

# Bedfordshire Matters

## Local people need a say in plans for 'Britain's Silicon Valley'



*Aspley Guise – one of the villages in the growth corridor © Barry Halton*

CPRE branches across the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor are working together to question proposals to create a 'Silicon Valley' spanning Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford. It is feared it will swallow up villages, destroy countryside and lead to massive ribbon development along the 80 mile stretch, without being subject to either democratic or independent scrutiny.

These major developments in our countryside may be effectively imposed by the Government. A consultation exercise on the project has been undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission. The NIC, which was set up to carry out independent assessments of our infrastructure needs, was briefed to look into plans to maximise the potential

of the Cambridge- Oxford growth corridor over the next 30 years. The Government's vision was to create a new Silicon Valley which could compete on the global stage.

In evidence to the NIC's consultation on the Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor, the Mayor of Bedford (Dave Hodgson) together with the Leaders of Central Bedfordshire Council (Cllr James Jamieson) and Luton Borough Council (Cllr Hazel Simmons), have all signed up to a submission document calling for an additional one million new homes (37% increase) and a population increase of 1.6 million people (25% increase) over the next 35 years.

Story continued on page 8

## In this issue:

**3**

**Bedfordshire Matters 30 years on**

**5**

**Eleven new villages planned for Central Bedfordshire**

**9**

**Photography Competition**

**10**

**Meet our new trustees**

## CPRE Bedfordshire turns 30!

Welcome to our 30th anniversary issue of Bedfordshire Matters. The Bedfordshire branch of CPRE was founded in 1987, and since then has worked to become a respected voice on local planning and environmental issues.

In 1986, CPRE had published a map of England showing the various Branch boundaries, and Bedfordshire was represented by a blank space – thus Bedfordshire, within CPRE circles, became known as 'The Gap on the Map', being then the only county without a CPRE branch.

Within a year, Michael Brooks had brought together a committee and founded CPRE Bedfordshire, which continues to work to stop the needless destruction of our countryside.

In this issue, we reflect on some of this work we've done over the last 30 years, and look ahead to the huge changes we could be seeing over the next 30 years in Bedfordshire.



## Editorial

Nicola Scholfield



I'm delighted to introduce our 30th anniversary issue of Bedfordshire Matters. For this edition, I invited Shelly Dennison to delve into our Bedfordshire Matters archives and reflect on key issues over this time.

Time moves on apace, and it is with a heavy heart I need to let you know that I'll be stepping down from my role at CPRE Bedfordshire as Branch Development Manager.

After nearly four years in post, the search is on for someone to whom I can pass on the baton of managing this small charity that does so much to protect Bedfordshire's countryside and environment.

I've loved working here. It's been an incredibly varied and fulfilling role – and a steep learning curve on how the planning system works! Though without doubt, what stands out are the wonderful people with whom I've worked.

I continue to be greatly impressed by the dedication, knowledge and commitment of the team of CPRE volunteers who give their time through our branch to protect and enhance our wonderful countryside.

In this issue we introduce our most recent volunteers, including our four new trustees who have joined our executive committee, who will play a key role in the branch's work going forward.

And we have much to do! As more and more evidence shows how much greenspace benefits our wellbeing, the challenge will be to shape our county in a way that benefits us all, developing our communities while enhancing our environment for ourselves and wildlife.

I hope you enjoy this issue. If you're new to Bedfordshire Matters and like what we do, please do consider joining CPRE. We rely entirely on local support for the important work we do.

Nicola Scholfield

## Report from the Chair

Gerry Sansom



CPRE Bedfordshire is a local environmental charity, committed to the protection of the Bedfordshire countryside and our rural and urban green spaces. CPRE is unique in the manner in which we do this by focussing much of our work through trying to influence decisions made on how land is developed through the planning system.

We are of course very proud of the campaigning we have done over the last 30 years to protect the Bedfordshire countryside and we can point to a wide variety of actions that we have taken over the years which have resulted in the protection of Bedfordshire countryside that we see around us today.

Much of our work is done in partnership with local community action groups and Parish and Town Councils.

Our prestigious Living Countryside Awards introduced almost 10 years ago provides us with the opportunity to raise awareness and recognise the amazing work that people from across the county are doing to improve our local environment.

However, none of this would have been possible without the tremendous support of our committed and loyal members and supporters to whom we are extremely grateful.

We have one part-time and extremely dedicated employee, Nicola Scholfield our Branch Manager, so we rely very heavily on our committed band of volunteer's right across Bedfordshire who support us in a huge variety of ways.

Some are supporting our work by helping out at our office in Bedford, others work from their homes across the county. The

help they provide is really varied such as administration, marketing, social media communication, responding to planning applications, providing responses to Local Authority consultations on planning policy issues or becoming one of our Trustees.

CPRE Bedfordshire would not still be here fighting for the Bedfordshire countryside were it not for our members, supporters and our volunteers over the years – thank you all very much indeed!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our founder members who had the vision and determination to start CPRE Bedfordshire 30 years ago.

Gerry Sansom

## Bedfordshire Matters, 30 years on..

As the branch turns 30, Shelly Dennison delves into our archive and takes a look back at 30 years' of the branch's Bedfordshire Matters.

It has been fascinating to look back through 30 years of Bedfordshire Matters as well as the press and branch archives. I've learned a lot about the history of the branch and about Bedfordshire in general.

Coming from a heritage education background it was great to read about the work with schools and young people – the new category in the Living Countryside Awards last year and projects on food miles and litter from further back stood out.

As you might expect there are some themes which have always been present. Over the last 30 years there have been many front covers devoted to planning and development including Eco-towns, Centre Parcs and local housing.

The threat to Greenbelt land has always been a hot topic and the successful campaign in 2004 to save Green Belt adjacent to Flitwick Moor's sensitive wetlands is a good example of CPRE Bedfordshire's work in this area.

Renewable energy, particularly the sensitive placing of wind turbines and solar panels, becomes a big story in the 2000s, while the proposed waste incinerator at Stewartby has been an ongoing story for many years.

Transport is high on the current agenda. A report published by CPRE in March this year challenged government claims that 'the economic gains from road investment are beyond doubt.' Over the last 30 years the branch has commented on the routes of new bypasses across the county, weighing up the options to balance local need with the effects on the landscape and wildlife, the visual impact, increases in noise, likely use



*Bedfordshire Matters issues over the years featuring transport issues (top) and Green Belt (bottom)*

by heavy traffic and the risk of the building of new roads opening up land for development.

Road-wise the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway, the A1 scheme at the Black Cat roundabout and the A6-M1 link roads are all currently being planned, and the M1 – A5 link has just opened after years in the pipeline.

Rail and air travel are also in the news. The reopening of the Oxford-Cambridge railway line is back on the cards. Back in 1997 Bedfordshire Matters reported that Luton Airport wanted to increase passenger numbers from 3 to 5 million. In 2013 the expansion from 11 to 18 million passengers by 2020 was approved. That makes an increase of 15 million passengers in just over 20 years.

Away from the important campaigning stories, I spotted an early Jordans advert in the first ever edition of Bedfordshire Matters (Jordans Mill featured in issue 58 as they were awarded a CPRE Mark last year at the Living Countryside Awards)

I was also easily side tracked by a Did You Know? feature from early editions which appealed to my love of trivia by exploring the meaning of local place names and slices of history.

In issue 27 I learned that the land area occupied by ZSL Whipsnade Zoo is greater than the land area of Monaco, while issue 41 profiled Pavenham and told how in the winter the river would regularly flood and freeze – in 1891 men and boys skated the 12 miles to Bedford following the bends of the river.

I also finally learned where Leighton Buzzard gets its name; the first part is from the Old English Leac-tun which is a town where leeks were grown – the dry greensand soil providing good growing conditions. The second part comes from the Old French name for the buzzard but was probably used as the nickname for a prominent local family with a French name rather than because the birds were seen.

Shelly Dennison



## Update on Local Plans

This year, each of our local authorities have continued to progress their Local Plans, which will determine the extent and location of development over the next fifteen years or so.

### Bedford Borough Council's Local Plan



Housing in Bedford Borough © Barry Halton

Bedford Borough Council's draft Local Plan 2035 was open for consultation for six weeks between April and June, setting out its proposals for where the new homes it needs will be built.

The council is proposing that it needs to build 19,000 new homes between 2015 and 2035 for its residents, which is equivalent to building five new towns the size of Ampthill in the Borough.

Plans include huge increases to villages such as Bromham, Sharnbrook, Great Barford and Wilstead plus the creation of new towns in the north Bedfordshire countryside. The brownfield site of the former brickworks at Stewartby has also been put forward as a site following a successful campaign by CPRE Bedfordshire and local people.

At the heart of our response, we disagree that 19,000 homes are needed over the period 2015 to 2035 – our calculation shows that 15,000 new homes would be a more reasonable number - a 20% reduction.

Looking at the figures, it appears that Bedford Borough Council (BBC) have chosen to disregard the use of the

official 2011 census figures – a well-proven methodology for predicting housing numbers – and instead used a method that has increased the final figure by 4,000 homes.

We do not accept the case to increase Group 1 villages "service centre" villages (Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford and Wilstead) to the levels proposed. With more realistic housing numbers overall, the number of new homes to be allocated to these communities can be substantially reduced to be far more sustainable – less than 200 each.

In some cases the allocations proposed in the Draft Local Plan represent increases of 50% or more to the size of the communities. This will have substantial repercussions, not only on the communities but on traffic across the rural road network in north Bedfordshire.

We do not believe that the case has been made for new towns, and we wonder what is driving these proposals other than the availability of Government funding from the "Locally Driven Garden Villages and Towns" programme.

We have learned from a Freedom of Information request that over 41% (7,800) of the 19,000 planned new homes that BBC claims it needs to build in its Local Plan 2035, are for people moving into Bedford Borough from elsewhere in the UK.

According to the draft Local Plan 2035, 2,200 new homes have been allocated to be provided by new settlements. This would equate to two medium sized villages. However, the draft Local Plan is considering developer proposals of between 4,000 and 10,000 new homes.

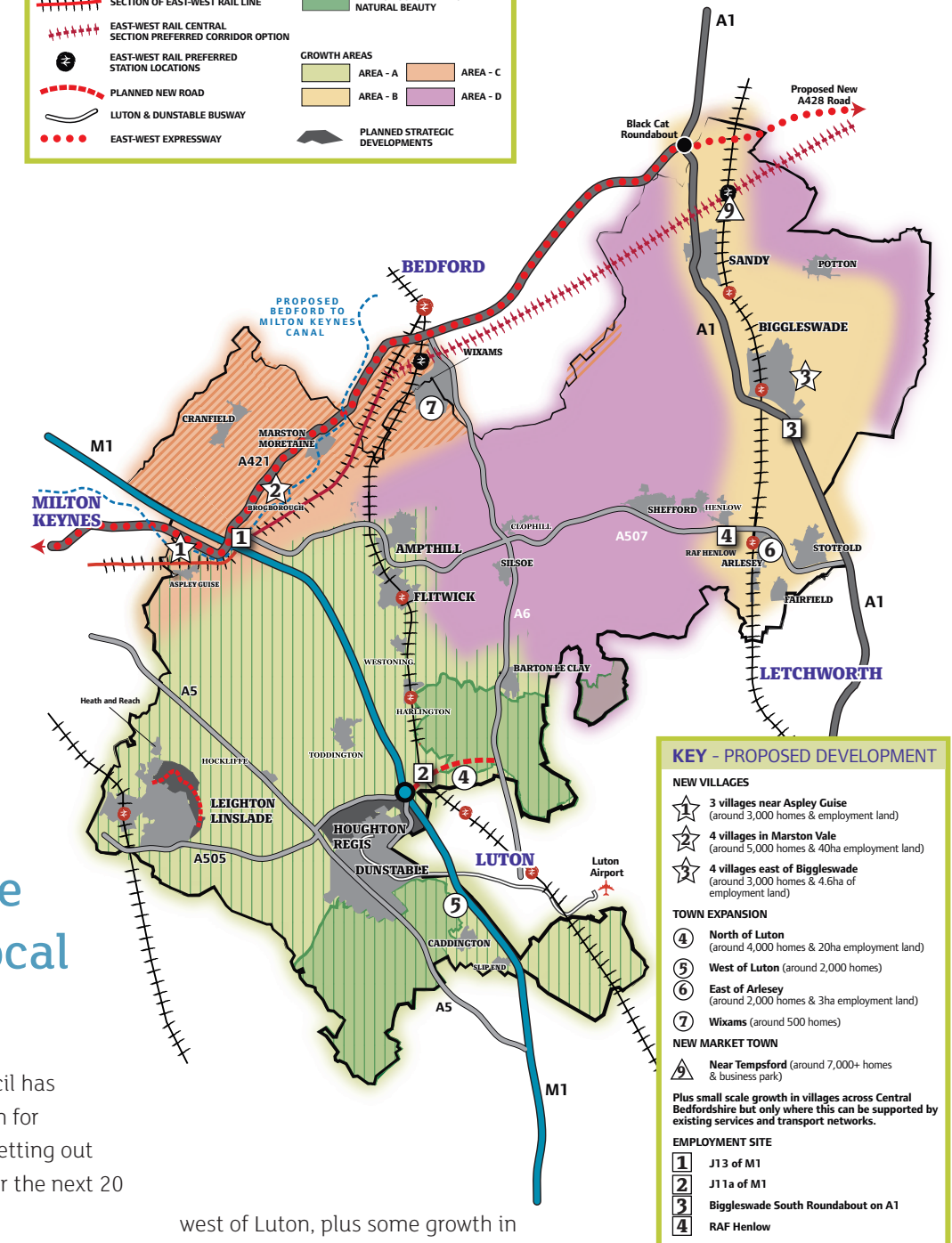
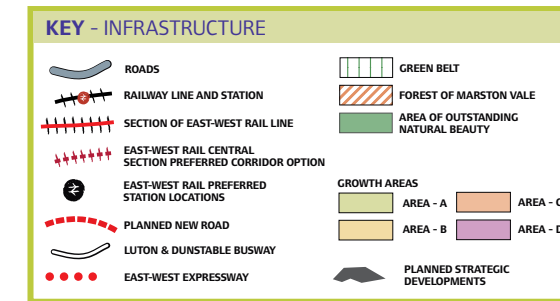
This is development on a totally different scale altogether – massive in comparison. New settlements on this scale would commit the Borough to very substantial long term housing developments on these sites well into the next Local Plan period beyond 2035 without any evidence to support it.

Residents will be consulted further on the final draft of the Local Plan, which is expected to be published in the spring of 2018.

Our full response to this consultation can be found on our website [www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk).

### Freemen's Common saved from development

In the last issue of BM, we reported that Freemen's Common, on the edge of Bedford, had been put forward as a site for development in the Local Plan. We're pleased to report that this has now been withdrawn from the plans, following a successful campaign by CPRE Bedfordshire and local people.



### Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Plan

Central Bedfordshire Council has released its draft Local Plan for consultation on July 4th, setting out development in the area for the next 20 years.

It is proposing that it needs between 20,000-30,000 new homes over this period, this is in addition to the 23,000 homes that are already allocated or have planning permission.

The options set out for delivering this housing growth include creating eleven new villages in the areas of Aspley Guise, the Marston Vale and east of Biggleswade; a new market town near Tempsford; urban expansion east of Arlesey and into Green Belt north and

west of Luton, plus some growth in existing villages.

Existing and potential new road and rail links have informed the draft plan – such as the proposed East-West Railway and the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway.

The M1 – A6 link road also features in the plan and its route appears to impact the Chilterns AONB.

We encourage everyone in the area to look at the plans and have your say during the consultation period,

which will be from 4th July to 29th August 2017. You can do this at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan) or by visiting local libraries or the Council office's where copies are available to view from 4th July.

We shall update our website soon with our initial thoughts on the draft Local Plan, as well as our final response later in the summer.



## Luton Borough Council's Local Plan

The examination of Luton's Local Plan finished in January and Luton has now released the schedule of modifications to the plan, based on the planning inspector's recommendations.

One of these includes the removal of Luton Town Football Club stadium from the multi-use site at Stockwood J10a site. We have written to Luton Borough to let it know that we feel that the removal of the stadium allocation represents an opportunity to include residential use in the proposed development of the site.

Luton is currently looking to neighbouring authorities to supply 9,300 dwellings it says needs but is unable to provide land for. This site represents a real opportunity to meet some of this requirement, which appears to be being ignored.

## Planning updates from around the county

### Bedford Borough

#### Covanta

Earlier this year, Covanta Energy Ltd applied to The Environment Agency for an environmental permit to incinerate non-hazardous waste at its planned Rookery Pit Energy Recovery facility, near Stewartby. The company received planning permission for this facility in 2012, despite very strong local opposition.

CPRE Bedfordshire is opposed to the company gaining this environmental permit, because we believe the incineration of non-hazardous waste at this site will cause harm to the environment in a number of ways, including air pollution due to the meteorological phenomena of "temperature inversion" in the Marston Vale and its impact on the surrounding area.

Our full objection letter can be found on our website [www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk)

### Central Bedfordshire

From April, Central Bedfordshire Council has shown it has a five year supply of housing land, without which it was in a weakened position to refuse speculative planning applications.

Our planning volunteers have been working hard to respond to planning applications and appeals for schemes that we feel are unsustainable, leading to disproportionate impacts on our villages and needless loss of countryside. In many cases, we work with resident groups and Parish and Town Councils to ensure that we are getting a local view and to support them in making their views heard.

### Angry Potton residents protest at CBC meeting

In the last issue of BM we reported how the small town of Potton was seeing a great deal of interested from speculative developers.

Over the last few years, Potton has seen planning applications put forward that amount to a 30% increase in houses, with those granted leading to hundreds of new homes for the town of just 2,200 dwellings.

In February, a group of Potton residents descended on a budget meeting to protest over the way Central Bedfordshire Council has dealt with planning issues in Potton.

Residents are angry at the level of unsustainable development facing Potton, and that local views – from residents, health practitioners to wildlife experts – had not been listened to.

Residents also raised questions about the S106 money, which is given by developers to the council to benefit the local community, which had not been seen by Potton Town Council.

At the budget meeting on February 23rd, residents chanted "Keep your hands off Potton", and refused to leave the meeting until they got answers.

Since then, Central Bedfordshire councillors have met with Potton Town

councillors and residents about this issue, Alistair Burt MP has attended a local meeting and a further public meeting on the issue is planned for the end of June.



Potton residents protest at CBC © Angus Macdonald

### Northill

CPRE Bedfordshire asked the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to call-in for review Central Bedfordshire Council's decision to approve a small but controversial scheme for nine new houses in Bedford Road, Northill.

CPRE Bedfordshire believes that the decision to approve the application conflicts with national policy regarding the protection of heritage buildings in conservation areas.

Central Bedfordshire Council gave the go ahead for the scheme earlier this month, despite strong opposition from local residents.

Unfortunately, the call-in request was refused.



Northill © Chris Deverell

### Pressure on government for community right of appeal

Earlier this year, Potton Councillor Adam Zerny, set up a government petition, calling for a "community right of appeal" against unwanted development. By the time it had closed (early due to the general election), it had attracted 21,500 signatures, and had forced the government to respond.



Cainhoe motte and bailey © Colin Carpenter

### What now for Clophill Lakes?

Permission has been granted for a controversial development put forward for the building of 50 new homes adjacent to a sensitive ecological site on the edge of Clophill.

The site forms part of a wider area of land that the owner of the disused Clophill Quarry would like to develop as a country park, opening up the lakes and site for recreational uses.

The site is in open countryside and includes a County Wildlife Site and forms part of the setting of the Cainhoe castle – a scheduled ancient monument, which is a heritage asset of the highest significance.

CPRE Bedfordshire made a strong case that this site was unsuitable for development and that this level of housing in the village is not needed.

We're not alone - of the village of 720 houses, over 700 letters were received objecting to this application, with reservations about the scheme received from groups such as the Wildlife Trust and Historic England.

A key concern is that although the developer states that the Cainhoe monument and the resulting parkland would be held in public ownership and handed over to an appropriate body for its future management, they had not identified an appropriate management partner at the time permission was granted.

There is real concern among residents that without an agreement in place before permission was granted, there is little to guarantee that the site's ecological and heritage value won't suffer from disturbances involved in opening the site up.

We now await the decision for a application down the road in Clophill at Readshill Quarry for a further 50 houses. Again, the developer is suggesting that a partner could be found to manage the ecological value of the site, alongside its development.



## Campaigning

### Local people need a say in plans for 'Britain's Silicon Valley'.. continued from pg 1.

Bedfordshire's Local Authorities signed up to a submission document provided as evidence to the NIC consultation by England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance.

This is a new and unelected body formed by six Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to respond to this NIC consultation. These include Cambridgeshire, South East Midlands (which includes Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes), Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire Thames Valley, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire LEPs.

The NIC is consulting on plans to 'unlock growth, jobs and housing' in the area over the next 30 years, and recommends that local authorities, local enterprise partnerships and national delivery areas across the area work together across administrative borders to create a strategic plan for the area.

However, the suggestion of one million new homes along the corridor go far beyond the numbers currently proposed in the area's Local Plans. At this level of housing growth, there's a danger the next thirty years will see Bedfordshire's

towns and villages become a commuter belt to provide work for the cities along the corridor.

CPRE supports strategic planning which can deliver regeneration, development and new infrastructure, especially in deprived areas, but there is a real danger here of swamping the already over-heated south-east and east of England. Instead the process should begin with local communities identifying their growth needs.

## Speaking up for affordable housing

Our chair Gerry Sansom was interviewed on Radio 4's Farming Today on June 14th in a piece exploring whether developers are playing fair in delivering rural affordable housing. The piece picked up on recent CPRE research that shows a growing crisis of affordable housing provision in many rural areas.

In most cases, developers are required to invest in local services and affordable housing to offset the impact of the development on the local community.

In 2014, David Wilson Homes informed Bedford Borough Council that it could no longer provide the full affordable housing allocation for its development in Kempston, despite already having built 1,000 of the planned 2,760 houses. The council assented to the move.

In the same deal, the council also assented to reductions in energy

efficiency standards and new infrastructure. Promised public facilities, such as a library and sports facilities, were cancelled.

All this saved David Wilson Homes (part of Barratt Developments Plc) in excess of £14m and means that 200 fewer affordable homes for rent or shared ownership will be built on the sites – 200 families will miss out on affordable accommodation.

Most recently, the developer sold land originally earmarked for a medical centre and community centre to a supermarket chain. Some homebuyers were not informed of these changes until after the purchase had been completed.

CPRE believes that developers need to deliver on their original agreements and that local authorities need to fight for the best interests of local people.



David Wilson Homes © Gerry Sansom



Dunstable Downs © Steve Halton

## Green Belt campaigning

In anticipation of a Green Belt review in Central Bedfordshire's Local Plan, CPRE Bedfordshire has been joining forces with other like-minded groups to campaign.

We continue to work with the London Green Belt Council, and other CPRE branches to campaign for the protection of London's Metropolitan Green Belt (whose northern edge makes up about half of Central Bedfordshire).

Closer to home, we are working with The Chiltern Society and other CPRE branches in

the Chilterns area to campaign together to protect the Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and its Green Belt.

Once CBC's Local Plan is open to consultation, we will be calling on Central Bedfordshire Council to make a long term commitment to protect the Green Belt and Chiltern Hills AONB.

### The latest news to your inbox



CPRE Bedfordshire sends out a regular e-bulletin with the latest news of our work and invitations to events.

To sign-up simply email [info@cprebeds.org.uk](mailto:info@cprebeds.org.uk).



## Photo Competition

This year, to mark CPRE Bedfordshire's 30 years of standing up for Bedfordshire's countryside, we are running a photo competition, open to all.

The theme is: Bedfordshire - A Changing Landscape.

First prize – £100, second prize - £50 M&S vouchers.

The deadline for entries is 16th October 2017.

For full details, including how to enter, go to [www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk)



## CPRE Bedfordshire People

CPRE Bedfordshire relies enormously on the time people give to do the work it does. Alongside one part-time member of staff, the branch currently has over twenty volunteers who give their time in a range of ways, helping us to stand up for Bedfordshire's countryside.

Meet our newest volunteers, who have joined us this year...

### Shelly Dennison, Office Volunteer



My background is in museum, archive and heritage education and so far I've been organising and indexing the press archive and looking back

through the history of the branch for the 30th birthday celebrations. Volunteering with CPRE has also encouraged me to get out and explore more of the county. Having grown up in rural Cumbria and West Yorkshire, I'm always in search of hills but I'm learning to appreciate Bedfordshire's charms!

### Paul Jenkins, Planning Volunteer

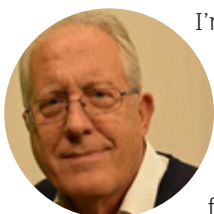


I grew up in Worcestershire and my love of the countryside has its roots there. Particularly walking the

Malvern Hills with views of the Vale of Evesham and Herefordshire. The countryside provided a reliable way of recharging my batteries through my working life in adult social care. The Lake District became an annual destination for family holidays for many years. As a Parish Councillor in Turvey I have become more aware of the pressures on the countryside in Bedfordshire and have joined CPRE to contribute to the valuable work being done to defend the countryside against unnecessary and inappropriate development.

Plus, we are delighted to introduce our four new trustees who have joined our executive committee.

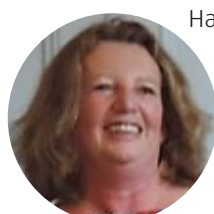
### Martin Christopher, Trustee



I'm pleased to be joining the trustees of the Bedfordshire branch of CPRE. I've been a member for many years and want to help support

the vital work of the Campaign in our county. As the pressure on the countryside becomes ever more intense, the need for organisations such as CPRE becomes even more essential. With over thirty years experience as a professor in a leading university business school I understand the need for balanced growth in the economy but also recognise that this must be accommodated within a concern for the wider eco-system of our precious countryside.

### Susan Lynch, Trustee



Having spent over 30 years advising on property developments across the UK I've seen the challenges in achieving the right

balance between protecting our green spaces and countryside and enabling new homes, employment and infrastructure. The role at CPRE is a really great opportunity to use this experience and my recently completed MSc in Landscape Ecology to help keep Bedfordshire beautiful.

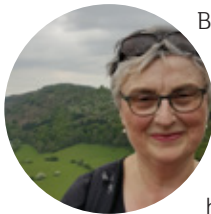
### Lau Tambjerg, Trustee



I am originally from Denmark and came to England about 2.5 years ago to study. I am now working in corporate sustainability. Protecting

our environment has long been a passion of mine and I hope to be able to help CPRE Bedfordshire in any way I can – especially raising the profile and telling the story of all the great work that the volunteers do.

### Julia Jones, Trustee



Born and brought up in Maulden, I have had a lifelong interest in the countryside and wildlife. I have recently moved

back to the area after a lifelong career in information and records management holding senior positions in both the public and private sector. I am concerned with balancing the preservation of the countryside for nature with the housing and commercial needs of Bedfordshire inhabitants and believe that CPRE Bedfordshire affords the best hope of achieving that balance.

## Love our countryside? Enjoy working with people?

Perhaps you could be our new part-time Branch Development Manager.

For more details, go to [www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk) or email [info@cprebeds.org.uk](mailto:info@cprebeds.org.uk)

Application deadline 10th September.

## Branch News



## AGM & Public meeting with Tom Fyans

We were delighted to welcome CPRE's head of campaigns & policy, Tom Fyans, to speak at our AGM this year. This was held on May 15th at Stratton Upper School in Biggleswade. Part of the AGM was the happy task to elect our four new trustees to our executive committee: Martin Christopher, Julia Jones, Susan Lynch and Lau Tambjerg.

About 50 people attended, a mixture of members and other interested individuals, to hear from Tom about how CPRE is working to protect our countryside, which led to a lively and wide-ranging discussion.

Tom began with the question which all campaigners need to focus on – who is benefitting from the current way things are done?

From our experiences, it has become clear over recent years that the planning system is not working for the

communities of Bedfordshire.

Rather than being a system that balances the needs of communities, the economy and local environment, we're witnessing time and again just a small number of landowners and developers benefiting from local planning decisions.

The result is needless loss of countryside and immense pressure on our transport and rural services.

Instead we need to ensure our planning system works for us all, that brownfield sites are redeveloped and that environmental constraints are respected.

Our discussion brought home how crucial it will be over the coming months and years to get involved in local planning issues and to hold our decisions makers to account, as they consider plans for the county with far-reaching consequences for us all.

## Summer Walk

As we go to press, we're looking forward to a walk exploring Mowsbury Hillfort and Putnoe Woods - natural treasures on the edge of Bedford.

Both sites were recognised in our 2016 Living Countryside Awards - with Mowsbury Hillfort gaining our top CPRE Mark.

Our guides will be members of Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort Group, who since 2011 have been working to turn back years of neglect on these sites, helping to enhance and restore their natural features and attract an abundance of wildlife.



Their work has brought new life to the sites - and is a great example of the difference volunteers can make in caring for and helping to safeguard the future of local natural areas.

## BARN DANCE

In support of CPRE Bedfordshire  
Standing up for Bedfordshire's countryside for 30 years: 1987 - 2017

**Saturday 30th September, 8pm**  
**Harlington Village Hall, Sundon Road, Harlington, LU5 6LS.**  
**Doors open 7.30pm.**

## Help us celebrate our 30th anniversary with an evening of fun & dancing!

Tickets are £15 pp and include a fish & chip supper.

Please bring your own drinks. The evening will include a raffle of fantastic prizes.

For tickets, email us at [info@cprebeds.org.uk](mailto:info@cprebeds.org.uk).

Let us know if you can promote the event, and we'll send you a poster!

# Places for 30 years

Harrold-Odell Country Park

Golden Gardens community garden, Goldington

Mowsbury Hillfort and Putnoe Woods

St Denys Church with Colmworth Country Park

Castle Close Wildlife and Heritage site Sharnbrook

Sustainable Oakley – Linch Furlong, allotments, orchard

Thurleigh Church – Memorial Garden

Stevington windmill

Bromham Mill and the river Great Ouse

## Priory Country Park, Bedford

Priory Country Park has 360 acres of greenspace and can be reached by a short walk along the river from the centre of Bedford.



Priory Country Park © Shelly Dennison

## Ampthill Great Park, Ampthill

This former royal hunting ground on the edge of Ampthill offers stunning views across the Marston Vale, and 160 acres of parkland and woodland to explore.



Ampthill Great Park © Shelly Dennison

Knotting Church, Knotting near Melchbourne

Millennium Country Park, Marston Vale

Houghton House (English Heritage)

Wilstead Wood (Forestry Commission)

Rowney Warren

Maulden Wood (Forestry Commission)

Potton Wood (Forestry Commission)

Woburn Deer Park

RSPB The Lodge, Sandy

Galley and Warden Hills Grazing project

Pages Park Community Garden, Leighton Buzzard

Stotfold Watermill & nature reserve

Walled Garden at Stockwood Discovery Centre & Stockwood Park, Luton

Dunstable Downs, the Whipsnade Estate and Whipsnade Tree cathedral (National Trust)

Pegsdon Hills (Wildlife Trust)

Sharpenhoe Clappers / Sundon Hills Country Park (National Trust)

Totternhoe Knolls (Wildlife Trust)

Grand Union Canal at Linslade / Tiddenfoot Waterside Park

## Rushmere Country Park, Heath & Reach

This is a jewel in Bedfordshire's crown – 400 acres of woodland, heath and meadow to explore. You can lunch at the Heron's View visitors' centre, which overlooks a dramatic valley, and at the right time of year, you can watch the herons nesting. The park was highly commended for its healthland restoration work in our awards last year.



Heathland restoration © Barry Halton

## You can help save the countryside from as little as £3 per month

Help protect the countryside by becoming a member of CPRE. We all need the countryside – whether it's for fresh air, delicious local produce, beautiful landscapes, or vibrant towns and villages – the countryside is invaluable. By joining CPRE, you are helping to ensure that a beautiful living countryside thrives for generations to come.

CPRE membership is from £3 per month, but giving at a higher level will help us do more to protect the countryside.

Becoming a member is easy go to [www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk) to join online or download a membership form.

## About us

**Campaign to Protect Rural England** is a national charity that exists to promote the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country.

We have 60,000 supporters, a branch in every county, eight regional groups, over 200 local groups and a national office in London. CPRE is a powerful combination of effective local action and strong national campaigning.

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

**Bedfordshire Matters** is the biannual magazine of Bedfordshire's CPRE branch. CPRE Bedfordshire is a local independent charity who works to protect and promote the countryside and green spaces of Bedfordshire.

Registered Charity No: 1023435



CPRE Bedfordshire  
5 Grove Place  
Bedford MK40 3JJ



01234 353331  
[info@cprebeds.org.uk](mailto:info@cprebeds.org.uk)  
[www.cprebeds.org.uk](http://www.cprebeds.org.uk)

