



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Bedfordshire

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Bedfordshire Matters

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Morning Glory

photograph by Joe McDonald

Promoting and protecting the countryside
and urban green spaces of Bedfordshire

Report from the Chair

Gerry Sansom



As we enter a New Year one of the biggest issues facing us as citizens of Bedfordshire is the massive and growing democratic deficit that is clearly emerging between the “Executive” at all levels of Government (national and local) and the people.

This is nowhere more evident than within the Planning System both at the Strategic and Local level.

As CPRE has pointed out, one of the most important long-term strategic planning decisions impacting Bedfordshire and the surrounding counties is the National infrastructure Commission’s (NIC) proposals for massive development across the Oxford – MK – Bedford – Cambridge Corridor. A new conurbation on a huge scale that will eat up our countryside. And yet, very little in terms of real public consultation has been undertaken - “Where democracy counts most, it is nowhere to be seen. The decisions that shape the life of a nation are taken behind our backs.”(i)

The “Executive” are making decisions that will impact on us all but with local media in crisis – fewer local newspapers (hard copies or online), other media (radio & TV) uninterested (or unwilling) to promote a debate on issues like Local Plans or NIC proposals – there are very limited avenues for discussion of alternative ideas or to highlight the damaging environmental consequences of proposals.

The latest innovation from both Government and Local Authorities in Bedfordshire is the “Central Growth Board” – a QUANGO the purpose of which – see article on page 8 – is to force through massive and increasingly unpopular developments proposed by the NIC – crushing the local democratic process.

The Mayor of Bedford and the Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council have access to what remains of the media and yet neither of them are rushing to explain to their electorate why they have formed this new QUANGO and the purpose of it.

The Central Growth Board is a massive threat to local democracy – local councillors beware – in the future you may not be happy with some of The Central Growth Board decisions but you won’t be able to fight against them because you won’t know about them until it’s too late.

(i) George Monbiot

Dates for your diary

Fundraising Charity Quiz 28th March 2019

The White Horse Pub,
Newnham Avenue, Bedford
from 7.30pm.

Please join us. Bring along a team (of up to 6) or join in with other supporters on the night. Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing you.

AGM & Talk 24th April 2019

How we can help

We’re developing a new section of our website to make it easier for you to find the help you need when responding to planning applications or working on a Neighbourhood Plan. You can find the link on our homepage. It also contains a list of local campaign groups so that you can connect with others in your area.

Please let us know of any other groups that might like to be featured. You can email us at info@cprebeds.org.uk

CPRE Bedfordshire members also have access to the CPRE Planning Hotline and receive Fieldwork, the newsletter from CPRE National Office to help you campaign.

CPRE Bedfordshire People

We could not do all the work that we do, without the hard work and dedication given to the charity by our wonderful volunteers.

Many of the fabulous photographs we feature on our website and in our newsletters are taken by our talented volunteer, Barry Halton. Bringing many stories and new features to life, adding colour and vibrancy, we are very grateful to Barry for all the work that he does.

Barry Halton shares his thoughts...



Barry Halton

I didn't grow up in the countryside but my parents took us out from Leeds every weekend into the Yorkshire Dales in the early days of mass car ownership. Later in life I've lived in contrasting areas of industrial Merseyside, London's suburbs and the beauty of the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset. These days I count myself fortunate to live in the Great Ouse Valley and when I leave home on foot or by car I am immediately surrounded by some of the most beautiful lowland countryside in the country.

I first came across CPRE many years ago when I worked on the promotion of a major oil development in a very attractive part of Britain, where a strong coalition of NGOs had a considerable local presence. My boss at the time was more enlightened than some and took the attitude that local people with the time and inclination to take a serious scientific interest in their natural surroundings are often just as well placed to suggest sensible approaches to development as imported hired consultants. So it was with the local branch of CPRE and their allies, whose data and suggestions ultimately had a considerable positive influence on the final result. I think it is always important to seek mutual advantage and am wary of speculative developers whose objective often seems to be to minimise

or evade necessary costs, but at times am dismayed by the strident approach of some campaign groups. For me, CPRE strikes the right balance and gains respect for that.

Nowadays retired, but having started my career as a professional photographer, I suppose I am very aware of changing light, weather and seasons and believe that the countryside should never be taken for granted. It seems to me that most custodians of the land take good care of their asset but their approach to making a living is sometimes adversely influenced by ever changing central government policies. A landscape might recover naturally but once concreted over is unlikely ever to have that chance.

I have now been involved with CPRE Bedfordshire for over a decade - not long by the measure of many of our members - and admire their analysis of development proposals and the dedication shown in pursuing good outcomes. For my own contribution, I am pleased to have played a part in the Living Countryside Awards scheme since its inception. It is always inspiring to see and record the often unsung efforts of so many people in this county who care so much for their surroundings.

How you can help

There are many ways you can get involved with the work we do. You could:

- Volunteer – we are looking to expand the work we do. We are looking for volunteers to join us in a number of interesting and varied roles. Please see our website for the latest opportunities, there are many ways to give your time to help the branch
- Become a trustee
- Become a member or introduce friends and family to CPRE Bedfordshire
- Follow us on social media, like and share our posts
- Make a donation



Please see our website for more information about any of these ways to help CPRE Bedfordshire grow and be able to do more across the county.
www.cprebeds.org.uk

Around the county

CPRE Bedfordshire working with Bedford Borough Council on cycling infrastructure

CPRE Bedfordshire is a member of Bedford Borough Council's (BBC's) Cycle Strategy Group. The group meet quarterly at Borough Hall with the objective of developing and improving the cycling infrastructure across the Borough.

Other members of the group include: Cycling Campaign for North Bedfordshire (CCNB), Cycle UK and Sustrans

CPRE Bedfordshire has worked together with BBC through this group on a range of issues – these are examples:

Campaigning for a Cycleway on the new Bromham Road Bridge over the Midland Mainline railway

CPRE has been campaigning against the Network Rail proposals to replace the current bridge with a straight replacement which does not include a cycleway.

We objected to Network Rail's plans when they were submitted to BBC calling for the bridge design to include a cycleway – a sustainable structure fit for the 21st Century!

CPRE Bedfordshire also attended the Network Rail Bridge Consultation in Bedford and discussed our concerns with the Civil Engineers responsible for the Project. We wrote to them detailing our concerns and to our local Bedford MP Mohammad Yasin who voiced his support.



The outcome of the combined action of BBC, Cycle UK, CCNB, Sustrans, CPRE Bedfordshire and others is the recent announcement by The Mayor that Network Rail have now agreed to support the construction of a separate cycle/pedestrian bridge next to the road bridge.

There is still some way to go as the detail of who will pay for the construction costs is still to be agreed. But it confirms that working together we can improve sustainable transport infrastructure in the Borough.

Wixams to Bedford Cycleway – A421/A6 Junction improvements

An important part of the development plans for the Wixams New Town south of Bedford was a safe, sustainable off-road cycleway linking Wixams to Bedford Town Centre.

Although much of the cycleway from Wixams towards Bedford has been completed, Highways England has failed to live up to their side of the bargain and provide safe access across the A421/A6 junction. We know that the cycleway would be used by more people - reducing car usage, congestion and air pollution but this dangerous junction is putting people off using their bikes.

CPRE Bedfordshire has been supporting BBC by writing to Highways England expressing our concerns at the delays to the infrastructure improvements that they promised some years ago. Highways England has undertaken modelling work on the junction but to-date they have failed to allocate funds to the project. We will continue to lobby Highways England to live up to their promises.

CPRE Bedfordshire supports Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council in their Local Plan objective for a minimum of 30% Affordable Homes but also wants homes for Social Rent to be specified.

In our responses to both BBC and CBC's new Local Plans we have supported their objectives that a minimum of 30% affordable homes should be included in new housing developments.

CPRE Bedfordshire is calling for the minimum 30% affordable home aspiration to be applied to all housing developments no matter where they are – in both urban and rural locations. Furthermore, we are asking both Local Authorities to specify the minimum number of homes that should be made available within the Affordable Homes percentage for Social Rent, and that this too should be applied to all developments - urban and rural.

CPRE believes that a range of Affordable Housing including social rent is crucial to the vitality and sustainability of all communities no matter where they are located.

The use of the term "Affordable Homes" is sometimes unclear because it includes a variety of tenures. For clarification, the Ministry of Homes Communities & Local Government definition is: "Affordable Housing is affordable rented, social rented and shared ownership housing,

provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market."

- **Affordable Rent** – homes made available by local authorities or other registered providers (e.g. Housing Associations) for a rent which is no more than 80% of that which is normal in the locality.
- **Social Rent** – homes also made available by local authorities or other registered providers on secure tenancies. The rental is significantly lower than Affordable Rent and is determined by a special formula. They are available to people on very low incomes.
- **Shared Ownership** – these homes are available on a part ownership, part rental basis. People would normally start with around 20% equity and rent and can move to a maximum of 80% equity and rent. The idea is that over time, people would build sufficient levels of equity in the property which they could then use to purchase their own home.

There are maximum household income levels that apply to those who wish to



take advantage of this scheme and they must be 1st time buyers or previous home owners who can't afford to buy now.

Shared Ownership homes are offered by Housing Associations or other registered providers.

CPRE Bedfordshire wins planning battle at Biddenham in Bedford Borough

CPRE Bedfordshire joined forces with Biddenham Parish Council and a Local Action Group to fight off a planning application for 250 homes on Gold Lane, Deep Spinney in Biddenham.

The land in question was a very important open green space and had been designated in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 as an "Urban Green Space" between Biddenham and neighbouring Bromham.

The emerging Local Plan 2030 had also carried forward this designation.

At a meeting of Bedford Borough Council Planning Committee on the 29th October planning permission was refused.

Over 600 individual objections to the planning application had been received.



Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Preferred Corridor Announcement – CPRE Bedfordshire's major concerns

Highways England recently announced their choice of preferred corridor for the western section of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. They have chosen corridor B which takes in a substantial area of countryside across Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The justification for the route is said to be proximity to the East West Rail route. According to their analysis, this route is able to support existing transport needs, as well as transformational growth, regeneration and redevelopment across the wider corridor.

The CPRE response to the corridor consultation was to reject Corridor B as detrimental and undesirable because it crosses open countryside, potentially opening up areas for development in currently unspoilt and tranquil areas with scattered rural villages each having their own character and identity. This includes areas of the Greensand Ridge on the Bedfordshire/Buckinghamshire border. Corridor B serves no existing towns other than Winslow and does not maximise the use of existing highway corridors.



Any suggestion that environmental effects will be reduced by road and rail sharing the same corridor is false. The impact of East-West Rail will be minimal, as it will provide improvements to the existing line and noise, stray light and air pollution are much less than for road.

CPRE Bedfordshire are stepping up our campaigning activity, working alongside other branches to bring the implications

of the Oxford Cambridge Arc growth strategy to closer public attention. The National Office team are supporting our efforts to make the case for greater consideration of environmental impacts through their engagement with ministerial officials in the relevant government departments.

CPRE Bedfordshire supports Wildlife Trusts Legal Action on Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

On the 27th September the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), along with the River Thame Conservation Trust and Beds, Cambs and Northants Wildlife Trust, sent a pre-action protocol letter to Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP to state that they intended to take the government to court through Judicial Review regarding the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway.

BBOWT is taking this action because they believe the need for the Expressway has not been adequately justified and nor has the corridor selected. The action focusses attention on the failure of the Department for Transport (DfT) and

Highways England, as contractor, to have conducted a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which would have included a public consultation, to provide this justification. BBOWT believe that the choice of the corridor has primarily been driven by economic considerations. They object in principle to the creation of the corridor as a means to enable the building of up to one million new homes at the cost of huge environmental degradation.

The SEA instructs that any decision made should be made by balancing the economic, environmental and societal needs.

We wholeheartedly endorse this initiative and we are supporting the action by providing an expert witness statement. CPRE Bedfordshire has been

concerned for some time about the risk of severe negative environmental impacts from the development of an Expressway. We believe that the case for the Expressway and the broader National Infrastructure Commission strategy is misconceived and unnecessary and has not been tested against local needs and priorities. We are also very concerned about the sheer scale of the housing development proposed, - 1 million new homes (equivalent to 20 cities the size of Cambridge) and a population increase of 1.9 million people (equivalent to 2 cities the size of Birmingham), and the environmental impact this will have across the Arc."

Look on our website for updates on this action in the coming weeks.

Local Plan Update

Bedford Borough Council's new Local Plan 2030 - an attempt to bypass Local Democracy. New Towns still on the cards.

BBC's third attempt at a Local Plan in as many years provides testimony to the "shambles" it has become as the Local Authority tries to manoeuvre its way around misguided government changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which would increase housing numbers even more.

They also state that it is due to that fact that they have had to remove plans for a New Town and Parkway Station at Colworth/Sharnbrook due to noise issues from the nearby Santa Pod Raceway - (see New Town comment below).

With this latest version of its Local Plan, BBC have reduced the time span by 5 years from 2035 to 2030 and, as predicted in our last edition of Bedfordshire Matters, BBC have introduced a new and very important paragraph (para 1.6b) which states that:

"...the Council will undertake an immediate review of the local plan once adopted."

This is because BBC believe that The Mayor's support for the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor proposals of +1million new homes and a population increase of +1.9 million people will also receive the full support of government despite growing local opposition.

If by the time of the Local Plan Review, the Government has approved the Oxford- MK-Bedford-Cambridge Corridor development proposals, then these massive increases in housing numbers and New Town proposals, as they apply to Bedford Borough, will be considered with a very much lower level of public consultation than in the Local Plan process.

By the Government giving its approval it will in effect become a "national infrastructure project"- Government will have already approved the greater part of the development proposals.

All that will be left to discuss will be the "colour of the road signs".

The result of BBC's decision to review the Local Plan 2030 immediately after it is approved will effectively remove the democratic rights of residents which would have been available to them under the Local Plan process.

Residents will have every right to feel deeply let down by a Local Plan process which has lasted over 5 years and is now chaotic and confusing.

Reading the new Local Plan 2030, people will be forgiven for thinking that proposals for New Towns in:

Colworth/Sharnbrook, Twinwoods, Thurleigh Airfield, Wyboston and the Marston Vale Corridor - plus employment land at each location are no longer on the table – nothing could be further from the truth – with one eye on next year's Mayoral elections and Government decisions, they have merely been "parked".

CPRE Bedfordshire's full response to BBC's Local Plan 2030 Draft for Submission Consultation can be read by going to the Home Page of our website.

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Delays

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) pre – submission Local Plan - the document which will influence development in Central Bedfordshire up until 2035- was sent to Central Government on 30th April 2018.

CBC's Local Plan programme anticipated that a Public Inquiry would be held in May 2018 and the plan would be adopted by December 2018

However it is clear that the Planning Inspector appointed by Government to carry out the Public Inquiry is not satisfied with the pre-submission Plan

and has been asking for a lot more detail and information from the Council before he is prepared to set a date for the Inquiry. Depending on when the Council submit the outstanding reports we may see an announcement on the timing of a Public Inquiry in the New Year.

Details of the further information requested by the Inspector and supplied by the Council can be found here

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/policy/local-plan/examination.aspx

And the Impact of this...

In the meantime during this limbo period we have been seeing an increase in planning applications for sites which have unconfirmed allocations in the pre-submission Plan and also for sites which have not even been included in the pre-submission draft – some of which were considered and dismissed during the plan's preparation.

In some cases CBC are choosing to determine these applications, rather than defer them until the Inspector's decision on the proposed allocations

is known - the approach adopted by neighbouring Bedford Council who are in a similar position with their Local Plan.

Taking Clifton as an example CBC's pre-submission plan contains one proposed housing allocation for 54 units. However 201 homes have been granted consent on unallocated sites

during the preparation and consultation process of the Local Plan, this includes permission for 36 homes granted after the pre-submission Plan was submitted. There are also 2 planning appeals for 210 dwellings pending on sites with no allocations and another for 45 dwellings at pre-application discussion stage.

We are currently studying the details of these applications including what assessment process was carried out when the Local Plan was being prepared and the various reasons for approval and refusal. A more detailed press release will be issued on this but do let us know if your community are experiencing similar issues.

The Government and Local Authorities have acted together to create yet another QUANGO – “The Central Growth Board”

It will enable them to push through massive developments along the Oxford – Milton Keynes – Bedford - Cambridge Corridor without the consent of local people, crushing local democracy.

The Mayor of Bedford, Dave Hodgson and the Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council, James Jamieson, both committed to the NIC plans, have joined the Central Growth Board.

The Central Growth Board has been formed to ensure that controversial Oxford – Cambridge developments across the local authority areas covered by the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) - Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, Luton, Aylesbury Vale and Northamptonshire plus the rest of Buckinghamshire - are pushed through without debate.

Similar “Growth Boards” are being created in Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

CPRE Bedfordshire believe that the work of the new “Central Growth Board” is already underway with controversial planning applications and projects being pushed through with minimal consultation with the people of Bedfordshire.

Examples are:

1. The Expansion of Cranfield Airport to become a major airport for private jets – some very large. To be called London Cranfield.

New runway & ground facilities incl. 300 bed hotel – doubling the number of aircraft movements from 20,000 to 40,000 per year - increasing passenger numbers to 70,000 per year.

This planning application was quietly approved by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) in June 2018 without consulting the many Town & Parish Councils in Bedford Borough which will be directly under the flight path or otherwise impacted e.g. by air pollution, increased traffic etc.

Villages like Wootton (Bedford Borough) to the north and west of Bedford town which will be heavily impacted by the very large increase in car and HGV traffic due to the airport expansion.

Several north Bedfordshire villages are directly under the flight path.

2. Proposed new A6 – M1 Link Road which will slice through the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and impact historic woodlands.

Details of the controversial route of the A6-M1 link road were mysteriously absent from CBC's Local Plan 2035 which was presented to Government for approval a few months ago.

Then “out of the blue” on July 10th, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) put the route of the new road forward for “pre-application consultation” with local people at a number of drop-in sessions across the area.

These sessions were held during the summer holidays (the first starting on the 17 July and the last on the 30th July) when many residents were away on holiday. Those residents who were available were given just 7 days' notice of the first drop-in event!

See the News section of our website for more details.

East-West Rail - where will the Bedford Station be along the East-West rail route?

This was the question we asked of “East-West Rail”.

“East-West Rail” replied – “we don’t know – Bedford Borough Council is leading on this”.

So, we asked Bedford Borough Council and they refused to answer.

The below map from a Report by 5th Studio commissioned by the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) – see our Oxford – Cambridge Corridor Briefing Document No. 2 on the news section of the CPRE Bedfordshire website, shows the “preferred route” for East-West rail in red.

“East-West Rail” show 2 stations between Milton Keynes (Bletchley) and Bedford.

These will be Woburn Sands and Ridgmont.

The East-West rail line then departs from the existing route at Millbrook

and crosses the Midland Mainline/ Thameslink Line at or around Wixams (2) – a Bedford South or Parkway Station.

The current railway line covering all stations along the Marston Vale is shown on the 5th Studio Report as a red dotted line from Millbrook ending up in Bedford itself – not as part of East-West Rail but what they call a “Light Transit Line”.

Why is all of this so important – because 1,000’s more new houses are currently planned for Wixams – without a railway station this makes a mockery of the new Local Plan 2030.

Since the Wixams New Town was conceived many years ago, it was on the basis of a new station – still not built.

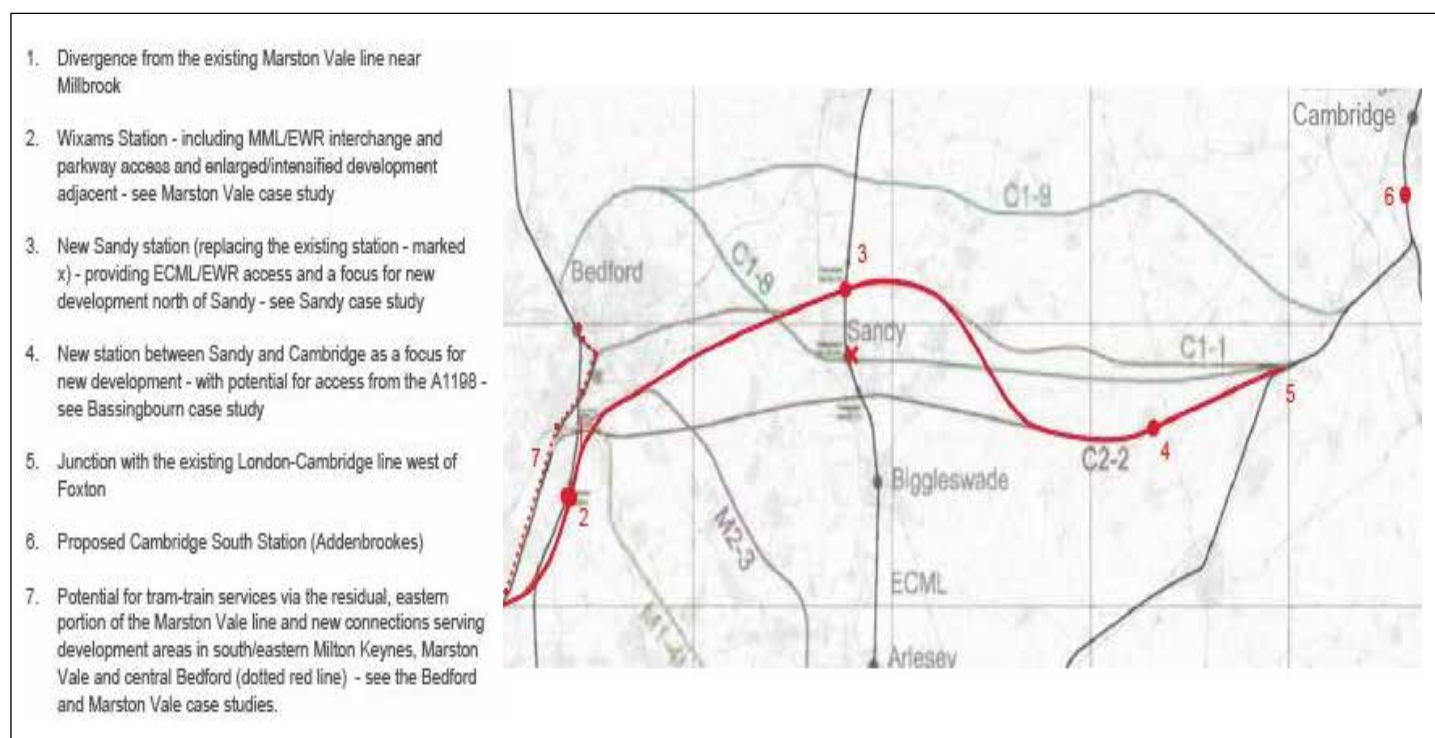
The Mayor has said that BBC will commit to funding a Wixams station but there is no confirmation from Network Rail or the Department for Transport and without that it will not go ahead.

If the East-West Rail station is Bedford itself then there is a strong chance that the rail route from Bedford to Cambridge would go north of Bedford “en-route” to Cambridge. See proposed routes C1-8 and C1-9.

CPRE Bedfordshire is strongly opposed to a northern route for East-West Rail we support the “preferred route” shown in red.

What ever happened to local democracy in the decision making process?

If you want to know the plans for the future of Bedfordshire just look through the 5th Studio Report – “Top Down” planning at its best.



The Scandal of Houghton Regis North - the largest housing site in Bedfordshire

Planning permission granted June 2014 for 5,125 homes + 30 % larger than Ampthill
£200m of public money spent on new roads
By 2023/24 just 187 new homes are expected to be built!
Desperately needed housing delayed for 5,000 families
The result – massive profits for Developers - even more Greenfield land allocated to Developers for housing.

We ask what's going on? - Why the delays!

In June 2014, Planning permission was given for the building of 5,125 new homes at Houghton Regis North Site 1 (HRN1) – a development 30% larger than the town of Ampthill.

As part of the infrastructure for the new development two new roads were built – the A5 – M1 Link Road (cost: £162 million) and the Woodside Link Road (cost: £38.3 million) these roads were officially opened in April/May 2017 – over one year ago.

Despite this massive expenditure from the public purse not one house has yet been built.

In their latest "Housing Trajectory" (July 2018) Central Bedfordshire Council state that they expect just 187 new homes to be built on the site up till 2023/24, ten years after planning consent was given to the Developers who include Aviva and the Diocese of St Albans.

CPRE Bedfordshire has seen papers from the Developers and CBC which state that around 1,000 new homes could have been built on the site even before the two new roads were constructed.

Central Bedfordshire Council say on their website that:

"The Woodside Link Road will provide access to a new development north of Houghton Regis, where 5,600 new homes are to be built and 30 hectares of employment land developed by 2031."

However, the Council's latest Housing Trajectory (July 2018) shows that in fact just 1,650 new homes will be built at HRN1 by 2031/32 – 17 years after planning permission was granted!

This is the biggest single housing development anywhere in Bedfordshire – 5,000 families are being deprived of new homes by Developers who are playing the system and Central Bedfordshire Council are complicit in this scandal.

Millions of pounds of public money have been invested in two new roads and one of the main reasons for this investment was that it would allow for the development of desperately needed new homes at Houghton Regis North Site 1.

It is Developers who profit massively from not building when permission has been given and it's the public who pay the price!

In this case quite literally with the cost of new roads and also families deprived of new homes.

The people of Bedfordshire lose their countryside as well because, as Developers well know, if this land isn't built on then even more Greenfield land will need to be allocated for development."

CPRE Bedfordshire questioned CBC on the issue of Houghton Regis North at the Full Council Meeting on 27 Sept - The Leader of the Council, Cllr. James Jamieson said that they were not to blame – and that CBC do not build houses Developers do.

This is disingenuous – house building is a partnership between Developers who build and Councils who provide various permissions and planning agreements – one cannot move forward without the other.

It is amazing that CBC have been conspicuous in their silence over this scandal of "Land Banking" – it's taken CPRE Bedfordshire to bring it to the public attention.

CBC have refused to give detailed reasons for the delays.

CPRE Bedfordshire will continue to shine the spotlight on this scandal until the full reasons for the delays are made public.

The people of Bedfordshire have the right to know!

2018 Living Countryside Awards

On 3rd October 2018 in the Harpur Suite at Bedford Corn Exchange with over 100 people attending, we hosted our prestigious bi-annual Living Countryside Awards.

With a record number of entries into this year's awards, we were delighted to see so many people attending the awards evening hosted by our trustee Martin Christopher.

The awards were presented by HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Helen Nellis and also present was the Deputy Mayor of Luton Cllr Mark Rivers. We thank both very much for their support.

The 2018 Living Countryside Awards saw the biggest number of applications yet with 32 projects shortlisted across six categories. New awards this year included Greening Urban Spaces which recognised projects working to enhance urban spaces, and the Health & Wellbeing category which looks for initiatives using the local environment to promote mental and physical health.

Our Local Food & Drink category recognises local producers and products whilst an expanded Young People's

category welcomes projects set both in and out of school settings.

Other familiar categories were Biodiversity & landscape Improvement and Sustainable Enterprise.

This year the awards were sponsored. KSK Bedford were our headline sponsors and also sponsored the Biodiversity & Landscape Improvement and Young People categories. Charles Little of KSK Bedford said a few words at the beginning of the evening – highlighting how pleased the company was to be involved. We extend many thanks to KSK and Charles Little for their support.

Our Health & Wellbeing award was sponsored by Free Range Design & Print Solutions, Sustainable Enterprise by BedsLife magazine, Greening Urban Spaces by Woodfines Solicitors, Local Food & Drink by Sharnbrook Hotel.

Again, very many thanks go to all our sponsors, who help cover the cost of running these awards.

This year, ten very worthy entrants were awarded the top accolade – a CPRE Mark.



Branch News

Dunton Walk

In early September a group of CPRE Bedfordshire members and volunteers visited Dunton Community Garden for a walk around their site. The garden is a hidden gem of one and a half acres - designed and tended by local people. There is plenty of organic fruit and vegetables growing, space for children to run around, a family picnic area, willow domes for hiding in, a wildlife patch, fruit trees and so much more.



Bedfordshire matters and 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 to join online or download a membership form.

Get Involved

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our branch – we rely enormously on their skills, commitment and enthusiasm to do the work we do. We have a varied of roles available and we'd be delighted to discuss these in more detail with you.

Contact us on 01234 35331 or find more information on our website www.cprebeds.org.uk/how-you-can-help

Easyfundraising

Did you know that when you shop online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be raising a free donation for CPRE Bedfordshire?

Shop with any of over 3,300 well-known retailers via the easyfundraising website and a percentage of what you spend is passed to CPRE Bedfordshire at no additional cost to you.

Retailers include Amazon, M&S, Vodafone, eBay, Tesco, Viking and many more. Please register to support us today at - www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cprebeds.

It's really simple, and doesn't cost you anything - thank you for your support!

easyfundraising
.org.uk

Leave A Legacy

If you enjoy the beautiful countryside of Bedfordshire, please consider leaving a gift to CPRE Bedfordshire in your will.

Your legacy, no matter what the amount, will help us in our work to protect the countryside of Bedfordshire. Information about how to include CPRE Bedfordshire in your will can be found on our website.

www.cprebeds.org.uk/how-you-can-help/leave-a-legacy

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 urban green spaces of Bedfordshire.

Registered Charity No: 1023435



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