



Network North - A Great Day Out

On Saturday October 30th a successful event was held at St William's College, York, attended by over 60 CPRE members from the North-East and Yorkshire and Humberside regions.

In the morning, we divided into two workshops. One discussed "Working with community groups". A series of presentations demonstrated how successful campaigning requires collaboration with other groups concerned about a particular issue or development. This will become still more important as the Coalition Government's Localism agenda is implemented. Community groups reflect a sense of place, resistance to threats and passionate feelings resulting in action. We can offer expertise, especially in planning, legal advice and networks.

Case studies were presented of a "Let's Grow!" scheme in North Lincolnshire, where an initial community allotment project led to extensive activity in schools to promote active horticulture, with the support of a local garden centre. Again, Fylde District Group collaborated with parish councils and other groups, including the local Civic Trust and Wildlife Trust branches, to oppose unwelcome development proposals. Local referenda were held on our advice, parish plans prepared and the Local Development Framework influenced. However, the general view was that although such campaigns generated interest and support, they did not, usually, produce new CPRE members.

Richard Cowen, Vice Chair, attended the workshop considering Renewable energy. This did provoke quite a lot of debate with a number of people concerned about the effect of renewable energy schemes, particularly wind farms, on the countryside. But points were also raised about carbon capture, including its viability as it requires up to 25% of all the energy generated by the plant to operate it, and the national grid, including the potential cost and effect of under-grounding as much of the network as possible.

We split into a number of groups to discuss how energy for the future should be provided, given the various types of generation available, and their likely

effectiveness and problems. But some of us were also concerned about targets and reducing energy use. One group suggested approaching schools to try to encourage children to reduce usage significantly. Another was concerned whether we should be agreeing to renewable schemes for their own sake (as is the case under PPS22) or whether we should also consider the actual effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

In the time available, realistic solutions were never going to be forthcoming. But a useful debate was held on the subject which may be further considered at the Autumn Conference.

After a very enjoyable lunch of local Yorkshire produce, we heard two keynote speakers. The first was Ken Trickett, Vice-chairman of the Yorkshire and Humberside Association of Civic Societies and President of Wakefield Civic Trust. It soon became apparent that the Civic Trust is our urban "twin", concerned particularly with preserving and enhancing the built environment. (Cont'd on Page 4)

Medal Winners

At the end of the Network North event, it gave me great pleasure to present CPRE Good Service Medals to two of our most stalwart volunteers: Norman Dobson, Treasurer of Northumberland Branch and Gillan Gibson, Secretary of County Durham Branch. A certain amount of subterfuge went into getting them there but I think we've been forgiven. Yorkshire and Humberside's Chairman John Hoare, presented a medal to Anne Robinson - also richly deserved and warmly applauded



L - R: John Hoare, Howard Elcock, Anne Robinson, Norman Dobson, Gillan Gibson

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CPRE, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, is a charity which exists to promote the beauty, tranquility and diversity of rural England. We advocate positive solutions for the long-term future of the countryside. Founded in 1926, we have 60,000 supporters and a branch in every county. Patron: Her Majesty The Queen. President: Bill Bryson.

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Diary Dates

Nov 29	NE Big Meeting Newcastle
Dec 6	CPRE Co. Durham
Dec 7	CPRE Northumberland
Dec 13	CPRE Durham
Dec 14	CPRE Darlington
Jan 18, 2011	RG QM in Newcastle



Around The Branches

Darlington, It's Growing (DIG)

Darlington Its Growing (DIG for short) was launched at the Clervaux Cafe on Friday 22nd October.

The Project is community led and aims to increase the amount of food grown and consumed in Darlington and to promote local food and its sources. DIG will work with groups who want to grow their own food and has a Big Idea to plant the Darlington Orchard in many places throughout the town. It was inspired by Pam Warhurst of the innovative and successful 'Incredible Edible Todmorden' movement which started off by growing food in spare pieces of unused land, which could then be consumed by the public, providing the last plant used was replaced by the consumer! Pam gave an inspirational talk at the Launch of DIG which was very well received.

Peter Roberts and Matthew Snedker gave ideas about how food could be grown in a variety of places and meet a variety of aims. These ideas were crystalised by using of images on the theme of "Are you a Player" using giant playing cards with, for example, "Are you a Digger" for the spades, and "Are you in the Club" for the clubs, representing all the organisation needs for a club to flourish.

The meeting was well attended with standing room only! Delicious fresh soup was served and a wonderful apple desert. Bowls of local apples were on the tables from the orchard of a local convent.

Derek Cowie, an internationally respected artist, painted a fantastic picture whilst the meeting was going on which was then auctioned off at the end for well over £100.

There was a music quiz to match songs with apples in their titles with their singers and finally, huge maps of Darlington were on the tables for people to suggest as many suitable places as possible from their local knowledge which could be suitable to grow food on.

If you want to get involved, please contact Peter Roberts at peter.edendays@googlemail.com and 01325 481267.

*Yvonne Richardson
Darlington Group*



Mapping Local Food Webs Research in Darlington

You may remember reading in an earlier newsletter about CPRE research into local food 'webs' in Hexham, part of a nationwide project which aims to increase support for the economic, environmental and social benefits of local food. In the North East, Darlington was chosen as the next case study location, and over the past 4 months NE co-ordinator Lara Marsh and a brilliant team of local volunteers (including CPRE members Gillan Gibson and Kath Cheadle) have once again been interviewing retail outlets who sell locally-sourced food and drinks, then following the chain to interview suppliers within a 32 mile radius.

Darlington paints a very different local food picture to Hexham. The great covered market really helps to make local food affordable and accessible. This simultaneously carries its own set of issues, however, with the worrying demographic of shoppers at the covered market being largely elderly, with the more affluent younger generation seeming to tend to shop at supermarkets. And of course the covered market is not selling exclusively local food.

Once again some fascinating food webs have emerged, from Acorn Dairy supplying Burtree House Farm with the butter for their famous sticky toffee puddings, which then get sold in the Cheese and Wine shop, to pioneering family business New Moor Veal, making good use of the male calves of their longer-established ice cream business. The calves are slaughtered by Simpsons of Cockfield, a butcher with small abattoir at the back of the shop - such a rarity these days - and then sold by another traditional family butcher, Aldersons of Cocker-ton.

It has also been valuable to interview both Tesco and Asda in the North East, to better understand supermarkets' local food strategies. Some see their involvement as the way forward for local food - others as the death knell. A report on Darlington's local food web will be out next year - look out for it and make up your own mind.

Lara Marsh

CPRE Chester-le-Street Update

Persimmon Homes have announced their intention to proceed with the construction of initially 40 out of the quota of 248 houses on the contentious Newfield Farm, Pelton Estate. 40 is significant since 50 is the trigger point at which supplementary infrastructure payments are due. The actual construction start date, originally December 2010, appears to be a moveable feast. A Liaison Group has been formed including Council, Persimmon and the Residents Association.

Iain Stewart-Fergusson



**The Regional and Branch Committees
would like to wish all our members and readers
A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year**

Around The Branches

Trees for Cotherstone

This is a community group that suits David Cameron's "Big Society" ideas well. It was started in early 2004 by Ian Moorhouse, a CPRE member, and Dave Martin, a retired forester both of whom live in Cotherstone in Teesdale. Seeing that many of the trees in the area were extremely old and that, in field boundaries particularly, replacements were not being planted, they decided to do something about it.

Later in the year the group was up and running with start-up funding from various sources including the Durham Branch of CPRE and tree planting commenced. Although trees are cheap, costing perhaps 60p each, to protect them from being eaten by livestock costs many times more and construction of the protective cages is fairly hard and time consuming work. Nevertheless, this enthusiastic band of volunteers has planted hundreds of trees in fields around the village, on the way building up good relations with the local farmers and with the local school where children help in tree planting and gathering seeds..

Its work has been widely recognized, winning awards from the North Pennines AONB Partnership, Northern Forests and Durham County Council. In November, the group will be represented at a reception to be held by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in Windsor Castle.

Ian Moorhouse Teesdale

Stop the Drop

English local authorities now pay the enormous sum of £858 million each year removing litter from our roads and streets. This cost excludes motorways and principal A roads which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency, excludes parks and other open public spaces and excludes the cost of dealing with fly-tipping. In spite of this, litter still abounds and we take the view that voluntary litter picking groups are essential to help Councils keep our roads and countryside clean.

Within the branch LitterFree Durham promotes Stop the Drop. They are in touch with 30 litter groups throughout County Durham and Darlington and gradually the number increases. They plan to hold a county-wide Spring Clean between 19 March and 16 April 2011 and hope that many organisations - such as parish councils, schools, women's institutes, youth groups - will join in. It is encouraging that in September and November this year Heighington Parish Litter Group were joined in their Picks by members of the Army Cadet Force detachment in Newton Aycliffe.

But the real problem is to persuade people to stop dropping. LitterFree Durham have a PowerPoint presentation which they take into primary schools.

To any school which is prepared to run an annual competition on a litter topic they present a shield on which the names of winners can be inscribed. The group also take what opportunities they can to push the message to a wider public.

Recently they had a stall for two days at Wolsingham Show, attended a school fair, and gave a presentation to some members of resident groups in Sedgefield Borough Homes.

Kit Bartram Darlington



Jenny Chapman
Darlington MP and
Durham Branch
Chair Elizabeth
Mann at Darlington
Green Market

Photo by
Wayne Norman

Darlington is an award-winning Market Town. Darlington's open-air markets take place in the town centre in front of the iconic Victorian Covered Market Hall.

Monthly **Craft Markets** are held every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month and **Farmers' Markets** every 3rd Friday of the month. Throughout the year there are other speciality markets to enjoy too such as the bi-annual **French** and other **Continental Markets**. Winter brings the special Christmas **Markets**

The outdoor **Traditional Markets** are held on Monday and Saturday with a daily Indoor Market in our **Victorian Market Hall**. They attract shoppers from far and wide and especially on Bank Holiday Mondays, so why not join us

Wind Farm Update in County Durham

Moorhouse has been refused by committee although the Planning Officer recommended approval. There are potential applications at Newbiggin, Foxton and Stillington and a possible re-submission of the A1 Wind farm Red Gap is awaiting the decision letter now the Airport has removed its objection. There are Public Inquires at South Sharpley and Hawthorn. Teesdale has potential applications near Hamsterley Forest.

Yet there is one sum that needs to be done as the big question remains unanswered:

"How much CO2 are the operating wind farms actually saving as opposed to how much they promised when planning permission was given?"

*Elizabeth Mann
Co. Durham Branch Chair*

The Trusts engage in a wide range of activities, including developing Heritage Walks, scrutinising planning applications, offering design awards and blue plaques, talks and social events and campaigning.

The final speaker was our own Chief Executive, Shaun Spiers, who spoke of current activities including the Supporter Review, the Brand Review, as well as scrutinising the Infrastructure Planning Commission and housing targets. The planning system is one of the last legacies of the post-war period but it will be radically changed by the coming Decentralisation and Localism Bill. There will be opportunities for us but worrying developments include the Local Enterprise Partnerships, which are likely to focus exclusively on economic growth, the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the community power to build which may increase housing numbers. We face many dilemmas. The expenditure cuts. The destruction of our strategic planning system has been inspired by a doctrinaire rejection of regionalism. What will the Big Society be in reality? They want to decentralise but will they? We were left feeling that we live in interesting times!

Howard Elcock and Richard Cowen

On Your Bike..!

One of CPRE's objectives is to encourage sustainable transport. We welcome planning policies which do this and provide the infrastructure to enable it to happen. So, while we may not be a cycling club, we support anything done to encourage cycling and help remove congestion and pollution from our streets.

One of my personal complaints is that in reality this is not happening. So what a pleasant surprise to be a part of two groups in my area which are serious about providing cycle routes and include cyclists to try to obtain the best solutions possible.

The first has been ongoing for some time. The Limestone LinX project (led by the Coxhoe Community Partnership) has already provided a cycle route linking villages in the north of the East Durham Rural Corridor AAP. It may not be perfect, but it has set out to provide a safer route for persons to cycle to work, school or just for fun. I live on part of the route and have noticed an increase in the number of cyclists using it. And now the AAP is proposing something similar in the Sedgefield area. The first stage proposal is to provide safe routes to school,

particularly the Sedgefield Community College (a specialist sports college and the only comprehensive school in the AAP) and to work, linking Sedgefield to Fishburn and working towards the Trimdons. Links to other places of interest, such as Hardwick Park, are also being considered and to other schools in the area, promoting schemes such as Cycle to School. With luck, we will in the future be able to link the two schemes and also link them up to the nearby National Cycle Route number 1, which would provide even greater opportunities.

It may sound obvious, but if successful this could also have health benefits at a time when we hear so much about obesity. Hopefully, these schemes could also prove a tourist attraction. And from what I have seen outside my own front door, I do not think these are unrealistic aspirations. Surely it is something for an organisation such as ours to support and encourage others to follow.

Richard



When obesity was not a problem



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