

Our London 2016 elections HUSTINGS

On 22 March 2016, CPRE London joined forces with Planning Aid for London and the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies to put on a Hustings event in Central London chaired by environmentalist Tony Juniper.

Over sixty people crowded into the Gallery at our offices in Cowcross Street to listen to what London election candidates had to say and ask questions on issues ranging from climate change to the housing crisis and transport issues.

Val Shawcross (Lab) said the Mayor should intervene if Boroughs decide to build on green spaces contrary to the Local Plan. She also said the Housing and Planning Bill was one of most misconceived pieces of legislation she has ever seen. David Dean (Con) said zero waste is an aspiration and incinerators should not be built; that we should not build on Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land and that he would like to help local communities influence local planning decisions.

Peter Harris (UKIP) talked passionately about the importance of social housing. Caroline Russell said the Greens have committed to a City Hall unit to help communities work on planning proposals to create new homes; and LibDem



L to R David Dean (Con), Annabel Mullin (LibDem), Peter Harris (UKIP), Caroline Russell (Green), Tony Juniper, Val Shawcross (Lab), Georgia Wrighton (CPRE London), Henrietta Billings (Planning Aid for London), Peter Eversden (London Forum)

Alison Mullin said we've had too many tall buildings and not enough affordable housing. And both agreed that there would be no building on protected land if their parties were elected.

We've set out *What we want to hear from the new Mayor of London* in our Mayoral Manifesto which you can see in the resources section of our website www.cprelondon.org.uk

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS for CPRE London Executive Committee

Are you interested in becoming a trustee and Executive Committee member of the branch or an Honorary Officer?

At our AGM on 19 May we will be electing a new Executive Committee and Chair, Vice-chairs, Secretary and Treasurer. If you are a branch member and would like to be nominated please complete the form and send it to Cynthia Jenkins, Hon Secretary, CPRE London, 70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ.
The form must be received by 5 May at the latest.

What does the Executive Committee do?
The Executive Committee manages the business of the branch, including agreeing the budget, employing staff, renting office space, setting strategy and deciding on projects and campaigns. There are four ordinary meetings a year as well as the AGM. It's a good opportunity to become involved in CPRE's work and meet new people. For an informal chat about what's involved please contact Cynthia Jenkins cynthia7jenkins@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 07900 906151.

London CPRE – AGM 19 May 2016 – Election of honorary officers and Executive Committee

I wish to stand for the following position and consent to being nominated (indicate which position you wish to stand for):

☐Chair Vice-chair ☐Secretary ☐Treasurer ☐ordinary member of the Executive Committee

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Name of nominator (must be member of the branch) _____

Please send to: Cynthia Jenkins, Hon Secretary, CPRE London, 70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ



LONDON CALLING

Newsletter of the London branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England
SUMMER 2016



As part of a major new CPRE London campaign, in March we launched our latest report 'The Strongest Protection' which revealed the huge extent of threats to Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.

Our report shows that over 50 protected green spaces in Greater London, including parks, recreation grounds and sports fields, are under threat from development. Alice Roberts, our Green Spaces Campaigner, said. "These are just the sites we are aware of: we think there may be twice that number out there. It's a huge concern. This land was given the 'strongest protection' for good reasons." The report also explains why so much land is currently under threat and what needs to happen to halt the loss of our precious, protected green spaces.

We have been supporting campaigners in Redbridge who are fighting to save Oakfields Playing Fields, currently the council's preferred site to build 1,000 new homes. It is a busy playing fields and has some of the best cricket and football pitches in East London.

The campaign has generated extensive publicity and has resulted in promises from Mayoral candidates. All the leading candidates have made strong promises on enforcing land protections in their Mayoral manifestos: this is a real result.

The battle does not stop here though. We are contacted every week by local residents concerned about a threat to protected land. Over the coming year we must continue to expose the problem; object to inappropriate planning applications; support local campaigners; organise letter writing campaigns and raise the profile of the issue in the media to apply pressure to politicians.

This year we are therefore launching a funding appeal to ensure we can continue to fight this important battle. The report is available in the Resources section at www.cprelondon.org.uk



Our recent report was launched with the help of (L to R) John Croxson, CPRE London Chair; Labour MP Wes Streeting; author of the report Alice Roberts; Conservative Mayoral Candidate Zac Goldsmith; and Jenny Jones of the Greens. LibDem Stephen Knight also spoke at the event attended by over 100 people.

SIGN UP to receive our **FREE Protect London e-newsletter**: it's full of news on planning issues and we will let you know about simple actions you can take to support our campaigning. Follow the 'Join now' button on our website and look for the e-newsletter sign-up on the right.

SUPPORTING LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

HELPING BROMLEY CAMPAIGNERS DEFEND THEIR GREEN SPACES



Local campaigners were delighted that CPRE London generated front page news in the local press in support of their cause.

Our work on Bromley’s Local Plan generated local press interest and hundreds of formal objections. Bromley published proposals in its draft Local Plan to build on 17 protected sites including playing fields, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, ancient woodland, a site of historic importance and allotments. Working with the Bromley Friends Forum and Bromley Common Allotments Association, we called on our supporters, friends and Bromley residents to respond to the consultation. This generated a major response with over 300 downloads of our document and even the London Wildlife Trust and Woodlands Trust writing to Bromley Council.

WE HELPED SAVE HOUNSLOW HEATH

Our objections, which featured in the officer’s report, helped local campaigners to save green belt land at Hounslow Heath from proposals which included 600 car-parking spaces. In a short space of time, over 80 people downloaded our draft letter they could use to object. The Planning Application was refused by the Council in March 2016, despite the Planning Officer recommending it should be permitted. The primary reason for refusal relates to the loss of access, one of the main points raised in our objection that had been included as part of the Planning Officer’s report.

SAVING LONDON’S PARKS: SUPPORTING LONDON PARKS FRIENDS GROUPS

Alice Roberts, Our Green Spaces Campaigner, was on TV in February explaining the little known fact that no-one has responsibility for maintaining parks, not even local authorities. Alice said “With cuts to local authority budgets, councils are being forced to focus their funding on the things they are obliged legally to do. And because councils are not legally bound to maintain parks, funding has shrunk to almost nothing. “So, working with London parks friends groups, we are calling for

the new Mayor to create *Parks for London* which would make sure that someone does have responsibility for London’s parks and that funding is available for their maintenance.” As part of our Mayoral Election Manifesto, we are also asking the new Mayor to establish a London Parks Festival, to fund the regeneration of one of London’s major parks every four years and to create 5 new parks or commons for London from under-used, wasted and neglected green spaces.



Alice appeared on London Live to talk about the need for the new Mayor to take responsibility for London’s parks

SUPPORTING KINGSTON CAMPAIGNERS TO PRESERVE THE VIEW FROM RICHMOND HILL

Campaigners in West London are concerned that high rise development in Kingston is impacting on the historic view from Richmond Hill and that the council is permitting developments which are out of keeping in terms of scale and the character of the area. Supporting their work, in December 2015 we launched our report ‘The Arcadian Thames: Planning Policy Ignored?’ which showed how the Government’s new, liberalised National Planning Policy Framework

CPRE London’s report on the Arcadian Thames which helped give exposure to the local campaign



is allowing Kingston Council to push development forward as a priority against other important policies aimed at protecting green and historic assets. Andree Frieze of Kingston Residents’ Alliance said: “This report accurately highlights what residents of Arcadian Thames, and particularly Kingston, have experienced for themselves. London needs homes, Kingston needs homes, but not ones that breach guidelines over size and which will destroy the landscape for future generations.”

CPRE in the City

Shortly after I became a trustee I discovered that the Branch planned to use a generous legacy for a research project called ‘Liveable Cities’. I later discovered we had published reports in 2001 and 2006 entitled ‘Compact Sustainable Communities’. So I thought: what exactly is the connection between protecting rural England (or the countryside, as I prefer to say) and campaigning for compact sustainable communities? And how did that fit with protection of the Green Belt?



Thoughts from our Chair, John Croxen

The National Planning Policy Framework states one of the purposes of Green Belts is “to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land”. In slightly different words, to steer development away from Green Belts into existing urban areas.

But looking at the national CPRE strategy document I found few urban themes beyond ‘Brownfield First’. Looking at the other CPRE branches, which are based on geographical counties, few were taking much interest in how the cities within their borders were developing.

CPRE’s new ‘urban network’ So CPRE members from branches all over the country decided to meet and explore whether we can add a new dimension to our countryside campaign. We want to make sure that our cities (and towns) do not sprawl into and spoil their surrounding countryside. It is called the Urban

Network. Our first decision, supported by CPRE nationally, has been to have a pilot project centred on CPRE Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

In my view CPRE nationally needs to recognise that it is very difficult to protect the countryside without getting involved in how our growing towns and cities are planned. We need to escape the NIMBY label and deliver urban messages which are positive contributions to the big debates about housing and growth; where it should go and how it should feel. I think it is one of the most exciting challenges that CPRE has faced since its foundation 90 years ago.

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