



The countryside charity
Cambridgeshire
and Peterborough

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

September 2021



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Chairman's report

Alan James

One of the effects of the lockdown has been that we could not hold our 2020 AGM, so there was no chance of me trying your patience with the 2019/20 Annual Report. The downside, of course, is having to summarise the last 2 years' activity in this Report.

Despite the pandemic, the number of planning issues and threats to our countryside have continued to grow at an alarming rate. I wish I knew why developers, builders and their staff seem to have been exempt from the controls and constraints that the rest of us have been subject to.

Clearly, the single biggest issue that is and will affect all of us remains climate change. In 2019 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, increased their estimate of sea level rise by 2100 by 10% to 1.1 metres. Meanwhile, the modellers at Climate Central are predicting that, if global temperature rises by 2°C, sea level will rise by 4.7 metres. Temperatures have already risen by 1°C. Either figure clearly places large areas of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, especially the Fens, under severe threat. Unless government stops ignoring the problem and starts spending billions on flood defences and stops spending them on more greenhouse gas-causing roads and other developments, our county and with it a large part of our national food supply is at risk. We must get this message across and not rely on our children and grandchildren or campaign groups such as Extinction Rebellion to do it for us. This is a global emergency and we all have our part to play.

As I write this in early July, Brazil is suffering its worst-ever drought, the Western USA is experiencing 40°C+ temperatures, many of California's drinking water reservoirs are almost empty and western Canada is on fire. As I said two years ago, we must bring climate change, flood risk and air pollution to the fore in many of the development applications we are faced with. These remain issues which really concern young people with whom we must engage and support.

The UK Government appears to be taking an opposite and highly irresponsible approach with its Planning White Paper. We consider the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to be a developer's charter. The Planning White Paper will effectively put developers in control of the planning process in many places and remove local democracy almost completely. What will happen to the Localism Act, to the Community Rights it

granted and to all the effort many communities have expended on their Neighbourhood Plans?

For now, we fight on and every day the intensity of the battle in our county increases. Some battles we win, some we lose and others are ongoing. Underlying everything we do in Cambridgeshire is the pressure being created by the appalling concept of the Ox-Cam Arc. This is a concept created by Whitehall mandarins and national government to build 1 million houses and all the associated infrastructure over the south-east of England. It flies in the face of the common-sense approach that the East of England Plan

The Planning White Paper will effectively put developers in control of the planning process in many places removing local democracy almost completely.

demonstrated back in 2009. Why build on green fields in the south-east and maximise carbon emissions when there are an estimated 0.5m empty homes elsewhere in England that could be refurbished, plus space for an estimated 1m more on brownfield sites according to government's own brownfield registers?

"Greed" is the answer. The south-east is where land prices and house prices are highest and where developers make most money.

A constantly peddled concept is the need to 'cluster' modern industries like pharmaceutical and medical research, high tech and robotics in the corridor between the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This really is rubbish! If the pandemic has taught us one thing, it is that these activities are global; clustering or even regular face-to-face meetings are not necessary for them to survive and thrive because we have video-conferencing and other Internet-based technologies. I doubt very much whether many physical journeys took place in order to bring the COVID-19 vaccines into production.

Another core issue we have to deal with is 'greenwash' under various guises such as 'bio-diversity net gain', and 'doubling nature'. A particularly local case was the 866,000 native species sapling trees planted along the new A14 by Highways England to replace 400,000 trees and shrubs removed to facilitate the road development. Although apparently "monitored", almost all the trees died and are being replaced. I recommend listening to the talk by David Rogers, Professor of Ecology at University of Oxford, given to the Friends of the Cam, for a detailed evaluation of some of the claims being made:

<https://www.friendsofthecam.org/content/oxcam-arc-david-rogers>

continued on pages 3 and 4 ►

In opposing the Ox-Cam Arc, we have been joined by other affected CPRE branches and more information can be gleaned from our joint Challenge the Arc website:

<https://www.challengethearc.co.uk/>

Then we have East-West Rail (E-WR), an HS3-like structure which will snake its way across the countryside of South Cambridgeshire and North-East Bedfordshire. Affected residents have actually been told by E-WR engineers that the route has been designed to break up the maximum area of land for development and not to deliver the core of any integrated transport plan. CPRE supports the principle of re-opening the railway between Oxford and Cambridge, the 'Varsity' line as it was called, but not this blatant stalking horse for yet more assault on the countryside. We are working with other organisations, supported by local MP Anthony Browne, to halt this project in its current form and to ensure an integrated approach is taken to public transport around Cambridge.

One of the really worrying trends is for planning applications for the most damaging projects to be made via the National

Infrastructure Commission (NISC) route in order to avoid proper scrutiny by local planning authorities and local communities. Increasingly, communities are having things done to them rather than for them or with them. E-WR would be understandable if it were part of the normal rail network, but it is not, it is a separate company. The climate and landscape-toxic busways being proposed by the unelected Greater Cambridge Partnership against the wishes of all local parish councils are also seeking to avoid critical local input. The movement of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment (WWT) plant into the Green Belt, again rejected by local parish councils, should be the subject of local planning. The Sunnica solar installation on good crop-growing land, crossing the Cambridge-Suffolk border which is really just an energy trading operation dressed up as "green" energy generation is similar, and again local communities are being by-passed. The application to build the largest waste incinerator in Europe in Wisbech we know was deliberately submitted to the NISC in order to avoid the scrutiny of the County Council, which is the local waste authority. The County Council rejected a similar plant at Waterbeach and has not included any new 'energy from waste' plant in its latest Minerals and Wastes Plan approved on 1st July 2021.

CPRE nationally needs to - and hopefully will - thoroughly question this very concerning planning development.

...we have been able to support several beneficial planning applications and recognised the excellent work of the Langdyke Trust protecting the countryside to the north-west of Peterborough.

Meanwhile, we have noticed the increasing failure of local authorities in Cambridgeshire to properly consult local Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) when examining or making their own planning applications in their district. Often when they do consult, they consult the wrong IDB. There seems to be a complete lack of understanding by planners of the vital role which IDBs play in keeping Fen communities and countryside safe from flooding in winter and drought in summer. Such consultation is a legal requirement and the knowledge, skills and engineering capabilities of the IDBs should be recognised and welcomed by all planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate. This is ever more important with climate change increasing flood risk and potentially jeopardising national food supply.

As expected, the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council to withdraw from their Local Plan process in order to continue, against the examining Planning Inspector's advice, with their misuse of rural exception sites, branded as Community Land Trusts, has led to a rash of speculative planning applications across East Cambridgeshire.

So, what good news is there? Well, the applications for the Waterbeach waste incinerator and the Hinxton Agri-tech Park were both rejected on appeal.

The A14 was not re-designated as a 'smart' motorway.

The Bottisham 'retirement village' in a conservation area has been turned down (but may go to appeal).

The application by the Great Ouse Valley Trust (GOVT) for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) status appears to be progressing again and GOVT are doing a great job of bringing the Ouse Valley Way back to a good standard for walkers and visitors.

The Friends of the Cam are now well established and have held some exciting talks and events, each talk attended by hundreds of people.

In the north of the county, we have been able to support several beneficial planning applications and we have recognised the excellent work of the Langdyke Trust protecting the countryside to the north-west of Peterborough.

In East Cambridgeshire we have written in support of the plans to complete the upgrade of the east-west freight rail route between Felixstowe and Nuneaton with the capacity increases around Ely. The only thing we have questioned is the effect of crossing closures, particularly on the Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI. We have also asked for a clear statement by Network Rail on the effect that this

upgrade will have on the need for E-WR to carry freight, if at all.

We are continuing to contend with many ongoing issues. In addition to those mentioned above, these include the NE Cambridge Development, the details of the applications and build-out of Waterbeach, Northstowe, Cambourne and Bourn, the A428 Expressway, the possible A10 dual carriageway, the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire new Local Plan, the A10/M11 Travel Hub in the Green Belt to which we have objected, the Foxton Travel Hub, the West Fields proposal by the University to fill in the Green Belt between the City and the M11 and - above all - the Ox-Cam Arc.

Unfortunately, we lost the battle against the application by the Genome Campus for a hotel and major housing development in the countryside. This was passed by South Cambridge District Council who have been successfully prosecuted several times by the Fews Lane Consortium for issues of planning process and are now the subject of a notice of judicial review.

We have welcomed two new trustees to our team. Long time writer and blogger for CPRE Lizzie Bannister joins us with her expert background in environmental science and strong love of the countryside and its economy. Wendy Oldfield, born and brought up in the Fens and an ardent campaigner to reduce the effects of heavy traffic on Fen communities and roads, joins us with a particular brief as membership champion.

Sadly we have said goodbye to our long-time Branch and Regional Administrator Tracey Hipson who has retired for family reasons. Tracey provided

the Branch and the Region with excellent administrative support for over 17 years and I am personally extremely grateful to Tracey for all the excellent advice, guidance and instruction that she has provided to me, especially when I first started in this role. I am pleased to say that Tracey has agreed to help us with particular projects on a contract basis as and when the need arises.

Following a break of several months without administrative assistance due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have welcomed Jo McGowan to the post of Branch and Regional Administrator. With Tracey's assistance, Jo has settled into the role and despite having to work from home is already making her mark.

Our social media presence is growing and we will soon have a modernised website. We have introduced new sections on our current website to help promote rural food producers and local rural businesses. If you would like your business to be featured, free of charge, in either section, please send an email to office@cprecambs.org.uk.

We have had a pleasing increase in branch membership.

Our office remains closed but we will be looking to reopen it shortly. It has been moved to a different room on the second floor of the St Ives Town Hall, so we will hopefully be able to inspect it for the first time very soon.

With your help and support we intend to continue our efforts to protect our precious countryside and to ensure healthy, vibrant rural communities within it.

Press and Publicity

Ali Sargent

COVID-19 has inevitably continued to dominate the headlines – as it has the ‘spin’ on a number of our press releases.

The release explaining our opposition to new plans to stack aircraft arriving at Luton Airport over tranquil Cambridgeshire countryside noted that the pandemic has led to massive reductions in air traffic. Chairman Alan James also argued that that forcing approval for the new air stack at a time when people are distracted by a national crisis was unethical.

Our press release opposing the Ox-Cam arc cited the COVID-19 vaccine developments to demolish the myth that modern industries need to cluster in the same geographical location in order to collaborate effectively.

We were happy to react with some enthusiasm to the announcement in March that the government was cancelling plans for the Expressway. Alan told a BBC Radio Cambridgeshire audience the decision would greatly reduce a major threat to our countryside. However, he questioned why the A428 upgrade was still proceeding to ‘expressway’ standards.

By early summer, along with the rest of the country, we started to emerge from the COVID-19 chrysalis and were able to spread our PR wings a little. We produced releases supporting initiatives such as the Friends of the Cam's campaign to protect our river and our new trustee, Lizzie Bannister's research on rural England's crucial role in our economic recovery.

Peterborough

Sally Jackson

This has been another challenging year for CPRE in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. Our greatest challenges, as always, centre on protecting our countryside from unsuitable development, whilst supporting plans to build the right homes in the right places.

We believe that everyone should have a safe place to live and communities must develop and grow, or they stagnate and die out.

The challenge is supporting proposals that will benefit our community, giving a positive gain for nature, while opposing proposals that provide short term financial gain resulting in long term natural destruction.

In Peterborough this year there have been three major contentious planning applications, which have divided opinion and raised concern.

- The development of the new Peterborough University site on the City Embankment has raised fears that this will result in a loss of green space in the city centre. The building of a new football stadium for recently promoted Peterborough United is also included in the plan and has been criticised as an unacceptable loss of green space.

CPRE have studied the plans and support this planning application, which will regenerate the city centre and deliver a net gain of usable public open space. The environmentally friendly buildings could accommodate 900 staff and students. This will bring a very welcome football into the city centre nearby and will be vital to the city's recovery from the pandemic.

- A new Lakeside Activity Centre in Nene Park has been approved by Peterborough City Council planners. This includes an Olympic standard climbing facility, which has raised concerns nationally about the impact on open views, wildlife and green space.

CPRE have supported this development which will result in not only much improved leisure and activity facilities for local families, but also enhanced habitats and biodiversity in the park.



- Cambridgeshire County Council have been successful in obtaining planning permission for a Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System on land to the south of Buntings Lane, Stanground. The site, which is just under 5 hectares, is part of the former Stanground landfill site and it will aim to provide enough energy to power 700 homes. Extensive ecological surveys, traffic management surveys and consultation events were undertaken.

CPRE supported this proposal with the qualifications that proper measures were taken to assess the potential of escaping landfill gases for causing an explosion; allowance had been made for safe clearance of the site after its expected 25-30 year life span; plans were in place for remedial measures if the landfill proved to be unstable; and

that there would be real biodiversity gain once the site was up and running.

As a campaigning charity our main concerns in Peterborough are to:

- Promote campaigning and protect nature and local landscapes providing tranquil places to relax and enjoy with huge skies and accessible open spaces,
- Support better planned, more sustainable, affordable places to live in the rural villages,
- Support farmers that provide locally grown seasonal food, store carbon and provide habitat for our wildlife,
- Promote sustainable, realistic transport alternatives to increased private car travel on roads that dominate large areas of countryside and decimate our wildlife.
- Work towards slowing climate change and encourage sustainable energy provision.

We support the brilliant work of the Langdyke Trust in the west and north of Peterborough and encourage you to look at their website

<https://langdyke.org.uk/>

This has details of community projects going on in local villages to protect and develop natural habitats

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Fenland

Alan James

We continued to monitor and respond to planning applications in the District and provide advice to residents and members.

The biggest issue facing Fenland is not of Fenland's making, it is climate change. As described in the Chairman's report, sea level rise as a consequence of climate change means increased flood risk to Fenland. With both the main rivers, Nene and Great Ouse, being tidal well inland, this is not just a coastal issue. Current measurements in the Wash show an annual increase in sea level of 3.3mm, up 10% since 2014. It is inexorable. The Environment Agency is taking mitigation steps with bank-raising ongoing in places. However, their funds are limited.

The risk resulting from climate change is increased by the additional carbon emissions created by new roads and construction, such as the Ox-Cam Arc. However, such developments create a double whammy for Fenland because they are also the source of increased run-off from the additional hard surfaces they create and this run-off adds to peak flood risk.

The most grotesque planning issue we face in the Fens is the proposed waste incinerator near a school in Wisbech. We are doing all we can to support the local Wiswin campaign group who have a petition calling for the taxation of waste

incinerators on their website

<https://wiswin.org.uk/>

Wisbech is, as many will know, the birthplace of Octavia Hill who, with John Ruskin, started the movement against urban sprawl which resulted in the formation of CPRE and who coined the term "Green Belt".

This application has been branded National Infrastructure to avoid local authority and local residents' close examination. It is not compliant with the County Council Minerals and Wastes Plan which does not include any new waste incinerator site and which does accept the government target of waste authority self reliance, meaning there shall be no net import or export of waste into or from the county.

We requested that Fenland District Council remove the proposal for a development of Manor Park, Chatteris, *aka* Wenny Meadow, as a site for up to 90 homes, from the Local Plan during its review. Wenny Meadow is a nature-rich, green space much loved and used by the residents of Chatteris.

We objected to an application to build sixteen houses in a green space bordering the Doddington Conservation Area which would have a negative effect upon the historic setting of the Grade II listed Doddington windmill. Our objection supported the comments of the Conservation Officer.

Huntingdonshire

Gareth Ridewood

We continued to monitor and respond to planning applications in the District and provide advice to residents and members.

We campaigned against proposals by London Luton Airport and NATS to impose a new airplane holding stack over large parts of Huntingdonshire. We called for the proposals to be withdrawn and are very concerned about the potential impacts including loss of tranquillity and noise pollution, impact on climate change and air pollution. We believe these proposals to be premature whilst a wider review of airspace in Southern England is undertaken as part of a government Airspace Modernisation Strategy which itself is currently in delay due to the pandemic. This and wider European aviation policy shows new technology should allow stacking of aircraft to be abandoned through better queue management, delay absorption and higher linear holds - so we see no need for this out dated 'racetrack' hold stacking to

blight our area. Air traffic has dropped by over 67% during the pandemic and is not expected to recover for a long time. We are very concerned at the lack of trust in the airspace proposals, which was shared by local MP's. The consultation was limited in nature and did not allow for an objection to be made to the overall proposals - it feels like a done deal. We will continue to work with others to strongly fight these proposals.

Huntingdonshire also faces threats from unconstrained development as part of the Ox-Cam Arc and CPRE continues to fight against any weakening of planning policy. Locally to St Neots, just across the border in Bedfordshire, proposals have been put forward by developers for a so-called garden village of 10,000 new homes in rural countryside. This large scale development would have a great impact on the countryside and local

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East Cambridgeshire

Alan James

Like Fenland the biggest issue facing the District is climate change. As described in the Chairman's report, sea level rise as a consequence of climate change means increased flood risk to large parts of East Cambs. and it is now very likely that the Isle of Ely will become an island again within current lifetimes.

That risk was demonstrated this winter when the local Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) started pumping on 23rd December, continued until February and the A1123 road was closed at Earith Bridge for several weeks while, further upstream, areas of Huntingdon and St Ives were severely flooded.

It was therefore very concerning to read that the Leader of the District Council proposed a motion against the new Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CAPCA), decision to fully implement the recommendations of the report prepared by the Authority's own independent Climate Change Commission led by Baroness Brown of Cambridge which had been established by the previous Mayor.

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk-6985942.hs-sites.com/cpicc>

<https://www.huntspost.co.uk/news/combined-authority-climate-recommendation-controversy-8127250>

We continue to be very concerned by the District's perceived misuse of the Rural Exception site rules and its branding of developments containing a majority of open-market housing as Community Land Trusts (CLTs) and 'community-led developments'. The resulting quantity of 'affordable' housing, some of which is now being sold under shared ownership schemes, is no more than the standard proportions of 'affordable' housing required of any development under current council policies. During the 2018 Local Plan examination, the council was instructed to remove its 'CLT' policy and proposed sites from the draft Local Plan by the Inspector. The council's reaction was to withdraw from the planning process. This has left the District open to much speculative development.

Most of these developments are being carried out by the East Cambs. Trading Company Ltd (ECTCL) using the trading name "Palace Green Homes" (PGH). It is PGH that is now the promoter and developer of 'CLT' sites within ECDC. The intention was that this organisation would result in a profit for the council, who remain the planning authority. The most blatant abuse has been in Kennett, where the council gave itself planning permission for a 500-home CLT, despite objections from every local

parish council, many residents and many organisations including ourselves.

CPRE nationally is a strong supporter of the CLT movement as a means of providing more rural affordable housing. However, the model being pursued in East Cambridgeshire appears to be more about delivery of market housing outside of planning envelopes than it does about developing truly affordable housing in rural communities. The concern now is that because these developments are funded by large loans from the council and from CAPCA, delays in building caused by shortages and increased prices of building materials, lack of labour and delays caused by COVID-19, will lead to a financial drain on the council as has happened elsewhere. In September 2020 the Haddenham 'CLT' was granted an additional £7k of parish council funds. The accounts of ECTCL for year-ended March 2020 showed a trading loss of £500K and it was agreed that in February 2021 loan repayments to the District Council scheduled for March 2021 would be met by the issue of new loans totalling £4.9m from the council. Meanwhile loans to ECTCL from CAPCA for the Haddenham 'CLT' and the Ely MoD site have been rescheduled. This issue would appear to be placing the District Council at considerable financial risk.

This situation is also failing to deliver much-needed affordable homes and this is exacerbated by the apparent collapse of the previous Mayor of CAPCA's much vaunted £100K home policy. It is reported that to date none of those built have been occupied due to their not being accepted by banks or building societies as mortgage-able.

<https://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/housing/100k-cambridgeshire-homes-scheme-in-tatters-8112384>

On other matters, we have written in support of the plans to complete the upgrade of the east-west freight rail route between Felixstowe and Nuneaton.

We have supported Suffolk Preservation Soc. and the local campaign group in opposing the largest solar park in the UK on good farmland crossing the county border. The Sunnica site is a NISC application and is also opposed by the local MPs.

We have objected to a speculative application on the hillside between Haddenham and Wilburton for 70 dwellings. We supported re-development of an old factory site in Station Road, Haddenham but requested (unsuccessfully) that existing employment space in two office buildings, one being the old Station House, be retained. We have worked with the local Heavy Commercial Vehicles

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Cambridge & south Cambridgeshire Jane Williams

The area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that the branch covers is under unprecedented pressure. This is driven by the government's pursuit of economic growth based upon sectors which are capable of generating huge future returns for the Treasury such as Life Sciences/ Health, Hi-tech, Agro-tech, University and other Research and Development, and the Sciences as a whole.

Because of the amount of building and infrastructure development proposed in South Cambridgeshire and the City the branch has experienced a major increase in the number of consultations it has responded to in the last year.

The branch also works and writes on behalf of communities and gives advice wherever possible to help with planning applications, to protect the Cambridge Green Belt and other surrounding productive farmland which is under serious threat.

Protecting the City and South Cambridgeshire corner of the patch by responding to planning applications and consultations has become an almost full-time job. In the current, 2018, City and South Cambridgeshire adopted Local Plans, new settlements have been approved for Waterbeach, Bourn and Cambridge North and areas removed from the Cambridge Green Belt in Fulbourn, Cherry Hinton and Fen Ditton. Extensions to Cambourne and Northstowe have also been approved.

The Cambridge Green Belt, which not only protects the historic City of Cambridge from urban sprawl but also protects the setting of the City, was further reduced in the City 2018 adopted Local Plan. Although the National Planning Policy Framework clearly states that Green Belt should only be built upon in exceptional circumstances, Green Belt boundaries can now be amended by local authorities when writing their Local Plans, requiring only the approval of the Secretary of State, not his/her instigation as before.

The Cambridge Green Belt now faces further threat from the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, a joint plan for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire local authorities, work on which commenced immediately following the adoption of the 2018 Plan overseen by the entirely unelected, City-Deal funded, Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP). The overwhelming response to the 'call for sites' was frightening and the situation became worse when a late response appeared from a company called Thakeham which aimed to develop tens of thousands of houses on open farmland in an arc from Bassingbourn to Foxton.

We fully recognise the need for sustainable transport – but it needs to be integrated and

coherent and not, as currently proposed, totally disjointed and a further threat to the Cambridge Green Belt. The GCP has proposals for more guided busways to the South-East, East, West and North from the City. There are the Cam Metro proposals from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CAPCA) and the East-West Rail (E-WR) proposal of Route 'E', each causing further damage to the countryside and the Green Belt by breaking it up and making it prone to development. Indeed, representatives of E-WR have admitted to residents that such break up (to enable future development) is the *primary* purpose of the project, not public transport.

Our concerns are that there is no joined-up approach to transport planning between the GCP, CAPCA or E-WR and that all routes cut through the Cambridge Green Belt in sensitive environmental areas. CAPCA is meant to be the transport planning authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough but we are waiting to hear what the newly elected Mayor will decide and how he will achieve some level of joined-up thinking between the competing authorities. Will he, for instance, stick to his election pledge to scrap the previous Mayor's plans for the Metro?

Global warming leading to climate change is resulting in increased risk and occurrence of drought in summer and flooding in winter to many communities and to the fertile agricultural land characteristic of the low-lying Fens and their hinterland. The growth agenda also brings challenges for the supply of essential utilities such as water and electricity. Water supply is now a major issue in South Cambridgeshire and the damage to the chalk streams which form the tributaries of the River Cam, caused by over abstraction from the chalk aquifer, is considerable. This has led us to support and participate in a new campaigning group started in Cambridge to protect the river, the Friends of the Cam

<https://www.friendsofthecam.org/>. They have held three successful lecture evenings, starting with an initial address by chalk-stream campaigner Feargal Sharkey, and recently performed a ceremony to read the Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam, the first river in the UK to have its rights declared. There is a proposal to move the Anglian Water sewage works from the current brownfield site in Milton to valuable farmland in the Green Belt at Honey Hill in close proximity to the villages of Horningsea and Fen Ditton. This is purely to facilitate the building of additional housing at the Cambridge North East site and is not a strategic

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East Cambridgeshire continued

(HCV) Group and agree with Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners that proposed gravel extraction close to the river on Haddenham Fen disguised as an agricultural reservoir, should be refused.

We have objected to another 'CLT' at Wilburton, which had led to both a village referendum and a residents' poll expressing 'no confidence' in their parish council. We are examining reported complaints of residents' issues at a further 'CLT' in Stretham.

We are concerned that reports of additional funding for the planning of an upgrade to the A10 between Cambridge and Ely will give rise to further development pressures on the Isle of Ely.

It is of great concern to us that we simply do not have sufficient resources to be able to monitor and respond fully to all the residents and communities that approach us concerning inappropriate planning applications.

Peterborough continued

that will eventually provide a green corridor linking the River Welland with the River Nene and Deeping with Stamford.

The trust, which was formed by four locals in 1999, is run by volunteers and manages seven nature reserves, including restored gravel pits, meadow, wet woodland and a county wildlife site.

It has a flock of 100 sheep, 120 household memberships and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable core of volunteers who regularly carry out maintenance tasks.

Well worth a look. It provides positive hope, in a scary and unsettling world that, with the right resources and enthusiasm, we can all make a difference to our wildlife and their habitat.

Website and Social Media

Website

The website <http://www.cprecambs.org.uk/> has remained under the original format, hosted by Catlyst2, rather than migrating to the CPRE national charity template and hosting services. The decision was taken on 14th June to employ JS Webservices <https://www.jswebservices.com/> to design a new website, re-using much of the existing content, for completion in Autumn 2021.

Since June 2020, a volunteer has been assisting with changing website content and layout, instructing JS Web Services as follows:

- Removal or archiving of outdated content
- New imagery sourcing
- Rewriting About Us
- New sections, notably on Local Foods & Rural Businesses
- New articles
- Regular refreshing of Home Page News items

Other original content has been produced by professional writer Lorna Watkins, and by volunteer and Trustee Lizzie Bannister. The aim has been simply to keep the website refreshed at minimal cost.

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/cprecambs>

A keen volunteer took over the Twitter account in 2020 when the followers totalled c. 500. As of 30 June 2021, we have 817 followers and climbing. We tweet local, national and international news on:

- Legislation, planning, public consultations, construction & engineering, development, transport, green belt
 - Environment, nature, wildlife, rivers, health, litter, hedgerows, other CPRE campaigns
 - Climate change, energy
 - Rural life & business
 - Arts & crafts, music events, exhibitions
- including a mixture of academic/scholarly and more consumer-oriented items, and to engage with a very wide range of audiences including other campaigning organisations, wildlife groups, local residents, media etc.

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/CPRECambridgeshireAndPeterborough>

The Facebook site has 109 Likes and 130 Followers. It is in need of more regular posts e.g. simply taking items from our Twitter feed or from the Facebook sites of other CPRE branches.

Cambridgeshire & south Cambs continued

necessity for Anglian Water. The existing sewage works was reportedly 'future-proofed' in 2015 to enable it to cope with an increased population up to 2050. Anglian Water has been granted £227m of public money by way of a government grant to fund the relocation of the works. We objected to the North East Cambridge Plan (NECAP) and we objected to the principle of moving the sewage works in our response to the first consultation comparing possible sites. A second consultation is now underway. We are supporting the 'Save Honey Hill' Campaign Group

<https://www.savehoneyhill.org/>

This is just a brief flavour of some of the work we have been doing and the challenges we face in

South Cambridgeshire. The upside is meeting and working alongside people who care about the places they live, a sense of place, the countryside and the natural environment.

We all know that change occurs and will continue to occur. People need homes and workplaces, we need goods and services, and our country needs a thriving economy and a healthy population. But a continued focus on a growth agenda will not help us face the reality of the global climate crisis. Changes have to be for the good of all and not for a privileged minority. That's why we need to continue to work hard for a better way. Please join us!

Receipts and payments accounts for the year ending 31st March 2020

Nicholas de Chenu

	For the year ending 31st march 2020 £	For the year ending 31st march 2019 £
Receipts		
CPRE subscriptions received	8,896	9,230
Donations received	394	346
Interest received	99	87
Lottery receipts	181	173
Total receipts for year	9,570	9,836
Payments		
Charitable activities	12,147	10,808
Governance	940	890
Total payments for the year	13,087	11,698
Excess of expenditure over receipts	3,517	1,862
Balance of Cash Reserves at the beginning of the year	30,708	32,570
Balance of Cash Reserves at the end of the year	27,191	30,708

The charity does not have any funds which are of a Restricted nature.

During the year to 31st March 2020 the charity received a steady flow of income from members' subscriptions to CPRE - albeit slightly lower than the previous year £8,896 (2019 £9,230), and donations of £394 (2019, £346) were received.

During the year we spent £1,260 developing our website. All other expenditure for charitable

activities and governance remained within normal boundaries £13,087 (2019 £11,698).

The net result for the year was an outflow of funds of £3,517 which reduced the cash reserves as at 31st March 2020 to £27,191 from £30,708 as at 31st March 2019. The balance of total reserves as at 8th July 2021 is £26,536 which is adequate for our requirements.

Huntingdonshire continued

services. Huntingdonshire recently suffered widespread flooding and concreting over the countryside brings added pressure and wider flood risk. There is a danger the payback to support an economic argument for East-West rail is the imposition of large scale development around new stations, putting huge pressure on local services and threatening the countryside and character of Huntingdonshire for ever.

We objected to the proposed near 50% reduction in the size of the Country Park at Alconbury Weald.

We continue to support the Great Ouse Valley Trust in campaigning for AONB status (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to help protect the wonderful local countryside, landscapes, nature and biodiversity.

About CPRE

We campaign for a beautiful and living countryside. We work to influence how we plan our towns and cities to make them better places to live and work, to ensure the countryside is protected for all to enjoy for now and future generations.

Our Patron is Her Majesty the Queen. Our President is Emma Bridgewater.

Nationally, we have around 60,000 members and a branch in every county. CPRE is a powerful combination of effective local action and strong national campaigning. CPRE is a Registered Charity (No. 1089685).

Please note the opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual contributors, or the editor, and do not necessarily represent the views of the branch or the national charity.

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General Planning issues

Branch office

Membership Champion

Wendy Oldfield

Keeping in Touch

CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are happy to help you. As well as this report and our printed newsletter, there are lots of ways to keep in touch with us. Please contact our office: Tel: 01480 396698.

If you have an email address, sign up for our occasional e-bulletin: office@cprecambs.org.uk

Our website is frequently updated with both local and national news and issues. Have a look and tell us what you think: www.cprecambs.org.uk.

Write:

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 Follow us on Twitter: [@CPRECambs](https://twitter.com/CPRECambs).

 And Facebook: CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

