

The Dorset Review

Campaign to Protect Rural England



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Autumn 2020 Branch News Issue 115



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Who would have thought that a year ago our world would be as it is today? Our Dorset world has changed in many ways: the hospitality and tourism sector has been financially hit hard; we have had an influx of visitors to the coast far in excess of last year; the behaviours of some of the visitors (and even some of the residents?) have been unwelcome and unacceptable; those who cherish the area are concerned. Whatever is happening in rural Dorset? Surveys and studies have shown that more people want to access the countryside for health and well being benefits. The lockdown produced an upswing in visitors-what an irony? How will the local economy of Dorset fare as the COVID-19 pandemic runs on, and how will we hold together a sustainable lasting recovery when so much uncertainty exists? These are difficult issues for difficult times.

Sustain and Enhance a Green Recovery

When I walk locally I pass the house, now an hotel, where John Maynard Keynes spent several summers, the cottage where George Bernard Shaw stayed, and the terrace house used by Virginia Woolf-a basis for her Purbeck walks and swims. These intellectuals and thinkers who changed the world in several ways had a special connection with the Dorset landscape and coast. They saw the area undeveloped, wild in places, and only subject to the light footprint of humans. Tourism as we know it was taking hold and gradually embracing the way of life for many in the Dorset seaside communities. What was it that drew these intellectuals, writers and artists to the Dorset seaside and the adjoining countryside? Was it the desire for peace and tranquillity not experienced in London or even a desire to return to nature-whatever that means?

The unexpected events of 2020 to date have rattled our collective cages and made us think and reflect on both the countryside and the choices that we face in our lives. The writing of Viktor Frankl and John Maynard Keynes show the power of choices and the consequences of these choices. How do we establish, sustain and enhance a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic? More of the same for all? Less for some and more for a few? Less for all? Whatever direction we take it is a result of the choices that we and others make.

Planning White Paper

The Planning White Paper and the emerging Dorset Local Plan are full of choices either being removed from local residents or giving them to developers to do what they want with our precious rural area. Surely there is something not quite right when the legacy that we leave is the result of self interest and the rate of return on monetary assets rather than an enlightened self-interest that creates a lasting legacy for others? What is it that makes Dorset what it is? Will these factors survive the relentless pressure of development driven by the demands of a growing population, the market for financial assets (including houses) ,and our current lifestyles? Who will gain and who will lose from these proposals?

Updating the Planning System

Fundamental changes are planned in this White Paper on planning. All in Dorset CPRE should see the dangers for what they are-a charter for development driven by excessive and undue pressures from the development lobby. Early community engagement in the designation of zones-growth, regeneration and protection-and an emphasis of good design may be welcomed. Set these against the loss of community engagement in planning applications, the imposition of central government targets, and the shift from community led local plans to development led plans driven by the building and development lobby. The proposals may be modified as a result of the consultation yet there seems to be determination from central government for updating the planning system, making it quicker and easier to grant permissions rather than making it better.

Dorset Housing Needs Evidence

Dorset CPRE has set out its stall with the independent report on Dorset Housing Needs Evidence. Too high a set of targets above local housing needs, current building almost entirely for inward migrants, and unaffordable access to housing for local residents-the report is an indictment on planning in Dorset. A Dorset National Park working with Dorset Council is the way forward if we really want to see Dorset not being urbanised. Meeting local housing need and

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Front Cover image – Three CPRE members and others at Langham Vineyards, Dewlish, after lunch in August. Theme of staycation and supporting Dorset drink business, taken by Rupert Hardy

protecting our precious places will be more likely to be secured with a Dorset National Park (see article on page 13) than any of the proposals in the Planning White Paper.

Please read the report from Opinion Research Services-it is on the Dorset CPRE website (see page 5 for more details). Tell others about the report; press your local councillor and local council to make representations to Dorset Council and your MP. We must in Dorset CPRE energise others to take action on this important report.

Dorset Local Plan

Dorset Council have agreed that the Dorset Local Plan (DLP) will be completed by March 2023. Work is being carried out by officials on the background papers, policies and studies for the DLP. The Council has held a consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement

and had two separate initial meetings with Parish and Town Councils. Delegates were told that government calculated numbers had to be used in Dorset and all that had to be decided was where new houses would be located.

Details from the former District Councils are to be incorporated into the DLP. The Council has set up an Executive Advisory Panel for the Dorset Local Plan-there are no public reports from the Panel and it is not known what it does other than meet in secret.

In January there will be an eight week period consultation on the DLP. Despite requests made at Dorset Council Cabinet meetings for there to be additional engagement by local councils and residents in the creation of a vision for the DLP in addition to what is planned for the January 2021 consultation, Dorset Council have insisted that community engagement will take the form of the

January consultation. Dorset Council will decide on the questions without any shaping of the consultation by residents and local councils.

Did you remember a poem?

Finally, did you remember a poem and did you use the summer to reflect on what we have and what we need to retain? Have you taken any action to ensuring that Dorset is protected, and enhanced in these times of climate, ecological and health emergencies? What would Keynes, Shaw and Woolf think of Dorset now? Who will take up the baton for the environment, wildlife and heritage of Dorset let alone the "trustees of the possibilities of civilisation"?

Peter Bowyer

Chair of Trustees

Dorset Local Nature Partnership

Annual Report 2019 – 2020

Dr Simon Cripps, Chairman Dorset LNP, drew attention to the way in which the Partnership has worked across traditionally separate topics such as environment, health and social care or between environment and economics or business development.

The Partnership worked with the Dorset LEP to produce a Local Industrial Strategy which included environmental issues and solutions for submission to the Government last December.

A workshop on Health and Nature Collaboration in November 2019 considered formal collaboration on nature-based wellbeing in the County. The Shaping Places for Healthier Lives Fund invited the Group to submit a Stage 2 bid, but this has now been postponed due to COVID-19.

Six "Picnic in the Park" events were held between May and September 2019 with a community fair, information stalls, taster sessions and live music to bring the benefits of nature-based wellbeing to a new audience.

Annual Forum 2020

I attended the Forum at the Lighthouse in Poole on 2nd March. Dr Cripps introduced a new report "Voices for Dorset: Dorset's Response to the 25 Year Environment Plan" which discusses all aspects of the County's woodlands, coasts, water, green spaces and much else. The report follows the sections in the 25 Year Plan and



needs to be delivered by local people who know the area and NOT by Central Government. This Nature Recovery Network for Dorset will investigate soils and habitats and give support to farmers and to rewilding.

Mr Tom Munro, Dorset AONB Manager, talked about Glover's Landscape Review and the Environment Bill presently going through the House of Commons. The Nature Recovery Network would cover 500,000 hectares nationally.

Julie Melin-Stubbs, New Forest National Park, spoke about nature conservation in the Park for birds, butterflies and botany, and also about the planting of native trees. Within the Park are many small farms, working woodlands and hedgerows.

We ended with a workshop on the Nature Recovery Plan for the whole County including heath, forest, parks and domestic gardens. Our road verges constitute a further 10,000 acres of nature reserve.

New Chair for the LNP

It's a time of change for the LNP as Simon Cripps, who has chaired the LNP for the last eight years, has decided to step down as Chair. Simon has started a new position with Wildlife Conservation Society and he will remain as a LNP board member.

Luke Rake is the new chair for the LNP and he took up the position on 9th September. Luke is currently Principal and Chief Executive of Kingston Maurward College.

Dr John Larkin

Dorset CPRE Representative to Dorset LNP

North Dorset Group



It has been much quieter than usual due to COVID19. Sadly we had to cancel both the North Dorset CPRE AGM and Summer party. However we did have useful meetings with both Simon Hoare MP and CG Fry, the regional housebuilder, as well as our North Dorset CPRE Planning Monitoring Group thanks to the marvels of Zoom.

Planning Applications

Our biggest concern remains **North Blandford**. We, along with Pimperne PC and Cranborne Chase AONB, voiced our concerns in writing to Dorset Council (DC) about the Examiner's Report approving the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan. This is expected to trigger an application for 600 houses north of the bypass, which is being mooted by Wyatt Homes on their website. Pimperne PC approved a motion to mount a one-off legal challenge in the form of a letter to fire across the bows of DC. Dorset CPRE and Cranborne Chase AONB agreed to share costs for that challenge. We are still waiting for a full response from DC.

Housing applications keep on coming in **Stalbridge**, and they currently total over 400 dwellings. We are objecting to most of them. In **Milborne St Andrew** we have opposed another housing application for 85 units. Grounds include conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan, and concern over traffic congestion and safety. We objected also to another 65 unit development on an unsustainable site in **Child Okeford**. The developer at Enmore Green has come back yet again with another proposal, despite losing their last one at appeal, and we are opposing it.

The developers for the 70 home **Charlton Marshall** site have taken their application to Appeal on grounds that Dorset council failed to determine the application within the statutory period. We are supporting the action group, who have at least got the Inspectors to agree to a Hearing.

Planning Hearing Decision

We were saddened that an application for 26 dwellings in **Child Okeford** was approved by the Northern Area Planning Committee, despite opposition from us, the PC and many residents. It appears that the main reason it was passed may have been that the village had not seen a new major

development approved for some years, while most large villages in ND have.

Solar Farm

There has been a request for a Screening Opinion for an extension to a solar farm in Spetisbury, covering 66 acres. The site is not visible from the village and there is unlikely to be much opposition from residents, so it is probable that we will not oppose. We are however more concerned about a larger 50MW solar park at Pulham, which requested a Screening Opinion. DC have acted quickly to request a full EIA.

Gillingham South Extension

The regional builder, CG Fry, who have a reputation for good design, are one of the key developers on the Gillingham South Extension (GSE) mega development. We met with them partly to establish what progress was being made here. It appears that delays primarily by Taylor Wimpey and Welbeck mean that GSE is 1-2 years behind the last schedule mentioned in the North Dorset Annual Monitoring Report for March 2019. GSE is meant to deliver 1800 dwellings, and a rough guess suggests delays will impact on North Dorset 5 Year Housing Land Supply by up to 10%. This is not helpful given the current deficit.

There have been considerable problems with utility provision, and general infrastructure, which have led to delays in agreeing S106 payments, while COVID-19 is clearly a factor too. Many changes in the DC Planning department may not have helped either.

New Blackmore Vale Magazines

It was sad that the Blackmore Vale Magazine (BVM) closed in August. Local media has been suffering for some years as advertising migrated to the internet, with a lot of the spend going to search engines, and COVID-19 has been the final nail in the coffin for some.

The BVM was certainly in North Dorset the most widely read local publication. They were quite good at giving us coverage on planning issues.

Other Dorset



casualties in recent years have been the Stour & Avon News, and the print edition of the Gillingham & Shaftesbury News.

A 2016 report by King's College, London, found that towns whose local newspapers had closed showed a "democracy deficit" that resulted in reduced community engagement by local people and a heightened distrust of public institutions. "We can all have our own social media account, but when local papers are depleted or in some cases simply don't exist, people lose a communal voice. They feel angry, not listened to and more likely to believe malicious rumour," Dr Martin Moore, the author of the study, stated. Some food for thought here!



To fill the gap a promising new online digital monthly, The Blackmore Vale, has been launched from Sturminster Newton. They say they want to be a community voice with a more diverse readership than before, and North Dorset CPRE has started contributing a monthly column so please do read it (www.theblackmorevale.co.uk). A biweekly printed magazine, the New Blackmore Vale Magazine, which promises to faithfully replicate the BVM, was also launched soon after. Confusion but no shortage of choice! We wish them both luck.

Rupert Hardy
Group Chairman

Dorset Housing Needs Evidence Report

The Dorset CPRE continue to campaign for more realistic housing targets for Dorset, which better reflect local need. We commissioned a Housing Needs Report, based on data and research by Opinion Research Services, which shows that the Dorset Council and BCP Council could be forced to plan for excessive numbers of new housing.

The Government's Standard Method for assessing local housing need produces a figure of 4,458 dwellings per annum for Dorset, which is 47% higher than the 3,030 new houses required by the existing Local Plans and nearly 100% higher than recent rates of housing delivery.

Now, the Government's Planning White Paper and proposed Planning reforms threaten Dorset with even higher, centrally-imposed housing numbers, while greatly reducing local people's say in the future of our communities.

Key Findings

- Central government's housing targets, using 2014 projections, are 47% higher than the existing Local Plans in Dorset.
- The government's housing targets are way in excess of any sensible forecast of local housing need.
- The report proposes that the local authorities should be prepared to challenge the Government's Standard Method based on outdated and flawed population and household projections.
- Local authorities should encourage the development of suitable affordable housing for younger households.

Dorset CPRE supports a locally led democratic planning system rather than the government's proposals for developer-led rather than community-based planning.

The Government's Planning Reform

The Planning White Paper

We believe the reforms will only serve to undermine local voices, by preventing communities from managing their own places/neighbourhoods and as we've seen before, result in environments that don't work for the people that live there. The White Paper is a Charter for unnecessary overdevelopment in Dorset with significantly higher numbers than are needed.



Changes to the Current Planning System

There is a more immediate threat posed by shorter-term measures which are included in a supporting document entitled, 'Changes to the Current Planning System'. This consultation document details proposals for measures to improve the effectiveness of the current system. The four main proposals are:

- Changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need.
- Securing of First Homes, sold at a discount to market price for first time buyers, including key workers, through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system.
- Temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing, to up to 40 or 50 units to support SME builders as the economy recovers from the impact of Covid-19.
- Extending the current Permission in Principle to major development so landowners and developers have a fast-track route to secure the principle of development for housing on sites, without having to work up detailed plans first.

All of this amounts to a strategy which, although laudable in certain aspects (especially 'First Homes') threatens to become a developers' charter, whereby local opinion counts for little in the drive to build more homes. These shorter-term measures represent a particular threat since the intention is to take them forward, with only minimal Parliamentary scrutiny, through the introduction of a written Ministerial Statement this Autumn.

We contributed to the National CPRE response to both consultations and also submitting our own response in October. A copy of the Dorset Housing Needs Evidence report is available to download from our website www.dorset-cpre.org.uk. A PDF copy of the report was circulated to Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and everyone on our e-newsletter mailing list after the Government announced the new Planning Reforms. Printed copies were also posted to Dorset MPs, Civic Societies and a number of Dorset and BCP Councillors.

Dorset CPRE has long campaigned for the right number of homes to be built in the right locations including genuinely affordable homes for local people, and prioritising the use of brownfield first.

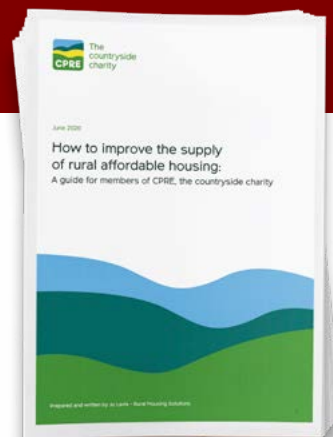
CPRE Recent Publications

CPRE National Office publishes a number of reports based on detailed research. Here is a summary of the most recent report that can be found on CPRE Resources webpage <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources>:

Affordable housing guide – August 2020

Getting more affordable housing in your town or village can be essential for ensuring that local people don't get priced out. This guide tells you everything you need to know about

how you can get involved in promoting affordable housing in your local community. It covers frequently asked questions, explains the key players, demystifies the process and explains how you can get involved in bringing affordable homes to your part of the countryside.



Wonderful Artist Inspired by the Dorset Countryside: Nicholas Hely Hutchinson

Nicholas Hely Hutchinson is one of Dorset's best known and most successful landscape artists. His love of art was first inspired by his mother who was an amateur artist, while it was a visit to the Prado in Madrid aged sixteen that was the real catalyst. He later studied at St. Martins School of Art and Bristol Polytechnic (Fine Art). Since his first one-man exhibition in 1984 Nicholas has exhibited consistently in London, Dublin and Hong Kong. His paintings have increasingly become more in demand and now feature in many private and corporate collections, while he has been represented by the Portland Gallery since 1997.

Inspiration from the surrounding unspoilt countryside

However it was his move to Dorset about twenty five years ago that was a major stepping stone as he gets so much of his inspiration from the surrounding unspoilt countryside and the coast. He lives there with his wife, Fifi, and two lurchers, Martha and Olive, who feature a lot in his paintings. Tom Hewlett, the owner of the Portland Gallery, observes that *"his heartland and the real love of his life is where he lives in Dorset. I don't know a better artist in terms of portraying the Dorset landscape than Nicholas....it is not just the landscape but it is the quirkiness"* of it. His paintings are very lyrical and atmospheric, arguably poetic, and he is good at conveying the beauty of the seasons and the changes in the weather. Animals and birds feature a lot. It could be a solitary blackbird in song, or a flurry of pheasants. The landscape really interests him as it is constantly changing, but there is also a diversity of landscape to celebrate from the chalk downland to the meandering river valleys to the dramatic contours of the Jurassic coast. His pictures vary from simple landscapes to the juxtaposition of the interior of a room with the view perceived beyond it.



Nicholas says, *"I wake up most mornings thinking about painting. Usually it is something that I have seen the day before....A long straight sunlit road, lined with telegraph poles...A sparrow hawk flips over the hedge...These are possible elements for a picture. I am lucky to live in the middle of rural Dorset, not too far from the sea. The seasons and the constantly changing moods of the countryside are my inspiration. From large dramatic landscapes, where people and animals seem small under the passing clouds, to smaller things...A bird in a cold winter sky...This is what makes me want to paint... Moments of heartbreaking beauty, moments that take your breath away."*

Favourite Places in Dorset

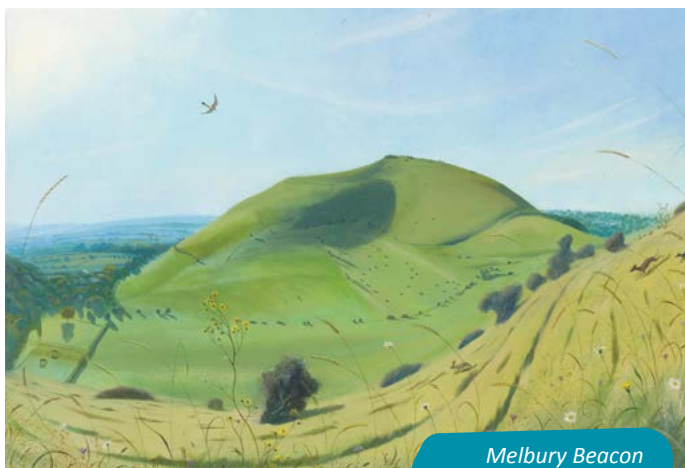
The coast is very special to him. The chalk cliffs present dramatic shapes and interesting shadows. He likes being on the edge of things and that feeling of space, as in his painting *"Cliff Edge"*, which is Bats Head in Purbeck. He has painted a



The Cliffs near Old Harry



Cliff Edge



Melbury Beacon

lot around Portland Bill, which can be so dramatic. Nicholas was photographed just completing a painting by Old Harry Rocks, which is a self-portrait with his lurchers. By contrast inland he is often seen around Win Green, a famous clump of trees on top of a hill just in Wiltshire but which looks down on Dorset. It reminds him of Paul Nash's work. He walks his dogs a lot in the hills of Fontmell Down nearby in north Dorset. He loves the way the light falls on them in his picture "Melbury Beacon".



Midsummer Afternoon

Painting Technique

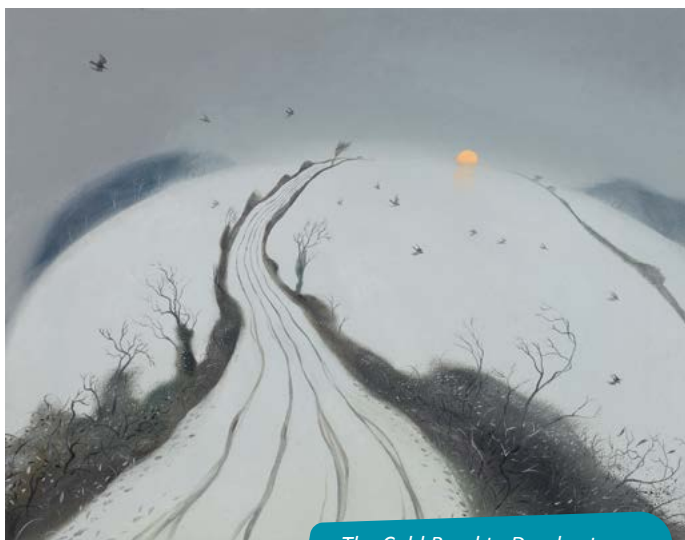
All artists have different techniques. He does rough drawings in a sketchbook initially and then it is straight onto canvas. He usually does underpainting first with the basic shapes, rather than drawing. Then using rags and large brushes he will build up the colour so there is a mixture of the two layers. Finally he works on the details, such as flowers and leaves. At any one time he can be working on three or more paintings.

His earlier work was often compared with Raoul Dufy, but not so much his later paintings, particularly the Dorset ones. He says *"my main interest with Dufy was his bold colouring and the gestures he made with his paint brush to capture something in one stroke. I like to look at other people's work to appreciate how they approach their subject and to understand how they achieve effects in a different way. But perhaps Paul Nash or the simplified forms Gustav Klimt used in his paintings fascinate me more now"*.

Beyond Dorset

He also travels to some of his favourite places to paint – particularly Venice, Paris, Ireland, the West Indies and Cornwall, where he is good at capturing the essence of these places. However he turned to London for inspiration for his most recent major exhibition last year, and he was commissioned to paint the Lord Mayor's Procession, which was also used as a poster on the London Underground. His London paintings capture the people there in all their diversity, whether they be rushing to and fro, in the bustle of a busy city, or celebrating a happy moment, such as the Procession itself.

His next major exhibition will be at the Portland Gallery in London in 2021, but he is having a smaller one at the Jerram Gallery in Sherborne this November, 7th-21st. Details of these and others will be shown on his website www.nicholashelyhutchinson.com. Do drop by and experience the sublime magic of his paintings!



The Cold Road to Dorchester

The Seasons

He loves the changing seasons. While winter may be dark and gloomy, it can be beautiful and poetic too. He will try to convey the coldness of the moment on a snowy day, as in his painting "The Cold Road to Dorchester". It is a simple snow scene with a weak wintery sun, with lots of rooks as it is near dusk. "Winter Evening" is near Crichel, and here he is trying to capture the mood of that time of year with the way the low sun comes through the trees, and pheasants everywhere. Summer often reminds him of Thomas Hardy, the writer. He may want to impart the heat of a sultry afternoon, complete with the birds and flowers seen on the day as in "Midsummer Afternoon". This was based on a field near his home, full of poppies. Essentially he is as happy painting a stormy windswept day at Portland, as a tranquil moment in full summer in the Stour valley.

Rupert Hardy

The Sherborne and District Society

May I introduce myself to those whom I have yet to have the pleasure of meeting personally: Chris Coville, ex-RAF Fighter Pilot and Air Marshal, previous Chairman of Westland Helicopters Ltd, and for the past five years living happily in beautiful Sherborne.

As many of you will know, John Newman, our Chairman, has been unwell for a time, and I am standing in for him until his health improves. I'm sure you would all wish me to thank John for his wise counsel and guidance to our Group, and wish him a speedy recovery to full health.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Sherborne and District Society have been pursuing our strategic objectives as best we can, using virtual meetings and small working groups.

One of our principal strategic objectives, as it is for national CPRE, is to raise our profile and extend our reach, especially to the young. As previously reported, shortly before the Lockdown, I visited Gryphon School in the town, where I met the Headteacher, Mrs Nicki Edwards. I was able to chat to many students and teachers about our work, and we agreed that our Farming and Countryside colleague Shaun Leavey, and I should connect with their Eco Club, to see if there was a way to work closely together. This initiative is on hold until COVID-19 conditions permit; but we are looking at the possibility of virtual engagements.

Sherborne Critical Review

One of our major initiatives was the recently published Sherborne Critical Review, which expressed mainly in photo format the good and not so good characteristics of Sherborne's architecture. I have to say that the vast majority of comments have been laudatory, but sadly a small number of our excellent and hard-working Town Councillors disagreed. We regret if our narrative caused offence, but hope that we can put that aside and continue to work in a constructive and harmonious manner in the future. I should add, in the area of improving our reach, that we intend to expand significantly our engagement with our membership, once conditions permit. We especially look forward to conducting plenary sessions at

which we might apprise our supporters of our activities and aspirations, but also ensure that we are fully aware of the issues they wish us to address.

Strategic Objectives

In refining our strategic objectives, we rapidly concluded that two elements needed urgent attention: **Planning and Rural Affairs**, especially farming. All will be aware of the Government's recently published White Paper on Planning, which is now in the consultation phase. We at Sherborne are dealing with this in three ways:

- **firstly**, we are wholeheartedly supporting national and Dorset CPRE's strong position against the paper as it stands;
- **secondly**, we are lobbying and briefing politicians and the general public on the reasons why we are taking a strong view against the White Paper; and
- **thirdly**, we are looking at the specifics of how the whole planning process and the potential consequences of the paper might impact on our immediate and adjacent areas.

As a result of our concerns at many of the Government's proposals, we are now mounting a planning campaign, which will reflect the county position, but focus on specific Sherborne area threats. We will include in our campaign objectives the following:

- Clear and corroborated evidence of the 'need', backed up with transparency on the underpinning criteria.
- Clarity on the scrutiny of the planning process, from initiation to completion.
- Evidence of well-developed master plans for every development, incorporating details of design and landscaping features.

- Assurance that social amenities will be built into all planning applications, with penalties for non-compliance.
- Comprehensive plans for infrastructure as required by the developments, especially roads, sewage, water, education and medical.
- Local committees with appropriate powers to challenge developers who exceed planning conditions or fail to deliver on preconditions.
- Clarity on the requirement for affordable housing, and mechanisms for delivering it where it is needed.

Alongside this major challenge of planning, the pandemic has demonstrated the vital importance of rural industries, farming and horticulture, to the resilience of our nation at a time of crisis. Of course, those few who can remember WW2 know this only too well, but sadly we seem doomed to repeat the mistakes of history. We at DT9, where both the utility and leisure offerings of our surrounding countryside are so precious, will be re-energising our expertise and efforts in the months ahead, and will be asking whether we need to mount a campaign similar to our planning one to ensure appropriate weight is given to this vital topic.

In the meantime we monitor closely CPRE's views on the emerging Environmental Land Management initiative, as well as the several schemes on rewilding, which whilst commendable must be balanced against commercial realities.

Sir Christopher Coville
Acting Chairman



Sherborne is fortunate to have Quarr nature reserve within an easy walk from the centre of the town

The Sherborne "Critical Review" – A Firework With Photos

Early in the current year the Sherborne and District Society CPRE Committee was worried about a wide range of matters. It was having difficulty in recruiting new members, it seemed to have a problem in getting agreement with the Town Council over issues of concern, and it perceived Dorset Council and bodies like Historic England as being inactive over the built heritage. All of this seemed ironic in what is arguably one of the most attractive towns in the South West of England.

For historic reasons the Sherborne and District Society CPRE is somewhat different from other local CPRE District Groups in that it combines its traditional CPRE role with an interest in the built environment of the town.

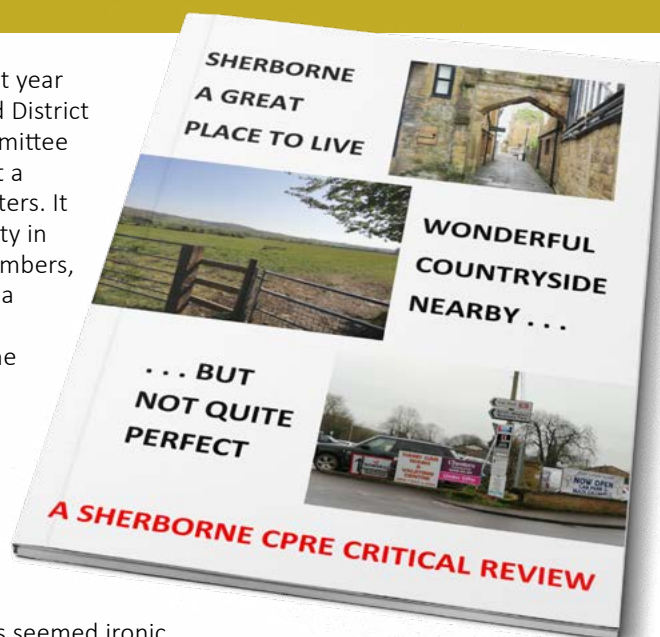
Flag up some of the lesser known features of the town

It was suggested that a critical review should be prepared which acknowledged the town's beauty, but highlighted particular aspects of the town which merited attention and, in some cases, seemed to justify remedial action by the authorities. But it also sought to flag up some of the lesser known features of the town that merited wider appreciation and some "missed opportunities".

COVID-19 made the preparation of the review more difficult, and diminished the opportunity for face-to-face dialogue. Subsequent criticism that owners of properties about which the review expresses concern should have been contacted may be fair, but ignores the practical difficulty of doing so during lockdown. The review seeks to question why some buildings seem to have been neglected or ignored rather than to presuppose the reasons for their current state.

Give their views on what they value

Inevitably the critical review is subjective in its likes and dislikes. However, it invites all those who read it to give their views on what they value, and what they regret, about the current state of the town with the intention that Sherborne CPRE can learn from that and take action accordingly. Hopefully it may also lead to more local people joining CPRE, and already some have done so.



Firework – waking local opinion

To make the review an easy read it was essential that every concern about a site or building should be matched by a photograph. That was achieved in almost every case. It has been pleasing that many of the respondents to the review have commented favourably on the extent to which it enabled them to see for the first time where a missed opportunity had occurred or an otherwise hidden architectural gem was sited. It was designed to act as a firework – waking local opinion formers and decision makers up to some of the eyesores about which there seemed to be complacency, but at the same time alerting them to the opportunities that exist for making improvements, renovation, and renewal.

Getting heritage issues better addressed

Of the 2000 copies printed a majority have been distributed free - firstly to CPRE members and then to local residents in the town centre. The review is also now available to download from the Dorset CPRE website. Inevitably reaction has been mixed, but the vast majority of respondents have welcomed the review. Our "firework with photos" is only the start of what will be a long process of getting heritage issues better addressed, but at least we seem to have made a start, and so far to have avoided a damp squib!

Shaun Leavey

OBE FRAGS



Farming in the Year of COVID-19

Harvest

The NFU predicted the worst harvest since the 1980s with wheat yields down by around a third. Problems began with the wettest February ever recorded after many regions were battered by various storms. The ground was already waterlogged in many areas after a wet winter, and the further downpours meant a poor start to the growing season for many. The sunniest spring on record followed, with the dry weather delaying germination. Matters were compounded by the wet August weather during weeks when many arable farms would be combining their crops. However I have heard of one Dorset farmer on the chalk stating that he had one of his best harvests ever – so locally it seems that that results were very variable!

The predicted fall in yields will leave the UK as a net importer of grain. During the lockdown, farmgate potato prices halved and milk was dumped as the food service industry disappeared overnight. The NFU pointed out that failure to leave the EU without a deal would only compound problems, with a tariff regime spelling disaster for farm exports.

Dorset CPRE needs to be aware that all of this will impact adversely on our local landscape. If conventional farming gets less financially attractive there will understandably be a tendency for farmers to look around for alternative sources of income, and in my experience many forms of “farm diversification” do not enhance the appearance of the countryside.

Environmental Land Management scheme

It now looks as if (contrary to previous expectations) farmers will not be paid for the value of the environmental services they provide. Instead, they will only receive compensation for income foregone and costs. I just wonder if this will be “income



Harvesting in August 2020

foregone” or “profits foregone” – the latter being the term used in the past by MAFF to calculate payments. Probably prompted by a wish (within Defra) for ease of administration this approach undermines the value of the services provided from land and leaves the overall budget for the post-CAP scheme very much open to debate. Direct payments will also be wound down rapidly, with farmers anticipated to lose half of the value of their BPS (Basic Payment Scheme) claims by 2024. In a significant deviation from earlier visions of the scheme, farmers will only be paid for actions and not outcomes. The latest spreadsheet to emerge from Defra indicated 1,261 proposed actions that ELM might cover. I doubt that all of those will survive into the finalised scheme, and remain concerned as to how applicable this new scheme will be for many of our Dorset farmers. At some stage we will need to assess the extent to which assurances (by a government wedded to Brexit) that farmers would be supported just as well – if not better – than they were within the CAP proves to be true.



Sheep in Kimmeridge Bay

The Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme

Defra is now planning for a transition scheme in England prior to rolling out the ELM. Called the Sustainable Farming Incentive it seems mainly geared to farmers not already involved in any agri-environment scheme. Farmers will probably be required to work towards the government’s environmental and net zero goals to qualify for funding. The aims of the Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme indicate that a reasonably large number of farmers may be able to qualify. As of now it is a case of “watch this space”.

Horticulture

COVID-19 and government constraints on pickers from Eastern Europe have had a very adverse impact on production. Most fruit and vegetable growers reported a shortfall in pickers, and a woeful inadequacy by most British pickers to work at the same rate as their eastern European counterparts (if indeed they turn up for work in the first place). We have a crazy situation where we are encouraged to eat more fruit and vegetables, but domestic production is reducing, and is rendered less cost-effective for growers because of government constraints on the number of pickers allowed into the country.

TB control measures

Following a consultation, the government has implemented no-cull zones to reduce the risk of vaccinated badgers being culled in the so-called Edge Area. The NFU has called on the government to 'build policy on the existing evidence and stop giving a false equivalence to vaccination and culling' when it comes to the effort to control the disease. There is a feeling among farmers that the government is pulling back from the badger cull as this decision comes after the previous Secretary of State cancelled a scheduled cull in Derbyshire against the advice of her scientific advisers. Personally I suspect the Prime Minister's fiancée of exercising undue influence as she is known to be an opponent of the cull. Although those who oppose the cull are very vocal they tend to ignore the extent to which a vast increase in the badger population (since it became a protected species under the Wildlife & Countryside Act) has had the effect of dramatically reducing the hedgehog population – badgers being the primary predator for hedgehogs (alongside rotary grass cutters).

Beavers

There has been some concern (including among CPRE members) about the decision by a Defra Minister to authorise the release of beavers into the wild in Devon. My own view is that this is a real issue for Dorset rivers – and in particular for chalk streams across southern England. About 30 years ago there was a resurgence of the animal liberation movement, and activists broke into mink farms and released large numbers into the wild. The escaped mink caused havoc in the local wildlife population. I remember being amazed how quickly and far they spread from where they had been released. One should never underestimate the capacity of an invasive species (think grey squirrels) to multiply massively. In the case of beavers I suspect that could also occur. A few beavers down in Devon building their dams may seem fine, but if they got into trout streams like the Stour, the Test or the Itchen they could be a threat to those rivers that would be difficult to ever properly control.

Self-sufficiency

You may be aware of the NFU statement that if we were to rely solely on British produce to feed the nation in 2020 we would have run out of food on 21st August.

Shaun Leavey

OBE FRAGS
Farming Adviser to Dorset CPRE

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Purbeck and Poole Group



Empowering the Group for 2020/21

Last Autumn our Group held a very successful open meeting for our local Members on 'Rebuilding trust in Dorset's planning system which was preceded by our AGM (maximum 15 minutes!). It encouraged our Group to continue campaigning for sense in local planning and to suit the guidance received from the Dorset CPRE Branch.

Since that time we have, as must be unsurprising, encountered the effects of a global pandemic that have radically reduced the opportunities for our committee to meet and attend events. However the committee did meet twice before the 'lockdown' and have carried on using emails to ensure that appropriate action is taken over matters brought to our attention – either directly or via the Dorset CPRE office. We have remained extremely interested in the next stage of the proposed Purbeck Local Plan, have sought to support planning related issues across the area and used our allocated finances properly and to the satisfaction of the Dorset Branch Treasurer.

'Thank you' to our Committee

As Group Chairman, I now wish to record my thanks for the contributions being made by the committee elected last Autumn who have kindly agreed to serve for another year so long as any other CPRE Member (expressing an interest in our area) can be co-opted. Your committee thus comprises John Larkin, Eve Wilkinson, Sandra Brown, Sue Bellamy, Dawn Skye, Peter Bowyer, Robin SeQuiera, Colin Morgan, Colin Brixton and Gerald Rigler, pending your expression of interest.

May I also take this opportunity (and because of general concerns for safety that prevents the holding of an AGM this year for our Group) to confirm that the Purbeck and Poole Group may consider seeking to adjust its geographical area of interest, depending upon the wishes of various Members in the large conurbation (and adjacent districts) and due consideration by the Dorset Branch as a whole. After all, natural assets in urban areas do help protect other areas in our Country and not forgetting there is an increasing appreciation of the importance of Green Belts and wildlife corridors.

Local Plan

Our Group continues to concentrate on planning issues which, as may be well known, now involves preparation of new and comprehensive Local Plans for our two 'super councils' in Dorset, which we would hope to ensure are even stronger versions of the adopted Local Plan for Poole and the current Local Plan proposals, now being processed, for Purbeck: strong enough to prevent us keeping 'brownfield' sites even longer whilst regrettably losing greener land (largely to unaffordable and unnecessary housing) that worsens existing 'infrastructure difficulties', amongst other things. We know the nation has a 25-year environmental plan but practical interim targets need to be included in local government thinking, for any such long-term plan to have credibility.

Our Group wholeheartedly supports the need for local decision-making (as distinct from centrally imposed requirements) and so **if you can share some of your thoughts / concerns with us, please do not hesitate to let me know.**

NHS Transformation Proposals

Our recent activities have sought (and are seeking) to ensure that the concerns are properly addressed that arise from the centrally imposed (and pre-COVID-19) NHS transformation proposals adversely affecting journey times to the 'state-of-the-art' hospital facilities and services being removed to the Far East of Dorset – not as far as the moon but still too far, given traffic congestion and proposed population increases. This activity seems essential if rural communities are to flourish over the next fifty years – the expected minimum life of the new hospital investments.



Walking along the cliffs of Dorset is fantastic exercise, during lockdown it has also been a great chance to enjoy the beauty of our surroundings, for which we feel so fortunate.

Hicks Farm, Throop Road, Bournemouth

In December 2019, the planning application for change of use to a SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) and formation of an associated Car Park was discussed at the Countryside Forum. I sent a letter of objection to the proposal that seeks to convert a natural green space into an alternative natural greenspace. The application is related to the proposed regeneration of the Winter Gardens site and intended to mitigate for the loss of green space associated with that project.

Lastly, it is trusted you are satisfied with this quasi-AGM for the Purbeck and Poole Group and that as a local Member you will try to ensure we do have support to empower relevant efforts over the next twelve months: until it becomes feasible to hold our next AGM followed by an open-meeting during the Autumn of 2021!

Gerald Rigler

Group Chairman

Dorset National Park



Worbarrow Bay taken by Richard Brown

Dorset CPRE supports a Dorset National Park which would work in partnership with Dorset Council and all stakeholders to bring benefits for our communities, economy and environment Dorset-wide. For example, a Dorset National Park can:

- Work with communities and councils to meet local housing needs including affordable homes for local people.
- Enhance the environment, wildlife, heritage and natural capital which are Dorset's greatest economic asset.
- Help address the climate, nature and health emergencies, and ensure a thriving, sustainable future.
- Attract investment, jobs and skills, bring genuinely additional resources (including core Government funding.)
- Work with and support farmers and land managers to take advantage of "public benefit" farm funding, facilitate appropriate diversification and help improve farm viability.

Planning

Readers are aware of the Government's Planning White Paper, and the findings of Dorset CPRE ORS report (see page 5) which notes that the proposed Government housing targets for Dorset "are in excess of any sensible forecast of local need". These numbers appear to drive Dorset Council towards large housing developments rather than a more distributed approach to building sensitively and appropriately where there is local need.

What difference would a Dorset National Park make? The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) says that where a National Park shares an area with a local planning authority (in this case the Dorset Council), a local methodology may be used for calculating housing need rather than the national formula with its resulting housing targets. So the Dorset Council in partnership with the Dorset National Park could agree on a level of housing development for the **whole of rural Dorset** that appropriately reflects local needs, taking account of household projections and economic aims. National Parks are under a duty to respond proactively to local housing needs and plan in partnership with local communities including on the basis of Neighbourhood Plans.

A Dorset National Park can help improve young people's health and life chances

Recent months have reminded us that access to nature is vital for everyone's health and wellbeing. An ONS survey found that 42% of young people felt that lockdown had made their mental health worse. A recent report shows how National Parks play a vital role in connecting young people with nature, promote mental and physical health, and help improve educational experience, family and community relationships and life chances, and develop resilient, more confident and independent young people. And such schemes are good value: every £1 spent on schemes run by the North Yorks Moors NP resulted in £6 "social returns on investment" for communities, families, councils and the NHS.

The report illustrates some of the benefits a **Dorset National Park** would offer. As a key partner for communities, councils, the health service and others, a Dorset National Park would support a thriving, healthy, greener future for everyone. Dorset Mind says: "We would welcome the increased resources a Dorset National Park would bring, and the new and exciting partnerships it could foster."

Campaign for National Parks calls for progress on the Glover Review

The Campaign for National Parks (CNP) has called for early progress to deliver the government's manifesto commitment to create new National Parks and take forward the Glover Review's recommendations. CNP says "Where a strong and well evidenced case for designation has been made for a new National Park", then Natural England should get on with the designation process. Dorset clearly meets the National Park criteria and is widely regarded as the outstanding candidate.

If any local community would welcome a discussion on the proposed Dorset National Park, a member of the team would be pleased to offer this. Do get in touch at info@dorsetnationalpark.com

The **Dorset National Park Autumn Newsletter** is on the website: <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/news>

Sandra Brown



Portland Waste Incinerator

Since the last Review article in April this year, the Powerfuel plan to build a huge incinerator on the southeastern corner of Portland Harbour has stimulated a large reaction locally and also further afield. As I described before, this so-called Energy Recovery Facility will process 180,000 tons of Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) per year (4 times Dorset's amount so much of it will be imported) and belch out some 570 tonnes of CO₂ a day as well as goodness knows what else. Dorset CPRE has donated a substantial amount to the cause as well as an individual member who was generous in the extreme – and doesn't even live on Portland. I attended a demonstration

on Saturday 12th September on Portland which was very well attended. This was organised by the very efficient local group – Stop Portland Waste Incinerator (SPWI). The main objections are the projected CO₂ figures, the 80 HGV journeys (40 each way) through the tiny main street of Wyke (past All Saints School etc.), the 85-metre-tall chimney, Powerfuel's insistence that the Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) can come from anywhere in the world, and 3 hours' drive time for fuel arriving by road. Not really Dorset's local fuel.

SPWI have commissioned several specialist reports on the planning, ecology and air quality. Comments on the Planning Application WP/20/00692/ DCC need to be submitted by 16th

November. I think the 'bottom line' here is that plastic and other packaging (obviously) needs to be drastically and urgently reduced. Also not a great contribution to Zero Carbon!

Enforcement

Another issue we are concentrating on is the planning (or rather lack of it) for race horse training facilities at Halstock. A great deal of work has been done without planning permission in the hope, and probable expectation, that it will be given retrospectively. We have been disappointed in the lack of action by the Dorset Council enforcement officers to stop much of this development. Again there is a very good local group, Halstock Vale Watch who are leaving no stone unturned. The development includes a gallop not quite in the agreed position, removal of part of an orchard, roads in the wrong place, hard standing with no permission as well as bridges and other buildings. A retrospective planning application number WD/D/20/001239 has been submitted and available on Dorset Council website for comment.

Planning applications

We were involved in an application to build houses in **Drimpton**. We had little objection to these apart from the fact that there was no access for pedestrians, those pushing prams and wheelchairs. These will now have to use a public footpath across a field which will be impossible in winter. In that case they would have to use a local lane which the Highways Department has already deemed as dangerous. So much for pedestrian safety as stated in the Local Plan.

An application in **Askerswell** was a repeat of a similar one 2 years before. It would seem that, in the first application, the contractor had "accidentally" removed a footpath. As the initial application was rejected, we argued that nothing really had changed, especially as the previous application to create an access splay had been rejected by the Landscape Officer. We await the result.

In **Bothenhampton** there was another case of the planning permission being 'stretched'. Retrospective planning permission was refused and the developer will have to undo his work. Dorset CPRE had supported those fighting the retrospective application with a grant of £500 towards legal advice but if it is carried at the appeal every Conservation Area in Dorset, if not the UK, could be subject to appeal. So much for Conservation Areas.

Quiet Lane Status

We have recently supported Watery Lane, Upwey, being given "Quiet Lane Status" – with a 20-mph speed limit and a section being one way. This road has been used as a rat run with the ever-increasing use of cars.

North of Dorchester

The other major development we are involved in is the huge building development planned for North Dorchester – which Persimmon hopes to construct (which is a bad thing in itself). The local group (STAND) continue to be very active. This is a huge and damaging application with some 4000 houses and probably pitiful numbers of 'affordable' homes. The local MP Chris Loder has reservations.

Dr Guy Dickinson

Group Chairman



Portland Waste Incinerator
Demonstration 12th September

Litter Campaigns

Since the last update we have participated in four online Litter Free Working Group meetings, hosted jointly by Litter Free Dorset and Litter Free Coast and Sea, and contributed to discussions on a number of topics and campaigns.

BBQs Burn More Than Bangers

The 'BBQs Burn More Than Bangers' campaign was launched in May this year to coincide with the lockdown restrictions being lifted to remind people that BBQs are illegal on heathlands. Litter Free Dorset (LFD), the Urban Heath Partnership (UHP) and Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) worked together on the campaign to prevent wildfire. On average, Dorset is subject to over 100 heathland wildfires a year, a high proportion of these can be attributed to a heathland barbecue gone wrong. The major incident of Wareham Forest Fire where 220 hectares were destroyed illustrated how much damage can be caused by a disposable BBQ. This campaign has raised awareness that it is illegal to barbecue on heathland and instead promote the use of alternative barbecuing destinations and use.



View from Woolsbarrow Hillfort following Wareham Forest Fire in May 2020



Woolsbarrow Hillfort – Flora Recovering Well After The Fire

'Don't Be A Tos53r' campaign update

In mid-July, LFD launched the 'Don't Be A Tos53r' campaign to positively impact littering behaviour at tourist hotspots across Dorset, reminding the public to take their rubbish home if the bins are full. The campaign was promoted via social media and the artwork was displayed on signs

across the county, at attractions, country parks, car parks and on roadsides feeding into major tourist destinations, such as Swanage, Dorchester and Weymouth. More recently the artwork was installed on ten Dorset Waste vehicles.

Cigarette campaign update

LFD received some funding to develop the 'Bin Your Butt' campaign this Autumn. Litter Free Purbeck and Wimborne War on Waste will be installing posters at bus stops and monitoring the impact. There have also been some beer mats designed for distribution in pubs. The campaign was launched at the end of September.

Education Workshop

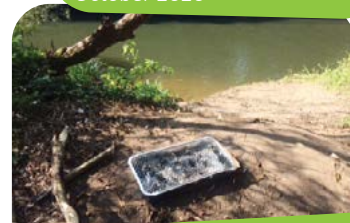
In August we joined a Litter Free Education Workshop to look at what educational activities we are all involved in and how we might do more together in a collaborative way and learn from each other. A workshop is organised for October to create some joint resources targeting secondary schools.

Litter Pick along River Stour in Christchurch

One of our members does a regular litter pick while walking along the River Stour. He sends us evidence of the waste (disposable BBQs, KFC bags and drink cartons) found and picked up on a stretch of the River Stour near Tuckton in Christchurch. He links up with the BCP Ranger who manages this area, and the bag of waste is picked up when the refuse team collect from the dog bin.



Litter collected River Stour October 2020



Disposable BBQ waste found and picked up on another stretch of the Stour near Tuckton in Christchurch.

WhatSUP – Rethinking Single Use Plastic

In our spring magazine we mentioned we supported DEED with a grant of £500 towards staffing and education resources. Much of the work they had planned under this project was unfortunately postponed/cancelled due to COVID-19. Staff returned to the office in October (having been furloughed) and have started working with schools again, but it is tricky!

Luckily, just before lockdown DEED did manage to deliver an assembly to the whole school (65 pupils and 11 teachers) at Witchampton Church of England First School about single use plastics at the start of their science week, and also spent an evening with Ferndown Scouts (14 Scouts and 3 leaders) exploring single use plastics and their alternatives. Both inputs with young people were very successful, and they were engaged, inspired and inspiring! DEED only wished they could have done more!

Rewilding

National CPRE has circulated a discussion paper on Rewilding the countryside.

The landscape of this Country is almost entirely man-made. It does not support wildlife well and there are clear advantages to dedicating substantial areas and corridors to Rewilding to improve the biodiversity and allow nature to heal some of the problems that have been created by man.

The Government's Environmental Land Management Plan, ELM, fits well with their 25 Year Environment Plan. The ELM describes

- (i) small scale proposals such as leaving field margins for wildlife,
- (ii) bigger projects with large farm areas for wildlife, and
- (iii) landscape schemes which the Government may specifically recognise and name for significant contributions to wildlife and ecosystems.

Much of the landscape is covered by arable and dairy farming, by commercial forestry and by built-up towns and villages. Only mountain tops and small patches of ancient woodland remain untouched. There are many small nature reserves where birds, mammals and botany flourish but these make up a tiny fraction of the total area and they do not allow the animals or the botany to migrate to other suitable habitats.

Nature Reserves

A wide variety of nature reserves are managed by the Dorset Wildlife Trust, the RSPB and other bodies. Local Nature Reserves such as Eight Acre Wood in Bovington are looked after by volunteers and are used by local schools. Hyde's Heath at Arne was established recently when a commercial pine plantation was felled and is now part of the 8000 acre Purbeck Heaths Super - National Nature Reserve. There are many other nature reserves of intermediate size throughout the County.

However, most of the nature reserves are fairly small and were established for a specific purpose. Since the end of the last Ice Age we, the population, have used the Countryside for our own purposes and we really should dedicate some of the land to Rewilding and biodiversity. This means essentially letting the landscape return to its natural state with a wide variety of different habitats. But we cannot just put a fence round something and walk away, Rewilding still has to be looked after, see some of the examples below. Unmanaged landscape will revert to thick forest in a few years and that is far from ideal for biodiversity.



Hyde's Heath is returning to heathland after the commercial fir tree plantation was felled

Rewilded areas would allow all sorts of nature to do well

The revision of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) could be used to help landowners to improve the environment with acid grassland, hedgerows and shrub land and especially more heathland, peat bogs and wetland. They could create profitable new businesses such as bird watching, photography, nature walks and education. Fairly extensive Rewilded areas would allow all sorts of nature to do well but it is not suggested for a moment that they should be sufficiently extensive to impact on farming or the food supply for the Nation. Subsidised farming with poor returns may be replaced by profitable tourism for Hotels, public houses, B and Bs and farm shops which deliver permanent jobs across the community throughout the year.

Improving health and well being

Visiting wild spaces and exposure to nature is accepted by the NHS as improving health and well being. People want to see the white tailed eagles, ospreys, pine martins and beavers that have already been re-introduced in various parts of the Country but there are no plans to introduce lynx or wolves.

The geology underlies the landscape and determines what can grow there. Soil is an essential asset and the proposed Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM) provides an opportunity to reward farmers for protecting and regenerating soils. Erosion, compaction and loss of organic matter are the main areas of concern.

Rewilding is being carried out on varying scales in several different parts of the Country.

The Knepp Estate, West Sussex

DEFRA described this as an outstanding example of landscape-scale restoration in recovering nature. The Estate has been left to grow wild now since the year 2000 but Longhorn cattle, Tamworth pigs, Fallow deer and Exmoor ponies have recently been introduced to fertilise, forage and disturb the undergrowth and soil. Twenty years is a very short time in environmental terms but it has already seen the return of turtle doves, nightingales and many species of butterflies and bats. There are also breeding stork, skylark, woodlark, jack snipe, raven, redwing and fieldfare. Beavers will shortly be introduced as part of the natural management scheme for woodland, ponds and water meadows.

Kingfisher Bridge Fen, Cambridgeshire

Water buffalo manage grazing, trample reeds and create paths to improve fish dispersal and improve the feeding grounds for bitterns.

Wild East, East Anglia

Three farmers have a vision to Rewild 250,000 hectares of farmland together with churchyards, barnyards and backyards to reverse post-war losses in biodiversity without the need for subsidies.

Kent Wildlife trust and Wildwood Trust

Bison have been introduced and by felling trees, eating bark and grazing they opened up the landscape to provide a more diverse system for threatened plants and wildlife.



The Ennerdale Valley

This wild valley on the edge of the Lake District has been managed to promote improved structure and diversity of habitats to sustain healthy wildlife and functioning ecosystems. It is also an important amenity for walking, cycling, canoeing, climbing and horse riding.

Burbage Moor in the Peak District

Intensive grazing has been reduced, grouse shooting has stopped and a large blanket bog and hay meadow have been restored. Bracken has been supplanted by bilberry, sphagnum moss and woodland

Urban Rewilding

Small scale sites in cities and towns to green our streets bring nature to our communities and provide great educational benefit. Appropriate green infrastructure should be mandatory in all new developments.

A Green Recovery

Finally, Lord Goldsmith in a recent speech entitled "A Green Recovery" said that the Government will mainstream Rewilding and that

- (i) the Nature for Climate Fund will finance the Rewilding
- (ii) the value of Rewilding will be recognised in the ELM, and
- (iii) the Government will deliver a riparian Rewilding programme with planting on either side of waterways.

The Government will reward, and incentivise a much greater uptake of Rewilding.

Dr John Larkin

Arne Moors Intertidal Nature Reserve



I attended a Zoom meeting of the Stakeholders on 16th September where the main business was an extensive survey by the Environment Agency and others about possible flood risks at Arne Moors and the surrounding areas. They studied bathymetric surveys, groundwater and surface water flows, tidal streams, historic storm surges, and much else. They concluded that the proposed rather modest works on the embankments at the new intertidal reserve would have no effect on these flood levels and that the Government forecast for rising sea levels and changes in rainfall over the next 100 years show that there should be no more flooding between now and 2120.

Ground investigations are continuing with more boreholes and geophysical surveys. The archaeology is being studied and almost all of the necessary embankments will be built with material from the site. Ecological studies of reptiles, birds, bats and botany continue. The next Zoom meeting on 4th November will consider the geomorphology of the area and siltation in Poole Harbour.

Dr John Larkin

Canute The Great and Dorset

As a schoolboy I learnt about King Canute, the Danish ruler of England, and the tides, but very little else about him. It is an apocryphal anecdote which was frequently misinterpreted, not showing him trying to use his supernatural powers to stop the tide, when he sat on the seashore and commanded the tide not to wet his feet, with the sea ignoring him, but actually his humility and powerlessness in the face of nature and god. Henry of Huntingdon recorded the event a century after it occurred, so the accuracy is questionable but very little was known about Canute, or Cnut in Danish, until several books were published recently.

Historians leant upon the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles to tell them about King Alfred, but the Chronicles say little of the late C10 or early C11. It was the Dark Ages when there was a paucity of written records, other than that written by monks, such as the Venerable Bede. There was even less recorded in Scandinavia, given the low level of Latin literacy there. However it is clear that Cnut richly deserved the epithet of “the Great” and rivals Alfred’s reputation as a wise and successful ruler who united England and went on to build an empire covering Norway and Denmark too. This brief account will cover both the reasons for his success, and something of what he did in Dorset.



King Cnut

Invasion of England

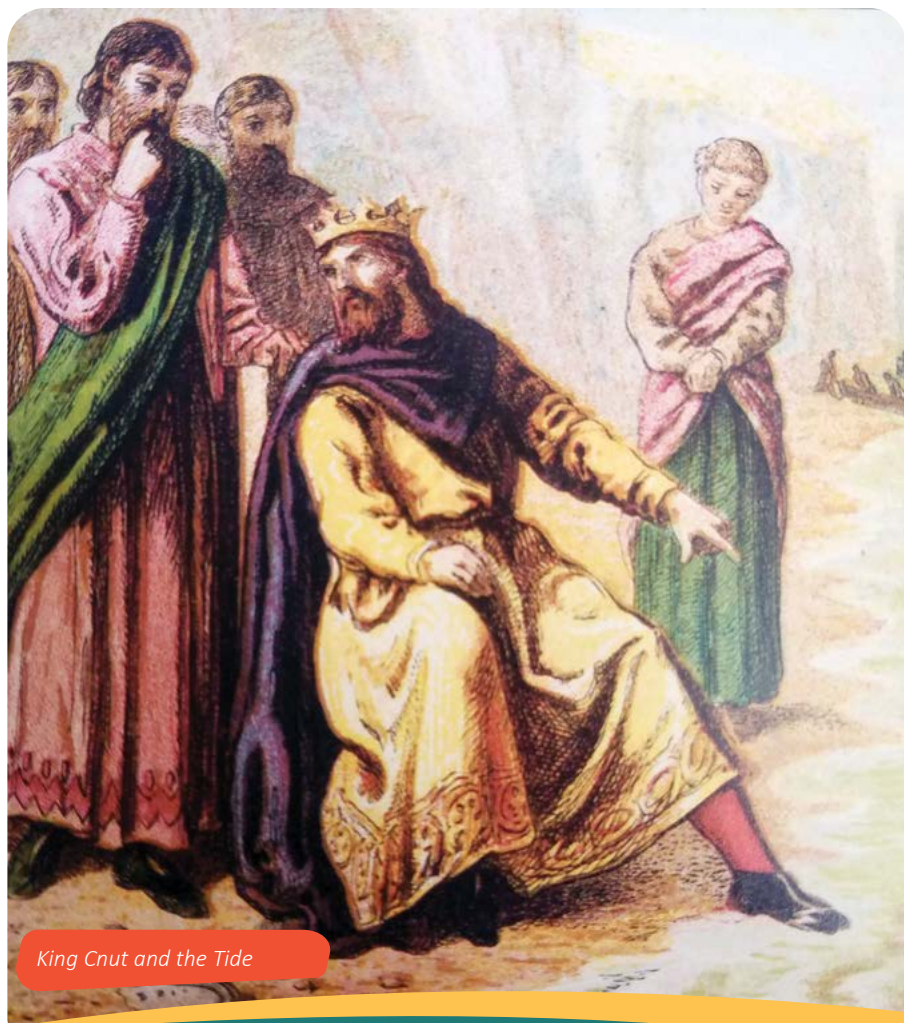
Cnut was the son of the Danish prince, Sweyn Forkbeard, and grandson of the Danish king, Harald Bluetooth. These are wonderfully expressive names, but they reflect the lack of surnames in Scandinavia then. Little is known of him until 1013 when, aged about twenty, he was part of a Viking invasion force led by his father, which swiftly conquered most of England. On Sweyn’s death the following year Cnut was elected king by the Vikings and the people of the Danelaw, which then covered much of eastern England. The English nobility opposed this and recalled King Aethelred The Unready from exile in Normandy. He was certainly a weak ruler but his epithet does not derive from the modern word “unready”, but rather from the Old English unræd meaning “poorly advised”; it is a pun on his name, which means “well advised”. Cnut and his Vikings fled back to Denmark only to return with a large army in 1015, which brutally fought its way across Wessex and then Mercia (middle England). Aethelred unfortunately died in 1016 and his son, Edmund Ironside, only outlived him by a few months. He died probably from wounds inflicted at the climactic battle of Ashington, which Cnut won. Cnut was accepted as king of most of England, and according to the Anglo Saxon Chronicles it was the first reference to “all the kingdom of the English”. A year later he also acceded to the Danish throne.

The country was divided into four provinces with Cnut ruling Wessex, which was his seat of government, with his henchmen given Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria. Initially he had to be ruthless in quashing any dissent, particularly from English noblemen, to cement his power, yet he promoted loyal Englishmen too to keep a balance with his Danish supporters.

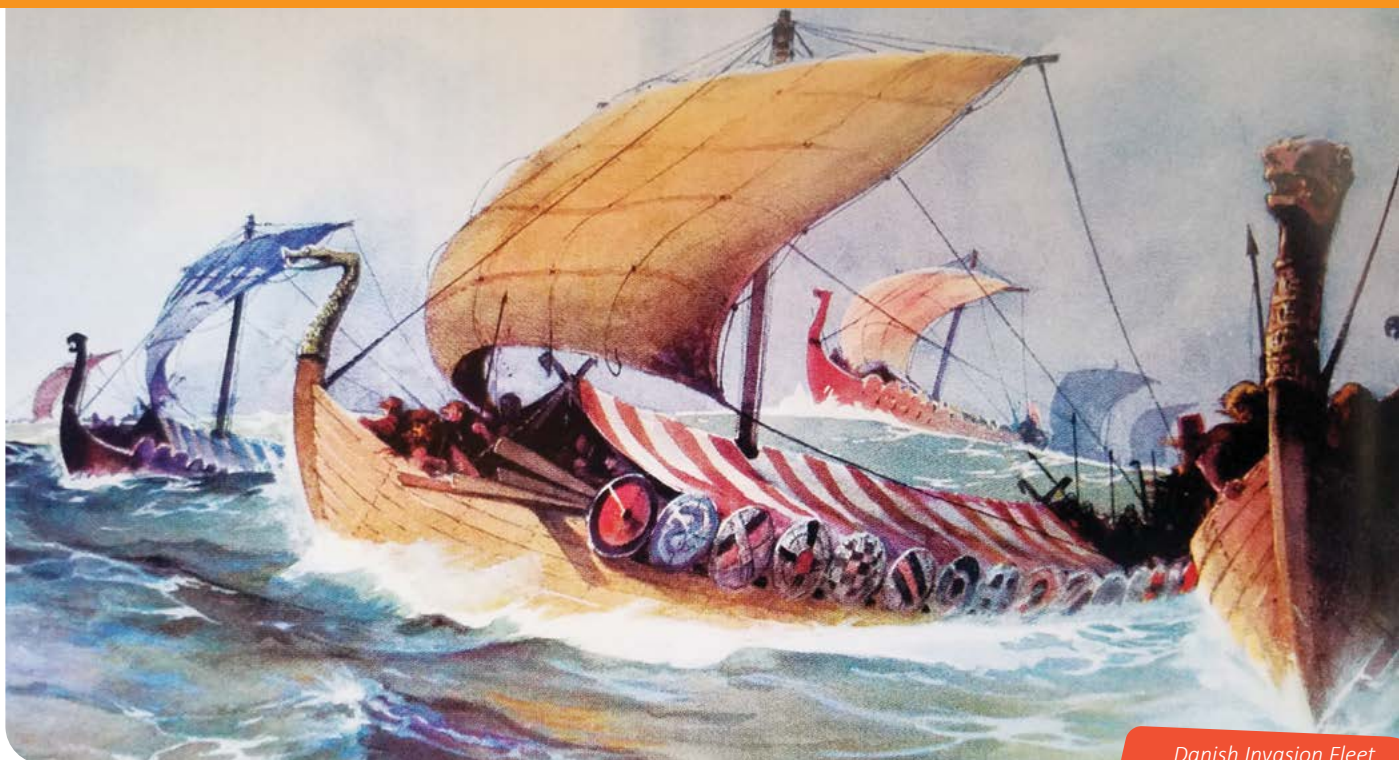
Why So Successful?

Firstly, he realized the importance of dynastic marriages, and the plural here is correct. In 1017 he married Emma of Normandy, widow of Aethelred, and later proclaimed their son, Harthacnut, as his heir. Emma was a remarkable queen, who outlived both of the kings she married, but equally significantly the Norman alliance deprived potential sea raiders from havens on the French coast. However he maintained a marital or “handfast” relationship with Aelgifu of Northampton too to help ensure the loyalty of the English. This bigamous setup worked well for him, but was surprising given his Christian beliefs.

Secondly, he was a statesman who understood the importance of a good relationship with the Church. He was a Christian who repaired most of the churches that were plundered by the Vikings, and was an earnest patron of



King Cnut and the Tide



Danish Invasion Fleet

the monasteries. He even went on a notable visit to Rome to see the Pope. He also recognized the superiority of English bureaucracy and the advantages of centralized government. His dominance in England meant the end of further Viking invasions, at least during his reign, and he bought off thousands of redundant Viking warriors with the biggest ever payment of Danegeld. He reinstated the Laws of King Edgar to allow for the constitution of a Danelaw, so was regarded as a just ruler, and he strengthened the currency. Overall he adopted the best customs and laws of the Anglo-Saxon kings, despite being Danish.

Cnut in Dorset

His invasion of England in 1015 was not forgotten easily in Dorset as he sailed his astonishing large fleet of 200 longboats, carrying 10,000 soldiers, along the coast first leaving Christchurch in ruins. Then he sailed up the Frome from Poole harbour, sacking Wareham. An intense military campaign through Wessex (the kingdom then covered Devon through to Kent) brought it to its knees. The records show he plundered Cerne Abbey then and probably other monasteries. There is a Saxon barn in Cerne Abbas still standing, Beauvoir Court, which did protect many of the local inhabitants from the worst of the violence there. As king however he later became a great benefactor of the abbey. He visited Sherborne Abbey too and supposedly found the roof leaking so badly that the Queen donated 20 pounds of silver for its repair.

One of the Saxon leaders who changed sides in 1015 to support Cnut was Aethelweard, who held estates in Dewlish and possibly Hilton. He was politically ambitious, however, and showed disloyalty to the King so he was outlawed in 1020. One of Cnut's Danish thegns, Orc, was given Aethelweard's land, including Abbotsbury and Hilton, in 1024. Orc's wife, Tola, was a Norman and was probably close to Queen Emma, which might have helped them. Being childless, the couple founded the Benedictine abbey at Abbotsbury, and this abbey owned various local estates and villages. Other thegns of Cnut given

land included Agemund, who later passed his Cheselbourne estate onto Shaftesbury Abbey, while Bovi probably passed his onto Horton Abbey. Saxon secular landowners may have lost out to Danes, but the change in ownership was nothing like the upheaval triggered by the Norman invasion a few decades later, while the monastic institutions did rather well during Cnut's reign.

A time of relative peace

He focused on cementing his rule in Wessex for the first few years of his reign, and only felt confident of leaving Wessex once his heir Harthacnut was born. However given Cnut's other realms, he then left Wessex, and thus Dorset, mostly to others to govern. In particular, Godwin was a loyal Saxon thegn and was made Earl of all Wessex in 1020. Godwin's son was of course Harold II, who succumbed to an arrow on Senlac Hill in 1066. Cnut's reign was remembered in Dorset as a time of relative peace and prosperity after intense fighting between Vikings and Saxons restarting in the late 10th Century.

Cnut was very focused on promoting trade and the currency. After sacking Wareham he was astute enough to keep on the Saxon moneyer, Ælfgar, who had responsibility for the local mint. His coins come up in archaeological digs occasionally. In 2017 the new £5 coin was minted bearing Cnut's head in recognition of his achievements here.

Cnut died in 1035 in Shaftesbury, although he was later buried in Winchester cathedral. Had his heirs not died within a decade of his demise, then Cnut's reign might have been the foundation of a complete political union between England and Scandinavia, with no claims on the English throne by William the Conqueror and the subsequent Norman Conquest. This is wishful thinking of course! For those who would like to read more do buy Timothy Bolton's excellent book, Cnut the Great.

Rupert Hardy

Minerals and Waste in Dorset



This is a summary of our recent work on minerals and waste in Dorset together with a few other items of interest. I have rather little new activity to report.

I have been in touch with the several Stakeholder Groups where I represent Dorset CPRE but many of the meetings that I usually attend continue to be postponed for the time being during these difficult times. Although there have been no formal meetings of some of the Stakeholder Groups all of these various organisations are now up and running and trying to get back to their usual functions.

I attended a Zoom meeting of the Stakeholders of the proposed Arne Moors Intertidal Nature Reserve on 16th September, see page 17 of this Issue; and there is much going on with beavers in various parts of the Country, see below.

Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan 2019

We can do nothing about the various proposed Minerals Sites until a planning application is submitted for one of them.

Imerys Ball Clay Operations Dorset – Community Liaison Group

The extraction of ball clay and sand continues at several the open cast mines in south Dorset and I will prepare a report when the next meeting of this Group is convened.

Toll Bar Stream

I will prepare a report when this work is resumed.

Wytch Farm Oilfield Consultative Committee

The extraction of oil and gas from the oilfield continues and I will prepare a report when the next meeting of this Committee is convened.

Geophysical Survey

The geophysical survey, by the Polish company Geofizyka Torun, of Perenco's Wytch Farm oilfield was recently completed but the analysis of the results will take some while and I will prepare a report in due course.

Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan 2019

We can do nothing about the various proposed Waste Sites until a planning application is submitted for one of them.

Litter Free Dorset

I will prepare a report when the next meeting of the Working Group is convened.

Winfrith Site Stakeholder Group

Normal operations have resumed with 110 employees working on site and others working from home. The decommissioning of the SGHWR and Dragon reactors has recommenced together with the inspection and maintenance of the active liquid effluent sub-sea pipeline. I will prepare a report when the next meeting of the Group is convened.

Dorset Innovation Park Enterprise Zone

Some 651 people presently work at the DIPEZ. The Dorset Council, the Dorset LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and the Home Communities Agency continue to advertise widely to attract new technological businesses to the Site.

Renewable Energy in Purbeck

There is no further news of the Alaska wind turbines.

Arne Moors Intertidal Nature Reserve

See page 17 of this Issue.

Dark Sky Parks

Large parts of rural Dorset have some of the darkest skies in the country and the Dorset AONB would be an ideal site for designation as a Dark Sky Park.

The Trustees are considering how Dorset CPRE might be able to take this forward and whether we should consider using some of the money from a recent legacy.

Mass Extinction Memorial Observatory (MEMO) at Portland

Sir Ghilleen Prance, former Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, is Chair of the MEMO Trust who plan to use some of the artificial rectangular caves of the worked-out Portland Stone Mines as a monument to interpret biodiversity and extinction.

UK's first Super – National Nature Reserve created on the Purbeck Heaths

I hope many of you have already visited this splendid newly designated Reserve which now spreads over more than 8000 acres.

Ospreys in Poole Harbour

I expect everybody has been watching the ospreys who have returned to Poole Harbour on the web camera operated by "Birds of Poole Harbour".

Beavers in the Isle of Purbeck

The National Trust with other partners is seeking the views of local farmers and residents about possibly reintroducing European Beavers in to suitable small rivers in the Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve. Beavers would not venture on to bigger rivers like the Frome or the Stour.

Beavers have been reintroduced, or have reintroduced themselves, in several small rivers around the Country including the River Otter in Devon, the River Teify in Wales, Ham Fen in Kent and the River Tay and several other places in Scotland. They are entirely vegetarian and rarely stray more than a few yards from their river. They improve the biodiversity and do not damage farmland or anything else.

Derek Gow gives a splendid account of the beaver group now established on the border between Devon and Cornwall in his new book entitled "Bringing Back the Beaver".

Dr John Larkin

Brian Warren-Peachey's 100th Birthday

I very much appreciated and was delighted to hear from so many of my colleagues from CPRE with their good wishes and a big thank you for all who sent cards. I had 52 in all including one from Her Majesty!

Despite all the restrictions I still managed to have a very memorable 100th Birthday. Our Vicar allowed us to have a celebration in the church yard with birthday cake and Prosecco. On the 29th September we had a celebration lunch with my family and the following weekend with Jennifer's family.

Brian Warren-Peachey



Congratulations and Best Wishes Messages from CPRE Members & volunteers

I had the pleasure of working with Jennifer Warren-Peachey for six years in Dorchester. Throughout that time her husband Brian was a great supporter of all that she did and a particular help to me as Director. Brian was especially helpful as an adviser on IT and would often help out with some of the technical problems we encountered saving us from having to employ an outside expert. He would design fliers and tickets and would help with the bi-annual Dorset Review. Brian would appear at every event that we organised helping with ticket collection, helping behind the bar or anywhere he was needed. He was a delightful unpaid colleague and very much an unsung member of our small team. It was a great pleasure to know him, a quiet and unassuming man, to have his help and advice and to have him and Jennifer as lasting friends.

CONGRATULATIONS Brian on your centenary and thank you for all you did for Dorset CPRE in years gone by.

Robin Bawtree

As a previous Chair of Dorset CPRE can I wish you a Happy Birthday, and thank you for all the work you have carried out, often unsung, on behalf of Dorset CPRE Your energy and commitment for CPRE is beyond reproach, and when times are less difficult, I look forward to meeting up with both you and Jennifer in the near future.

Richard Nicholls

Brian & Jennifer were great supporters & Brian's photography added a real bonus!
Best wishes,

Dickie Bird



Congratulations Brian – what a wonderful achievement. Brian always carried out his CPRE work with great professionalism and to the highest standards. An enormous asset to Dorset CPRE.

Best wishes from *Peter and Susan Chance*.

A wonderful achievement – it must be what Jennifer is feeding you! Sue and I wish you a very happy day with lots of good cheer. We hope that you have plenty of “puff” to blow out all your candles on the cake.

Love *Sue and Richard (Norman)*

During my four years' chairmanship, I was able to rely on Brian's steadfast help on many occasions and of course also that from our secretary Jennifer, who, very gratifyingly to all of us, became Mrs Warren Peachey. It's wonderful news that Brian has reached the ton, and I send my best wishes to them both".

Howard Thomas

Sending good wishes to Brian. *Stephen Howard and Peter Neal*

Many congratulations on reaching your Century, we do hope that you will have many more Happy Birthdays.

But we do wonder whether you would be willing to divulge your secrets for achieving such a long life to a couple of youngsters like us.

We hope that you and Jennifer are still keeping well.

Sincerely

John and Anne Larkin

Thinking of you both today, a big birthday hug for you Brian on your 100th Birthday. I sent you a birthday card a little earlier in September. Hope you have a fantastic day and can look forward to having a bigger gathering at a later date.

Linda Williams

Alan Hastings Kenyon 1925 – 2020 Dorset CPRE Life Vice-President

Alan was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, on May 6th, 1925. After training as a glider navigator in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War, he moved to Lancashire where he met his future wife, the late Margery Patricia Banks.

During his career in town and county planning, Alan earned the qualification of Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (FRICS), became a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute, and was awarded the honour of becoming a Life Vice-President, Dorset CPRE.

Before moving to Dorset, Alan worked for the County Councils of Sheffield, Warwickshire and Suffolk (Regional Planning Officer). In Suffolk, his most notable contributions were his involvement in the 1961 restoration of Pakenham windmill and the preservation of the Sutton Hoo Viking site in Sutton, near Woodbridge.

Alan moved with his family to Dorchester in 1968 and was Assistant County Planning Officer for 14 years during which time he represented the County Council on Dorset CPRE's Branch Executive Committee for about 10 years.

After his retirement in 1982, Alan was invited to join in his own right and in 1984, he was appointed Chairman. He worked hard to use his experience and influence to minimise the environmental impact of the Wytch Farm oil wells in Purbeck in the heart of Hardy's Wessex. For this he was awarded the Royal Town Planning Institute's Silver Jubilee Award.

Alan and Margery lived happily in Dorchester throughout their long retirement years. His wife Margery passing away in 2016.



Alan was a regular attendee at our AGM in Cerne Abbas. We were very sorry to hear that he had passed away, he was a lovely man and is still remembered now for his work on the establishment of the Wytch Farm oilfield.

Alan passed away peacefully on September 15th, 2020.

Leaving a Legacy

**A GIFT IN YOUR WILL
CAN HELP PROTECT OUR
GLORIOUS COUNTRYSIDE
FOR GENERATIONS TO COME**



© Ian Dagnall/Alamy

If you share our beliefs about protecting our precious heritage of a beautiful countryside, please consider leaving a gift to Dorset CPRE in your will.

Your legacy, no matter what the amount, will help us ensure that developments are sensitive to the countryside, and that housing sprawl is kept in check. With your help, there will be a green, tranquil and beautiful England for tomorrow's children to enjoy.

"The English countryside is an exceptional creation – immensely old, full of surprises and nearly always pleasing to look at. For me, the countryside represents so much of what makes life worth living but how much of it will be left for future generations to enjoy?" Bill Bryson

3 Simple steps to leaving a legacy to CPRE

1. Find a solicitor or other qualified advisor
2. Decide what type of gift you'd like to leave CPRE – a share of your estate or a fixed sum.
3. Take our details with you – your solicitor or advisor will need our full name (Dorset CPRE), address and registered charity number 211974.

Dorset CPRE Membership

New Members — Since April 2020

North Dorset:

Mrs Janie Harris
Mrs Jackie Upton King
Mrs Wendy Convoy

Purbeck & Poole:

Mr Bernard White

West Dorset:

Mr Stephen Larcombe
Ms Sarah Wallis
Dr Frances Hogwood
Mrs Jackie Hunt

East Dorset, Christchurch & Bournemouth:

Mr John Goddard
Mr David Holmes

The Sherborne and District Society:

Mr Mark Smallwood

We also welcome members who have moved from other branches or re-joined during the year.

Deceased Members

North Dorset:

Mr Alan Thomas
Miss Moyra Lyle

West Dorset:

Mr Ralph Browning
Mr Alan Kenyon (see obituary)

The Sherborne and District Society:

Mrs MES Whittingdale
Mr Christopher Ballard
Dr David Butler
Mr DJ Hope-Simpson

Diary Dates

A number of events have been postponed / cancelled due to Covid-19, please visit our website www.dorset-cpre.org.uk for details on re-scheduled dates as they become available. We are constantly reviewing the situation in line with advice from government.

21st November – 83rd Anniversary AGM, 11 am, virtual AGM via Zoom. See enclosed invitation.

Please visit the Dorset CPRE website for 2020 meeting dates for the Countryside Forum and District Groups.

Not already a member?

Joining is the single most effective way to stand up for the countryside. The more you can give, the more we can do to keep our countryside safe. You can join online via our website www.dorset-cpre.org.uk or contact our office on 0333 577 0360 to receive a copy of our membership form. As a member you'll receive our regular Countryside Voice magazine, and enjoy discounted entry to houses, gardens and other attractions around England. The following Dorset properties offer a discounted admission for CPRE Members:



- Edmonsham House & Garden
- Forde Abbey & Gardens
- Mapperton Gardens
- Serles House & Gardens
- Wolfeton House

Visitors are asked to check for individual opening times before setting out as many are seasonal.

Please visit our website for details on how to join or contact our office for a joining form. CPRE Membership also makes an ideal present.

Dorset CPRE Members also receive –

- Two Dorset CPRE reviews per year
- Fieldwork, our quarterly newsletter to help you campaign
- Membership of your local county branch
- Access to our Planning Hotline for advice from CPRE staff

Campaign to Protect Rural England

DORSET BRANCH

Registered Charity No. 211974

PO Box 9018, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 9GY.

Tel: 0333 577 0360

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The views expressed in some of the articles do not, necessarily, represent the views of Dorset CPRE. Many of the articles have been written from a personal viewpoint.

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