

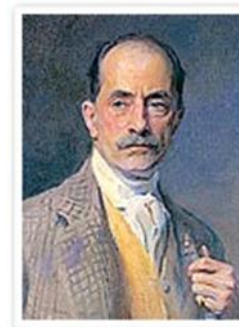
## ANNUAL REPORT 2016

**Chair:** Frederick Cook  
**Treasurer:** Elena Gilbert  
**Best Kept Village Competition Organiser:** Dr Peter Holland  
**Policy Adviser:** Bettina Lange

**President:** Mr Liell Francklin DL

### Chairman's Report

In May 2016, attendance at an archiving workshop at the University of Reading Museum of Rural Life (where CPRE records are kept) brought home to me how much an organisation such as CPRE can change over the years. The earliest mention I could find of the Nottinghamshire branch was a meeting in 1935 chaired by Lord Lansdowne: he was once the MP for West Derbyshire and apparently had been considered by Alva Vanderbilt as a suitable match for her daughter Consuelo (who instead married Lansdowne's maternal first cousin, the Duke of Marlborough, in 1895). At that time CPRE Nottinghamshire appointed countryside wardens to keep an eye on things but only those people who were "suitable" were considered for appointment. The branch disappeared - probably during the Second World War years - and was reconstituted in 1946. A 1950 record has the dowager Viscountess Galway in command. The Galways lived at Serlby Hall, a grade I listed 18th century mansion and estate north-east of Worksop and matters of concern included petrol stations, ribbon development and post office wires. The present chair can offer neither aristocratic connections nor any past potential for marrying into money. And I certainly do not have the luxury of being able to be snuffy about possible volunteers. The one similarity I do discern with this history is that the branch could disappear just as it did over 70 years ago during the War.



6th Marquess of Lansdowne

Membership of our branch reduced during 2016 from 425 to 395 a drop of just over 7 per cent. Membership is falling across CPRE but our reduction, while not the worst, was above average. Our friends in Lincolnshire raised their membership by 24, proving that it is possible to do better. We are woefully lacking active volunteers and the truth is that, if one or two of our stalwarts were to stop volunteering, the branch would cease operations. Our annual expenditure has exceeded our income for some years now. A major item of expenditure comprises salary and associated payments in respect of our employment of our policy advisor for one day per week. In the absence of volunteers to carry out her work or additional funding, this financial impost will continue to deplete our financial reserves. Those reserves are of course not inexhaustible and the present position is not sustainable into the longer term.

Despite this gloomy backdrop, we have continued with our work and can record several successes over the year.

Thanks to the continued generous sponsorship from Wilkinsons, the Best Kept Village Competition attracted 35 entrants. Whilst this was a reduction from 41 in the previous year. The standard remained high. This county Competition is now 66 years old and has been sponsored by Wilkinsons for the past 24 years. We have secured their agreement to sponsor the 2017 competition - but we cannot be sure that this financial support will always continue. Just as

CPRE have lost the national sponsorship from NFU Mutual, we recognise that donors sometime choose to tighten their purse strings and we must plan accordingly. We want to see this Competition continue. We should like to see more villages take part. In Nottinghamshire, there are 151 Parish Councils and 38 Parish Meetings, which means there is substantial scope for greater participation across the county in a competition which encourages people to take a pride in where they live and, working together with their neighbours, to do what they can to improve their environment and to create a sense of community involvement. The Best Kept Village Competition is not a competition about finding beautiful picture postcard places. We seek to recognise villages where the community have made the best of what they have and have clearly taken care to look after it. My thanks go to Peter Holland, our Competition organiser, all the judges and, of course to Wilkinsons for their valuable contributions to making this Competition a success.

During the year, we also ran the Valerie Gillespie Competition for the best community effort to improve their local environment and we co-operated with the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust in running the Harry Johnson award for the best building restoration and new build.

Details of the winners in these competitions have been published in our newsletter, website and Facebook page. We issued two newsletters in 2016 and were assisted by contributions towards the cost of printing and postage by NFU Mutual. As mentioned above this financial assistance has now ceased and we shall have to revert to using electronic publication to those members who have provided us with an e-mail address. Here I enter a plea - that any member with an e-mail address unknown to CPRE kindly notifies us of it in order that we may minimise postage costs. And, while I am making requests, here are two more:

- Please have a look at our website: <https://www.hugofox.com/community/cpre-nottinghamshire> - where you can sign up for e-mail alerts to new posted items;
- Please look at our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/NottsCPRE> from time to time: you do NOT have to join Facebook to do so.

We use these means to publish up to date material about our activities without incurring any financial cost.

A big issue facing our county is the possibility of fracking for shale gas. We have made extensive representations about the proposals to undertake explorations at Misson and near Barnby Moor. We have endeavoured to use an evidence-based approach to consider the local circumstances of each case. Although we have not prevented these applications from proceeding, we take heart from the fact that the County Council have taken into account our concerns in setting conditions to which the applicants must comply. We have also made significant efforts to influence the new Minerals Plan that is being drawn up by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Our efforts to protect the Green Belt included a public meeting in Gedling and appearances on local radio.

I am always keen to say that CPRE is not a group of NIMBYs and that we are not simply against anything new. During the year, we made representations to members of parliament and ministers in support of a proposal to extend the Robin Hood line from Shirebrook to Ollerton. We have also supported a proposal rejected by Newark & Sherwood District Council to build a small group of eco-homes on the edge of the village at Eakring. We believe that such a development, which is supported by villagers, would provide opportunities for local young people to remain resident in the village where there are a number of employment opportunities. More details of this will appear in our forthcoming newsletter.

I must report that our treasurer, Elena Gilbert, has decided that other calls on her time mean that she is unable to continue in the role. Our warm thanks go to Elena for looking after our finances for the past three years. Bettina Lange has continued to provide planning and policy support and we are grateful to her for the work that she outlines in her separate report. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to our members for your support. We

depend on our membership for our existence. We want to continue because a beautiful and living countryside is one of England's greatest assets. It is a much loved and vital part of our national identity. CPRE is its principal champion. We want to continue delivering public benefit by standing up for that part of the English countryside that is Nottinghamshire in a way that is passionate, evidence-based and effective. Would it not be wonderful if every member could recruit just one other to support our cause?

## **Report of Policy Adviser**

### **Planning Applications**

1. Field Farm, Broxtowe District is a major housing proposal with outline planning permission. We had tried to achieve higher densities on part of the site and a plan for the whole site so that valued green space could be retained. We failed, but Broxtowe agreed that the design proposed by the applicants was poor and in April 2016 refused full permission (for part of the site - 118 dwellings). Sadly, the Planning Inspectorate overruled Broxtowe on appeal.
2. The Sookholme solar park application was resubmitted in 2016. We objected to the loss of BMV agricultural land; the adverse impact on landscape and amenity without the possibility of mitigation; the conflict with the NPPF requirement to protect 'valued' landscapes; and the fact that the applicants had not demonstrated that alternative sites in the area would not be suitable. I spoke at the MDC Planning Committee on 31st May 2016. The Committee refused planning permission, agreeing with the officer's recommendation, which used the arguments we had put forward.
3. I supported local people in objecting to a major housing proposal (400 dwellings) on the edge of Market Warsop. Our reasons for objecting were that the site was not needed to meet Mansfield's housing targets if the historic rate of windfall sites is considered; that MDC's own assessment ranked the site only 8th most suitable for housing; and that it is unlikely that the development would meet the established need in the area for housing for older people and those on low incomes.

### **Local Plans and related**

#### **1. Broxtowe**

In January 2016, I contributed to a stakeholder workshop (local authority officers and elected members, developers, and CPRE) as part of Broxtowe's work on the SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment). The workshop focused on factors influencing the speed of housing delivery. In July 2016, I contributed to a stakeholder workshop on Green Belt policy as part of Broxtowe's work on their Local Planning Document (Local Plan Part 2). The workshop considered whether to include generally supportive policies in relation to a range of uses in the countryside (sports fields, cemeteries, grazing etc); to renewable energy; and to rural diversification.

On renewable energy, I expressed reservations as such a policy would put the onus on Broxtowe Borough Council to demonstrate why an application should be refused. For practical and planning reasons, it is better to leave the onus on the developers to make their case for development in the Green Belt (they also have more resources than BBC). I made the case for a policy which prioritises roof-mounted solar and wind turbines near where the energy will be used and suggested that BBC draw up a Supplementary Planning Document and to request our input (as with Gedling). I reinforced a ministerial statement that the support from the community should be an important consideration when deciding applications for wind turbines. In October and November 2016, Broxtowe consulted on additional sites for housing for their LPD. I did not disagree that a site near Bramcote adjacent to the built-up area could be allocated if public transport can be improved; supported the allocation of a brownfield site (Chetwynd Barracks); and objected to a site 100% in the Green Belt (at Nuthall).

## 2. Rushcliffe

Rushcliffe consulted on their Local Plan Part 2. I objected to proposals to allocate a site with a playing field to housing (South of Wilford Lane, Nottingham); to sites at Radcliffe on Trent which would encroach into the countryside and affect the settlement form; and to the designation of safeguarded land. I agreed with Rushcliffe that no further green field/Green Belt allocations should be made around Bingham, West Bridgford, Clifton, Cotgrave, and East Leake; that small sites should be allocated in smaller villages specially for affordable housing; and that a requirement for an impact assessment of retail proposals above a certain size should be introduced.

## 3. Gedling

Gedling consulted on their Local Plan Part 2. I offered CPRE's help in drafting the proposed Supplementary Planning Documents on renewable energy and on wind turbines; quoted national CPRE examples of good practice tackling light pollution for the relevant policy in the LP; objected to the proposal to safeguard land in the LP, and to allocating Westhouse Farm for housing (would encroach on Bestwood Country Park); and I urged caution in relation to strategic Park & Ride sites (risk of increasing road traffic).

## 4. Mansfield

Mansfield consulted on their Local Plan Part 2. I submitted that the envisaged housing build rate is unrealistic (twice the recent historic build rate); that housing 'need' and 'demand' (what people can afford to buy) had been conflated. I argued that Mansfield District Council had underestimated land available for housing by not taking windfall sites into account; that a 'brownfield first' approach would deliver houses faster (quoting national CPRE research which shows this); that protection should be extended to undesignated countryside as per national planning guidance; and that the proposed approach will not deliver the affordable housing needed. I welcomed the proposed settlement hierarchy. I questioned the wisdom of exempting sites below 10 units from an affordable housing requirement and made the case for requiring independent viability assessments instead of leaving these to the developers. I objected to the proposal to allocate major green field sites for housing near Market Warsop, pointing out that doing so would defeat MDC's stated objective to assist the regeneration of the town.

## 5. Newark & Sherwood

Newark & Sherwood started preparation of a new Local Plan. I agreed with N&S that housing figures should not be higher than their housing assessment had shown but also showed that the (national) methodology is flawed (conflating need and demand etc) using national CPRE research. I objected to the proposal to allocate the site of Thoresby Colliery for housing because N&S's own calculations show it would not be needed to meet housing targets and allocating it would miss the opportunity to restore this part of the valuable Sherwood Forest landscapes. I agreed with N&S that housing development in smaller villages with few facilities should be limited to infill; that the 2012 Green Belt boundaries should be retained. I questioned the wisdom of exempting sites below 11 units from an affordable housing requirement as proposed by N&S, and the proposed reliance on Starter Homes to provide affordable housing. I welcomed the proposal to include impact on landscape and heritage in the criteria for travellers' sites.

## **CPRE events and initiatives**

In March, I gave a presentation on Nottinghamshire CPRE to a 'Neighbourhood Planning Roadshow' in Grantham. Funded by DCLG, this was organized jointly by CPRE and Community Lincs. answered technical questions at the event, and gave advice in Neighbourhood Planning to Bleasby and Burton Joyce Parish Councils after the event.

I gave a presentation to a public meeting on the Green Belt in Gedling, held in a community venue in Arnold in January. 25 attended from across Gedling, and the presentation was followed by a lively discussion.

I was interviewed twice in April by BBC Radio Nottingham about the future of the Green Belt.

I would like to thank the people of Sookholme and Warsop for their donations which part-funded my work on issues in their areas.

### **East Midlands Region**

Nottinghamshire Branch continued to take a full part in regional activities and attended all four regional group meetings during 2016. At these meetings, presentations on matters of interest to CPRE are given; individual members of national office attend; and news and ideas are exchanged.

During the year,

1. the regional website became fully operational.
2. the Secretary of State granted consent for the Castle Donington Strategic Rail Freight Terminal.
3. Plans for government devolution to combined authorities in parts of the East Midlands were considered.
4. Representations were made to Shaun Spiers (National Office CEO) on the withdrawal of the Autumn Appeal - the only fundraising exercise during each year that brought any benefit to county branches.
5. A Rural Economy Conference was held in Lincolnshire, sponsored by the EMRG.
6. A joint CPRE East Midlands /East of England regional event to celebrate 90 years of CPRE was held in Peterborough - there were keynote speakers keynote speakers, Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE and Oliver Hilliam, CPRE Senior Communications and Information Officer, and author of "22 ideas that saved the English Countryside". to start and finish the day and workshop learning sessions. There were display stands from several outside organisations. The event was open to CPRE Committee Members, Volunteers and the general membership and closed with a short awards ceremony.

## Accounts

### Receipts & payments account for the year ended 31 December 2016

2015	Receipts	£
7040	Members subscriptions	6171
596	Donations	947
3485	Best Kept Village Competition	3452
10	Bank Interest	10
35	Give as You Live	20
1616	Reimbursement from Derbyshire CPRE	-
-	Consultancy	1194
210	Sundry Receipts	-
<u>210</u>	<u>Total Receipts</u>	<u>11794</u>
<b>Payments</b>		
	Subscriptions, affiliations and donations	
33		33
2768	Best Kept Village Competition	2571
204	Valerie Gillespie Award	-
368	Hall hire and refreshments	145
452	Travel expenses	219
8544	Salary and Associated Costs	6120
3100	Suppliers and Miscellaneous	1669
<u>15469</u>	<u>Total Payments</u>	<u>10756</u>
(2477)	Net Receipts / (payments)	1038
<u>29979</u>	Cash funds at start of this period	<u>27502</u>
<u>27502</u>	Cash funds at end of this period	<u>28540</u>

### Statement of assets and liabilities at 31 December 2016

2015	Cash Assets	£
27492	Bank Accounts	28530
<u>10</u>	Cash in Hand	<u>10</u>
<u>27502</u>		<u>28540</u>
<b>Other monetary assets</b>		
3256	Debtors and Pre-payments	1782
<u>3256</u>		<u>1782</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
(2060)	Creditors	(2166)
<u>(2060)</u>		<u>(2166)</u>

The above figures are a summary of the 2016 accounts. Full copies of the independently examined accounts will be available at the 2017 Annual General Meeting. The accounts are also available on our website at <https://www.hugofox.com/shared/attachments.asp?f=38c3431d-aa8c-40c6-be1d-44b92bdfdf59%2Epdf>. Any member may apply to the chairman to be sent a paper copy.

**Campaign to Protect Rural England Nottinghamshire Branch  
Charity 213481  
Annual General Meeting 2017  
Friday 30 June 2017 at Flintham Village Hall  
17.00 for Museum Visit and Walk  
18.00 for Refreshments and Meeting**

All members of CPRE Nottinghamshire are warmly invited to attend the AGM – Please see the May 2017 Newsletter for further details

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of 2016 Annual General Meeting: These have been previously circulated and a copy is available on our website at <https://www.hugofox.com/community/cpre-nottinghamshire-10680/2016-agm-minutes/>
  - Approval
  - Matters Arising
3. Report of Chairman and Questions
4. Report of Secretary and Policy Adviser and Questions
5. Financial Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2016
  - Any Questions
  - Approval
6. Election of President
7. Election of Chairman
8. Election of Vice-Chairman
9. Election of Hon. Treasurer
10. Election of Other Trustees
11. Election of Independent Examiner
12. Any Other Business