandeur of the southern parts of the Malvern Hills.

The county's National Nature Reserves (NNRs) too are also the destination for many who visit and volunteer their time at the county's four Reserves in the Cotswolds and the Wye Valley. These NNRs are vital at a national level for the future of our wildlife and habitats.

And how many of us, in recent months, have used Gloucestershire's two long distance paths – the Cotswold Way and the Offa's Dyke Path? Or simply wandered along the hundreds of miles of waymarked public footpaths, comforted by a Definitive Map that we have the right to do so? (And all of us taking heed of the Countryside Code).

We nowadays view all these fundamental contributions to our quality of life in an open, matter of fact way but it is humbling to realise that for the generations before us none were a given. It is thus especially important to recognise, in its seventieth year, the passing of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act on 16 December 1949, because through that Act all these things were made possible.

The 1949 Act had a venerable preparation, drawing on separate but complementary movements

of the inter-war years for wider public access to the countryside and the importance of 'preserving' (the term current at the time) its natural and historic beauty. Many groups spearheaded these movements and none more so than CPRE.

Campaigning was difficult so it perhaps took the waging of war, or at least the need for a reconstruction of minds, buildings and countryside afterwards to bring home the importance of these ideals. The 1949 Act was designed to help that process of national reconciliation, neatly bringing the gap between the process of land use change introduced by the mighty Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, and the development of a wider welfare state.

The perceptive 1949 Act, although by now much amended, still remains a bedrock of our environmental thinking and a key to our quality of life. But it is not flawless.

It contains, for instance, a political fudge that led to inadequate proposals for open access to our wilder areas. The 1949 Act approach of management agreements proved costly and unwieldy – and a country mile from the hopes of the inter-war campaigners (including the mass trespassers on Kinder Scout in 1932). It took another fifty years and the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 to provide the open access for which many had strived.

Another fault is understandable in the context of 1940s food shortages, but the 1949 Act failed to predict the imbalance that was to appear between the drive for increased agricultural

production and the quality of the environment. The following decades were those when the attractiveness and enjoyment of the countryside together with its wildlife and habitats, became subservient to food production. The 1949 Act could offer only limited help with the policy guidance needed to cope with the change.

A third flaw is institutional. The 1949 Act divided landscape and wildlife policy (and historic landscape policy for that matter) into separate silos at a time when most European nations were seeing them as a single policy area. Those working for the Countryside Commission in John Dower House, Cheltenham, had to limit their scope to landscape conservation and public access. Those

responsible for nature conservation worked under a different banner 120 miles away in Peterborough - until the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act at last brought policy and institutions together in 2006.

Seventy years on, our conclusion is a happy one - and made happier by the findings of the Glover Report that endorses so much of what the 1949 Act stands for. Much amended the 1949 Act might be, and with the high ground of retrospect we can see inadequacies; but CPRE nationally and locally can take pride in helping its gestation and still say 'thank heavens it is there'.

Lewis Silkin MP, Minister of Town and Country Planning who was responsible for piloting the Bill through parliament.



ASCHURCH EXPANSION AND UPGRADING THE A46

David Bayne

THE NORTHERN part of Tewkesbury Borough is faced with two interrelated – but potentially conflicting – challenges. On the one hand, the massive expansion of Ashchurch into a ‘Garden Town’ is seen as a principal way of meeting the future housing requirements both of the Borough itself and of the wider Joint Core Strategy (JCS) area. On the other, plans are at an early stage to upgrade the A46 both to overcome local congestion in the Ashchurch area and as part of a region-wide initiative to transform the A46 from the M5 northwards into a major strategic route.

The proposed A46 strategic upgrade is being led by an industry-led consortium called ‘Midlands Connect’. Their vision is to generate regional growth and relieve pressure on the M5 – M42 – M1 in the Midlands by upgrading remaining single carriageway sections of the A46 to near motorway standard. One of the early sections identified to need upgrading – and the only one outside the Midland Region – is that between the Teddington roundabout and M5 Junction 9 at Tewkesbury. At present these plans are at an early stage and have yet to be included and funded in Highways England’s Roads Investment Strategy. But assuming it

progresses, one of the route options proposed could well be based on plans drawn up in 1993 but then shelved for lack of resources.

Regardless of the strategic initiative above, the A46 through Ashchurch already needs to be improved if it is to cope with traffic volumes resulting from developments already in hand under the existing JCS. And this need will only increase if Ashchurch expands.

Late last year, in order to cope with expected future housing demands as part of the JCS Review, Tewkesbury Borough commissioned a ‘Concept Masterplan’ for a major expansion of Ashchurch. This Masterplan formed the basis of a successful application to government for modest funding to develop Ashchurch into a ‘Garden Town’.

CPRE has been tracking both these initiatives along with the Teddington and Alstone A46 Advisory Group who are particularly concerned at the effect that any A46 upgrade could have on these two villages. We have engaged the services of Gerald Kells who formerly worked for CPRE Midlands Region

and is now a consultant to them on the Midlands Connect plans. We have also been discussing the way ahead with the Head of Tewkesbury Borough Development Services. Tewkesbury are using the government funding to set up a dedicated planning team for the garden town and thence to draft more detailed planning and governance documents. The next stage is development of a detailed masterplan for Ashchurch to be completed early in 2020.

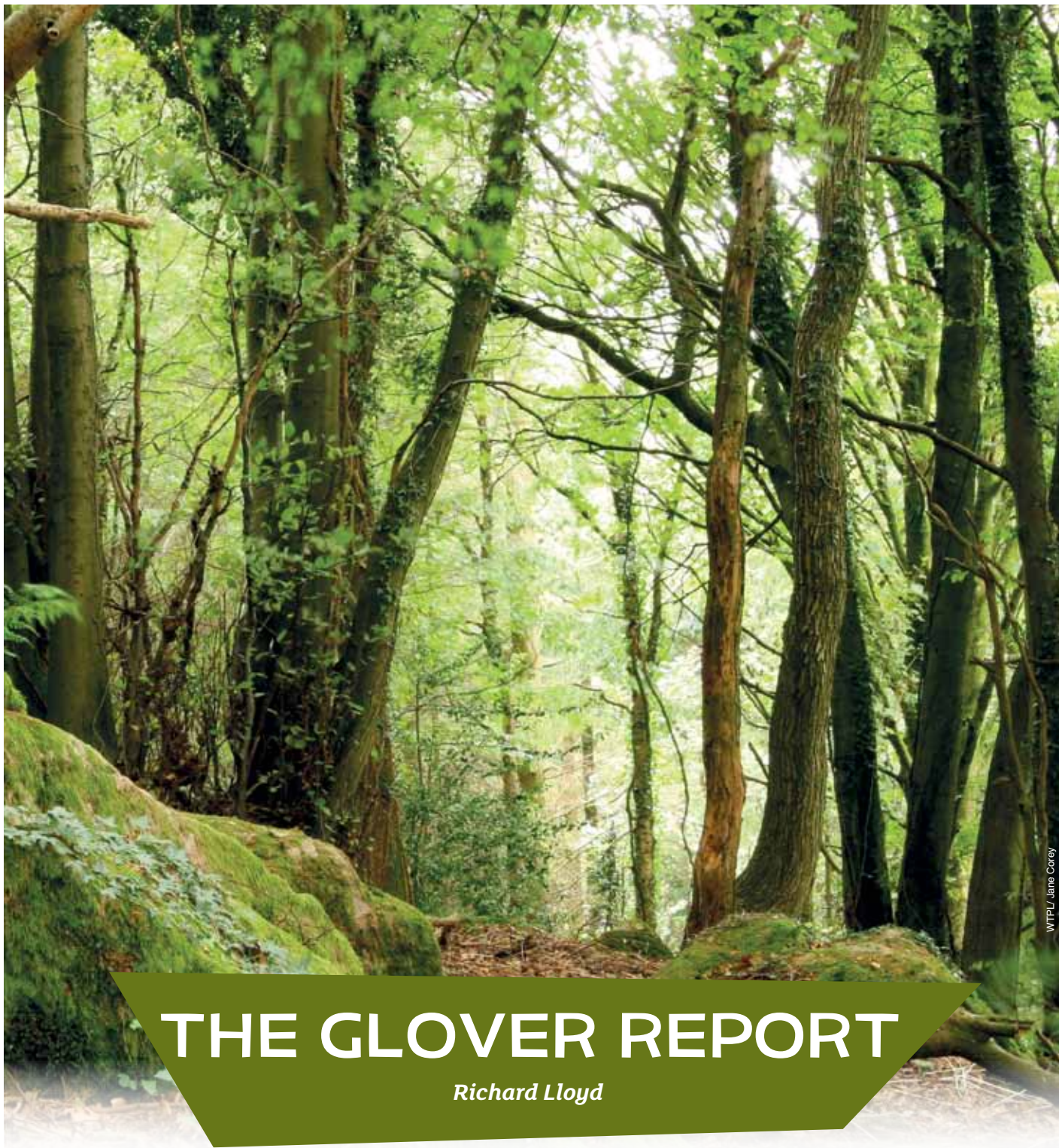
Clearly a key aspect of future plans for Ashchurch will be what happens to the A46, including its junction with the M5. There will be a balance to be struck between its function as a trunk route and the way it is used by local traffic.

CPRE will be continuing to watch unfolding moves in this area extremely closely and do what it can to influence developments.

Joint Core Strategy Review Concept Masterplan Report



Ashchurch from Oxenton Hill



WPL/Jane Corey

THE GLOVER REPORT

Richard Lloyd

THE EAGERLY awaited final report on future directions for England's National Parks and AONBs was published on 20th September. The report titled Landscapes Review and its proposals are the outcome of an independent review commissioned by the government in May 2018 and led by an expert panel chaired by Julian Glover. CPRE Gloucestershire's Vice-President Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE was amongst those to serve on the panel.

National CPRE made a comprehensive submission

to a consultation and CPRE Gloucestershire made a separate submission relating to the future of the Forest of Dean and the Cotswolds AONB. CPRE has warmly welcomed the report which makes many recommendations that chime with CPRE's aspirations for the future of these iconic landscapes.

What does this mean for Gloucestershire?

We are pleased that the Review has endorsed the strong case made over many years that the Forest of Dean

should be designated as an AONB. The Forest of Dean was one of the areas originally recommended for designation in the reports which led to the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and the provisions for AONB designation.

The Review has also recommended that the Cotswolds AONB should be considered as a strong candidate for National Park status reflecting the case put forward by the Cotswolds Conservation Board and supported by CPRE Gloucestershire.

We now await the government's response.

Tetbury and South Cotswolds

Nicholas Dummett, Chairman

“The main event since the last newsletter has been the merger of the Tetbury and South Cotswold Districts”

THE MAIN event since the last newsletter has been the merger of the Tetbury and South Cotswold Districts. The formation of the new district was celebrated by having a joint AGM at Colesbourne Park in July at which the members of each district unanimously approved the

merger. Sir Henry Elwes then gave us an utterly absorbing and charming tour of the arboretum followed by sharing a glass of wine on the terrace in beautiful sunshine. After this auspicious task the new committee has been formed with representatives from both ex districts and

it has started work. The rationale for the merger is fundamentally that there is a strong overlap of planning concerns – what happens around Cirencester affects Kemble and Tetbury and vice versa. With declining membership it was also clear that

by bringing together the administrative functions and our events programmes we would be better able to serve the membership.

On the planning front it continues to be very quiet with a steady flow of small planning application for single dwellings or extensions/ conversion of existing buildings but no major developments. We have objected to a limited number of these. Many of these have still not been decided which is a concern.

Apart from the joint AGM we have held two other events this summer. A fascinating visit to behind the scenes at Westonbirt arboretum where we met and heard from the experts who have made it a world renowned centre of arboreal research and a truly mind stretching guided tour of the long barrow archaeological excavation on Abbey Home farm. The professor had an unbelievable way of bringing to life what to the layman looked like a pile of random stones and pits. It reminded one how deep the history of the Cotswolds is – we were looking at a site which had been in continuous use from 3500 to 500 BC - a longer period than from the Romans to today. All the events were well attended and I think well enjoyed; many thanks to all the members who supported your committee's efforts.



Nick Dummett

Sir Henry Elwes pointing out trees of special interest at Westonbirt arboretum.

Berkeley Vale

Prue Vernon, Chairman

THINGS HAVE been quiet as the Stroud District 2020 Local Plan is being considered. The Berkeley Vale will be in for a number of large housing developments with access to the A38 and the M5. Where everyone is going to work and how they will get there except by driving is a serious consideration.

The application for the proposed football stadium at Junction 13 of the M5 for Forest Green Rovers was refused but has now gone for appeal and a new application with slight

modifications has been submitted. We all agree that the design of the stand is splendid but are not keen on the site nor on its likely impact on William Morris College for severely autistic adolescents who need quiet to help them manage their condition. The development of the current stadium site for 96 houses at the top of Nailsworth is now under active consideration. Poor access to the current stadium, one of the reasons given for the new stadium, applies equally to the development of

the site for housing.

The AGM was held at Dr Jenner's House, Berkeley, and we were able to visit the museum and garden of medicinal herbs. Prof. Mark Horton gave an entertaining talk on the Berkeley family and their role in the colonisation of the east coast of USA. This was well attended by non-members and we all enjoyed the excellent supper provided by the committee.

We had a stand at Frampton Country Fair and the exhibition of the proposed football stadium

with a Yes/No pin board attracted attention.

Ashley Smith, who is volunteering with CPRE this summer, did a great job in asking passers-by for their opinions. It was an excellent opportunity to discuss CPRE's approach to planning and the need to consider wide ranging effects of what may initially seem an open and shut case. He had run the same exhibition at Stroud Show which produced very different results. Frampton: two thirds against, one third for – Stroud: overwhelmingly for.

“Berkeley Vale will be in for a number of large housing projects”

Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury

Tom Hancock, Chairman

EXAMINATION OF the Cheltenham Borough Plan took place in February but the Inspector has yet to issue a final report. According to the Council website, Major Modifications resulting from the Examination are due to be considered by Cheltenham Borough Council in October with public consultation starting in November 2019. From the Inspector's 'post-hearing advice note', the Council are required significantly to reduce the proposed areas designated as Local Green Space, especially at Leckhampton and Swindon Village while that at West Cheltenham will be removed entirely.

The Cheltenham Plan

includes provision of a new secondary school at Leckhampton in spite of well-documented concerns about the unacceptable traffic congestion in the area. A planning application has now been submitted by Gloucestershire County Council as the local education authority to itself as planning authority!

Meanwhile Cheltenham has been making rapid progress towards planning for the Cyber Park and associated housing in West Cheltenham. The Borough Council has now purchased the land (£22m) for the first phase and consultation is under way on road access designs. The West of

“The district continues to deal with a small number of planning applications and appeals”

Cheltenham master plan now proposes 7000 jobs, 1200 homes and £650 million investment over 320 acres – and all in ex Green Belt!

There has been no further obvious progress on either the JCS Review or the Tewkesbury Local Plan. Future Tewkesbury Borough planning is focusing on development plans for Ashchurch which is seen as the focus for meeting future JCS and Borough housing requirements. The Borough has secured government funding which it proposes to use to develop a more detailed masterplan for the area. A key element of this planning will be how to accommodate an upgraded A46.

The district continues to deal with a small number of planning applications and appeals. An appeal

seeking development of 215 houses at Stoke Road, Bishops Cleeve, close to the Wingmoor Farm waste facility, is to be the subject of a public inquiry starting on 8th October. An appeal seeking a development of 24 houses in an isolated and unsustainable site close to the AONB on the edge of Winchcombe parish is to be considered at an informal hearing on 15th October.

Over 50 members and guests attended the District AGM held at Stanway House in May when CPRE Gloucestershire President Charles Martell gave a fascinating talk about his experiences overseas. Then in June a smaller number made a highly successful and enjoyable visit to Woodchester Vineyard including a tour and wine tasting.

Forest of Dean

Colin Evers

CPRE Gloucestershire Trustee

“Prof. Patricia Broadfoot gave a stimulating talk on CPRE’s new Strategic Plan and The Countryside Charity initiative”

AN IMPORTANT event held early in September was our Annual General Meeting. With Charles Martell our Gloucestershire CPRE President present, the meeting was held at Westbury-on-Severn Church with its unusual dedication to Saints Peter Paul and Mary, and commenced with a guided tour of the newly re-shingled 160 ft high Grade 1 listed stand-alone tower and spire. Complete with its 6 recently rehung refurbished bells, and its 35000 newly hand-clefted Forest of Dean oak shingles, everyone agreed the extent and quality of the work that has been carried out

on the spire was a superb achievement of which everyone involved should be very proud.

The AGM proper saw Simon Murray appointed as the District’s new Chairman and Clive Osborne was thanked for the contribution he had made to the District during his period in office. The other committee members were unanimously elected and a call was made for more members to volunteer. Formal business closed our CPRE Gloucestershire Chair, Prof. Patricia Broadfoot gave a stimulating talk on CPRE’s new Strategic Plan and “The Countryside Charity” initiative. Following on this a variety of views

and suggestions for future action were expressed under any other business.

Since the last newsletter, action within CPRE Forest of Dean District has continued on a number of fronts. CPRE Gloucestershire involvement in the draft Gloucestershire County Council Minerals Plan round continues to be led via Bob Brown from our District. A number of planning applications made to Forest of Dean District Council have been assessed and responded to where they do not appear to align with CPRE policy. One example is an intended new 30m tall communications mast to be built near Yorkley at The Barracks. We have not

objected in principle to the proposal, but object to the mast’s intended position in the landscape and design style. To assist, we have suggested an alternative site and a much less brutalist mast design.

Hot off the press, Forest of Dean District Council’s Forward Plan group has just published its Forest of Dean Local Plan 2021 to 2041 – Issues and Options Consultation September 2019 document. The document sets out the Council’s intended approach as to how the District will be planned until 2041. We shall be responding in due course to the consultation.

View of the Forest of Dean



North Cotswolds

Michael Green, Acting Chairman

“we have questioned the density of housing and a major parking issue”



Michael Green

Moreton-in-Marsh

SINCE THE Cotswolds is being proposed as a National Park we held an April meeting in Stow; over 100 people attended with Martin Lane, the director of the Cotswolds Conservation Board giving the talk. A lively question and answer session followed.

The adoption of the local plan has affected the number of planning applications but our involvement on three sites in Moreton in the Marsh show the resolve of some developers. The proposal for

a 60 bed care home on the edge of the town is only 300 metres away from a recently granted care home; here we concluded that as the site was lying outside the newly adopted Local Building Plan and within the Cotswolds AONB there was a strong case for refusal.

Another controversial site for 67 homes on the Eventide road is within the boundary of the local plan but is strongly objected to by local residents and we have questioned the density of housing and a

major parking issue.

The new Dunstall Farm proposal for 250 houses on the Fosse Way concerns us for reasons relating to the scale of development compared with the provision of the local plan. It involves 250 dwellings, more than twice the number [119] intended in the local plan. We welcome the provision for affordable housing and hope the council will hold firm against any attempt to reduce the number specified.

The District AGM was

held in July at Springhill near Broadway by kind permission of the Weil and Ward families. The house was built by Capability Brown in 1759 for the 6th Earl of Coventry, known more for his landscaping and garden design, this was the only house in Gloucestershire that he built. We had an interesting talk from Charles Martell and spent the early evening enjoying the sunshine in the gardens.

Stroud

Pippa Schwartz, Secretary

“Stroud District had a very successful day at the Stroud Show in July ...”

STROUD DISTRICT had a very successful day at the Stroud Show in July, with Ashley Smith initiating a welcome change of approach by engaging passers by to record their opinions of the proposed football stadium at M5 junction 13 and the related housing development at Forest Green's current site. This attracted considerable

interest and the committee concluded that this approach makes for a far more fruitful event. The committee were once more grateful to the treasurer, Margaret Fedrick, who again produced a wide range of plants which were sold to raise money for the district.

At the beginning of September, the committee arranged an outing

for members and non-members at Brimscombe Port, where a volunteer for the Cotswold Canals Trust talked about the current major development plans for the area.

There has been an interesting application for an equestrian establishment in Thrupp which, owing to its size, has attracted a lot of adverse comment locally

and an objection from CPRE. One major worry that was not addressed by the plans was the resultant light pollution from lights at the stables and in the ménage in this rural location. If consent is to be recommended by the planners, the local councillor will ask for it to go to the Development Control Committee for further scrutiny.

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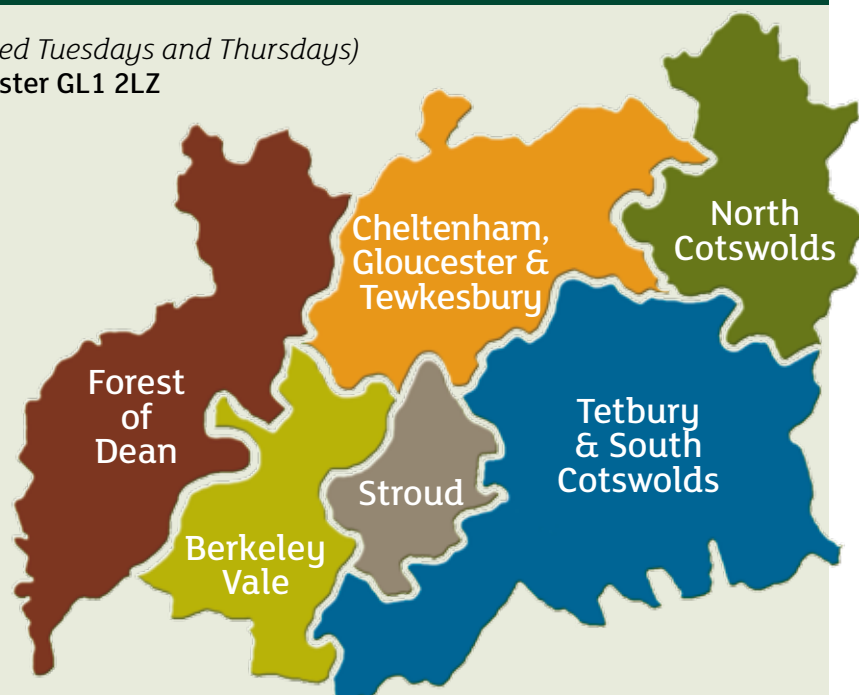
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