

New Branch Website

We will soon be unveiling our new website. The redesign, taking place across the CPRE network of branch offices, will feature a brighter, more modern look and feel. It's been updated to be accessible from different device types - from PCs to tablets and phones. A new section, 'Discover our countryside', will offer ideas on places to visit in the countryside and will celebrate the best that the Cambridgeshire countryside has to offer.



Ox-Cam Expressway

CPRE and the Wildlife Trusts have written to the government calling for the Oxford-to-Cambridge (Ox-Cam) "Expressway" (a trunk road built to motorway standards but not yet designated) to be cancelled. **In what is a hopeful sign, they have received a reply in which the government says it is reconsidering whether the "Expressway" should go ahead.** In a letter to Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, CPRE and the Wildlife Trusts say that the proposed "Expressway" could damage air quality, the natural and historic environments, and efforts to combat climate change due to increased carbon dioxide emissions. They point out that the preferred "Expressway" corridor contains many environmentally sensitive areas, including:

- 345 wildlife sites, 51 of which are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- 20 nature reserves
- 8,474 hectares of nationally important wildlife habitat

In the government's response, Baroness Vere of Norbiton, the Transport Minister for Roads, Buses and Places, said that the government is currently deciding 'whether the project should continue in due course'.

In addition to the "Expressway", plans for the Ox-Cam corridor include an East West Rail route and one million new homes to be built by 2050. The Ox-Cam corridor spans the area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge.

Both CPRE and the Wildlife Trusts support East West Rail, but suggest habitat loss needs to be considered in the route plans. In addition, they want to see the East West Rail routed into Cambridge via Cambridge North station to ensure it becomes part of an integrated transport solution for Cambridge.

<http://www.cprecambs.org.uk/news/current-news/item/2334-environmental-groups-call-for-the-ox-cam-expressway-to-be-scraped>

We Are 90 This Year

CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is 90 this year. Formed "under the auspices of the Cambridgeshire Rural Community Council" on 28th January 1930. At the time, the speaker at the inaugural meeting, Lord Crawford said that he thought "our English countryside was in danger, not merely from disfigurement or actual degradation...our country(side) was very vulnerable". We are still dealing with these challenges! **We will be celebrating our birthday at our AGM this year – more details in later news updates.**

Buckden Parish Council Event

In January we attended Buckden Parish Council's event "What on Earth Can Buckden Do?". This event addressed the climate emergency and included information about transport, ecology, energy, food, re-cycling, single use plastics, wildlife and education.

The turnout on the day represented more than 10% of the village, and Buckden Parish Council will now be working to take forward the suggestions and pledges to reduce carbon footprint. We thought the event was a great way of communicating the many climate change concerns and necessary mitigating and preventive actions. **We want to encourage other parish councils and local groups to hold similar events – we'll support you where we can.** For more information on CPRE's views on the climate emergency, go to <https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/climate-change-and-energy/climate-emergency/>

Incinerators

In our Autumn news update we told you about our objection to AmeyCespa's plans to build an energy-from-waste incinerator facility on the outskirts of Waterbeach. AmeyCespa appealed Cambridgeshire County Council's decision to reject the application and a public inquiry was held in November – we await the outcome. **In the meantime, the threat has not gone away.** In November, Wisbech residents became aware of plans by MVV Environment Ltd (MVV) for a new energy-from-waste combined heat and power (CHP) facility generating electricity and steam on land on the Algores Way Industrial Estate. A local residents' group, Wisbech Without Incineration (WisWIN) has been formed and they are liaising with the Town Council, the District Council and local people to organise opposition – our Chairman Alan James spoke at their public meeting in February. We'll keep you informed – check links for updates: www.cprecambs.org.uk, <https://wiswin.org.uk/> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wiswin/>.

The Great Fenland Basin and Collaborative Working

The Great Fenland Basin, an area extending, north to south, from Lincoln to Cambridge, is projected by some to be below annual flood level by 2050. Those of us who live in Welland Valley, an area to the north of Peterborough, are concerned about the lack of cross-boundary cooperation with the northern part of the Great Fenland Basin. The potential loss of Grade 1 farm land and effect on food supply is an issue of national importance.

To that end, we are applying to CPRE's Strategic Collaboration Fund for the money to employ a consultant who will work with CPRE and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to promote cross-boundary cooperation. **The Climate Emergency does not recognise county and regional boundaries.**



Map from Climate Central

Goodbye...and Hello

At the end of April this year, we say goodbye to our Branch and Regional Administrator Tracey Hipson, who is leaving the branch after 18 years. Our Chairman, Alan James said "I am sure that all our trustees and members will want to express their gratitude for the hard work and dedication that Tracey has applied to CPRE during all these years. No one could have done better. We all wish Tracey the very best of luck for the future, whatever it may hold." We're pleased to welcome Mandy Dunlop, who will take over from Tracey on 1st May.