

SUPPORTING LOCAL CAMPAIGNS



"I try to offer as much support as possible, giving advice and guidance but also helping raise the profile of local campaigns by talking to politicians and journalists about them."

Alice Roberts, CPRE London Green Spaces Campaigner



Keith Bilton,
Committee Member,
Enfield RoadWatch

"I felt I needed to preserve this land for future generations."

Enfield RoadWatch was formed initially to prevent the inappropriate building of 300 homes and a secondary school on precious Green Belt land in Enfield. We are not opposed to building schools or housing but believe all avenues should be explored before destroying the Green Belt is considered. In conjunction with CPRE, we have assisted similar groups and brought the attack on Green Belt to the forefront of local news. We will continue to campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of Green Belt, not just that in Enfield. www.enfieldroadwatch.co.uk



Susan Lofthouse,
Secretary, Battersea
Park Action Group

"Our success shows what sheer hard work and determination can do!"

Battersea Park Action Group's hundreds of supporters took action when Wandsworth Council ignored the protests of residents and permitted what campaigners called a 'totally unsuitable event, Formula E car racing, to be held in the Victorian Grade II Listed Park, partially closing it. After hundreds of letters, thousands of petition signatures, press, TV and radio coverage and a planned Judicial Review, Formula E withdrew from its five year contract with the council and work is now underway to remove the extra tarmac and plant trees, grass and shrubs. www.savebatterseapark.com



Dr Chris Nutt, Secretary,
Save Oakfield Society

"The campaign has attracted thousands of supporters and the interest of the press and TV."

Chris set up the Society two years ago to save Oakfield which is a high quality sports ground of 62 acres in the Green Belt of Hainault Fields in East London enjoyed by thousands of people every week. Chris said: "It is protected by a restrictive crown covenant and registered as an asset of community value, yet Redbridge Council has listed it as a development opportunity site. We have a strong case and are now awaiting the call of the Planning Inspector sometime in the Summer." www.facebook.com/SaveOakfieldSociety



Carolyn Brown is
campaigning to
save Warren Farm
in West London

"Ealing Council should not be able to give away a public asset in this way."

Ealing Council plans to lease these 61 acres of publicly-owned land to the commercial organisation QPR Football Club, for 200 years at no rent and for a time-limited, unspecified, investment in community sport. It is protected Metropolitan Open Land, part of Brent River Park, designated Community Open Space and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation supporting a diverse grassland ecosystem. Carolyn has fought against huge odds, is still fighting and currently raising funds to appeal a court decision. www.crowdjustice.org/case/appeal-to-save-warren-farm



Newsletter of the London branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England
SUMMER 2017

GREEN LONDON

Leading the defence of London's Green Belt

CPRE London's new partnership with seven other CPRE branches and the London Green Belt Council has made a huge impact in its first year.

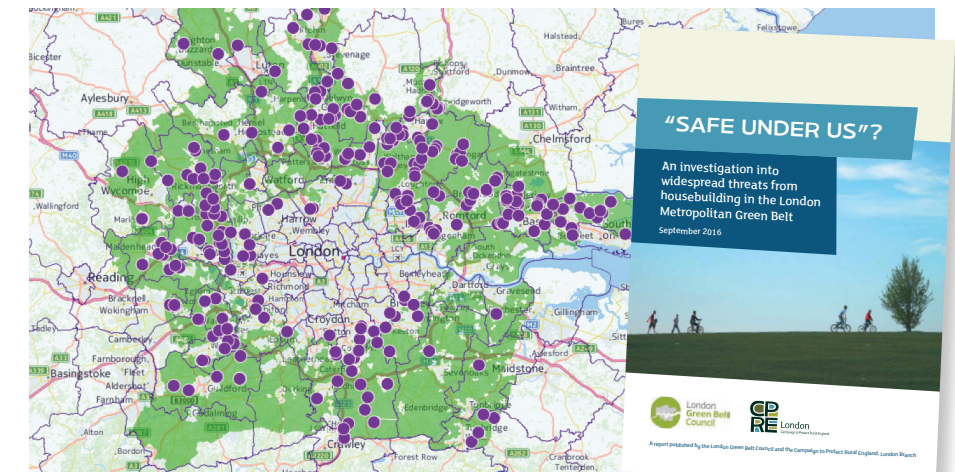
To help raise awareness of widespread threats to London's Green Belt, in May 2016 we published a map highlighting over 200 sites in London's Green Belt threatened with development.

This gained national media coverage and exposed the current situation. You can see the map at www.londongreenbeltcouncil.org.uk.

In September, we launched a follow-up report *Safe Under Us?*: an investigation into widespread threats from housebuilding in the London Metropolitan Green Belt which showed how Government housing and



Theresa Villiers MP and CPRE campaigner Alice Roberts at the launch of *Safe Under Us*.



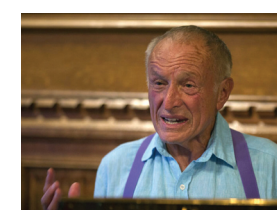
Our map and report created national headlines and ensured MPs and others know about extent of the threats to Green Belt.

planning policies are undermining Green Belt protections. Baroness Jones kindly sponsored a launch event in the House of Lords which was packed with campaigners, MPs and Peers.

Widespread interest from the media and MPs meant the Government was forced to change its tune and acknowledge the scale of the threat.

Campaigners and MPs used the evidence in the report to write to and question Ministers. This helped to ensure the Green Belt protection was not weakened in the recent Housing White Paper.

The influential architect Lord Richard Rogers spoke in defence of the Green Belt at our launch event.



It looks positive that funding will be secured to continue this campaign into the year ahead. Contact our Green Belt Campaigner Catherine Maguire on catherine@cprelondon.org.uk to find out more or to report threats to Green Belt in your Borough.



We are delighted to welcome Neil Sinden as our new Director. Neil has extensive experience of environmental campaigning and urban regeneration including at CPRE National Office. Neil said "CPRE London performs a vital role and I look forward to working with trustees, staff and members to make London a greener city."

Campaign to Protect Rural England London

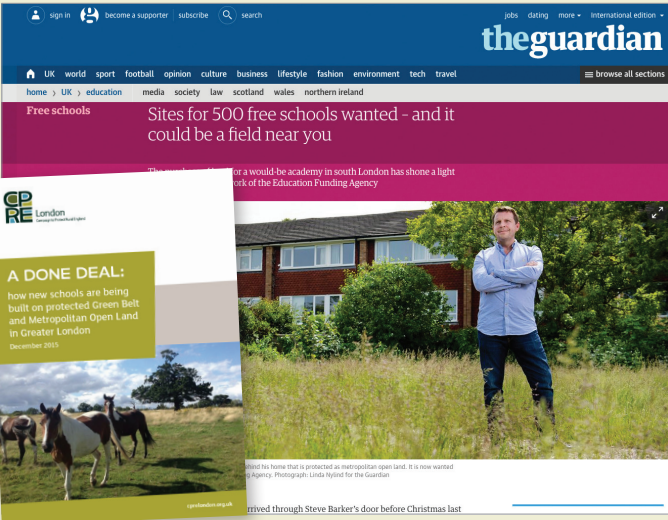
70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ 020 7253 0300 office@cprelondon.org.uk @CPRELONDON CpreLondon www.cprelondon.org.uk

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CPRE London makes national news!

This year, our Green Belt map and reports made national headlines in the Daily Telegraph and our revelations that the Government is buying London's protected land for free schools appeared in the Guardian. Meanwhile the Sunday Times interviewed our Green Spaces Campaigner Alice Roberts about the reports, often funded by developers, which use 'highly selective evidence' to argue that the only way to solve the housing crisis is to build on Green Belt. Alice was quoted as saying: "the public see reports from reputable organisations and understandably think they are objective... They don't realise they are essentially a front for the industry."



Evidence in our report, *A Done Deal*, showed how the Government is buying London's protected land for free schools. We put a Guardian journalist in touch with local residents in Greenwich who were affected by this issue and helped secure much needed publicity for the campaign.



CPRE London Campaigner Alice Roberts has made a number of TV appearances explaining that we have enough brownfield land in London to keep building new homes at current rates for 20 years.



Shoreditch Park in Central London where the council is proposing to build over the now derelict ball courts. Dereliction can lead to a cycle of decline which sadly ends in permanent loss of green space, even in a park like this which is the only green space in a large, built up area.

Photo by D1v1d on Flickr

Thoughts from our Chair, John Croxen



We are seeing a reduction in levels of maintenance; reduced opening times; closure of toilets; and increased litter. Staff levels have been cut.

The response of some authorities has been to allow more commercial activities in order to raise money. Some authorities plan to sell off sites for housing, again to raise money. In some cases only a small proportion of the income has been reserved for the parks service, with the bigger balance going to support other council services.

The Committee concluded that the Government should play a role in 'providing vision, leadership and co-ordination', but stopped short of suggesting the injection of additional cash. And that is the problem. It is about money.

CPRE London has been working recently with the London Green Spaces Friends Groups Network to mobilise public opinion to campaign both for councils to be required to maintain public parks and for them to be given sufficient resources.

Parks are well-used by local communities and they provide much needed green spaces where families can escape for fresh air and exercise. There is clear medical evidence that green spaces and trees contribute to better health and well-being.

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Last year we promoted the idea of the Mayor and the GLA establishing Parks for London (PfL) – like TfL (Transport for London) – as a separate entity with a budget and staff to help improve all

London parks in co-operation with the boroughs. Given the emphasis in the Select Committee's report on co-ordination, that might be a good way forward. The Mayor would be well-placed to attract private funding as well as contributing some of his discretionary resources.

Last year the Communities and Local Government Select Committee invited evidence about the impact of reduced local authority budgets on open spaces. More than 180,000 people submitted evidence.

The key demand was for the Government to make it a statutory duty on local councils to protect and maintain public parks.

Cuts to local authority budgets are having a profound effect on most services. We have already seen the impact on libraries with many closures and appeals for volunteers. The effect on parks has been more gradual and in some respects less obvious. The budget cuts are, however, real and increasing.

The Mayor and London Assembly get behind our campaign to save protected green spaces

Last year our campaigning generated a promise from London Mayor Sadiq Khan to protect London's green spaces. Since then, we have worked with Assembly Members to raise awareness of important cases and gain support for residents' campaigns like Rosehill Recreation Ground in Sutton and Oakfield Playing Fields in Redbridge. In February 2017 the London Assembly underlined its commitment to save Green Belt when Assembly Members sponsored a *Green Belt of the Future* event in City Hall. Speakers, panellists and delegates reaffirmed a pledge to protect the Green Belt and shared ideas about how we can improve its value so that its benefits are shared by all Londoners.



Our regular contact with City Hall and politicians including Nicky Gavron and Tony Devenish has helped save protected land across London