

# Year of Positives and Negatives the Chairman reports

This newsletter marks my first year as Chairman of our branch, and what a year it has been. We have had some notable successes, some exciting times and - unfortunately - increased threats to our countryside which are exacerbated by our chaotic local governance situation here in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We have also had great sadness with the death of Shirley Fieldhouse on 30th December.

Shirley's obituary is overleaf in this newsletter but I have to say I will miss her both as an adviser and as a person of strong arguments and firm views. It says a lot for Shirley's total commitment to the objectives of CPRE that in late November when she was really very ill, she was writing to me with new concerns about the Cambridge Green Belt.

The threats to our countryside seem to increase exponentially. As I write we have ongoing consultations about the East-West Railway, the Caxton to Black Cat A428 expressway, the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership guided bus to Cambourne and, just closed, Oakington 'rural transport hub'. More major development is proposed at Buckden. The Wellcome Trust have proposed expansion of the Genome Campus near Hinxton to which we have objected. We have responded to the proposal to turn the A14 upgrade between Cambridge and Brampton into motorway, with its concomitant march of gantries across the countryside. The Mayor of the Combined Authority wants to reconsider the case for the Wyton to Godmanchester link road across the Ouse Valley and is funding a study into making the A10 a dual carriageway from Cambridge to Kings Lynn. Meanwhile in the north of the County, Wisbech residents and councillors have been campaigning for 22 years without success to re-open their local railway line. There are plans for a development of 7,600 homes on the Cambridge North East Fringe, aka Cambridge sewage works. Our concern is where will a replacement sewage works be located?

The South Cambs Local Plan has passed examination. It has been noted that the South Kesteven (Lincolnshire) Local Plan will have a huge effect on Peterborough and the northern villages and we are considering how to respond. Examinations of Local Plans for Peterborough and for Huntingdon continue. The East Cambs Local Plan has been found 'unsound'. In December, the Inspector asked the council to make changes to the submission Local Plan. Two of these related to East Cambs' use of Community Land Trust branding to facilitate large market-led developments on rural exception sites, the largest being for 500 houses at Kennett. The inspector asked for this site to be removed from the Plan and for the Policy allowing unlimited private housing to be built on rural exception sites, if they were branded 'community led developments', to also be removed. The Council decided on 21st February to withdraw the Local Plan from examination and to revert to

Contents	page
Remembering Shirley Fieldhouse.....	2
CPRE View: The Ox-Cam Arc.....	3
CPRE 'Green Clean' Cleaning up Peterborough.....	4
Care of the Countryside.....	5
Nature Reserves.....	6
Social Media: Raising Awareness and new website.....	7
Your CPRE.....	8

the 2015 Local Plan. I am concerned that this now leaves rural communities open once more to speculative development, the first of which has already been received for 110 houses in Haddenham.

We had success when South Cambs rejected the Hinxton 'Agritech Park' and the County Council rejected the Waterbeach incinerator. An appeal has now been submitted against the rejection of the 'Agritech Park'. The Warboys incinerator was passed but has been called back for reconsideration of the pollution and public health issues arising from the proposed associated waste water treatment plant. We supported the launch of the Great Ouse Valley Trust formed to establish an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the valley between St Neots and Earith <http://greatousevalleytrust.org.uk/>. It is a shame that Natural England claim not to have enough resources to process the application for AONB designation of the valley.

The national CPRE Working Group on the Ox-Cam Arc, of which we are a member, has continued to meet regularly

*Continued on page 3* ►



# Remembering Shirley Fieldhouse

## 1934-2018

Shirley Fieldhouse, who died on the 30th December, was for over forty years a vital cornerstone of our branch.

Her organised mind and steely determination, coupled with a detailed understanding of the issues arising from the rapid growth of the county and its hinterland, made her a formidable contributor to upholding the principles and policies of CPRE locally and nationally.

Shirley joined CPRE in 1975, and in 1977 she was elected to the CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Branch Committee, where she served in various roles, including Branch Secretary, Membership Secretary and Trustee.

It is impossible to overestimate Shirley's contribution to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Branch of CPRE. For decades, her role was an almost full-time and professional one. The work she did was not glamorous or high-profile, but it required a great deal of intelligence, analysis, attention to detail, planning, determination, tenacity and technical expertise. Shirley had an immense breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of rural and community life. In addition she had the enviable ability to deploy this within the context of the development and planning system, often to devastating effect. Her dedication, range of contacts, and knowledge of the county were invaluable assets which greatly contributed to the regard in which CPRE is held by official and voluntary bodies in our region, as well as the local residents who call on the branch for advice and support in planning matters.

Between 1997 and 2015, Shirley's tireless work for the CPRE was recognised with three prestigious awards: the CPRE medal (1997), the Marsh Honorary Award for Outstanding Contribution to CPRE (2012), and the CPRE Lifetime Achievement Award (2015).



Remarkably, Shirley was also heavily involved for many years with Cambridgeshire ACRE, the rural community council for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Until 2005, she was a Board member and, typically, her contributions went well beyond being a source of sound council at board meetings: she constantly demonstrated her commitment to the cause of maintaining a good quality of life in rural parishes by being involved in and leading a number of important

projects.

Shirley did not limit her community activities to CPRE and Cambridgeshire ACRE. She was also a dedicated member of Amnesty International and Treasurer of the Unitarian Church in Cambridge where she worshipped. She was also a keen cyclist and an active committee member of CAMCYCLE, the Cambridge Cycling Campaign "for better, safer and more cycling in and around Cambridge."

Shirley was still making positive contributions to enhance CPRE's responses to planning applications after she had been taken ill in autumn 2018. She was highly respected by all those who met her, even if they did not agree with CPRE's stance on particular subjects.

Shirley certainly "made a difference" to the county of Cambridgeshire, in particular, Cambridge city and South Cambridgeshire. Her considerable skills, determination and dedication have helped to ensure that much inappropriate development does not destroy precious farmland and countryside, and erode the enjoyment and amenity these assets bring to local residents.

Everyone at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Branch of CPRE will miss Shirley for her unique skills and knowledge, her tenacious and energetic campaigning, and her love of our precious countryside. She is, quite literally, irreplaceable.



Shirley receives the CPRE Lifetime Achievement from Branch President Christopher Vane Percy in 2015

## ▶ Year of Positives and Negatives

from the front page

and has published a Policy Position paper on the Arc: <https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/ho-using-and-planning/planning/item/4956-cpre-policy-oxford-milton-keynes-cambridge-arc>. This clearly hit the right note because it received rapid response from both the Government and the National Infrastructure Commission. We are now exploring how to work with other organisations to campaign against the expressway (*aka* Motorway) in particular, and how to ensure that the East-West Rail link, which we support in principle, does minimum damage to the countryside and becomes the spine of an integrated transport system serving rural as well as urban passengers.

We have seen two new national environmental campaign groups have significant media effects locally. In Cambridge, YouthStrike4Climate saw 400 school and college pupils take part in climate strikes on February 15. Also in Cambridge, The Extinction Rebellion have held several events this year, the latest of which has been to successfully petition Cambridge City Council to declare a climate emergency. It is interesting that youth has realised that E. F. Schumacher, J. K. Galbraith and James Lovelock were all correct when they forecast that unrestrained growth without economic consideration of natural capital would lead to environmental disaster. By pursuing policies which reduce emissions, minimise commuting, reduce road travel and protect our high grade agricultural land, we can help these young people protect their future.

We badly need your help. Whether you have relevant expertise, can collect data, research issues, bring issues to our attention, recruit new members or raise funds we need you to sustain a vibrant, working countryside.

## CPRE View The Ox-Cam Arc

Gareth Ridewood reports

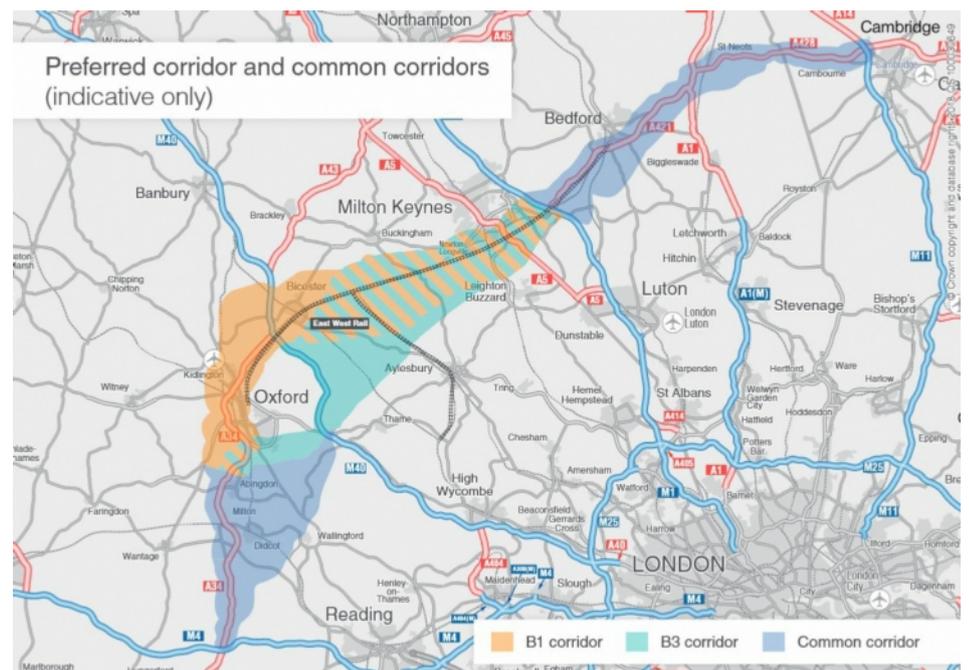
The Ox-Cam Arc refers primarily to a broad swathe of largely undeveloped countryside across Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Oxfordshire.

For the most part the area is economically buoyant, with levels of job creation, employment and housing growth above the national average, and (partly linked to this) being relatively close to London. The Government's National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) recommended that 1 million new homes and 1.1 million new jobs should be created in this area by 2050. The NIC also called for this growth to be serviced by a major new 'Expressway' of near motorway standard, and for the re-opening of a passenger rail line known as 'East West Rail'.

Since the stated aim of the Expressway is to open up land for development, this will also inevitably further increase pressure on the Green Belts of Cambridge, Central Bedfordshire and Oxford. In addition, there are a number of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty that could be affected including the Chilterns and the North Wessex Downs, as well as other designated nature conservation sites. The democratic deficit in the process to date is significant and troubling.

CPRE believes we should aim to protect and enhance the countryside, landscape and heritage assets so highly valued by local people and the nation as a whole.

There needs to be wide-scale public engagement and consultation both on the overall growth proposals and on the Expressway proposals, allowing alternative options to be considered before any policy decisions are made. Sustainable transport at all levels, including East West Rail, should be supported and prioritised over new road-building. In housing, the main priority should be providing the affordable housing needed by existing residents supported by sustainable public transport. Investment and regeneration should be prioritised in the regions of England where there is a clear identified strategic planning case.



Corridor B1 – a central corridor broadly aligned with the proposed East-West Rail route from Abingdon to south Milton Keynes via Winslow. This option passes to the west of Oxford  
 Corridor B3 – a central corridor broadly aligned with the proposed East-West Rail route from Abingdon to south Milton Keynes via Winslow. This option passes to the south east of Oxford.

# CPRE ‘Green Clean’ Cleaning up Peterborough

Last September CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, in partnership with the Peterborough Environment City Trust (PECT), stepped up to the Green Clean challenge.

National CPRE launched the Green Clean - a nationwide series of litter picking events - to celebrate the promised deposit return system for bottles and cans in England.

The challenge was straightforward: to collect as much rubbish as possible to get our countryside looking the way we want it. With PECT we organised four events in Peterborough and volunteers set out to pick up litter on Bourges Boulevard (two events), Mill Lane in Castor and Thorpe Meadows.

CPRE’s amazing Green Clean Reverse Vending Machine (RVM) - which took in the empty bottles and cans collected and issued a cash voucher in exchange to show everyone just how the new system would work - made an appearance at the Castor litter pick. We also had the all-day presence of Peterborough City Council Cabinet Member for Waste & Street Scene, Cllr. Marco Cereste.

You may have heard us talking about the Green Clean on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, and the RVM was also featured on BBC’s Look East. The RVM was built in Norway and these machines are installed in supermarkets in several European countries, where the vouchers issued are recognised at the tills and their value removed from shopping bills.

Our Green Clean litter picks were a success! With your help, we picked up a huge amount of rubbish, including almost 1,000 discarded cans and bottles.

We recorded the quantity and type of rubbish found. We found plastic bottles, drinks cans and glass bottles – all litter that could be recycled. The table below shows a breakdown of what was picked up in Peterborough.

	Plastic bottles	Cans	Glass bottles	Tetra pak	Total
Items collected	303	447	215	16	981
% of total	31%	46%	22%	2%	100%

The Peterborough figures have been combined with the totals from the other Green Clean litter picks and will be put to good use. National CPRE intends to use the data to inform the government as it develops a deposit return system in England –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/deposit-return-scheme-in-fight-against-plastic>.

You can see the final results for all of the Green Cleans, plus four recommendations that CPRE thinks the government should follow for an effective deposit return scheme, at <https://www.cpre.org.uk/magazine/out-and-about/item/5000-green-clean-2018-results?highlight=WyJncmVlbiIsIidncmVlbiciLCInZ3JlZW4iLCJncmVlbicsIiwiZ3JlZW4nIiwY2x1YW4iLCInY2x1YW4iLCJjbGVhbiLCJjbGVhbiIiwY2x1YW4iXQ==>.



The Green Clean Reverse Vending Machine

*“It’s only when you take part in a venture such as this that you realise the scale of the problem”*

# Care of the Countryside

Lizzie Bannister reports

Research has consistently shown us that using or having a connection with green spaces, the countryside and nature is good for us in many different ways: from providing recreational opportunities and relaxation, to learning skills that help us interact with people and the world around us.

We now tend to live in urbanised areas and are increasingly dependent on technology, with associated problems like social isolation leading to an increase in mental health problems that are costing millions of pounds to resolve.

Medication and talking therapies are still seen as key tools in the clinician's mental health toolbox, however something is clearly missing for some service users.

There is a growing consensus that 'green care' should be part of everyone's vocabulary in the health care system. Green care means the use of nature (from animal-assisted therapy to environmental conservation) to help with mental health issues, and the sector benefits from charities and individuals who run services and activities on farms and nature reserves, helping to reduce the demands on the NHS.

One type of green care service is social farming. I visited my local accredited social farm to assess the viability of the solution for our society, and found it a promising way to utilise the countryside to provide safe, enjoyable experiences for people. Spring Farm sits on 17 acres near Bottisham, Cambridgeshire, set up by healthcare workers who got support with all the paperwork from their accreditation body, Care Farm UK.

Its range of activities - and positive, sociable environment - increases people's confidence and sense of purpose as they gain knowledge and develop skills, including teamwork. Clients liked working with the farmers, and each other, in meaningful tasks like gardening, bird box building and helping feed the goats - who are great at interacting with them.

It became clear that this wonderful use of land can both preserve our landscape and educate people about the rural lifestyle and food production. But, its core purpose remains providing an effective preventive measure and treatment for the poor mental (and physical) health that is burgeoning in our urbanising population. This is the future, and green care should have a much higher profile as a valid idea - I have never heard it mentioned anywhere in the health services, but it should be integrated into the minds of health professionals at an early stage



*Volunteer and branch member Lizzie Bannister's latest blog has been well-received - it was featured on The Guardian's "My Green Pod" website and was used as an article in the Western Morning News. The full article can be read on our website ([www.cprecamb.org.uk](http://www.cprecamb.org.uk)).*

in their education. For their part, the green care groups have been collaborating hard to promote their services as well as deliver a standardised definition of green therapy and its practices, including quality assurance.

Encouragingly, Cambridge's Psychological Wellbeing Services, which offer talking therapies on the NHS, has started incorporating into their website information on Darwin Nurseries - a local farm shop with land and animals to look after, and produce grown with the help of people with mental health problems or learning disabilities on placements. I hope we're nearing the day when we might see posters in GP surgeries advertising green care as a therapy option. The movement is following psychotherapy's path - a steadily increasing understanding, leading to action from the government and medics to support non-physical aspects of our human experience and health.

We rely on our natural environment for comfort and stimulation because we came from such natural surroundings. Indeed, we can no longer afford to ignore the importance of the relationship between our minds and the natural world. Our "undeveloped" lands can also help manage physical health problems, prevent further social degradation and promote positive lifestyles. Making the

most of these opportunities would require a change of attitudes in people who look upon our countryside as building plots and commercial opportunities, and in the general public, who could learn to value and appreciate the countryside for what it is, what it does and what it could provide.

In the long term, it makes sense for human health to retain our natural resources, and ensure a healthily functional environment provides a lasting respite from our urbanising society. Our planners, NHS and government must be able to look at the countryside and recognise its immense, largely untapped, potential for health and social care services. If we care for our countryside, it can certainly care for us.

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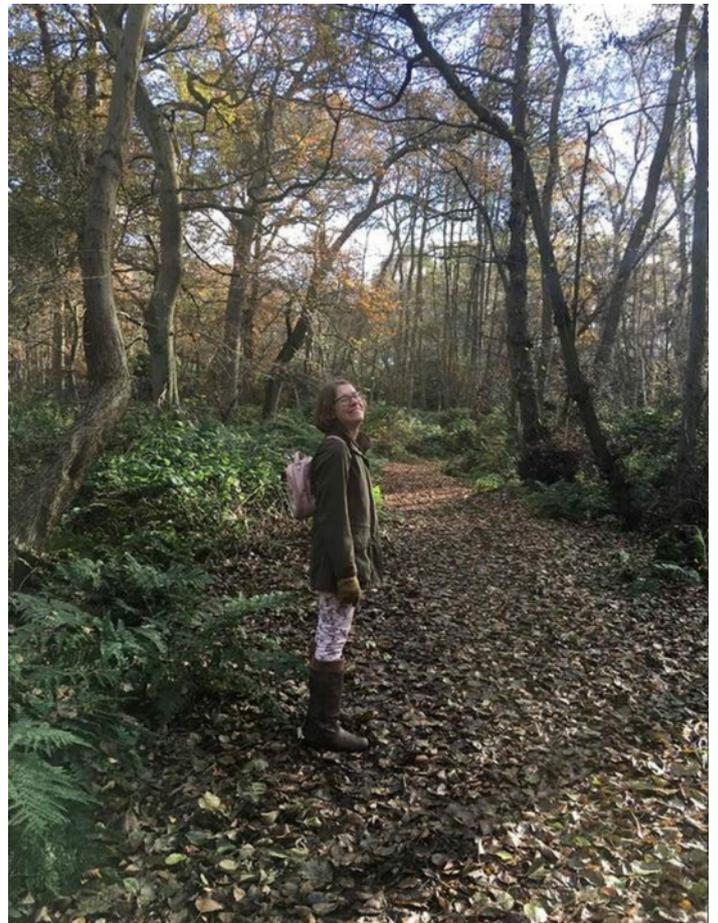
# Nature Reserve Exploration In and Around Cambridgeshire

Lizzie Bannister

Since recently passing my driving test, I now have the freedom to explore my local nature reserves. I've adventurously travelled down single-lane tracks that wound around mysterious countryside to reach hidden gems of fenland wilderness not far from my doorstep - in this case to Welches Dam (a RSPB reserve, as part of the Ouse Washes co-managed by RSPB, Wildlife Trust BCN and Wildfowl and Wetland Trust) and Holme Fen (managed by Natural England, supported by the Wildlife Trust BCN and part of the Great Fen Project).

I want to encourage people to visit these places. They're an important part of our countryside, which needs all the support it can get, especially in the face of the ever-present threats to it. Nature reserves help to engage people with their natural world and provide essential habitats and life support for our local wildlife and ecosystems.

Countryside photographs on this, and previous page © Lizzie Bannister



## Website Design Update

Exciting plans for a refreshed CPRE website were unveiled at the February meeting of the East of England office of CPRE.

Tom Quinn, CPRE's national Digital Communications Editor, gave an overview of plans to update the national website, as well as the websites of CPRE branches across England.

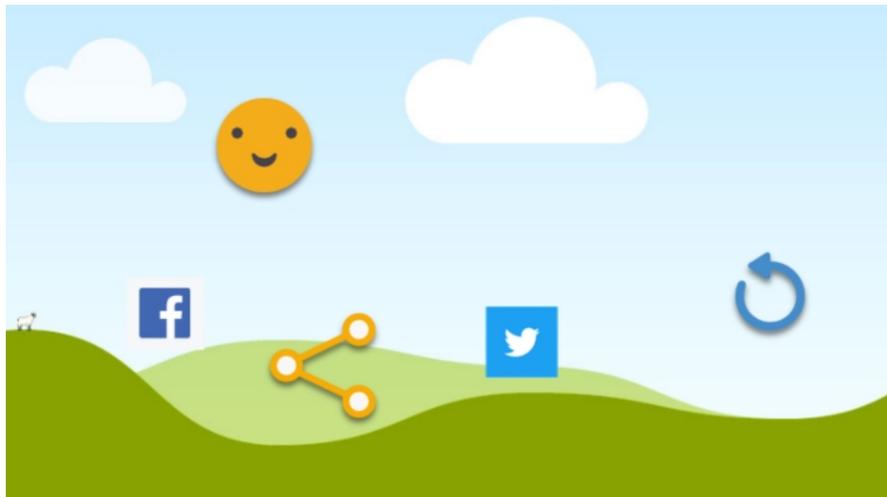
Changes will be made to the look and feel of the websites and to the underlying technology that supports them.

Meeting attendees agreed that the website should be part of a wider social media strategy, crucial to attract younger people. Tom indicated that national CPRE's social media strategy was focussing on the 30-50 age group, as that group had been identified as being most likely to engage with CPRE.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are to be part of the social media mix, but Snapchat has been deemed not appropriate at the moment. One proposed strategy is to use our social media presence to directly engage with local action groups. The website would play a supporting role by providing a 'library' of publications and resources for them to access.

The proposed website changes should help CPRE to be more proactive about engaging the media and following up stories and issues. The change should facilitate easier linkage between the national and branch websites and provide a common style across all websites. It will also be an opportunity for our branch to review and revise our website content.

The national office will be supporting the roll out of the new websites across the network of CPRE branches. Our



## Social Media Raising Awareness

Jean Prince reports

If you'd like to keep up to date with our work, why not join us on social media.

We use social media to celebrate the Cambridgeshire countryside, raise awareness about it and to let you know what we're doing to protect it. We want to engage with supporters and others in the wider community. Of course, bringing in new members is also a positive.

On Facebook, we post stories about protecting the countryside in Cambridgeshire and beyond. We also share national CPRE news. Twitter tends to be a faster-paced

medium. You'll find information about potential land development in Cambridgeshire. We highlight positive initiatives such as nature-friendly farming in the Fens. We also let you know about programmes from our national office that you can take part in.

Finally, we share news about

environmental topics such as climate change and the health of our soils.

To join us on Facebook or Twitter, you'll need to set up an account if you haven't done so already. Then search for **cprecams** and click **Follow**.

We'd love to have you join us in the digital realm. Hope to see you there!

web manager Jean Prince is part of a group that will be providing feedback over the coming months as the new design begins to take shape. Refreshed branch websites are currently expected to be rolled out in early 2020.

### Searching the Internet?

**Why not use Everyclick?** Everyclick is a fundraising website and charity search engine raising money for over 200,000 UK charities. CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is listed on [www.everyclick.com](http://www.everyclick.com), the search engine that helps charity.

Please go to <http://www.everyclick.com/uk/cpre-cambridgeshire/807455/770415> to do all your searching. It does not cost us, or you, a penny - so it's a great way to support us every day.

## 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.

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. Our President is Emma Bridgewater.

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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Jane Williams & Jean Prince

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Alan James

#### Huntingdonshire

Gareth Ridewood

#### Peterborough

Sally-Ann Jackson

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**General planning issues:** Branch office

**Website Manager:** Jean Prince

### CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Branch

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CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are happy to help you. To get in touch, please contact our office:

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Website: [www.cprecams.org.uk](http://www.cprecams.org.uk)

Write:

CPRE, The Town Hall, Market Hill, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5AL

### Subscribe to the Weather Lottery Support our branch and have a chance to win £25,000!

Joining online is easy and costs just £1 per week. You don't need to be a CPRE member to join.

For more information and to sign up go to [www.theweatherlottery.com](http://www.theweatherlottery.com) and select Campaign to Protect Rural England Cambridgeshire.

#### How it works:

One day a week, the Weather Lottery calculates a result based on the temperatures from six European destinations.

You get a unique 6-digit Lucky Number which is entered in the weekly Weather Lottery draw.

Prizes are given for 3, 4, 5 or 6 matching numbers with a top prize of £25,000 for 6 matching numbers.

For only a £1 per week you can join in a lottery that supports our branch and puts you in a weekly draw for a top prize of £25,000, while raising millions of pounds for charities.

Be in it to win it!

