

CESHIRE

VIEWPOINT

AUTUMN 2017



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
Standing up for your countryside

CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND CHESHIRE BRANCH

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ROYAL CHESHIRE SHOW

CPRE Cheshire Branch returned to the Rural Activities Marquee at this year's Royal Cheshire Show, and we were joined by the Mid Cheshire against HS2 campaign group, who helped us to highlight our many concerns over the route between Middlewich and Northwich, which is set to pass above the salt mines, brine wells and canal.

The hot and sunny weather brought in a large crowd, and we had many interesting conversations with members of the public.

For more on HS2 and our local landscape, see page 6

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



We had an enjoyable walk along the Trent and Mersey Canal to see the impact of HS2. Report on page 7.

This raised public awareness and we were pleased that Antoinette Sandbach MP secured a debate about this.

One of the major issues to come out

of the debate, which was held in Westminster Hall, was the major problems caused by geotechnical issues on the route chosen by HS2 Ltd, as highlighted by the Eddisbury MP (quoted below).

Antoinette Sandbach If phase 2b is to go ahead, it is vital that it be done properly. At such a high cost to the taxpayer—£55.7 billion—and with budgets having risen significantly since High Speed 2 was first announced, the route must be designed so as to avoid unnecessary cost to the taxpayer.

The proposed route of HS2 through my constituency of Eddisbury will not only cause significant environmental damage and noise disruption to many areas, but come at a particularly high cost to the taxpayer because of the unique geotechnical challenges of routing HS2 through an area of current and historical salt mining and across land with a long history of significant subsidence risk. HS2's route through Eddisbury must be looked at again, and the serious and valid concerns raised by independent experts, academics and local people need to be taken into account to find a route that works better both for the local communities and for the taxpayer....

...I also wish to raise the decision last year to realign the route through Eddisbury 800 metres to the west, and the concerns that have been raised about taking it through an area with a greater amount of wet rockhead—unstable ground liable to subsidence as a result of salt. HS2's decision to move the route came about because the original 2013 proposed route went through the area where the UK's strategic gas reserves are stored. It was of course practical to move the route

away from the gas reserves, but moving it 800 metres to the west has caused other problems, because it still goes through an area with geotechnical challenges that are not easy to engineer around and where there will be a significant cost to the communities and the taxpayer.

TerraConsult Ltd produced an independent geotechnical report on the proposed change of route and concluded that there would be an increase of 11% in the route length over wet rockhead. HS2's lead ground engineer has called the ground conditions in the Cheshire salt area "spicy", referring to the engineering challenges of building a high-speed railway line in that area, and HS2's own consultant, Wardell Armstrong, recognises the risks of building HS2 through Eddisbury in its report on salt-related ground instability.

The Government must recognise the risks in the area and move the route away entirely. Alarming, before making route choice proposals, HS2 had not done any detailed ground surveys for use as a baseline to track ground movement. As far as I am aware, those surveys have still not been carried out.

The engineering challenges require significantly increased height and length of the embankments and viaducts—up to 26 metres. There will be two additional crossings of the Trent and Mersey canal, one at the location of previous subsidence at Billinge. That comes at an estimated additional cost to the taxpayer of £750 million and significantly increases the noise and visual damage for communities. The route alternatives set out in the TerraConsult report should be looked at and given serious consideration.





THE REGIONAL VIEW

**Regional Chairman Peter Raynes asks:
Can we preserve our historic Cheshire
Countryside for the next Generation?**

As members of CPRE we all have a love for the Countryside around us, the green lanes and hedges that were built up over centuries to make a unique legacy and give us such pleasure to our daily lives.

However, the Countryside is also ever changing with new methods of farming and new demands for food production.

Farming is not an ordinary industry; it uses 70% of the land area of England to produce £9 billion of foodstuff but also creates employment and wealth through tourism and the food and drinks industry, and provides us with space for recreation.

These wide ranging uses and the public benefit farming provides have long been recognised, and since 1973 public policy has been supported by direct payments to farmers through the Common Agricultural Policy. With the referendum to leave the EU the CPRE has the opportunity to influence a new national policy to shape the Countryside for the future.

The indication at the moment is that Government is listening to environmental groups and will channel public money to provide public



benefit, enhancing payments that will protect the landscape and wildlife of the Country. The final policy will have to balance these wishes with the economics of maintaining farmers' livelihoods and sustainable food production but the case for more emphasis on the environment is compelling.

The CPRE has already published two reports giving ideas on this crucial subject. Both papers can be found on the National Website and links are provided at the end of this article.

The first paper entitled –“New Model Farming: Resilience through diversity” reviews the effect of subsidises based largely on production volume. As examples 200,000 miles of hedgerows removed from 1947 to 1990, and the dramatic loss of plants and wildlife in the Countryside. Even now, despite many changes in the C.A.P only 15% of subsidy goes for environmental benefit, with 85% being directed to big arable farms many which are able to make profit without subsidy.

The next paper – “Uncertain Harvest does



New model farming: resilience through diversity



FOOD & FARMING FORESIGHT – Paper 1



Uncertain harvest: does the loss of farms matter?



FOOD & FARMING FORESIGHT – Paper 2



the loss of farms matter” examines the trend for farms to become ever larger. Historically this has probably been seen as inevitable and part of creating a modern efficient farming industry. The paper considers whether the negative effects in reducing the opportunities for new farmers to enter the industry or the lost opportunity of smaller scale but high quality food production need to be looked at in the system that will replace the Common Agricultural Policy. If this is a subject that interests you do look at the reports and should you wish to join the debate you will find the contacts for National Office in the reports

or write to me via the Cheshire Branch Office.

Web links for reports:

Uncertain Harvest: <https://tinyurl.com/uncertain-harvest>

New Model Farming: <https://tinyurl.com/new-model-farming>

HIGH SPEED RAIL & CHESHIRE BRINE

CPRE Cheshire and Mid-Cheshire against HS2 organised a walk on 7th July, led by geologist Ros Todhunter, enabling members to see the signs in the local landscape indicating the subsidence that is a consequence of the Mid-Cheshire Brine Field's underlying geology.



The geological history of the area makes it particularly challenging to build upon; even the lead ground engineer for HS2, Nick Sartain, has described it as 'spicy'! The original proposed route for the area crossed the Holford Gas storage plant, which is of national strategic importance to help the country manage its energy reserves, so a new route has now been approved which avoids this area. However, the terrain which the realigned route traverses crosses a longer stretch of the Cheshire brine field and throws up further issues.

Not only will the route, much of which is to be raised up on high embankments and viaducts, be challenging, but costs will be significantly higher in the 'wet rockhead' sections of the route, where some of the underlying rock salt has dissolved, leaving voids or weakened sections. The route also crosses above the salt mine in Winsford and areas of brine extraction for the chemical industry in Middlewich, and other strategically important gas storage facilities. In order to ensure that the foundations of the viaducts would be secure, piles would need to be driven over 100 metres down into the ground across the wet rockhead area. The salty groundwater gives additional challenges, as it is more corrosive than normal groundwater.

It was fascinating to look round at the familiar Cheshire countryside and see the signs of subsidence all around, from the railway bridge in Whatcroft (depicted below) that has been repaired on both sides and rebuilt because it has settled up to 82cm on one side and 60cm on the other to flashes, hollows and dips in the ground to which a walker wouldn't necessarily give a second glance, but which signal warning shifts in the



underlying ground to a geologist.

Branch members Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan kindly supplied refreshments at their home halfway through the walk along the Trent and Mersey Canal, and the weather was beautiful.

Eddisbury MP Antoinette Sandbach se-

cured for a special debate in the House of Commons wherein she highlighted the findings of the TerraConsult report, and called for the route to be realigned owing to the significant extra cost of routing the line across the brine field. Branch Chairman Andrew Needham is to attend a meeting with HS2 at Lostock Gralam to ask why HS2 has ignored the geological report by TerraConsult which warns of the potential for the rapid development of significant ground movement and subsidence in the Middlewich to Northwich section under the weight and vibration of trains, with a consequent risk rating as high.

The issues with HS2 are not confined to the stretch of Mid-Cheshire outlined above! Cheshire and Lancashire Branches CPRE have submitted a joint response to the HS2 Phase 2b: Crewe to Manchester and West Midlands to Leeds draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scope and Methodology Report (SMR) consultation, which sets out the methodology proposed for determining the likely environmental impacts. Both branches regard the scope of the EIA as too limited, due to their inadequate consideration of alternative options. We call for an up-to-date analysis of east to west rail options to support improved connectivity within the North and to support rail freight from the port of Liverpool2.

We believe the Government should focus investment on a proper transport 'network', providing cross-country links to help the city-regions link together, rather than a system that simply links London to all major towns. Read our full response here: <http://tinyurl.com/ChesLancsHS2>

OUT & ABOUT IN CHESHIRE

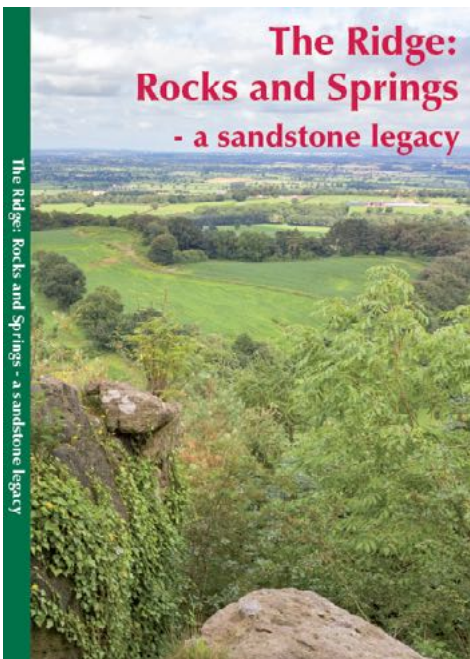
The hills of the Sandstone Ridge are visible from most of Cheshire, contrasting with the low-lying plains which make up the bulk of the county. You can now find out more about the geology and history of the hills in a new publication from the Sandstone Ridge Trust.

The Ridge: Rocks and Springs - a sandstone legacy is available either as a free download from the website or in printed form from information centres and local libraries, or direct from the Sandstone Ridge Trust. It summarises the work of the three-year lottery funded project of the same name.

The book is packed with interesting historical facts about the different locations along the ridge. We now tend to see quarries as a blot on the landscape, but the book explores 2000 years of quarrying from Roman times to the present, highlighting all that we can learn about our past by reading the marks that remain and combining that information with what we can glean from historic maps to build a picture of the area through the ages. Further back in time, the ridge contains prehistoric rock art which (although on a much smaller scale) is compared with that from the Tsolido Hills in Botswana, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. And there are amusing oddities, like the article about Whistlebitch Well in Utkinton, which supposedly had medicinal water that tasted of liquorice that would cure all manner of ailments.

The book concludes with nine short walk routes which can be tackled separately or as detours from the ridge trail.

Download the book, and other leaflets about the Sandstone Ridge, from <http://www.sandstoneridge.org.uk/publications.html>



A more modern route through Cheshire can be followed on the Mid-Cheshire railway line, which runs from Chester to Manchester. Although it takes longer now to get from Chester to Manchester than it did in the early 1960s, the mid-Cheshire line is well used and connects market towns and tiny villages with the cities at each end. A new booklet and website has been produced by the Mid-Cheshire Community Rail Partnership and encourages people to take a relaxing trip, not just to use the line for commuting, but to leave the car at home and ‘Meander the Mid-Cheshire Line’.



Both improving public transport and reducing the number of cars on the road and getting people out and about in the countryside to ensure that they appreciate and wish to protect it are key campaigning priorities for CPRE nationally, which makes this initiative all the more relevant to our members.

The booklet is illustrated by striking images, created by artist Nicky Thompson, and inspired by the work of Frank Henry Mason, which hark back to the vintage railway posters of the golden days of rail by using bold designs and flat colour, incorporating both historic and contemporary buildings. By contrast, some of the locations are illustrated with watercolours by Bernice Barrett-Brown and Gordon Wilkinson.

The text is written by John Hulme BEM, who was honoured in the Queen’s 90th Birthday Honours for services to railways in Cheshire, and is filled with anecdotes and personal recollections about the destinations as well as



advice on continuing your journey to local attractions by bus when the station is too far away to walk.

Visit <http://www.marvellousdaysout.org.uk/> to read the booklet and check the timetable for your trip.

If you’re interested in improving local transport in your area, visit <http://transporttoolkit.cpre.org.uk/> to download CPRE’s Transport Toolkit.

JOIN CPRE

We're delighted you want to join CPRE and help us to stand up for the countryside. **CPRE membership starts at £3 per month.**

CPRE CHESHIRE BRANCH MEMBERSHIP FORM

Title: _____ First Name: _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

We would like to write to you to keep you updated on what we are doing to protect the countryside, including our campaigns and fundraising. If you would prefer not to receive certain communications from us, please call our Supporter Services Team on 0800 163680 or email supporterservices@cpre.org.uk.

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

☐ Please tick here if you are happy for us to contact you by phone

☐ Please tick here if you are happy for us to contact you by email

Please be assured that we will never sell or share your contact details with anyone outside CPRE.

If you would also like your partner and/or family to enjoy CPRE membership, please add their details below. We recommend a minimum of £5 per month membership if you are adding additional names.

Name: _____ (D.O.B. if under 16)

_____ / _____ / _____

_____ / _____ / _____

Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate. Simply tick the box and complete the declaration below. Thank you!

giftaid it

☐ Treat as Gift Aid all donations and subscriptions I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

If your circumstances change, or you want to cancel your declaration, please contact us on 0800 163680.

Full name of taxpayer: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete payment information overleaf

Direct Debit is the easiest way to pay and helps us to plan our work, but we also accept payments by cheque or debit card. Please complete the relevant section below.

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT

I wish to pay a Direct Debit of (please tick as appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> £3 per month	<input type="checkbox"/> £5 per month	<input type="checkbox"/> £10 per month
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I'd rather pay £_____ per month/year (delete as appropriate)

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit:

To: The Manager, _____ Bank/Building Society

Address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Name(s) of account holder(s): _____

Sort Code:

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 Account Number:

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Service User Number:

7	2	4	2	4	5
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Reference: (for office use only)

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Instruction to your Bank or Building Society: Please pay CPRE Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction will remain with CPRE and my details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) _____

_____ Date _____

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Please tick chosen annual membership rate below, and indicate how you will pay.

£36 (equivalent to £3 per month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
£60 (equivalent to £5 per month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
£120 (equivalent to £10 per month)	<input type="checkbox"/>
£_____ per year	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ I have enclosed a cheque made payable to CPRE
☐ OR I wish to pay by Credit/Debit Card

Card type (please circle): Visa / Mastercard / Amex

Card number:

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Expiry Date:

Start Date:

Security Code:

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Name on card _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete this form and return to:

Freepost Plus RTCK-UBXX-BBCR, Supporter Services, CPRE,
 5 Lavington Street, London, SE1 0NZ

CHESHIRE BRANCH AGM

Thanks to all the members who attended this year's Branch AGM which was held at High Legh Village Hall on the evening of Wednesday,

May 17th. The following members were elected or re-elected to the Executive Committee for the coming year:

Chair: Andrew Needham

Treasurer: Derek Goldstraw

Trustees: Randal Hibbert

Martin Dearden

Peter Moore Dutton

Peter Raynes

Jacqui Johnson

Rev John Whitehead.



Andrew Needham, with Neil Parry and Rod Tann of the Wirral Society



Jackie Copley and Nick Thompson

Following the business agenda, Nick Thompson (Lancashire Branch Chair) and Jackie Copley (Planning Officer, CPRE Lancashire) gave an interesting presentation focusing on devolution and CPRE's new Urban Network.

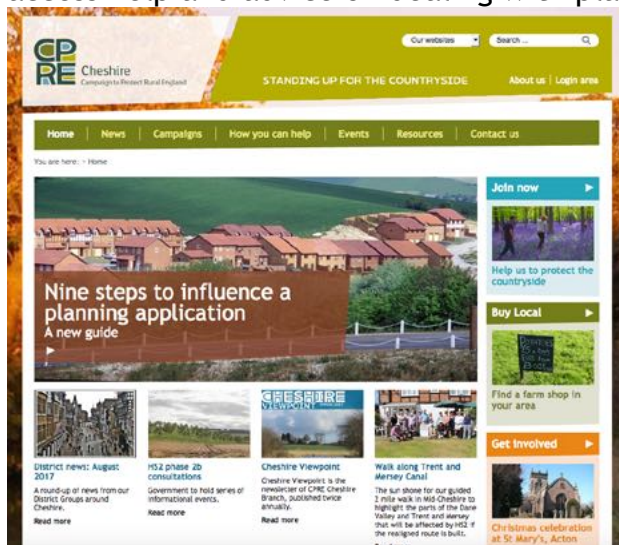
The Urban Network is a new initiative which aims to identify issues and campaigns for Branches who have a significant urban population in cities and large towns, especially in light of devolution in city regions.

Manchester and Liverpool, although mainly within Lancashire in CPRE Branch terms, both border Cheshire. The Urban Network will consider the natural environment in and around towns and cities, and will focus on engaging with the new decision making bodies in terms of spatial planning and strategic decision making and is as such particularly relevant to Cheshire.

Members enjoyed a buffet of cakes and sandwiches in the evening sunshine to conclude the evening.

ONLINE: CHESHIRE PLANNING HELP

Have you visited the Cheshire Branch Website recently? As well as featuring news and events from around the County, you can also access help and advice on dealing with planning applications.



The newest addition to the website's 'Planning Help' section is a guide originally produced by the Friends of the Peak District but subsequently tailored to be appropriate to Cheshire residents.

The website lists nine steps that Branch members or members of the general public can take to influence a planning

application, from visiting the site and viewing the details online or at their local planning office, to finding policies and documents that may help them to challenge inappropriate development, make a case for the plan to be amended or indeed to support the planned development if appropriate.

The page includes a link to the planning departments in each of the Cheshire Branch districts.

In addition to the 9-step guide, visitors can download a range of leaflets produced by CPRE National Office on different aspects of the planning system, including an overview of the planning system and Neighbourhood Plans, and a helpful new guide from CPRE Kent which focuses on protecting heritage through the planning system.

Visit our website here to access the resources:

<http://www.cprecheshire.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/planning>

A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



Acton St Mary's Church, © Colin Park, <http://www.geograph.org.uk/more.php?id=5219272>

Our very popular Christmas celebration will take place this year at St Mary's Church in Acton near Nantwich on Wednesday, 13th December 2017 from 2 - 4pm.

After the main carol service, our Branch Chaplain, Rev John Whitehead, will give a brief talk about the church and highlight some of its unique features, including the Tower (which is said to be Cheshire's oldest, dating from 1180) and what are thought to be late Anglo-Saxon carvings. All guests will then be welcome to enjoy some light refreshments. The Church's Christmas Tree festival the weekend before the concert, and so all the Christmas trees will be in place for the CPRE event.

The cost of tickets will be £5 per person, and all are welcome to attend, but tickets must be booked in advance to allow for catering arrangements.

In order to book your place please complete and return the enclosed booking form or contact Branch Secretary Debbie Janney (see inside cover for details)

Please do join us for this special celebration of the Christmas season.

DISTRICT NEWS

Chester District

A Compulsory Purchase Order is in place for 70 homes in Chester, to allow the next stage of the Northgate development to proceed, but CPRE Cheshire has questioned the logic of the proposal, suggesting that it would be more appropriate to include more housing and fewer retail units into the proposed development, especially as there are so many empty retail units already built. New residential areas in the city centre would support local businesses, cut down on the need for commuting, and provide badly needed housing. The Barons Quay development in Northwich, also in Cheshire West and Chester, still has a large number of empty units, and it is feared that a similar outcome might face the retail units in the proposed development in Chester.

Saughton Playing Fields: CPRE objected to the construction of a new primary school in Green Belt as inappropriate development. The school was planned to be part of the large housing development in the former Saughton Camp, a non Green Belt Site. The Cheshire West and Cheshire planning committee granted permission subject to the Secretary of States approval.

Chester is now designated as an Air Quality Management Area. Since the free parking in Chester after 3pm came into force, Park and Ride use has dropped and the Council are looking at ways to overcome this issue.

CPRE will not object to the new planning application to demolish the bus depot and construct 321 student units in its place bases on re-use of a brownfield site, or to the planning application for a new car park for 100 cars beside Chester Railway Station as this will hopefully encourage the further use of rail transport.

Vale Royal District

Plans to build 183 homes in the village of Darnhall, which were rejected by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in 2016 on the grounds that they conflicted with the local development plan, clearly being in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Verdin Estate took the application to Judicial Review, and the judge has dismissed this objection at appeal, stating that the Secretary of State had failed to supply any 'rational explanation' as to why he had dismissed an application which would provide affordable housing and local training and employment opportunities. Darnhall residents are overwhelmingly opposed to the plans, with three quarters of the adult population signing a petition opposing the plans. The final decision is

still pending, with the High Court Judge having issued a 36 page report. The final decision on this case may have national consequences as an assessment of the strength of Neighbourhood Plans.

The recently-completed Barons Quay development in Northwich still has many empty retail units, and Andrew Needham has highlighted the fact that the original plans included riverside apartments, which are not part of the development as it stands. He has called for a reassessment of the project before it proceeds any further, especially in light of the fact that town centre housing is more sustainable than that built in rural areas.

Warrington District

The last few months have been very busy. We have had information meetings for HS2 route 2b - no, it has not gone away.

The consultation on the Warrington Local Plan Preferred Option ended on September the 29th. The actual draft Local Plan will appear next year and any comments on this draft will go forward to a Public Inquiry. Note that if you respond to this consultation, you will need to make a fresh comment at this point, do not rely on the Preferred Option one.

At the beginning of the present consultation members were sent a list of the points which I would use and expand on in a CPRE comment.

There is currently a government consultation on how housing figures are calculated, and it would be helpful for members to comment on this because Council policies have to conform with National ones.

As a general point, whenever you take part in a pre-application consultation you still need to comment on the actual application when it appears.

One of the concerns at the moment is that traffic avoiding the new toll bridges will come through Warrington. I have commented on the Western link road pointing out the problems with this and new roads in general.

Jacqui Johnson

The Wirral Society

Wirral Borough

At Saughall Massie, the re-application for the “Imposed” Fire Station on the Community at Saughall Massie has been approved. Most disconcerting is the fact that the Secretary of State, Sajid Javid, declined to “call in” this most contentious and damaging Planning decision. Those of us who wrote to him urging “call-in” have yet to receive the courtesy of any response. One has to ask if the Secretary of State has abandoned

the Green Belt. We should be hearing of thousands of his staff now being made redundant if they are no longer acting to uphold Green Belt legislation!

At Eastham Village, we await the decision on the application to build on Green Belt rugby pitches for “enabling development”, to keep the rugby club financially viable. This application is “muddled” by the inclusion of a replacement “Community Facility” for which our Council has pledged some £350,000.... If the Council decides that the planning application should be approved by the Council!

At Storeton Village there is an application for a housing development, the funds from which will again be “enabling development” to facilitate the restoration of Storeton Hall (listed historic building etc..).

At Thornton Hough, the proposals for a “Retirement Complex” have “gone quiet”. We have kept in touch with the local objectors.

In Hoylake, the great Hoylake Golf Resort fiasco rumbles on at great cost to the taxpayer. We now learn that the “required” Hoylake By-Pass road, to serve the Golf Resort will likely be built at the Council’s (i.e. taxpayers’) expense, rather than the developer’s!

Wirral Council have embarked on yet another SHLAA consultation re methodology. The concept seems to be to analyse the deliverability of Green Belt land for housing as if say it was brown field land. But then of course to ignore it as it is Green Belt land and contrary to its planning policy!. Most troubling. The Wirral Society have objected but we expect little from this Council that seems dedicated to housebuilding.

Not content with the SHLAA the Council have also produced a Strategic Regeneration Framework. This is a very amateurish document, re-living varied failed or failing projects. It could be that its sole purpose is to give status to the Council’s “vanity” Hoylake Golf Resort by being able to claim it is strategic and so incorporate it into the still emerging Core Strategy / Local Plan.

Perhaps becoming part of the Liverpool City Region will save us... or not!

[Cheshire West and Chester Council \(on the Wirral\)](#)

In comparison to Wirral Council’s area the southern end of the Wirral has been relatively quiet.

The massive Redrow housing development on prime farmland continues off Ledsham Road, with the new houses being sold.

Any issues on the Green Belt in the Wirral peninsula, please email:-
planning@wirralsociety.net

T Neil Parry, Green Belt Coordinator, The Wirral Society

LOCAL PLANS UPDATE

Cheshire East Council

Cheshire East's Local Plan, which was finally adopted on 27th June 2017, has received another setback in that an application for judicial review has been made within the six-week window following its formal adoption.

Regular readers will be aware that the plan has been in development for about seven years, and was re-drafted after Planning Inspector Stephen Pratt questioned its soundness. The adopted plan includes provision for a minimum of 36000 new homes over the plan period, and underwent thirteen separate public consultations during its development.

As well as being in the news for systematically falsifying air quality data between 2012 and 2014, leading to a number of planning applications needing to be reassessed in at least five towns, the authority was also named the second worst in the country for complaints about its planning department in a report by the Local Government Ombudsman.

Warrington

Cheshire Branch is disappointed that Warrington, having completed its Local Plan in 2014, has been forced to reconsider its housing figures despite having been found to have an overprovision of housing. New proposals for 9000 homes in the Green Belt cannot be sustainable, and the land is currently either farmland or in other employment use for rural businesses.

CPRE opposes building on agricultural land because of food security issues, and this is more pressing following food price rises in light of the Brexit result. Additionally, it is much more appropriate and sustainable for new housing to be as close to existing infrastructure as possible. Building in the town centre encourages use of public transport and local businesses.

CPRE also queries the need for the amount of employment land allocated as this is already oversupplied in Cheshire. Consideration needs to be made of the local plans of adjoining boroughs, particularly when considering the important Green Belt aspiration of preventing the coalescence of settlements.

The road networks around Warrington are already overused and although Warrington is described in the 'Local Plan Preferred Development Option' as 'well served by motorways', frequently the motorways are blocked by accidents or simply high volumes of traffic.

A response to the 'Preferred Development Option' was submitted by Jacqui Johnson on behalf of the Branch on 28th September.

NO FINER LIFE

Fellow Archers addicts will already be familiar with the name Graham Harvey, Archers Scriptwriter and formerly longstanding Agricultural Storyline Editor. In addition to this, he is an established playwright.

Despite being a 'townie' by birth, Graham has always loved the countryside, and his views on agriculture were shaped in his student days when he came across a copy of *The Farming Ladder* by George Henderson. His new work focuses on George's life, seen through the eyes of his wife, Elizabeth.



No Finer Life, set in rural Oxfordshire, moves between the 1940s and the present, highlighting issues that are as relevant today as they were in wartime, including the quality of the food that we produce, the interaction between our identity and our countryside, and our relationship with it. The play is presented by Dogwood Productions, a theatre company established with the aim of encouraging a broader understanding of rural matters and highlight the fact that the countryside is not 'just a picture postcard, nor simply the space between our towns' but a vital part of our economy, food

production, and a place of deeply-rooted tradition.

Dogwood Productions is working with CPRE Branches to bring this production to a wider range of people, and CPRE Cheshire is delighted to be able to stage a performance of *No Finer Life* at Tarporley Community Centre on **Tuesday 27th February at 7.30pm**. Reviews from the tour so far have been excellent, and live music will be provided by award-winning composer Alastair Collingwood.

Elizabeth is played by Rebecca Bailey, who trained at the Birmingham School of acting, and whose theatre credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Courtyard Theatre, London), *With a Clock in Mind* (Troubadour Theatre, London), *An Impossible Dream of Life* (Hotel Teatro) and *The Snow Dog* (Edinburgh Pleasance). The Director, James Le Lacheur, has a range of credits for acting, writing and directing on stage, TV and screen.

Tickets, which are priced at £12, are available [online via this link](#), and it promises to be an interesting and uplifting evening.