

**MINUTES OF 79<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY (89<sup>th</sup> for CPRE) DORSET CPRE AGM HELD AT THE CERNE ABBAS VILLAGE HALL, CERNE ABBAS, ON SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2015**

**1. Vice-President's Welcome**

Richard Heaslip, Vice-President Dorset CPRE, opened the Meeting at 11 am and warmly welcomed members and their guests.

**2. Apologies**

Edward Fox due to play rehearsals, Wendy Syer, Mr Derek Gardiner, Mrs Janet Healy, Mr John Holiday, Mr Rupert Hardy, Mr Edward Fox, Mrs V.F. Romeril, Mr and Mrs R Bawtree, Mrs S. Matthewman, Mr Gerald Rigler, Mrs Janette Ward (CPRE SW Chair), Mr Matthew Price, Mrs June Cull, and Mr & Mrs D. Dodge.

**3. Minutes of the 2014 AGM**

The Vice-President asked if there were any amendments to these minutes. There were none. Proposer Terry Stewart, seconder Dr John Larkin, all in favour, none against.

**4. Matters Arising**

There were none.

**5. External Relations Report**

Richard Nicholls said the South West Regional, Branch Forums and National Office meetings give him an overview of issues faced by other counties. Threats of building on the Green Belt, enforcement notices not complied with and disappearing public transport are issues not just local to Dorset County. There are also real concerns about the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships, the Government expects them to become part of the planning process and they lack democratic accountability.

**6. Chair of Trustees Report**

Stephen Howard spoke about the significant threats to the countryside and challenges facing CPRE. They include the changes in planning laws, renewable energy, swathes of new housing beyond what the countryside can reasonably accept and aggravated by the planning inspectorate overriding Local Plans.

In recent years Renewable Energy (RE) has been our priority area for campaigning. Well run local groups mobilised strong opposition to four proposed wind farms and enjoyed our full support. CPRE approved grants to cover legal and consultancy advice for two of the campaigns namely TAINT and NSLT. While we have been spared the many large wind farms seen in other counties there has been a progressive spread of solar installations of various sizes, some in sensitive areas. Campaigners, supported by CPRE, are again considering legal action over the way East Dorset District Council undertook the approval process for the Mapperton Solar Park application. He said the Government is right, in his view, to be concerned over climate change but there are better and less damaging ways of addressing it, most particularly by increasing the number of solar panels on buildings, particularly industrial buildings. He expressed much gratitude to Dr David Peacock for his research, technical evaluation and campaigning. CPRE is pressing Local Authorities to be mindful of the considerable progress already made towards targets in considering future renewable energy applications.

Presently we see increased housing and industrial development as the major threats with erosion of AONBs and Green Belt. The planning inspectorate have significantly increased housing allocations in Local Plans in a number of districts, following

Examination in Public, which is neither democratic or appropriate and a major concern. Another concern is that Local Enterprise Partnerships, through which the government hopes to 'kick start' the economy are not sufficiently accountable and do not sufficiently value the countryside. Research shows clearly that the countryside has an economic, as well as aesthetic value. The Dorset that we seek so steadfastly to defend is the product of its beautiful, varied and unique landscape. We continue to press for a Dorset and East Dorset National Park.

It seems likely that Local Authorities will be completely reorganised over the coming years and a major concern is the effect that this will have on the planning process and countryside protection. It seems likely that there will be one or two large single tier authorities for greater Dorset; such authorities already exist elsewhere. A benefit might be a greater emphasis on Brownfield rather than Greenfield development, given that the same authority might cover conurbations and rural areas but this is unlikely to come about without political pressure and strong lobbying. A further factor is the creation of a Combined Authority in Dorset that would receive further devolved powers from the centre (like Manchester, for example).

We, in CPRE, accept that there is a shortage of housing generally and particularly of affordable housing but it must be provided in the *right* places and designed appropriately.

While RE and housing have occupied much of our time in the past year we also monitor and seek to influence activities in other fields that impinge on landscape including transport, waste, minerals and flooding.

Our principal mouthpiece is the Dorset Review and we also achieve public exposure through publicity and by placing articles in the local press, staging or collaborating in local events. The review is designed to keep our members informed about what we are doing, to reassure but also to raise awareness of threats, while at the same time demonstrating our expertise. If we are to continue 'to punch above our weight' we have to demonstrate our standing and commitment to the countryside. We now send the review to all councillors, MPs, and other bodies with countryside interests.

A healthy membership provides a reservoir of volunteers, financial stability and the clout we need to influence others. He repeated his call for all members to recruit another during the coming year. He thanked Rupert Hardy who has sought to raise our profile and encourage recruitment.

Stephen expressed the huge appreciation for the continuing support and the stout band of volunteers on whom we depend. The new Dorset CPRE organisation has been remarkably successful in placing greater emphasis on campaigning. A relatively small trustee body oversees the finances, administration, and determines policy while a well-attended Countryside Forum, ably chaired by John Holiday, directs and oversees campaigning. Linda provides administrative support, working from her home since we gave up the offices rented from DCC in Dorchester.

He thanked in particular the trustees for their dedication and hard work and Richard Nicholls for again acting as Foreign Secretary and representing us at National Office and South West branch meetings. Richard Norman has continued as our long serving and highly competent treasurer, exercising strong control of our finances. He would like to record our thanks and appreciation to Dickie Bird, elected Life Vice-President

after many years of distinguished loyal service. Also thanks to Richard Heaslip who has been elected Vice-President following Dickie's retirement.

Stephen steps down as trustee with some misgivings and regrets, he has enjoyed being involved with CPRE for almost 20 years because of the colleagues he worked with and the strength of the cause.

**7. Treasurer's Report**

Richard Norman summarised the Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015. Copies of the audited accounts can be found on the Dorset CPRE website.

Total amount spent on charitable activities was £19k. He thanked NFU Mutual for donating £750 towards the production of the review magazine and posting the spring and autumn editions to our members. The Vice-President asked for questions on the Accounts. There were none. The Accounts were accepted. Proposer Peter Neal, Seconder Terry Stewart. All in favour, none against.

**8. Revised Dorset CPRE Constitution - approval**

Richard Heaslip explained that the updated Constitution is a living document and that we are now two years into working under the new structure. No amendments were received. The members proceeded to vote on and accept the new constitution as a living document with future amendments welcome for consideration. Proposer Dr John Larkin, seconder Terry Stewart, 2/3 vote in favour, none against.

**9. Election of Officers:**

The following were duly proposed and elected:

Position	Proposed	Proposer	Seconder
President	Edward Fox	Stephen Howard	Sandra Brown
Vice-President	Richard Heaslip	Peter Neal	Richard Norman
	Stephen Howard	Dr John Larkin	Richard Heaslip
<b>Elected Trustees</b>			
Treasurer	Richard Norman	Richard Nicholls	Peter Neal
	Peter Neal	Felicia Wilde	Linda Williams
	Dr John Larkin	Gerald Rigler	Terry Stewart
	Sandra Brown	Gerald Rigler	Dr John Larkin
	Richard Nicholls	John Green	Andrew McKenzie
	Richard Heaslip	Peter Neal	Richard Norman

**10. Election of Examiners.**

The Fund examiners, Scott Vevers, were unanimously elected.

**11. Any Other Business.**

No resolutions were tabled this year. CPRE Members were encouraged to propose some in advance of next year's AGM.

Michael McAvoy mentioned plans for an exhibition at Milton Abbey to celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Capability Brown.

The meeting was followed by a presentation given by Cllr Robert Gould, Leader of Dorset County Council.