

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 Dame Janet Trotter

**SPRING
2016**

In this issue ...

2 A UK CHARTER
for trees, woods
and people

4 COTSWOLDS AONB
is 50 years old

5 FARM ANIMALS
and antibiotics

8 NEWS FROM
AROUND THE
DISTRICTS
*Updates from
around the
County*

Times are a-changing - but far too slowly

OVER RECENT years we have consistently stressed our concern about the lack of up to date Local Plans in the majority of our County's districts. Up to date plans give greater certainty both for developers and for planners and help to avoid speculative applications. When proposals are put forward that fit the Plan then approval should be speedy but where they depart then refusal should have greater weight.

We are therefore pleased that, over the past few months, there has been some real progress. The Stroud Local Plan has been formally adopted, the Cotswold Plan is now drafted and the Forest of Dean is implementing its adopted Plan.

However, in the significant Gloucester, Cheltenham and

A personal view from the Chair

**Charlie Watson,
Branch Chairman**

Tewkesbury area we still await the conclusion of the first step to set a framework in which more detailed Local Plans can finally be prepared by the three District Councils. Preparation of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) started some 8 years ago. Yet, today, the Planning Inspector tasked with assessing whether the submitted Strategy is technically 'sound' is still busy asking for yet more and more information from the three Districts Councils before she can finalise her recommendations.

Even when the JCS is

finalised, hopefully before the end of 2016 or in early 2017, then it will be at least another year or two before Local Plans are adopted for each of the three Districts.

What a shambles! And certainly not an example of how an effective planning system should be working. In the meantime both developers and planners have the potential for conflict and much needed infrastructure projects are being delayed.

Against this background, we noted with interest – and some degree of scepticism – that all six District Councils have committed not just to adopt up to date Local Plans but also formally to review them by 2021. That commitment was made in the jointly-prepared Devolution Plan submitted by Gloucestershire to the Government.

Finding the right balance between providing for a growing economy and much needed new homes but at the same time protecting the quality of life of existing residents and the wider environment is no easy task. It surely requires far greater priority to be given in future to the planning resources and skills being provided both individually and jointly by the District Councils.

We will continue to monitor progress but so far remain exceptionally concerned that Gloucestershire's countryside is being unnecessarily lost or threatened by poor planning decisions and a lack of resources.

*View of Northleach: a
typical Cotswolds scene –
see article on page 4.*

A UK CHARTER FOR TREES, WOODS AND PEOPLE

Richard Lloyd

“Our nation’s trees and woods are facing unprecedented pressures from development, from pests and diseases and from climate change”

Woodland Management – coppicing at Lower Woods.

Ellen Winter

TREES AND woodlands are a vital component of urban areas and the countryside yet they risk being increasingly neglected and undervalued.

CPRE is one of 47 organisations, led by the Woodland Trust, which is supporting a call for a new UK Charter for Trees, Woods and People to help put trees and woodlands higher up the agenda in public consciousness and decision making and so help secure their future. Gloucestershire Branch Vice-Chairman, Richard Lloyd, is representing CPRE nationally on the professional steering group for this exciting initiative.

The Charter will be launched in November 2017, which marks 800 years since Henry III signed the original Charter of the Forest. Henry III’s Charter was issued on November 6, 1217, in the second year of his reign. It followed the re-issue in 1216 and again in 1217 of the Magna Carta of Henry’s father, John, in 1215, and the two statutes need to be seen as complementary. The Charter of the Forest protected and restored the rights of people to access and use the Royal Forests.

Trees and woods provide immense

benefits to society: their beauty enriches the landscape; they are a key element of ecosystems and support abundant wildlife; they are an economic resource through the production of timber; they sequester carbon; and people get health benefits from walking within woodland. Trees in towns, in streets and in parks are an essential part of a quality environment. For CPRE, trees and woodlands are a defining feature of much of rural England and are part of the special character of many of our National Parks and AONBs.

Today, our nation’s trees and woods are facing unprecedented pressures from development, from pests and diseases and from climate change. The aim is to create a new Charter that recognises the importance of trees in our society, celebrates their enormous contribution to our lives, and encourages action now so that future generations can fully benefit from them too. It is intended that the Charter will articulate the relationship between people and trees in the 21st century and provide guidance and inspiration for policy, practice, innovation and enjoyment for everyone – from

Government to businesses, communities and individuals.

Local groups, clubs and councils are being encouraged to take part in the Charter process by bringing people together to celebrate the woods and trees at the heart of their communities and to help feed ideas and stories into the building of the Charter. Guidance and information will be provided during the campaign to inspire and support local activities, and to help people create a lasting legacy in their communities across the UK. Funding will be available for local events, activities and projects that reconnect people and trees. To start off the process people are being invited to share their ‘tree stories’ – treasured or significant moments in their lives that would not have been possible without trees. This will help create a Charter that reflects the true meaning and value of trees and woods to people.

To get involved, visit the Charter website at www.treecharter.uk.



JOINT CORE STRATEGY: THE EXAMINATION DRAGS ON ...

Lisa Belfield

THE EXAMINATION of the Joint Core Strategy for Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury by an independent Inspector has been going on since May last year. CPRE has taken every opportunity to input views to the Inspector by way of written statements and to take part in Examination hearings where relevant. To date, we have attended sessions on housing need, employment, spatial strategy, strategic land allocations and Green Belt issues. During January, sessions on housing market assessment, on employment needs, on the allocation of safeguarded land West of Cheltenham and on the objectively assessed need for housing and employment land have reconvened. This was to debate additional evidence from the JCS Authorities provided at the Inspector's request.

Sessions on transport and infrastructure are to follow in the coming weeks.

CPRE supports the JCS strategy of focussing growth within or adjacent to Gloucester and Cheltenham, where the need largely arises, rather than a dispersed pattern of growth. We see this as the least damaging alternative. But we have areas of major concern, particularly:

- The unrealistically high economic growth forecasts which could mean that housing numbers are increased further to accommodate the projected additional work force.

- Proposals to remove from the Green Belt areas of land which would directly impact on its primary purpose of maintaining the openness and separation between Gloucester and Cheltenham.

- The lack of policies for phasing development to



Land West of Cheltenham that may be lost from the Green Belt

David Bayne

ensure the use of vacant sites and derelict land first.

The Inspector is hoping to conclude the public hearings in April, but this is unlikely to be possible because associated transport plans are not expected before the Autumn. Once the hearings have been completed, the Inspector will produce a report

containing her findings and recommendations. If, as a result, major modifications to the JCS are proposed, the JCS Authorities will be required to hold a further public consultation for a minimum of 6 weeks, so final approval even by the end of 2016 is in the balance. The JCS has already taken 8 years to produce but it isn't finished yet!

EDUCATING VOLUNTEERS AND COUNCILLORS ABOUT PLANNING

David Bayne

DURING OCTOBER 2015, jointly with the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC), the Branch laid on an educational day on the planning system. We were fortunate to attract some highly qualified and excellent speakers who addressed a near capacity audience at Whitminster Community Hall.

After a warm welcome from Branch Chairman Charlie Watson, Geoff Walker, the SW Policy Project Officer for the Royal Town Planning Institute, set the planning scene. Starting with the National Planning Policy Framework, he explained the fundamental changes to planning policy and the current state of play regarding both district and neighbourhood planning. To complement

this talk, Jeff Bishop of Place Studio Ltd then led us to understand the issues that mattered to the private developer, such as timescales and profit margins. To complete the morning, Chris Shepley, former Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, explained the appeals process and the role and practices of the Inspectorate.

The afternoon was taken up with an examination of a number of case studies by David Crofts, a Gloucester-based planning consultant regularly engaged to represent CPRE. He used important examples at Alderton, Stow-on-the-Wold and Fairford to draw attention to the key



A capacity audience attends the Planning Day at Whitminster Community Hall

Mike Mackey

issues presented by such planning cases and how to respond to them.

The sandwich lunch and afternoon tea provided excellent networking opportunities for those present as well as allowing the speakers to respond to individual questions and concerns. Altogether it was a most valuable day and one that CPRE expects to repeat, especially as the event was over-subscribed.

THE COTSWOLDS AONB AT 50

Richard Lloyd

“CPRE Gloucestershire Branch can take much of the credit for securing AONB designation”

2016 marks 50 years since parts of the Cotswolds were designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, giving formal recognition of the area's special qualities and national importance.

1,555 sq km, mainly in Gloucestershire but also including parts of Oxfordshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire, were included in the original designation order submitted by the National Parks Commission and confirmed, without modification, on 19th August 1966 by the Minister, the Rt Hon Anthony Greenwood MP. A boundary review in 1990 resulted in the designation of a further 483 sq km of land. It extended the AONB to the south to Bath and beyond, into Warwickshire, and further into Oxfordshire. At 2038 sq km, the Cotswolds is now the largest of 38 AONBs in England and Wales.

AONBs are designated under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and are largely drawn from proposals recommended by the Hobhouse Committee after the Second World War. The first AONB, the Gower, was designated in 1956, but progress with subsequent designations was slow.

CPRE Gloucestershire Branch can take much of the credit for securing the Cotswolds' designation as early as 1966 but the process was very protracted. In March 1957 the Branch had agreed a resolution to designate the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire as an AONB “to prevent further disfiguring developments in the area”.



The response from the National Parks Commission for early action was discouraging. But CPRE continued to press the case locally and in 1958 secured the support of the planning committees of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire,

Worcestershire and Warwickshire County Councils. Field Advisers from the Commission met with planning officers to discuss a draft boundary at the end of 1958. Provisional boundaries were agreed by 1962 but it took another four years to complete the consultation processes.

Following designation, the first task was to set up a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) comprising representatives from the constituent local authorities and other interest groups. These included the Countryside Commission which had replaced the National Parks Commission and had a national oversight of AONBs. The JAC's role was to advise and coordinate action by the constituent Councils to achieve the effective management of the AONB. Councillor Geoffrey Shackerley of Gloucestershire County Council was the JAC's first chairman and the County Council continued to take a lead role until the establishment of the Cotswolds AONB Partnership in 1999. The Partnership provided a more formal role for local representatives of environmental, cultural, amenity and land management organisations.

An early achievement was the creation of the Cotswolds AONB Voluntary Warden Service in 1968. In 2014 – 15 over 300 volunteers clocked up over 45,000 hours undertaking a wide range of

practical conservation and enhancement work, organising and leading guided walks, attending events and working with school groups.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the CROW Act) provided the opportunity for AONB Partnerships to seek a new status as Conservation Boards. These are independent statutory authorities, analogous to National Park Authorities but without planning responsibilities – these remain with the local authorities. They have the duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities. The Cotswolds and Chilterns AONBs became the first (and so far only) AONBs to seek this status. So began an exciting new chapter for the Cotswolds AONB in 2004.

Through its new status, the Board has assumed responsibility for the management of the Cotswold Way. The 100 mile route from Chipping Campden to Bath along the Cotswold escarpment has been progressively improved and is now one of England's finest national trails.

The CROW Act also requires the preparation of AONB Management Plans. The current plan for the Cotswolds runs from 2013 to 2018. These plans are a material consideration in the planning system and CPRE enjoys a close working relationship with the Conservation Board over planning matters.

Throughout this 50th anniversary year the Cotswolds Conservation Board will be organising events to mark the occasion and encourage everyone to help protect, enhance and conserve this beautiful landscape. Details are available on the Board's website www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk.



Cotswolds Voluntary Wardens in action.



FARM ANIMALS AND ANTIBIOTICS

*Tanya Robbins, Chairman,
Gloucestershire NFU*

FOLLOWING THE recent publication of the 'O'Neill' report there has been a great deal of media interest in the use of antibiotics in farm animals. It is important for all to note that this study was looking at the use of antibiotics in agriculture in all the countries of the world.

In the UK all medicines – including antibiotics – that are given to food production animals are only available under Veterinary Prescription. As farmers, we have a legal responsibility under UK and EU law to ensure our livestock are given the appropriate treatment without delay. In 2003, twenty UK organisations concerned with animal and human health came together to form the 'Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance', known as RUMA. This highly respected organisation continues to ensure medicines are used as little as possible but as much as necessary.

We pay for our farm to be checked each year by an independent inspector who

carefully examines the animals, farm buildings and farm records. This is for the 'Red Tractor Farm Assurance' scheme. Absolutely every medicine, including antibiotics, has to be recorded so that it is known what each individual animal has received, the reason, the date and amount given, the batch number and expiry date for the medicine, and the withdrawal period. This is to ensure that no animal enters the human food chain with a remnant of antibiotic still in its system.

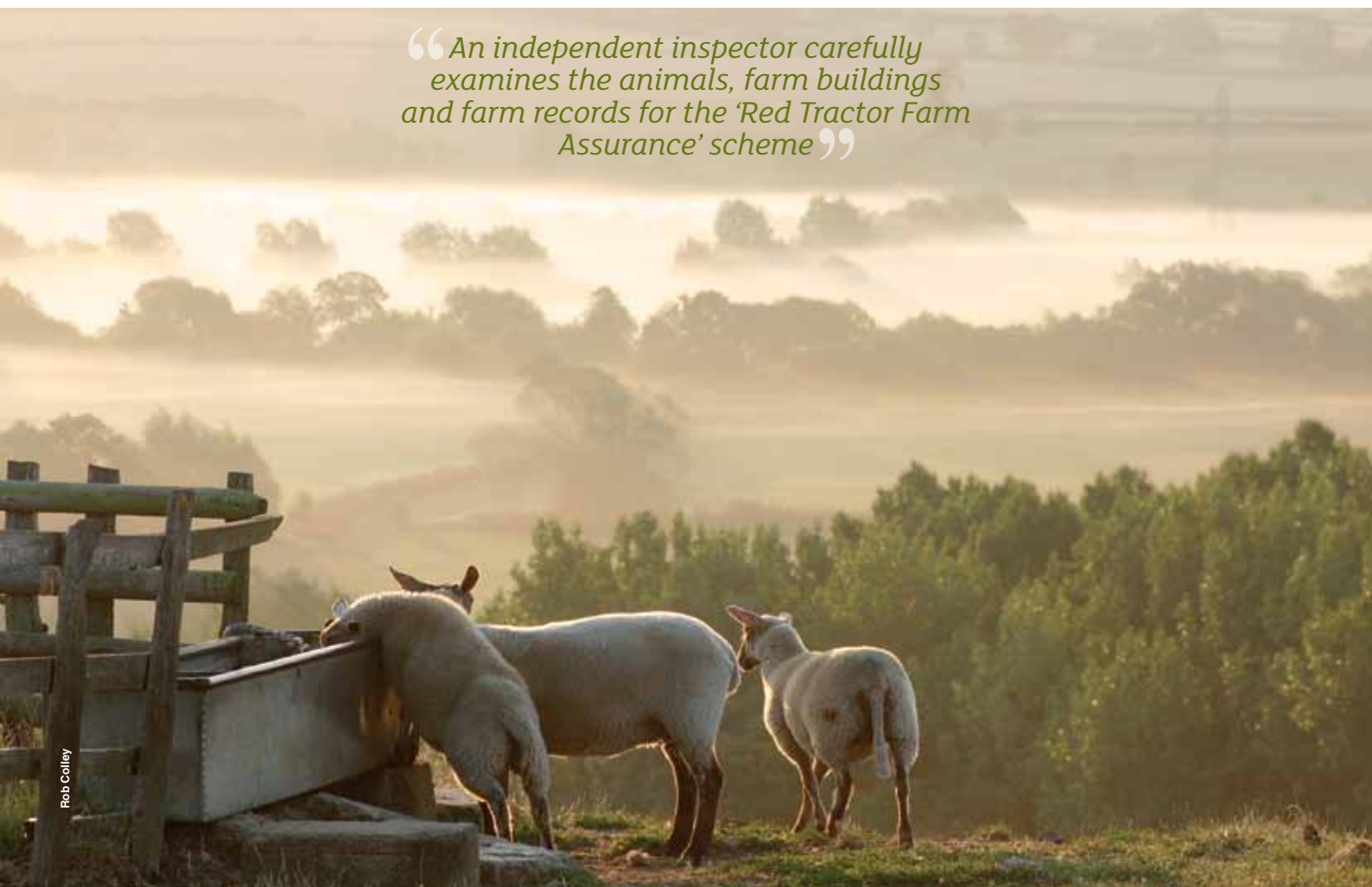
I am a sheep farmer and take the care and health of my flock very seriously. Each year our vet visits the farm for an annual health review when together we look at the animals and our health records to discuss any health concerns that have occurred over the last twelve months. We also talk about current research and we work on a health plan for the next year. If I have an ailing animal I take it to the vet or speak to our vet for advice on the best course of action.

An example of this is an orphan lamb

whose mother was not able to produce the colostrum needed. We fed him a colostrum substitute and then made up bottles from milk powder. When we can foster an orphan onto another ewe this is done, but unfortunately for this lamb no foster mum was available. For a couple of days he was doing very well but one evening I noticed he was off colour and, knowing an infection can take hold in such a young lamb very quickly, I phoned the surgery and met the out-of-hours vet. Young 'George' was indeed succumbing to a nasty bacterial infection and he was prescribed some special antibiotics. It was touch and go for a few days but 'George' pulled through.

The press portray our country as a high user of veterinary antibiotics. In reality we are in the lower to middle range of users across the EU. Our consumers expect a very high level of farm animal welfare and independent schemes such as the 'Red Tractor' ensure this and provide traceability from the farm to the fork.

“An independent inspector carefully examines the animals, farm buildings and farm records for the 'Red Tractor Farm Assurance' scheme”





CPRE Gloucestershire AWARDS



LAST YEAR was the eighth year of our Awards scheme. Awards were made to six projects and we again used the Gambier Parry Hall at Highnam for the Awards' Ceremony. Following an overview of the projects by Richard Lloyd, the citations were read by Anna Jones, one of the Awards Judges, and plaques and certificates were presented by Viscount Bledisloe to representatives of each project. The event concluded with a delightful tea.

Coln Valley Village Hall ▷

AFTER 70 years of use, Coln Valley Village Hall was in desperate need of replacement. Working together, the community of only 300 people in five tiny villages has planned, fund-raised and managed the construction of a new hall carefully designed to fit in this very rural landscape and has undertaken much of the non-specialist work through volunteers.

■ **CITATION** For outstanding community engagement in providing a replacement Coln Valley Village Hall, and a new building that is both appropriate in scale and cost and fits easily into this very rural environment



Below is a brief description of each project, the citation and a photograph. You can find details of all the projects that have received Awards over the years by visiting the Branch website (www.cpreglos.org.uk) and clicking on Awards recipients 2007 – 2015.

▷ Horsbere Brook Flood Storage Area

FOLLOWING SEVERE flooding in 2007, the Horsbere Flood Storage Area was conceived to provide enhanced flood protection for parts of Gloucester. But it has done it in a way that has also created an attractive wetland area enhancing wildlife and the landscape and providing a valuable new amenity for the local community.

■ **CITATION:** For the successful creation of a flood defence scheme protecting local urban areas while also creating new wetland habitat and landscape interest and increasing recreation opportunities and amenity



▽ **Rural Innovation Centre, Harnhill**

AN ATTRACTIVE training centre for the Royal Agricultural University has been developed from redundant farm barns on the Harnhill Manor Farm. Clad in natural cedar boarding, the buildings fit well in the landscape. They also incorporate innovative energy solutions including photovoltaic and air sourced heat generation; and rain water is harvested from the roofs, saving water.

■ **CITATION:** For the comprehensive adaptation of redundant farm buildings providing a contemporary educational centre that is visually appropriate in its rural setting, incorporates sustainable construction technologies, and demonstrates good economic management of the University's built resources



△ **Sly's Close, Northleach**

SLY'S CLOSE is a small development of six affordable houses in two terraces of three on a brownfield and sloping site off the main street in the centre of Northleach. Funded by a local charitable trust, architecturally the housing is superb with a varied building form, careful detailing and energy efficient design. And a new public space has been created.

■ **CITATION:** For bringing new life to the medieval fabric of Northleach by providing exceptionally well designed and detailed affordable housing that avoids pastiche, and the recreation of a public open space linking West End to Back Lane, and which is a significant exemplar for small scale residential design

▽ **Tirley Pressure Reduction Installation**

THE TIRLEY Pressure Reduction Installation is a vital piece of infrastructure in the national gas grid. Set well back from public highways, the installation is surrounded by generous bunds planted with over 23,000 trees and shrubs and is an excellent example of successfully fitting a major engineering structure into the landscape through careful design.

■ **CITATION:** For designing and implementing a major engineering installation, vital to national gas distribution, that respects its landscape setting and has a minimal visual impact which will diminish further as the site planting grows and matures



△ **Whitecroft Railway Station**

WHITECROFT STATION has reopened on the Dean Forest Railway. The station building is a reconstruction of the former building erected in 1875, faithfully recreating the original structure. The result is a delightful addition to the railway scene and welcome environmental improvement, and a valuable contribution to local tourism and the rural economy.

■ **CITATION:** For rescuing from dereliction, and bringing new life to another piece of the Dean Forest Railway's vision for the future, which will be of benefit for both residents and the visitors to the Forest of Dean

4th
MAY
2016

COME TO OUR BRANCH AGM ON WEDNESDAY 4 MAY

OUR BRANCH AGM for 2016 will again be held in the spring, but a little later this year – on Wednesday, 4th May, when we shall be returning to Stowell Park, by kind invitation of our past President, Lord Vestey. Members and guests are invited to view the fine gardens from 1.30pm before we assemble in the Ballroom for the meeting to start at 2.30pm.

This year, the meeting will start with the talk when we are delighted that our speaker is to be Jonathon Porritt, the well-known, and often controversial, environmental campaigner and writer. Whatever he says is sure to be challenging and thought-provoking. This will be followed by the AGM itself and tea.

Our current Chairman, Charlie Watson, is due to retire at the AGM after five busy and energetic years. We are making progress towards finding his prospective replacement, although

at the time of writing have yet to have a confirmed candidate. If you know of anyone whom might be interested or would like more details please contact Charlie Watson on 01242 230008 or the Branch Office on 01452 309783 or info@cpreghos.org.uk.

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find your copy of the CPRE Gloucestershire Annual Review for 2015. You will also find your invitation to the AGM, the agenda for the meeting and the minutes of the previous AGM.

Whether you will be coming to the AGM or not, please would every recipient return the slip on the bottom of the invitation without delay and include on it your email address (if any). Your current email address is essential if we are to develop and maintain an effective way of communicating with our members quickly and cheaply.

Jonathon Porritt



S Daily

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Berkeley Vale

Prue Vernon, Chairman

WE ARE delighted that Mr Anselm Guise of Elmore Court has agreed to stand as our new President.

The new Stroud Local Plan is having a positive outcome. The application for 95 houses at Whitminster was withdrawn while Kingswood – currently a target for developers – is not considered a suitable place for further development. An application for 95 houses 'South of Charfield' was refused as the then 'Emerging' Local Plan had achieved sufficient weight. An appeal against refusal for 59 houses at Chestnut Park, Kingswood has,

which is included in the Local Plan, whereas the Berkeley ones are not.

The news on solar arrays is better than might have been feared. Although it is still visible from the Cotswold escarpment, the solar array at Cambridge had strong local support and was allowed by the District Council. Stanley Downton had two applications for solar arrays, both of which have been turned down for impact on views from the AONB. One of the sites is also of archaeological importance and has considerable ecological merit, both worthy of conservation. Thankfully,

“The new Stroud Local Plan is having a positive outcome”

unfortunately, been upheld; the Inspector maintained that the site was adjacent to current development and within an indent of the village envelope.

CPRE has been involved in resisting the application for 186 houses behind Canonbury Street, Berkeley, which would be a huge blot on the setting of Berkeley; the appeal against refusal of this application will be heard in August 2016. There is also another appeal against the refusal for 375 houses and industrial units at Severn Meadows, Newtown, Berkeley, to which we have objected. Both are green field developments. The shame of both these proposals is that they are spoilers for a well-thought-through planning development at Sharpness

the huge solar array at Awre on the bend of the River Severn, which would have been clearly visible from all along the escarpment and from the Severn Way, was turned down in January.

There is an outline application for a major football stadium and associated sporting facilities, plus an 'eco' industrial park and small nature reserve, on green fields – good farming land – at M5 Junction 13 (the A419 Stroud junction). If allowed, there would then be almost continuous development between Stonehouse and the M5 as there would only be a couple of fields between it and the planned West of Stonehouse development. Berkeley Vale District is not happy about this.

Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury

Tom Hancock, Chairman

“We are still looking for volunteers ...”

ONCE AGAIN, the major planning issue affecting the District has been the Joint Core Strategy, where as before we are most grateful to the officers of the County Branch for so ably representing CPRE at the continuing Examination in Public – see separate article for more details. Meanwhile there has been no noticeable progress on the underlying individual local plans.

Most of the planning appeals which were occupying us during 2015 have now been determined, overall with better outcomes than we had feared. Most recently that for a development outside the settlement boundary at Gotherington has been dismissed. Decisions on the

major proposals for Brockworth and Leckhampton – both areas allocated for housing in the pre-Examination JCS – are still awaited. More recently, we have again engaged David Crofts to present the CPRE case against an appeal seeking to build 38 houses in the AONB at Woodmancote.

The most significant – and damaging – local planning decision has been that by Tewkesbury Borough Council to approve proposals for 377 houses at Farm Lane on the edge of Leckhampton. These highly unattractive, high-density proposals for land just below Leckhampton Hill have been roundly criticised by the Planning Inspector examining the JCS. CPRE and others have asked the Secretary of State to ‘call in’

the application and action is now on hold until he makes up his mind.

In early October, a small group of members made a highly successful visit to Bletchley Park. Very recently, members of the District Committee paid a most educational visit to the Grundon facility at Wingmoor Farm for a first-hand view of the management of waste disposal and recycling. This will inform the CPRE position on any proposals or complaints. In the hope of increasing CPRE membership, forms and other literature are being delivered to the two new large housing estates in Winchcombe.

The District AGM for 2016 will again be held at Stanway

Works on the site at Farm Lane, Leckhampton, put on hold by the Secretary of State

House, on Tuesday, 17th May, when our speaker will be Lord Lieutenant and CPRE Branch president Dame Janet Trotter. We are still looking for volunteers to take over from our longstanding Chairman and Secretary, both of whom are currently continuing only in an ‘acting’ capacity. During the year we plan coach visits to Wells and to Hughenden Manor, another visit to a working farm and again to have a stand at the Winchcombe Show. Further details can be found in the Branch Calendar of Events.



David Bayne



Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Committee visit Grundon waste and recycling site, Wingmoor Farm

Ron Lane

Forest of Dean

Mike Mackey, Chairman

“The need for the development at the Clearwell/Stowe Hill quarry has not been demonstrated”

EARLY IN 2015, Breedon Aggregates submitted an application to Gloucestershire County Council for a major extension, amounting to around 55ha, to the Clearwell/Stowe Hill crushed rock quarry. As well as major adverse consequences for landscape and local amenity, around 35ha of the land is Grades 2 or 3a, “best and most versatile” agricultural land. CPRE objected to the proposal as

the development would have had serious environmentally damaging impacts and the societal need for the crushed rock had not yet been demonstrated through the developing Minerals Local Plan process. There was significant local opposition to the application and it was withdrawn later in 2015. A revised application has now been submitted to the County Council. Whilst this seeks to address some of the issues

raised by local homeowners, the environmental impacts are at least as large as in the original proposal and CPRE will again lodge a strong objection to the development.

In line with CPRE’s recommendation, Forest of Dean District Council refused outline planning permission for a scheme which would have delivered up to 200 homes at Allaston, on the outskirts of Lydney. Following an appeal of this decision and

an Inspector’s subsequent recommendation of approval, the Communities Secretary has refused the application after concluding that “the adverse impacts of the appeal proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole”.

In July of last year, CPRE Gloucestershire made a formal objection to a planning application for a vast (over 100ha) solar installation on the Awre peninsula. Our core argument was that the installation would constitute the industrialisation of a particularly sensitive landscape on a massive and unacceptable scale and that the adverse effects would substantially outweigh the benefits. That proposal was withdrawn. The applicants, however, submitted a revised proposal. Whilst this reduced the area to be occupied by around 15%, it resulted in scarcely any reduction in the perimeter of the development adjoining or close to the Severn estuary. CPRE objected to the revised proposal and it has been refused by Forest of Dean District Council.

Site of the proposed Clearwell/Stowe Hill quarry extension



Mike Mackey

North Cotswolds

Peter Loveday, Chairman

“We ask that members alert any of our committee to any application as early as possible”

THE TWO serious housing applications in Chipping Campden, refused on 8th July, are now out of date for Appeal. However a new ‘Screening Opinion’ has been requested for a full Environmental Impact Assessment for the

Leasows site and this may foreshadow a new application. The application for the Collin Lane, Willersey site was made in October 2014, refused in September 2015 and appealed in the same month. The decision is due shortly. This shows the lengthening

time-scale and expense for building developments in the North Cotswolds.

In this last case we did not make a representation as we were not made aware of the original application. We do ask that members alert any of our committee of five people,

drawn from different parts of the North Cotswolds District, to any application as early as possible. All District members will be receiving a letter giving details of our AGM and garden visits at the end of April and this will give names and emails.

South Cotswolds

Nicholas Dummett, Chairman

South Cotswolds visit to Tewkesbury Abbey

Planning: Cotswold District Council published a lengthy consultation document on the policies to be included in the Local Plan to which CPRE districts sent in an equally weighty response. We had three major concerns:-

- There was no policy restricting development in the open countryside. Unintentional loop-holes would inevitably lead to excessive development in smaller settlements. We suggested tighter wording.
- Over the previous ten years the proportion of people of working age commuting out of the Cotswolds and the number of jobs filled by in-commuters had doubled to about 40%. This unsustainable pattern was entirely due to excessive building for the executive commuter market against a failure to build housing which those who work in the Cotswolds could afford. The plan policies did little to redress this balance. We suggested a tough stance on the requirement for all development to include at

“Our co-operation with the Cotswold Water Park Trust is working well”

least 50% affordable housing.

- There was no clear policy requiring infrastructure such as schools or medical services to be delivered as a precondition for allowing major housing development to commence.

CDC are digesting our and all the other comments with a view to publishing a full draft local plan sometime in May.

We have commented on a number of minor planning applications the most important of which is an application to build 88 houses on the edge of Siddington. We regard this as unacceptable, particularly as the planning application for 2500 houses on the Chesterton site has now been submitted. While we support the choice of Chesterton for a major urban extension to Cirencester over the next 15 years, a planning application now is premature. We are studying the detail of the application and will have made our comments by the time you read this newsletter.

Our co-operation with the Cotswold Water Park Trust (CWPT) is working well. In the last newsletter I described the rationale for CPRE contributing to a study of how to implement the Master Plan for the Park. The result was

a very good report from the consultant which has had two important almost immediate direct results:

- It has given the CWPT a clear focus on the strategic issues which are achievable over the next few years.

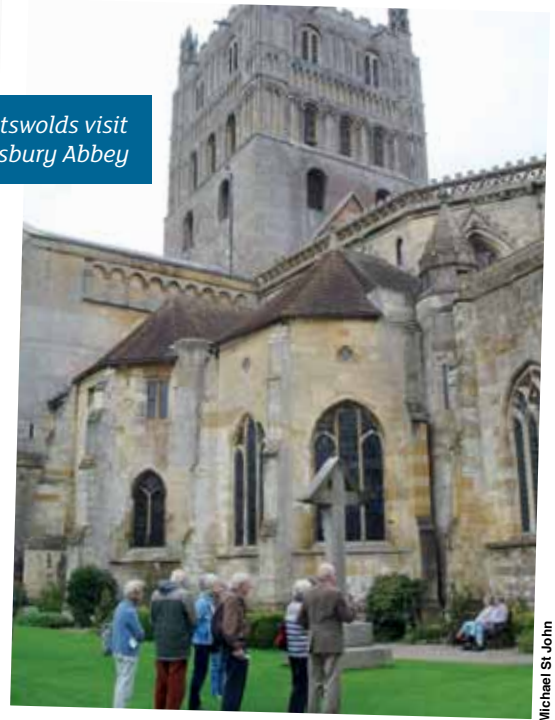
They are able to use this as a platform for dialogue with the local communities and local authorities.

- It provided the evidence to back up our submission to CDC. They needed to redraft the policies for the Water Park in the draft Local Plan to make sure they support achieving the potential of this very special but very different part of Cotswold District.

Events: In September a group of 25 members enjoyed a guided tour of Tewkesbury Abbey. All of us had vivid recollections of the Abbey during the floods of 2007 when it stood alone on an island surrounded by

muddy water so the tour began with a walk round the outside of the building. We learnt how a very generous American lady had bought the surrounding grounds in 1962 and bequeathed them to the Abbey Lawn Trust. The Abbey interior contained numerous items of interest including three organs, one of which had been previously in Magdalen College, Oxford and Hampton Court Palace. The views from the tower were certainly worth the effort.

Several have asked that we arrange a further visit, perhaps next year, to explore the most attractive town to learn more about it and its surroundings.



Michael St John

Stroud

Pippa Schwartz, Secretary

“So far, the new Local Plan is working in protecting some key sites in the District”

HERE IN Stroud District we are hoping that the recently-adopted Stroud Local Plan will start to slow down the onslaught of planning applications that we have experienced over the last couple of years.

So far, the new Local Plan is working well in terms of protecting some key sites in the District. A renewed

attempt by Gladman to develop Baxter's Field in the lovely Slad Valley with 20 houses was recently refused by officers, as was a smaller plan for 5 houses on the outskirts of Minchinhampton. A more ambitious plan for 150 houses, also in Minchinhampton, was withdrawn following much local opposition. CPRE Stroud objected to all three of these

applications. David Crofts, the planning consultant engaged by the Branch, handled the larger two expertly on our behalf.

One major application, for a solar farm in Upton St Leonards, remains undecided. This site is a sensitive one in terms of landscape and is visible from the Cotswold Way.

The Committee is currently

planning its annual social event for members which this year will be a wine tasting organised by Woodchester Valley Vineyard, followed by an optional Gloucestershire supper, all to be held at Woodchester Valley Village, near Nailsworth on 6th May. We hope that many of our members will enjoy this evening with us.

“Tetbury can ill afford any further development”

IN THE autumn Cotswold District Council issued a consultation document and invited further comment on the policies to be included in their Local Plan 2011-2031. Jointly with CPRE North and South Cotswolds Districts we submitted detailed comments, with Nick Dummatt of South Cotswolds taking the lead for all three districts. Our comments were designed to be read as constructive and we are confident that Cotswold

District Council planners will value the input.

It is encouraging that the proposed housing development on the Kemble Airfield site is not included in the Local Plan. This was a poor proposal on many grounds. It became evident during the consultation that the District Council remain committed to the Chesterton development and would not consider the Kemble proposal as an alternative. CPRE have been broadly supportive of

the Chesterton proposal.

We attended a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Panel at which two additional sites for residential housing in Tetbury were considered. We spoke out against both sites on the grounds that the town needs to retain some vital green spaces amongst the many housing developments that have already been approved and are under construction. The feedback from the Panel conclusion was positive in

that neither site was approved for further consideration – Cotswold District Council clearly did not want them and were grateful for comments supportive to their position.

The Tetbury Neighbourhood Plan continues to gather momentum. By the time of the next newsletter, it may well be reaching completion. I continue to make an active contribution and hope it comes to fruition. Tetbury can ill afford any further development.

BRANCH AND DISTRICT CONTACTS

CPRE Gloucestershire office

(manned Tuesday and Thursday mornings)

Community House, College Green Gloucester GL1 2LZ

Tel/Fax: 01452 309783

e-mail: info@cpreglos.org.uk

www.cpreglos.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 248577

Chairman Charlie Watson

Vice Chairmen Richard Lloyd, David Brooke

Office Manager and Planning Advisor

Lisa Belfield

Campaigns Manager Rachel Reeves

Branch Administrator Vanessa Paterson

Membership Secretary Elizabeth Bourne

Hon Treasurer Julian Oxley

☎ 01452 750797

Hon Secretary David Bayne

☎ 01242 237074

e-mail: secretary@cpreglos.org.uk

District Chairmen

Berkeley Vale Prue Vernon ☎ 01453 860329

e-mail: chairberkeleyvale@cpreglos.org.uk

Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury

Tom Hancock ☎ 01242 602173

e-mail: chaircheltglostewks@cpreglos.org.uk

Forest of Dean Mike Mackey ☎ 01594 530648

e-mail: chairforestofdean@cpreglos.org.uk

North Cotswold Peter Loveday ☎ 01242 602887

e-mail: chairnorthcotswolds@cpreglos.org.uk

South Cotswold Nicholas Dummatt

☎ 01285 720090

e-mail: chairsouthcotswolds@cpreglos.org.uk



Stroud Pippa Schwartz (Secretary)

☎ 01453 883973

e-mail: pippaschwartz@btinternet.com

Tetbury Jeremy Lodwick

☎ 07843 283884

e-mail: chairtetbury@cpreglos.org.uk

Newsletter Editor David Bayne

e-mail: secretary@cpreglos.org.uk

Design Colette Brownrigg

e-mail: colette@riggerjig.co.uk

Printing TopFlight, Cheltenham

☎ 01242 528906

