

Summer 2020 Newsletter



 The countryside charity
Staffordshire

CPRE Staffordshire Summer 2020 Newsletter

SUMMER NEWS FROM CPRE STAFFORDSHIRE

WWW.CPRESTAFFORDSHIRE.ORG.UK

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Hello and welcome to our summer newsletter. If you've received this newsletter in the post, that either means that we don't have an email address for you, or that because of the new GDPR, we haven't had confirmation that you wish to continue receiving emails from CPRE. If this applies, please email Supporter Services (supporterservices@cpre.org.uk) at the CPRE head office to confirm that you are happy to receive CPRE emails.

As well as reducing our printing costs, signing up for

e-mail newsletters means you will get your news earlier. We will never pass your email address on to anyone else. Please also let us know if you do NOT wish to continue receiving the newsletter or other communications from us.

Please let us know if you would like a large-print

copy of the newsletter.

16 September: AGM, Haling Dene Centre, Penkridge (TBC: may be postponed until 9 December).

Autumn, date TBC: Great British Spring (now Autumn!) Clean.

Above photo credit: Steve Gullick, Making Memories at Grindon.

Chairman's Report

Mary Booth

Lockdown has been a strange and difficult period, but Sue and Sarah adapted quickly and smoothly to working from home instead of Eastgate House. Our trustees and committee members also adjusted to meeting virtually. It has been surprising how much has got done at CPRE Staffordshire during this time, as you can read in this Newsletter. My sincere thanks go to our members and supporters for their loyalty. You help us in our efforts to protect and enhance the Staffordshire countryside. Sadly we have recently lost two significant figures in the history of our organisation, Amyas Stafford Northcote and Frank Walmsley. Short obituaries of them both are given below. We are still looking for new trustees and volunteers, with the assistance now of a new national system called Assemble. We are in the first batch of local CPRE groups to use it for recruitment, and we are still finding our way with it at the moment.

We still hope we may be able to have our AGM in September in Penkridge, but if this is not possible due to the pandemic, we shall put it back till December. There should be a new draft Constitution for you to consider then, bringing ours up to date.

Legacy We are most grateful to the executors and friends of the late Mrs Pam Collard of Norbury for organising the payment of a legacy from her estate to CPRE Staffordshire. Pam Collard cared deeply about the erosion of the English village and countryside. Over 40 years she saw the closure of the village school, shop and post office, and the already sparse bus service. However, she cared enough to take action where she could, including as a parish councillor. She oversaw the renovation of the crumbling village hall (now thriving), and was instrumental with the local history group in marking the Millennium by having great boulders erected on the parish boundary. Her legacy helps our work go on.

Two national network meetings I participated in two virtual meetings recently. The first was the County Branch Forum. This should have been held in Birmingham, but instead was conducted via Zoom with 44 participants. Among them were representatives of far-flung counties like Northumberland and Cornwall who don't usually manage to get to meetings. We discussed the impact on the landscape of huge wind farms, and the cumulative effect of the increasing number of applications for solar farms. We agreed to support much greater use of roofs of warehouses, industrial

and farm buildings for solar power. The conundrum is that we want to be more 'green' regarding energy sources, but also protect the countryside. We also had a discussion about re-wilding, a topical subject. The book 'Wilding' by Isabella Tree describes how the Knepp estate in West Sussex has changed from an intensive, unprofitable farm to a rich ecosystem. Herds of free-roaming animals stimulated new habitats. It was felt that CPRE should support re-wilding projects, which tend to significantly improve native flora and fauna. I mentioned the problem of land values being halved by wilding, which might discourage farming families from embarking on it. This topic is likely to be on the agenda at an upcoming panel discussion on CPRE's countryside solutions to the climate emergency with the Secretary of State at Defra, George Eustice. I hope to take part.

The national AGM on 24th June was held online too and was rather different from normal. The voting was all done electronically and written questions sent in via chat. Su Sayer, chairing her last AGM, reviewed her six years in office, mentioning that against all the odds CPRE had transformed the debate on the Green Belt, which is now regarded as essential for increasing our well-being and tackling the climate emergency. She referred to

our phrase 'the right homes in the right places' which became a Government mantra a couple of years ago, and the Government's manifesto commitment to prioritise brownfield development. The new national Chairman is Simon Murray, who was Chief Operating Officer of the National Trust where he worked for 32 years until retiring in 2019. Crispin Truman, CPRE CEO, presented the review of the year. This is available online. He pointed out that CPRE is not a federation or an affiliation, it is a network. Many people at the AGM referred to the opportunities arising from lockdown, as local green spaces have increased in importance and people have turned to nature and the countryside to improve their physical and mental health.

In memoriam

Amyas Stafford Northcote died on 21st March 2020 at the age of 82 following a lengthy illness which he bore uncomplainingly and with great courage. He was our Vice-President and had served as Chairman for about ten years up to September 2018. We had many lovely messages of condolence about Amyas, which we passed on to his family. Su Sayer, national Chair at the time, summed it up well when she said: "What a man, and oh how we shall miss him." His knowledge of

the planning system as a former Stafford Borough Councillor was invaluable. It meant a lot to us and we think to him to be able to mark his voluntary work for us with the presentation in December of a national CPRE award and medal to mark these achievements. Amyas was delighted to be called a 'countryside hero', a description he richly deserved.



Members of Colwich Parish In Bloom met in Great Haywood on 7th July to watch the commemoration of the flowering cherry tree planted in honour of Amyas.

Cllr John Francis gave a personal recollection of Amyas's life, paying great tribute to his knowledge of planning and also saying it had been a privilege to have known and worked with him. Cllr Sue Francis also paid tribute to the time she had shared with Amyas.

Colwich Parish In Bloom Hon. Treasurer Jean Makin MBE then gave a personal and moving tribute to the memory and work Amyas had been involved in, especially his love of gardening and quizzes.

Frank Walmsley, who last year received a CPRE Lifetime Achievement Award, died of cancer on 19 April at the age of 82. A member of CPRE for over 30 years, he was a trustee and member of the Executive Committee from 2013 to 2018, having previously helped in the office. Frank attended regional West Midlands meetings on behalf of Staffordshire, spoke alongside Baroness Jenny Jones at a public event about possible green belt release around Rawsley in March 2018, and had extensive experience of the conservation sector gained through working for the Countryside Commission. He was a keen tree planter and lover of steam railways, and often helped out on stalls however inclement the weather. He was a regular visitor to the office in Martin Street with some publications or cuttings he thought might be of interest, usually accompanied by notes in his tiny neat handwriting. His knowledge of large-scale projects such as HS2 and the West Midlands Rail Interchange was a great help, and will be sorely missed.

Appointment of Trustee

Do you care about the countryside? Would you like to help one of the main countryside charities in the county continue its vital work? The trustees of CPRE Staffordshire would welcome a new trustee of any age. This is an active, hands-on role in managing and running the organisation. Our charity monitors development in rural areas, encourages the use of brownfield land for building, tries to protect the green belt on the outskirts of the West Midlands conurbation and Stoke on Trent, connects people with the countryside, raises funds - and much more. We are one of the local groups of the national CPRE.

We have a meeting every two months, currently in the afternoon (but we could move to the evening if work commitments make this difficult), and keep in touch regularly by email. There are occasional other meetings and conferences to attend. If you are interested in the position, please contact the Office Manager for an initial talk about what is involved, call 01785 277890 or email protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk. Written applications should be sent to the Chairman, CPRE Staffordshire, Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2DH, or to view a description of this role, and other volunteer roles

available, and apply online, through the new Assemble system:
<https://volunteer.cpre.org.uk/opportunities>

FUTURE EVENTS



Our AGM for this year is scheduled for Wednesday 16 September, starting at 12:45pm at the Haling Dene Centre, Cannock Road, Penkridge ST19 5DT. This may have to be postponed until Wednesday 9 December. We will update you after 1 September when we have made a decision subject to government advice.

The venue is a Grade II listed building, built in 1841 for a retired Colonial Bishop, easily reached with Penkridge rail station nearby, within 15 minutes walking. It has a substantial car parking area with disabled parking provision. The meeting room sports a grand open fireplace and has a beautiful view of the gardens. Penkridge is served by Arriva buses and has a number of taxi firms (taxis should be booked in advance) including Pegasus 01785 712982, ABA 01785 636363 and Casper Cars 01785 712222.

We plan to have a speaker from the Staffordshire NFU (National Farmers' Union) to speak about how the coronavirus pandemic has affected farming in Staffordshire - it should be very interesting to have an insight, and appreciation, of the challenges faced by local farmers in the current climate.

An Agenda and Nomination form have been sent out with this newsletter. Please do feel free to put yourself, or another member/interested person, forward for a committee position - current Executive Committee members and positions are listed at the end of the newsletter. A person can be a committee member without taking up a specific position on the committee and you can nominate yourself.

Please do attend, if possible, the AGM is an important event in your local CPRE calendar providing the opportunity to participate in the nomination process and influence the direction of your county group. Please email protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk or phone 01785 277890 by 5pm on Wednesday 2nd September if you wish to attend stating your name, number of people attending and any dietary or accessibility requirements.

LOCAL NEWS

Grand Summer Draw

We have some fabulous prizes for this year's summer draw although, unfortunately, we will not be able to sell tickets out and about at events. Our 'star prize' is a wonderful hamper, full of goodies, donated by Canalside Farm, Shop & Cafe. We have many runner up prizes including Staffordshire beers and wine, visits to attractions, a year's CPRE membership free, hand painted t-shirt, pictures of our beautiful Staffordshire countryside and handmade soaps and bathing products.

Winners will be drawn on our provisional September AGM date - Wednesday 16th September or, if this is not able to go ahead, a live draw will take place online on our YouTube channel.

Photography Competition



We now have the results in from the five judges of our Countryside on Camera competition (four local photographers, though one has now moved to Scotland, and a countryside lover who previously ran the SBC Green Awards). Four of the winning photos are shown below.



The photos can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/2W8ZBzj>

Green Schools' Trophy

Application forms for the 2020/21 School Trophy Award will be sent out to all Staffordshire schools at the start of the autumn term. If you work, or volunteer, with a school please encourage your school to enter for your chance to sport our marvellous hardwood trophy and receive a cash prize towards your school's further conservation and environmental work. Entry is open to all Staffordshire schools.



We are looking for inspiring projects that contribute to the protection, conservation or improvement of the local environment. This could be through cutting down on single-use plastics, practical conservation work, creating wildlife habitats, promoting energy-saving or waste reduction/recycling, green transport schemes or any other original idea your school may come up with.

To enter please complete the application form available on our website and submit your entry, preferably with supporting photographs, by Friday 30 October. Please call 01785 277890 or email us if you have any queries/questions.

Staffordshire Day Quiz

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, our Staffordshire Oatcake Day at Canalside Farm had to be cancelled. However, Enjoy Staffordshire, not to be disheartened, moved the whole event online and invited us to host their Great Big Staffordshire Day Quiz on 1 May.

The whole event was hugely successful with interactive and non-interactive activities to join in with, learn from and enjoy. Of particular note were the group singalong to Staffordshire born singer Robbie Williams's Angels, Making Staffordshire Oatcakes with Cris Cohen and poetry with the Staffordshire Poet Laureate 2019-21, Mel Wardle Woodend.

The quiz was taken by more than 30 people on the actual evening, of which 14 individuals/teams submitted their answers for marking and a chance to win a prize. Questions were all about Staffordshire - its history, geography, heritage, sport and culture - participants commented on the difficulty of the quiz but all said that they had enjoyed it. Our highest scorer, winning a year's free membership of CPRE and a quality Staffordshire tea towel, was Stephanie Thompson and the (aptly named) Oatcakes. The quiz is still available on our YouTube channel

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BJ7QtIgZHU>) - if you would like to have a go for fun and see how you do - the answers can be found on our website.

The group singalong is quite moving and fitting for the time and can still be viewed on the Enjoy Staffordshire website.

Lockdown Activity Packs



More than 100 children across Staffordshire have received CPRE Staffordshire 'lockdown activity packs' - containing colouring, crafts, bubbles, notepads and pens.



We would normally be out and about attending stalls and organising outdoor activities, such as at the Staffordshire County Show, at this time of year. However, this year we have had to be a little more innovative to get our message out.

We had our spring newsletter to distribute and also many branded items, that are popular with youngsters when we attend events, so we had to find another way to put ourselves out there.

The activity packs have proved very popular, reaching children in the outlying villages of Gnosall, Derrington and Brewood with children of key workers at both Brewood Middle Academy and Castlechurch Primary School benefitting. We would like to say

a very special 'thank you' to Jayne White, of Gnosall, for taking a dozen packs to deliver around the village, Netta Cartwright for distributing packs to families in the Stafford Welcomes Refugees group, Bernie Bradbury for taking a number of packs for Burton Manor Church, Alison Way for taking packs for Youth Net, Justine and Nigel at Tranquility and Roots Larder and Karen McNicol of Stafford Railway Station for providing packs for customers to pick up.

Do you have a novel idea of how we might distribute our summer newsletter more widely? Is there a telephone box library in your village, currently in operation, where we might be able to leave a few copies? If so, please email us or call 01785 277890 with your suggestion.

Plastic-Free Haywoods

The Haywoods Plastic Free Group was started by Rob Horton and Katie Reed to stop waste from getting into the environment. People were invited to meet on a Friday evening in the upstairs at the Haywoods Sports and Social Club to see what can be done in The Haywoods to reduce the amount of plastic we all use.

The evening was called Green Drinks and over a cup of coffee or a beer we started with a general discussion and later we invited Speakers to give us more information about how we can get to be plastic-free.

This small group has now spread into all the Haywoods and the landlady, Jacquie Rogers, has

opened the bar at The Lamb and Flag one Wednesday morning a month when we can bring our empty plastic bottles etc., for recycling or refilling with washing up liquid, hand soap, toilet cleaner etc., and chat together over coffee and delicious cakes.

The pub is also the collection point for all our recyclable items and Rob and Katie regularly make a journey to Terracycle. (money made is given to children's cancer charities).

A small description of the items we collect are crisp packets, Pringle tubes, Kenco/Tassimo packaging, toothbrushes and toothpaste, baby food pouches, biscuit and cake wrappers, chocolate wrappers, felt tip pens. The Mothers' Union collect stamps, mobile phones, cameras, jewellery. and Food Bank donations.

There's sometimes a talk about what is or isn't recyclable.

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Waste-and-recycling/Waste-Savvy-Staffs.aspx>

More information can be had from Rob Horton.

Anne Clendon, Vice-Chair

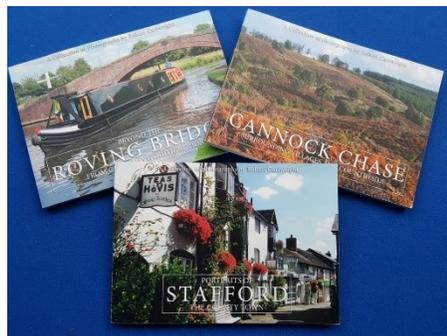
Rural Services Network

An online meeting in which vice-chairman Anne Clendon recently participated discussed the work being done to help isolated people in rural areas. Alertacall is a service used by over 15,000 people, often but not exclusively elderly, who are contacted every day through the OK button. In some cases, the caller just

ascertains that the receiver is well and OK. The system has been shown to reduce hospital admission numbers. The lower population density of rural areas means that less money is spent on them, so there is a big gap to close here.

Robert Cartwright's Books

Local photographer Robert Cartwright has very kindly agreed to donate £3 from the sale of each of his newly released photographic books to CPRE Staffordshire. The books are available at £9.99 each plus p&p from our online shop. However, if you have problems ordering online please do phone us on 01785 277890 or email us to arrange payment by BACS or cheque.



Ever since being given his first camera in 1950 photography has been Robert's passion. Over the years he has presented audiovisual entertainment, commissioned the making of a series of video documentaries and held a number of exhibitions of his work in galleries in Stafford and Cannock. Three years ago at Stafford Railway Station a panel of five of his photographs of the county town was unveiled mounted above the exit doors from the Booking Hall. The

display was designed to welcome arriving passengers. The panel is still receiving comments of appreciation.

Ten years ago Robert appreciated that he had built up a vast library of images of Stafford and the surrounding district and so decided to publish a collection of greetings cards which has now reached over 50 designs!

A more recent development has been to publish three books, the first of which carries the title 'Portraits of Stafford'. Of A5 format, the book contains 50 photographs of the best loved landmarks of the county town, from the old world charm of Church Lane, the Ancient High House, Victoria Park, St Mary's Church and the new Riverside Development, through to the old Police Lockup in Lichfield Road. While of interest to local residents the photographs have brought back many memories for those who have moved to other parts of the country and overseas.

The second Book 'Cannock Chase, Surrounding Countryside and Villages'. is dedicated to his four flatcoat retrievers who have, over the years, accompanied Robert on walks over the countryside.

The third title, in common with all three books, contains 50 photographs of the local canal scene and is called - 'Beyond the Roving Bridge at Great Haywood'. This time the book is dedicated to the friends he made who lived or worked on the canal introducing Robert to one of the

few places where the joy of the countryside can be appreciated.

CPRE NATIONAL NEWS

Star Count sheds light on light pollution

Dark starry skies are a beautiful sight, and a distinctive feature of the countryside. But the results of a citizen science survey show that all too often, light pollution means that many of us can't see the stars.

Nearly 2,500 people took part in February's Star Count, a cosmic census to map the nation's view of the night sky organised by CPRE and the British Astronomical Association. In Staffordshire, 82% of people who took part in the survey could only see fewer than 10 stars in the Orion constellation, indicating severe light pollution. No-one in the county observed more than 30 stars, a sign of truly dark skies. Nationally, 61% of people taking part counted 10 stars or fewer, meaning they were in an area with severe light pollution. That's an increase from 57% last year.

CPRE, along with the British Astronomical Association's Commission for Dark Skies, say that councils must act on light pollution so more people can enjoy starry skies.

CPRE wants councils to adopt better policies in Local Plans to tackle light pollution and protect and enhance our darkest skies.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/dark-skies/star-count-2020-results/>

Next winter, we hope to organise a local Star Count to assess the extent of light pollution around Cannock Chase, which suffers the worst light pollution of all the 34 English AONBs.

Regenerate our countryside, regenerate ourselves

CPRE has set out its vision to regenerate the countryside and ourselves - and says the government's plans make a mockery of its 'so-called green recovery'.

The PM's 'new deal' speech came just a day before CPRE, the countryside charity, launched its own detailed 'manifesto' for a green recovery that can support the regeneration of the economy, our wellbeing and the environment. This vision urges the government to use this post-coronavirus moment as an opportunity for real change, laying out recommendations for ways to stimulate the economy while making life greener and more resilient for the countryside and its communities.

Regenerate our countryside, regenerate ourselves: A manifesto for a resilient countryside after coronavirus emphasises that our Green Belts, the countryside next door for 30 million people, and other countryside around large towns and cities, should see funding significantly increased to make sure they are used better for people and to help mitigate climate breakdown. It also presses for the support of greener farming techniques that could make our food supply more resilient.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/June-2020-Regeneration-manifesto.pdf>

Greener, Better, Faster: Countryside Solutions to the Climate Emergency and For a Green Recovery

Another big new report from CPRE sets out policy recommendations for the government in different sectors: food and farming, planning and building, transport and energy. CPRE believes that the countryside is key to tackling climate change, for example through massively increasing the length of hedgerows, rewetting peatland and creating new woodlands. CPRE also wants the £27 billion earmarked for roads to a ring-fenced rural transport fund.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Greener-Better-Faster-June-2020.pdf>

Public involvement in planning during the pandemic

CPRE London, Just Space, Friends of the Earth and the London Forum for Civic and Amenity Societies have drawn up six key principles for local authorities to ensure local communities are properly involved in local planning decisions during the lockdown period and beyond. The group asked national CPRE to write a letter about the principles to Robert Jenrick, the Secretary of State for Housing, and secured further support from the Town & Country Planning Association (TCPA). There is concern that the new Covid-19 regulations for Local Authority meetings risk undermining the community's role in the planning process, as decisions could be made in virtual committees and closed meetings for up to one year. In some authorities, there has been an increase in delegated decision making - where council officers, rather than elected councillors, decide a planning application.

<https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/impact-coronavirus-planning-system>

Lockdown Lesson: We Need Green Spaces

As lockdown in England eases, new research has found 71% of people think their local green spaces, including the countryside next door to where they live, could be enhanced. Commissioned by CPRE and the HomeOwners Alliance, and carried out online by YouGov as the lockdown started, the research shows that the majority of people believe increasing the amount of wildlife (52%) and the variety of plant life (51%) are top ways in which their local green spaces can be improved. During lockdown, we have seen a surge in appreciation for local green spaces and a heightened awareness of their role in boosting our physical and mental health and wellbeing. For the one in eight households who do not have access to their own garden, accessible shared or public green spaces are all the more important.

Respondents added that reducing litter and litter collection are also key issues affecting our countryside and green spaces. This has been a problem in the local area, with several incidences of antisocial behaviour, fires on Cannock Chase, littering and fly-tipping.

Homes for Rural Keyworkers

CPRE has analysed data on the private rental sector and found that over nine in ten rural areas are currently

unaffordable for low-income key workers, with private rent costing more than 35% of their post-tax income in most regions. Along with specialist housing association English Rural, CPRE is calling for the Chancellor to use the upcoming stimulus package to allocate £12.8 billion of funding to tackle the housing crisis and provide well-designed, affordable homes in rural communities.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/news/homes-for-heroes/>

LOCAL PLANNING ROUND-UP

Do Not Destroy Black Country Green Belt, Build in the City

CPRE West Midlands and CPRE Staffordshire are calling on councillors to build new houses and offices in the city and not in the Green Belt.

The Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) is proposing to release land for nearly 27,000 homes in the Green Belt (in its own and other districts) as part of its Joint Plan which it may publish in the autumn along with 560 hectares of industrial land although a delay to the Plan has been mooted.

CPRE commissioned an assessment of updated evidence produced by the councils in February and say that level of development in

the countryside is not genuinely needed and suggest the following actions to mitigate the loss of countryside:

1. Use the latest household projections from the Office for National Statistics which would give a more realistic level of housing need, reducing the figures by over 17,000.
2. Use 2036 as the end date for the plan reducing the deficit in housing by 7,500.
3. Review the real level of housing supply to allowance for more windfall sites, more housing in key centres and moderate increases in housing density. These could reduce the deficit by between 5,000 and 10,000 homes.
4. Undertake a joint review of potential strategic employment land with adjoining authorities, including Shropshire and South Staffordshire, to avoid double-counting large sites such as the Four Ashes Proposals which recently got the go ahead.

CPRE says that if this approach were adopted, ABCA could drastically reduce the requirement for Green Belt development and concentrate on development where it is most needed to help the economy, environment and social cohesion of the Black Country.

CPRE say this should be primarily on brownfield sites in urban areas where the need for homes and jobs is greatest and where development would limit the loss of countryside and increases in congestion, pollution and climate change emissions from extra traffic growth.

CPRE will formally respond to the plan when it is published, but is urging ABCA to review the evidence now and are supporting residents facing Green Belt development who are calling for a pause in the process until the spring.

The report and a summary are available on our website: <https://www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk/events/future-events/item/2327-protecting-green-belt>

Accountability of the Planning Inspectorate

CPRE Staffordshire's county committee meeting in January discussed the issue of the Planning Inspectorate overturning the refusal of planning permission by local authorities. One application for 250 houses on open green space in Burton on Trent was rejected by councillors but subsequently approved by the PI. The area was not allocated in the Local Plan, which had allocations for housing until 2031, and the decision had been supported by a qualified Landscape Architect. Following a refused

appeal to the PI, the same application made two years later was approved by a different Planning Inspector.

We wrote to Matt Thomson, then head of land use and planning at CPRE, who told us that CPRE has regular meetings with senior managers in the Planning Inspectorate. He is of the opinion that the problem of bad decisions does not really lie with the Inspectorate, but with the political and policy context that they (and we) are working with. The Inspectorate's role is to uphold local and national planning policy, so when they come to a different conclusion than the local authority, it is because they are applying established policy, albeit possibly in a different way to the council.

We would be very interested to learn of any cases in which two identical or very similar applications have had different responses from the Planning Inspectorate. If you are aware of any such cases, please get in touch. Please also let us know if you are aware of an appeal case where an Inspector has clearly made a decision that conflicts with the relevant policies of an up-to-date local plan, without the context of a clearly explained rationale for doing so.

Stafford Borough Council

20/32041/OUT Outline application for demolition and

clearance of existing structures, ground remodelling, drainage infrastructure, and development of up to 365 dwellings with landscaping, access and associated works (outline, all matters reserved save for means of access to the site). We supported this application on a brownfield site relatively close to the town centre.

Lichfield District Council

19/00753/OUTMEI | Rugeley Power Station: Outline Planning Application for the creation of development platform and the demolition of existing office building, environmental centre, and security gatehouse, site clearance, remediation and phased mixed-use development comprising up to 2,300 new dwellings and residential units. CPRE supported this application, commenting on the need to retain and improve habitats for wildlife, energy-efficiency and the inclusion of good connected walking and cycling provision.

Staffordshire County Council

L.20/03/867 M

Cemex UK Operations Limited's application for proposed sand and gravel extraction, the erection of plant and infrastructure and creation of new access, in order to supply the HS2

project with ready mix concrete, with export of surplus sand and gravel on land south of the A513, Orgreave, Alrewas, Staffordshire (Pyford Brook Quarry).

CPRE Staffordshire objected to this application on the grounds of non-accordance with the Minerals Local Plan and impact on the local environment and the current rural and agricultural nature of the site.

South Staffordshire District Council

20/00399/FUL

We objected to this, the same application as 19/00140/FUL from April last year for two dwellings within Green Belt in Lapley, South Staffs, which was refused.

HS2

HS2 have released a new set of information booklets that provide updates on how the Phase 2a route, between the West Midlands and Crewe, is being developed.

Also published is revised safeguarding directions to safeguard land needed for its development.

A full Phase 2a newsletter is available detailing how design changes have been made as a result of a House of Commons Select Committee of MPs considering petitions from people directly affected by the development of Phase 2a.

The newsletter reports how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected how HS2 communicate with stakeholders and interested parties and provides a link to the outcomes of the Oakervee Review from late last year. The newsletter goes on to describe how HS2 have conducted ground investigations and ecological surveys and met with parish councillors, such as Tixall at Ingestre, to answer questions and address concerns. Importantly a link is provided to information about funds provided for communities affected by HS2. (To receive these updates from HS2 for yourself you can sign up at HS2 In Your Area).

Meanwhile, a Judicial Review of the Government's decision to approve HS2, headed by BBC wildlife presenter Chris Packham and funded and organised by Stand for the Trees, took place on Wednesday 8th July. There is a link to the hearing on the Court of Appeal Video Archives website - Packham v the Secretary of State for Transport.

We await the outcome!

<https://www.hs2.org.uk/in-your-area/>

West Midlands Rail Interchange

Disappointingly, the Secretary of State has granted a Development Consent Order

for the West Midlands Rail Interchange planned for land west of Junction 12 of the M6 in South Staffordshire.

The proposal is to build 740,000 square metres of warehousing, up to 30m high, within 643 acres of Green Belt. The plans include a modest rail freight facility with over 90% of the plant not directly served by rail.

CPRE Staffordshire responded to initial consultations stating, "CPRE is opposed to the urban sprawl of Birmingham and Wolverhampton into the attractive open countryside of southern Staffordshire. Provision of houses and roads for 8,500 employees would place additional pressures on the Green Belt. Penkridge, Cannock, Lichfield and Tamworth already face huge pressure from house-building companies."

In February and July our volunteer Planning Advisor attended Preliminary and Issue Specific Hearings. Further focused post-hearing representations were made regarding impact on Green Belt, economy, highways and movement.

Electronic copies of the Secretary of State's decision letter and other documentation can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's web portal.

It is with great regret that we received the news that the

project was awarded consent on 4th May 2020. The issue now is to ensure that the development is built in strict accordance with the approved documents and to respond to any further consultations that may arise concerning site design and impact on highways and surroundings.

While our office staff and executive committee keep keen eyes on local planning applications and issues, there may be something happening in your area that you feel has been overlooked. If you think the countryside, rural environment or specifically green belt near you is under threat, please contact us and we may be able to investigate. CPRE Staffordshire and the CPRE national office also have resources that might be of help when responding to planning applications.

Tree-planting



CPRE Staffordshire have previously helped plant a large number of trees within the county via the Woodland Trust's tree pack scheme.

If you are involved with a parish council or community group and you have an area of land, which you either own or have permission to plant on, that you would like planting with native trees or a hedgerow please get in touch and we can apply for trees.

To see what is available please visit the Woodland Trust tree packs page. All you need is an area to plant, which can accommodate the number of trees on offer within your chosen pack, a group of willing volunteers (we will happily pitch in!) and some shovels!

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/free-trees/>

Volunteers' Corner

We are pleased to welcome two new volunteers to CPRE Staffordshire, Anita Scargill and James Maher.

Anita Scargill



Although I was born and brought up in North Staffordshire, I lived and worked in West Sussex for a good many years as a senior

secretary to senior executives in the telecommunications and computer industries. It was whilst working with Thorn-Ericsson in Horsham that I trained as a recruitment officer carrying out selection interviewing for vacancies up to middle managerial level. I moved to live in the south of England as a result of my late husband's work as a scientist and after his death I retired and moved to live back in my native Staffordshire. Since returning I have carried out volunteering roles with the National Trust and more recently as a parish councillor. In my younger days I was on the Dimmingsdale Youth Hostel house committee.

I was particularly interested in joining CPRE following a very interesting talk by a CPRE member of staff at our WI meeting. Having been brought up by my parents in a country environment - and still living in a farming community - the countryside means a lot to me and I appreciate its beauty and admire the work that is done by CPRE and in some small way I would like to contribute by helping in resuming a recruitment role and help to support and promote the countryside which is for everyone to enjoy. We have a lovely countryside to feel proud of which is worthy of promoting.

Call for Volunteers

Please contact us if you would like to volunteer. You don't have to have any special qualifications - just enthusiasm and passion for our wonderful Staffordshire countryside. We are currently advertising four positions - two fundraising (community and bid writer), assistant planning volunteer and trustee. We particularly need committee members and trustees and positions may be combined, for example if you would like to be a trustee and you have fundraising or planning knowledge or experience. Please do not be put off if the job role looks a little too involved for you - please call us or leave a message on 01785 277890 for a chat.



Recycle for CPRE Staffordshire! **TERRACYCLE**



We are collecting biscuit, cracker and cake wrappers to send to Terracycle for 'upcycling'.

You can take your biscuit, cake and cracker wrappers to our public drop off point at Aroma Tranquility Castlefields, Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1BQ or post them to us at CPRE Staffordshire, c/o Staffordshire County Council, 2 Staffordshire Place, ST16 2DH.

We collect a variety of other items (see enclosed leaflet) for Recycling for Good Causes, including old jewellery, out-of-date and foreign banknotes & coins, used stamps (old or current) and electronics etc which can either be dropped off (by arrangement only - please call 01785 277890 or email protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk) or posted to us or, if small items, posted to the Freepost address below in a no larger than A5 envelope:

FREEPOST RSXA-GJBY-ARRZ
CHARITY NAME: CPRE Staffordshire
UNIT 14
AMBER BUSINESS VILLAGE
AMBER CLOSE
TAMWORTH
B77 4RP

If you have large items, such as laptops, or large amounts, please either contact us directly or Recycling for Good Causes on 0800 633 5323 (they are based in Tamworth).

CPRE Staffordshire is a registered charity, number 219443. It promotes and encourages the protection and improvement of the countryside of Staffordshire: its towns, villages and rural environment. Anyone who values the Staffordshire countryside is invited to join us, either as a supporter of our work, or as an active participant.

<http://www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk>

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Mailing Address:

c/o Staffordshire County Council
2 Staffordshire Place
Stafford
ST16 2DH

Our office number is: 01785 277890

protect@cprestaffordshire.org.uk



Facebook CPREStaffsPage



Twitter @StaffsCPRE



Instagram @cprestaffs

Current CPRE Staffordshire Executive Committee Officers:

Chairman: Mrs Mary Booth BA Hons MSc

President: Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire Mr Ian Dudson, CBE KStJ

Vice President: **Vacant**

Vice Chair & Social Secretary: Mrs Anne Clendon BEM

Executive Committee Member: Steve Hopkins

Coronavirus and CPRE

CPRE is playing its part in keeping safe and slowing down the spread of the coronavirus. Visit the national website at <http://cpre.org.uk> for a message from its Chief Executive, Crispin Truman OBE.

We are doing all we can to keep staff, volunteers, supporters and members safe. For this reason CPRE Staffordshire will not be holding face to face meetings or participating in events where there is a need to be physically present until further notice. Office staff will be working from home. We are able to pick up emails and telephone calls. If your email or call is not answered within a couple of working days, please try the alternative number or email given to the left of this message, thank you.

In the meantime, we wish you well and encourage adherence to the Government's Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Join Us!

If you would like to join CPRE, please go to:

<http://www.cprestaffordshire.org.uk/how-you-can-help/join-or-donate/join-us>

As a member you will receive discount to attractions nationwide, 15% off Cotswold Outdoor store and national and local news about events, your local countryside and future planning.

Please remember to state **Staffordshire** as the local group or branch you are joining through.